DOWN AND OUT IN MUSIC CITY:

THE URBAN STRUCTURATION

OF HOMELESSNESS

By

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To the love of my life, Helene Di Iorio, the sweetest person I have ever known

and

To Nashville's unhoused men, there but good fortune go I

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The fact is…the city is rooted in the habits and customs of the people who inhabit it. The consequence is that the city possesses a moral as well as physical organization, and these two mutually interact in characteristic ways to mold and modify one another.
                                                            – Robert E. Park (1925)

The law of benefits is a difficult channel, which requires careful sailing…We wish to be self-sustained. We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten...We sometimes hate the meat which we eat, because there seems something of degrading dependence in living by it.
                                                            – Ralph Waldo Emerson (1844)

   The vast surface parking lot behind the Nashville Rescue Mission provides a panoramic view of Music City's downtown skyline. Looking northeast, there is proud evidence of a booming "New South" city – sparkling high-rise condominiums, the Renaissance Hotel, the AT&T building, the U.S. Bank and Pinnacle headquarters, the Gaylord Entertainment Center, the Schermerhorn Symphony Hall, and the Country Music Hall of Fame. Pulsing in the shadows cast by these skyline markers is the thriving entertainment district on Lower Broadway and Second Avenue where country kitsch mingles with smoke-filled honky-tonks and a host of themed environments, including country music themed nightclubs and chain restaurants such as the Old Spaghetti Factory, Joe's Crab Shack and Hard Rock Cafe. These tourist and business environments embody the "entrepreneurial" Zeitgeist of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Indeed, city officials' and property owners' dreams of an orderly and profitable inner city "revitalization" have come to near complete fruition. But, as the men who gather daily

and nightly in the parking lot just four blocks south know all too well, the dreams of the fortunate are the nightmares of the down-and-out.

On any given day in Music City, more than 500 men find themselves on the street, looking for shelter. Nashville's vibrant economy and rapid growth have combined to gentrify most of downtown, relegating them to a small, densely concentrated island of human service provision in the Lafayette district where despair and hope, resignation and resistance, survival and death uneasily coexist. Lafayette festers like a gangrenous wound in the middle of an otherwise "healthy" urban "body." Take a walk (or drive) south down 8th Avenue from Lower Broad and, literally from one block to the next, you will see a world of opulent urban amenities give way to Planet Indigence – an organizational ensemble of day labor enterprises and caretaker agencies that sustain and structure the lives of the city's most marginal citizens. Whereas men who are down-and-out in Music City organize their daily lives in accordance with its various "amenities," scores of housed Nashvillians drive past this organizational island of indigence on their daily work commutes, hardly noticing its existence.

Sociological studies of homeless life in the contemporary city also overlook organizational ensembles located in districts like Lafayette. According to urban political economists, caretaker agencies are little more than derivative "palliatives" that cushion the spatial impact of restructured urban environments by "warehousing" the homeless poor. A handful of ethnographic studies acknowledge the relatively autonomous and socially productive (rather than derivative) role of caretaker organizations in the management of homelessness, but focus exclusively on individual agencies at the expense of an empirical focus on the districts in which they are located; they treat

caretaker agencies as closed systems, rather than as the loci of a given locale's social relations. Community ethnographers posit intra-group mechanisms as the locus of homeless individuals' routine activities, but treat caretaker agencies as unproblematic social formations, reducing them to backdrops in lives structured by the streets. In short, despite their integral role in managing homelessness, the sociological literature has yet to pay close attention to the organizational ecologies that animate spatial environments like Lafayette.

Sociological attention to this socio-spatial structure and process is warranted by the fact that previous studies' analytic units – the city at large, a single caretaker agency, or a group of homeless individuals who carve out survival in the shadow of caretakers – obscure the central role of caretakers in structuring the otherwise chaotic situations (social relations) of unhoused clients into routine processes that organize the neighborhood and extant urban environment: the urban structuration of homelessness. The overarching purpose of this dissertation is therefore to offer a corrective to the sociological literature by moving caretakers out of the background and placing them into the center of the daily drama revolving around the management of surplus populations. Specifically, insofar as neighborhoods are structured (produced and reproduced) through social relationships, I attempt to account for the different kinds and levels of mechanisms that (re)produce these social relations.

Doing so requires first taking the reader on a tour of the Lafayette district, raising the dissertation's animating questions/analytic intents in the process. This section will be followed by a discussion of my methodological devices, which transitions into a more detailed discussion of extant literature on urban homelessness. The penultimate section

supplies the reader with an analytic framework essential to understanding the analysis, which is outlined in this introduction's final section.

The Lafayette District

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the Lafayette district was the last remaining site of urban disinvestment in Nashville's downtown. Light industrial warehouses, auto-repair shops, discount liquor stores, and adult entertainment clubs mingled with corrugated cardboard shelters, three day labor agencies and three recently relocated caretaking organizations. From area merchants' collective perspective, homeless caretakers' relocation to the area marked the twilight of the 8th Avenue South/Lafayette Street commercial district's tenuous viability. "The Mayor's Office has left the area a dumping ground for all they have found unsavory," Richard Ropelewski, owner of Stuttgart South Mercedes repair, told a newspaper reporter. Ropelewski's repair shop still sits at the head of an alleyway that laces together the Nashville Rescue Mission, the Room in the Inn (RITI), and the Downtown Clinic – a narrow, block-long strip of asphalt that he dubbed "the homeless highway" in his 2001 newspaper interview. Estelle Larson, an 8th Avenue antique dealer who moved into the neighborhood in 1995, had an equally acerbic recollection of RITI, which relocated to the area from Demonbreun Street the same year. As she stared out her plate-glass boutique window, which still overlooks a decrepit, urine-soaked CSX railroad bridge, she told me that:

When Father Strobel moved here—he's a Catholic, de-frocked priest—that was his baby [RITI]…His philosophy is put a halo over every homeless person and let em *smoke crack*. There were times when there would be *twelve people* standing outside openly smoking crack. It was blatant in your face. This whole [CSX railroad] bridge would be full of people urinating, having sex, and unfortunately I had a view of all of it. The police were like, 'We've got better things to

do.' It was like 5,6,7,8 calls a day to the police coz they were killing my business. Because Father Strobel was shepherd to the homeless and Mayor Purcell at the time was a national leader of the homeless movement, he put a halo over them too. Politicians' favorite picture was with Father Strobel. The homeless just ruled the neighborhood and did anything they wanted to!

"The agencies are not here because of their own choosing," Charles Strobel

rebutted to a local newspaper reporter in 2001. "There has been encouragement on the

part of government to move to this area so Lower Broadway might be more prosperous.

Who gets caught in the move are the surrounding neighbors." Nearly eight years later,

neighbors like Bruce Baker – owner of the art supply store that borders the Mission's rear

parking lot – still felt "caught" by the district's propinquitous human service agencies:

They [missionaries] don't monitor the parking lot real well. We could go out in the parking lot right now and watch a drug deal go down. I call the police a lot, but the drug dealers are pretty smart. They'll make a deal and move on to another location. I'm looking at the back wall of the Mission. So they urinate, they crap back there. There's nobody keeping law and order out there. They'll *smoke crack* out there right in plain view in front of my store. It's what I call the 'Mission-impact zone,' and they do nothing to alleviate that.

Figure 1.1: Mission's Rear Parking Lot   **Figure 1.2: Mission's Rear Parking Lot**
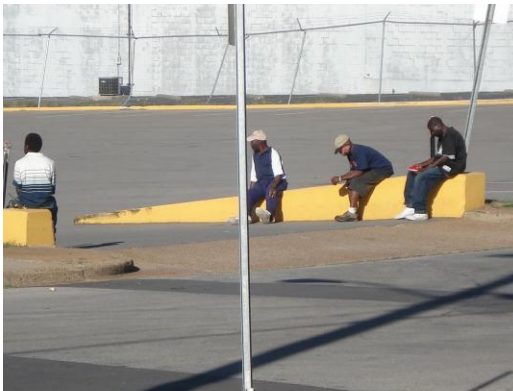
Figure 1.3: Mission Courtyard　　　　　**Figure 1.4: Mission Courtyard**
(Opens into Parking Lot)

Despite running his business in ground zero of the "Mission-impact zone," Bruce Baker is a pragmatist, believing that area caretakers serve a noble purpose. He views the homeless "problem" as intractable, and attempts to make peace with his less-than-desirable neighbors, believing they "have to exist somewhere." Nonetheless, he cannot help but lament how they impede the neighborhood's potentially lucrative ground rent:

> This is the bad part of town; the under-belly. Is it going to be the Gulch? Not as long as the Mission's here. It will always be a warehouse area. The Mission is basically the nerve center that attracts the homeless population, the people who can't function in society like the rest of us. If they would go, this whole neighborhood would change over night. If you moved all of this out of here it would be beautiful. Everything's moving in. You got the convention center coming. You got two giant high-rise condominiums over there [in the Gulch]. You've got a beautiful restaurant that just opened over here at 8th and Division [Flyte]. It's a *spectacular* entrance to the city when you see the city skyscrapers coming down 8th. But with the homeless people, *it's like a dustpan*. They're sweeping everything over in this corner right now.

By the time I began regularly visiting the district in the spring of 2007, the tensions between local merchants and service providers had eased off – something akin to a détente had been forged out of the neighborhood's antagonistic history. Nonetheless, as Gerald Suttles (1972) pointed out, "defended neighborhoods" leave behind a "residue." It was, in fact, this conflict-laden past that congealed into a string of newspaper articles and urban redevelopment proposals that both brought the neighborhood to my attention in 2006 and put Lafayette on other Nashville residents' cognitive maps.

On the literal map, Lafayette is a concentrated pocket of poverty located on the southern tip of the Central Business Improvement District (CBID) and bounded by 4th Avenue to the east, Franklin Street to the north, 8th Avenue to the west, and Interstates 40/65 to the south. During the period of study (2007-2009), the district was the only remaining blighted area in Nashville's rapidly redeveloping downtown. Even though boutique owners like Estelle Larson and restaurateurs like Jack and Rose Arnold (owners of Arnold's Country Kitchen, a famous "meat-and-three" diner) operated on the district's fringes, light industry and adult entertainment still dominated the built environment and, except for a few working class "pioneers," its residents were homeless men who depended on the goods and services distributed by the Downtown Clinic, RITI, and the Mission for their survival.

Figure 1.5: Blighted Space   **Figure 1.6: Blighted Space**

Casualty to the structural violence of uneven development and suburbanization, the former Sears department store represented by the yellow pentagon at the center of Figure 1.7 now stands as a physical instantiation of the district's redirected social and

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economic activity (see also Lloyd 2006). Whereas its 170,000 square-foot interior was once animated and structured by the designs of commercial capitalism, today its internal spaces are inscribed by the practical activity of rescue missionaries. "It is a great shock to some who come to the Mission for help, that we include religious activities," explained its director as he granted me a tour of the state-of the-art human service facility. "God has always told us to take care of the needs of the poor, but to do more for them than just feed and clothe them. We must help them to accept God's love, even in a time of great misery." As I would discover, this Salvationist raison d'etre creates a schematic for both staff and client action in the neighborhood. We will soon see how missionaries' notions about what constitutes an appropriate lifestyle – expressed in their agency's caring practices – profoundly influences the social organization of Lafayette as well as sites beyond its perimeter; taking precedence as it does over homeless residents' time-allocation and scheduling, the Mission is the central organizing principle of male homeless life.

Figure 1.7: Aerial Shot of Lafayette District
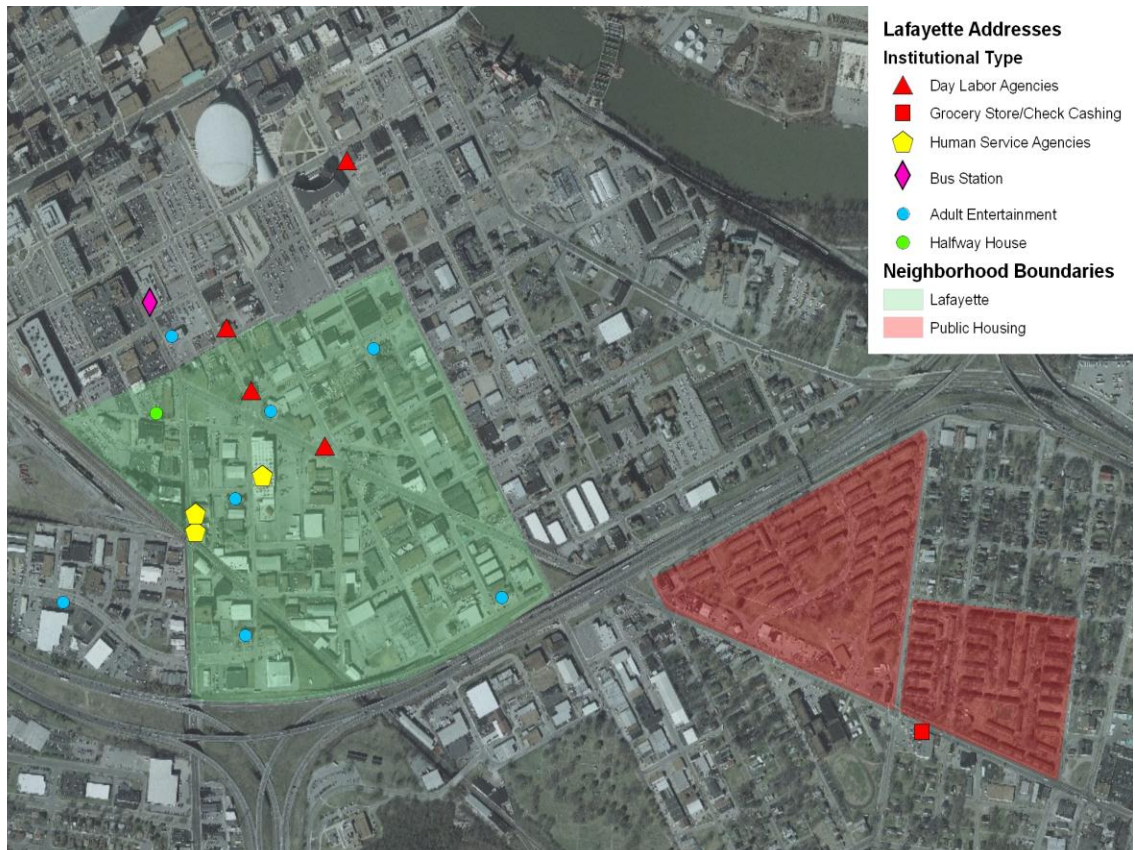
A quick jot west down the "homeless highway" (a.k.a., "the alley" in street

parlance) leads us to the rear parking lot of Room in the Inn (RITI) – a plumbing

warehouse-cum-drop-in center (the bottom of the two, leftmost yellow pentagons in

Figure 1.7). The squatty gray cinder block building is tucked between the alley, 8th

Avenue S., and an earthen bank which creates the foundation of an elevated CSX railroad

track. Contrary to Estelle Larson's assertion, RITI founder and director Charles Strobel is

not a "de-frocked priest." His successor, Father Joe Sanches, believed Strobel's twenty

year stint in the priesthood at Holy Name Catholic Church "didn't support his mission. So

he was torn. This [RITI] was so important to him he saw it so clearly as his mission,

almost God's plan for him, that he had no choice but to devote himself entirely to that."

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Strobel preferred to cast his "mission," and the brick and mortar in which it has crystallized, in paternalistic terms. "It's like getting married and having children and more needs occur," he told me over coffee one winter afternoon. "So, the upstairs attic is turned into a bedroom, the basement turned into a playroom, the garage becomes a den. You start expanding; because like the old lady who lived in a shoe, there's so many needs you just keep doing it. But it all starts out of hospitality."

Figure 1.8: Downtown Clinic (Left) RITI (Right)   Figure 1.9: The "Homeless Highway"
(a.k.a. "The Alley")

Over the course of nearly two years in the field, I would learn that this notion of "hospitality" had far reaching implications for Lafayette's unhoused residents – far from an arbitrary choice of words, the term encapsulated a meaningful difference between RITI's ethos and that which animated the Mission. Every practical activity staff performed – from the distribution of instrumental services such as food, clothing, toiletries, bus tickets, and over-the-counter medication to the dispatching of homeless "guests" to a night's stay at a host congregation – was refracted through this religiously imbued concept. Both caretaker agencies, I found out, were in fact engrossed in

respective attempts to cultivate "congregations," one of the oldest forms of urban community – but they did so for very different reasons, in very different ways, with very similar results. In the pages that follow, we will explore in detail what these differences are and how they translate into their managerial strategies vis-à-vis homeless clients. We will also explore how homeless clients negotiate and play a role in reproducing these strategies.

Figure 1.10: "Jimmy" in the Alley　　　　**Figure 1.11: Ancillary Alley**

In addition to integrating homeless men into provisional religious communities, Lafayette also served as a strategic site for other local economic interests that contributed an infusion of (sub-)minimum-wage employment into a neighborhood inundated by otherwise jobless residents. Indeed, the last quarter of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first have witnessed the resurgence of pre-Fordist labor market practices based on insecure, contingent work arrangements and ushered in by declining government regulation and diminished union strength (Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson 2000; Smith 1997; Theodore 2003). Day labor agencies (a.k.a. "hiring halls") – which broker low-skilled workers by the hour to client firms on the urban periphery – have

become defining features of both the contingent labor market and the impoverished neighborhoods they mobilize into forces of "flexible production." A host of hiring halls – attracted by the district's low rents; its surplus of vulnerable, stigmatized, and hence exploitable workers; and its distance from low-skilled, entry-level jobs located in outer-ring suburbs – operated in close proximity to the caretaker agencies which anchored prospective homeless "employees" who had few other opportunities to engage the formal labor market. Alongside the caretaking agencies were these "low-road" emissaries of the contingent labor market with self-descriptive names like Labor Source, Command Center, A Day's Work, and Able Body (see the red triangles in Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.12: A Day's Work **Figure 1.13: Command Center**

This spatial propinquity, I soon learned, was the result of the day labor industry's locational logic which is predicated on maximizing its ability to selectively siphon workers to extant employment sites "on demand." "We're here to give you labor on demand," one dispatcher told me. "If you call me up in the morning and say 'I need ten guys,' I need to put my hands on ten that I know what they've done and I know what

they're capable of, and get em out there. We need them to report in every day." But how, precisely, do dispatchers retain their transient workforce? Moreover, why do homeless men report to these purveyors of low-paying, low-prestige, back-breaking, dirty, and sometimes dangerous temporary work? On entering the agencies in Chapter 9, we will explore these questions.

Figure 1.14: Labor Source **Figure 1.15: Able Body**
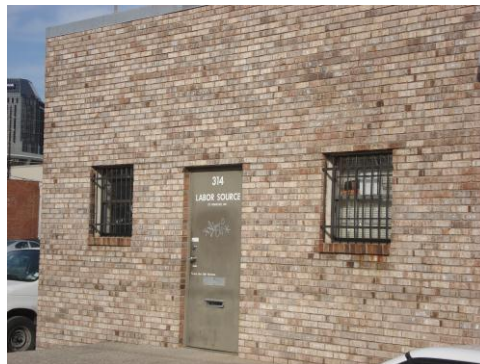
As the reader may have already surmised, the activities taking place inside these organizations are not hermetic. On closer ethnographic inspection, in fact, I found synergistic relations between caretakers' ameliorative enterprises and day labor agencies' exploitive commercial transactions. In the concluding chapter, we will explore how the "product" of the former was the "raw material" of the latter in order to excavate the (latent) bonds between these organizations with contradictory goals.

Moreover, this organizational ensemble, I learned, was not an "island" unto itself, but was embedded in a larger "sea" of "entrepreneurial" urban governance structured by the imperative to attract profit-oriented investment – an exigency met through urban authorities' ongoing attempts to create an environment conducive to the work, life, and entertainment of office employees, tourists, and middle-class downtown residents. These

constraints have led Nashville's officials to engage in efforts to produce and maintain a stable property rights regime, privatize basic service provision, download responsibility for welfare provision onto the non-profit sector, decentralize social control through the promotion of self-regulating business improvement and residential districts, and employ punitive mechanisms of control premised on socially excluding the homeless poor.

Quite unlike skid row neighborhoods which hosted a diverse organizational ecology of inexpensive hotels, flop houses, restaurants, bars, barber colleges, houses of prostitution, welfare agencies, employment agencies, and missions, and which functioned as self-sustained, segregated, parallel social universes (Anderson 1923; Hoch and Slayton 1989; Wiseman 1973), it was readily apparent that Lafayette's organizational ecology was less diverse and operated conspicuously in the interstices of numerous redevelopment districts encroaching upon it from the north, south, and west. This seemingly inhospitable downtown environment suggested two interrelated questions regarding Lafayette's origins and contemporary role in managing homelessness in Nashville's entrepreneurial environment: Why does this particular downtown neighborhood contain the primary caretaking agencies for homeless men, and what processes account for its production and persistence?

As we will soon see, the story of Lafayette's social production is both one of divergence from and continuity with "Dodge City Skid Row," its predecessor. Even though Lafayette's location, morphology, and identity differ from Dodge City's, its animating organizations are vestiges from the skid row era which perform a similar, yet magnified role in Nashville's larger system of poverty management. The re-embrace of classic liberalism's "market triumphalism" has led federal, state and local governments,

vis-à-vis notions of voluntarism, to "retain elements of a reformist discourse of social equality even as it withdraws resources from the poor" (Goode and Maskovsky 2001; Maskovsky 1999: 5). This trend is embodied by Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, whose speech at a RITI groundbreaking ceremony expressed the contradictory orientation of a growth-oriented, devolutionary local government that simultaneously committed to a "10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness" five years ago:

When I heard a train go by, it occurred to me that that was very appropriate. Because this facility is located *in the heart of our city*. And this facility represents what *should be* in the heart of all of our citizens. What we need to do is represented by this facility. I like to think of Bob Dylan's song that 'If you're not busy being born, you're busy dying.' I like to think of Nashville as a city that's always busy being born. We're busy recreating ourselves. We're busy embracing all people who need our help. Nashville is a great city. It will remain a great city as we *remain inclusive* and *celebrate diversity*, making a home for everyone. Today we celebrate the beginning of a project that will offer 38 affordable apartment units, increased medical space and services, and educational space to help homeless individuals transition off the street – this facility offers expert care all at minimal taxpayer expense.

Dean's celebration of RITI's expansion evidences not only the central role of voluntary agencies' managerial authority ("expert care") in Nashville's management of homelessness, but also portends the Lafayette district's strategic position in the larger institutional complex of "poverty management" (Wolch and DeVerteuil 2001). In the wake of urban redevelopment and the dissolution of traditional skid rows, the homeless poor increasingly circulate across an array of seemingly unrelated settings: prisons, jails, sidewalk vending sites, hospitals, mental health treatment facilities, halfway houses, alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs, public housing projects, and homeless shelters. The circulatory spatial practices of indigent citizens in the post-skid row era have led critical geographers (Hopper 2003; Mitchell 2003, 2006; Ropers 1988; Sites 2003; Smith 1996) to (implicitly) embrace and extend Hoch and Slayton's (1989) declaration that: "The social system of skid row…has been replaced by the *disorganized existence of*

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homelessness, and nowhere has this been more problematic than among the alcoholic, the drug-abusive, and the mentally impaired" (86, emphasis added).

However, as I peeled back the social layers sedimented in Lafayette it became clear that homeless life was not characterized by social entropy, but was in fact enveloped in an order-producing "island" connected to a managerial "archipelago." In particular, caretakers' managerial authority played a surprisingly central role in producing this order. Indeed, the social relations generated by this managerial authority sit at the center of the story that unfolds below. For now, it is enough to say that from the very outset of the project I found the disorganization thesis unsatisfying, preferring to believe that William Foote Whyte (1993 [1938]) was correct when he noted that *what at first glance appears to be disorganized* "often turns out to be a *different form of social organization* if one takes the trouble to look closely" (8, emphasis added).

Taking a Close Look: Fieldwork in Lafayette

When asked to share his insights on the ethnographic trade at a Pacific Sociological Association meeting, Erving Goffman defined the technique as a means of obtaining data "by subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation…So that you are close to them while they are responding to what life does to them" (Goffman 2002 [1974]: 154). For nearly two years (May 2007-April 2009), I submitted myself to the contingencies that

played upon the homeless men who utilized the Lafayette district's goods and services to facilitate their survival.

However, my initial forays into the field were by no means encouraging and my welcome participation in residents' daily activity came about quite gradually. Residents hardly wanted to get up close and personal with an upstart sociologist who walked around "getting in people's business." Part of my initiation into this strange milieu was, in fact, the discovery that my very raison d'etre violated a trenchant norm in the district succinctly expressed by phrases like "Just mind your own business!" or "I just keep to myself." or "If you wanna know, you should ask *him*." This norm of minding one's own business, I eventually learned, was a means of self-preservation for a population frequently hiding from law enforcement agents and, not infrequently, bounty hunters. Many of those who were not "on the run" from authorities had either done jail or prison time, which meant they had internalized some variant of the "convict code" that ethnographers have found to consist of two dimensions germane to my entrée problem: do not "snitch" and do not mess with the interests of other residents (Wieder 2002). Even residents who had not done time, it seemed, operated according to this logic in order to mitigate the threat of reprisal; they did not, in Lafayette parlance, "want to rock the boat."

Given these normative constraints, I decided to course-correct and assumed the mantle of Mission volunteer in order to give myself a chance to acclimate to the environment. This position allowed me to become acquainted with staff and participants in a "life recovery" program (who were also staff members in that they performed the majority of the daily labor). My volunteer role also allowed me to ask many questions that would otherwise seem out of place and, moreover, gave me an invaluable window on

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how members of the general homeless population (who were called "transients") were perceived and treated by both paid staff and Life Recovery members. This observational niche also afforded a window on the patterned relations between paid staff and Life Recovery members. After I began recording redundant practices, interactions, and conversational themes, I left the Mission for RITI, which had just begun its winter shelter program.

My role as a RITI volunteer gave me the same advantages as my position at the Mission. In addition to providing insights into staff's perceptions as well as their recurrent organizational practices and relations with their homeless clients, my position allowed me close and personal interaction with unhoused "guests," as they were called. I soon learned that what amounted to an ethnographer's interactive boon was in fact intentionally built into RITI's "relational model;" whereas the Mission stringently separated both Life Recovery members and volunteers from the general homeless population, RITI encouraged such co-mingling. By the third week of my tenure, many "guests" knew me by name and would speak with me about various trials and tribulations. However, much of the dialogue was refracted through an asymmetrical relational prism which situated me, the volunteer, above them, the client, in the organizational pecking order. Notwithstanding my avowal of the sociologist's identity, my volunteer position technically gave me the power to enact an interactive chain of events that could end in their suspension. Consequently, many of these conversations were sanitized and borderline obsequious in nature. That all changed in early December when a dreadlocked African-American man entered the RITI courtyard and embraced me with a bear hug.

I met Howard in the fall of 2004. Having just started my second year of graduate studies at Vanderbilt, I was in search of a topic for my Master's thesis. During my first year of graduate school I conducted an ethnographic analysis of Church Street Park, a small pocket park heavily populated by homeless Nashvillians located directly across the street from the public library, and decided to return there and see where things might lead me. On my first day back in the field, I met a Latina woman named Chi-Chi who invited me to follow her to a place she called "the living room." She led me east down Church Street and into the Downtown Presbyterian Church. We made our way through a throng unhoused individuals who were finishing up their lunches in the fellowship hall/soup kitchen and took a right down a narrow hallway which led to a closed wooden door. Chi-Chi turned the knob and led me into a small room in which nearly 30 disheveled men and women were seated in a circle. There were only two folding metal chairs left and, as luck would have it, they were not next to each other. When I took my seat, a black man extended his hand to welcome me, before saying, "My name is Howard. What's yours?"

I only saw Chi-Chi three or four more times after that (rumor had it that she had been found dead in a low-income motel). Howard and I, however, became "fast friends," as he liked to say. He was the homeless representative on the "leadership team" of the support group in which we met and served as my "key informant" when I decided to study the group and write my Master's thesis on it. By the summer of 2006, however, he and I lost touch. As I came to find out, he had been incarcerated for over a year on a domestic violence charge.

As he often did when he had the chance, he was staying with his girlfriend who lived in the James Roberson building at the corner of 7th Avenue and Church. It was

"check day," when government transfer payments are distributed, and the couple was "partying" on "Uncle Sam's dime." As he and Anne, his significant other, both explained it, Howard got excessively drunk on vodka and high on crack cocaine which launched him into an angry and abusive tirade. Convinced that Anne was "fucking around on him," he beat her to nearly an inch of her life. She managed to escape the apartment and call the police, who arrived promptly and arrested Howard. He spent the next 16 months behind bars. When he was released, he beelined for the Lafayette district and, after purchasing a bed ticket, made his way into RITI that cold December evening in 2007 when we reunited.

Howard was obviously no saint. He had a bad temper and a history of violent flare-ups. As a feminist man, when I learned about his history of violence against women several months after his release, I became plagued with the "guilty knowledge" that my key informant could become such a monster. Herein lay a brutal paradox of gaining intimate access to the lives of men who eke out an existence in a structurally imposed setting of human suffering – an ethnographic uncertainty principle of sorts: the closer you get, the further you want to get away. Should I cut my ties with him? I wondered. There is no easy solution to this paradox. Most of the men whose lives we will enter in the pages that follow have colorful presents and/or pasts. Many have been victims of abuse who, in turn, abuse those around them. The logic of inter- and intra-personal violence endemic in street life forces ethnographers of poverty to walk a tightrope between not sanitizing poor people's less-than-savory behavior and humanizing their daily trials and tribulations (Bourgois 1995, 2009; Duneier 2002; Fairbanks 2009; Wacquant 2002). I have done my best to suspend moral judgment regarding misogynist and racist behaviors

and discourse, drug sales and consumption, and other putatively "immoral" acts. But I must leave it to the reader to assess whether or not I have stayed atop the wire.

Howard also had a softer, benevolent side and was a street intellectual of sorts. He studiously analyzed the power dynamics inside the rescue mission, RITI, the day labor agencies, and, on occasion, would monitor the proceedings at night court for evidence of homeless people's harassment by local law enforcement (it was often his activist entertainment when he missed curfew at either RITI or the Mission). Moreover, his charismatic personality and epic street wisdom won him many friends and acquaintances in street society. With his sponsorship, I was able to gain the acceptance of nearly every unhoused man he introduced me to (which easily exceeds 100). After several weeks of participating in his daily rounds, I became known as "Howard's boy," which seemed to have several meanings, including: someone who asks questions, but is not a snitch; a white boy you shouldn't mess with if you don't want Howard to "jump your shit;" a college kid working on a project; and, often, a potential benefactor (or "mark," as the case may be) who might extend a "loan."

Several of the men Howard introduced me also became my informants. Men like Cleo, Rayshawn, Detroit, Philly, Darnell, and T.J. were often eager to "show me how it really is out here," and invited me to "hang out" with them as they conducted their daily "business." Shadowing these men and haunting their haunts provided me the opportunity to experience their "matrix of meanings" by participating in their system of organized activities (Wax 1989). I have observed and/or participated in routine neighborhood practices, including: waiting in line at the rescue mission for meal and bed tickets; eating dinner at the mission and attending its mandatory chapel service; sleeping in the mission

dormitory; accompanying informants when they obtain resources from RITI; hanging out with informants in "the alley" and RITI courtyard; negotiating the RITI bed queue; waiting in the day labor queue; and working day labor. On returning home each day from the field, I wrote field notes using well-established ethnographic techniques (Emerson 2001).

Importantly, throughout this project we will place these *practices* rather than the *people* who execute them at the center of our analysis. This analytic focus is justified by my empirical focus on *place* and my overarching theoretical goal of elucidating the social processes that produce and maintain the Lafayette district. The routine use of place, however, cannot be separated from its inhabitants' perceptions of the environment, because the daily rounds that makes survival possible are structured (steered) by inhabitants' strategic designs (schemas).

In order to make sense of the strategic yet routine social practices observable in Lafayette, it was also necessary to understand how they were shaped and bounded by the larger institutional context in which the district was embedded. Toward this end, I conducted 56 interviews with Lafayette habitués in order to reveal the contours of the other sites in the system of poverty management that impinge upon (and animate) the neighborhood, including prison, jail, public housing projects, and mental institutions. These interviews were also designed to tap men's life histories, daily routines, contacts with local authorities and welfare bureaucracies, mental maps, and self-understandings. The sessions, which lasted between 90 and 200 minutes, were conducted on street corners, at coffee shops, and private study rooms located in the downtown public library. I paid interviewees $10 a piece as compensation for telling me their stories.

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I also purposively sampled urban authorities and conducted interviews with: two different central precinct commanders, one lieutenant, and one sergeant; employees of the Nashville Downtown Partnership (the downtown Business Improvement District); the director of Metro Social Services; and the Homelessness Services Coordinator of Metro Social Services. Moreover, I attended and recorded numerous meetings held by the Urban Residents' Association, the Nashville Downtown Partnership, the Homelessness Commission, the "Quality of Life Committee", and the Homeless Power Project. I analyzed this interview data as well as my field notes in an iterative fashion, identifying salient themes in the process. I then coded these themes, drawing out both their nuanced content and interrelationships.

I was also convinced by Loic Wacquant's (2008) assertion that fully comprehending the processes that produce and maintain neighborhoods of relegation require placing their "state and fate…in the *diachronic sequence of historical transformations* of which they are the material expression and which never find their source and principle in the neighborhood under examination" (9). Thus, aside from establishing how the institutional context molded Lafayette's internal dynamics, it was equally important to account for the origin of its morphology and organizational ecology. Given the relative neglect of cities like Nashville in the Urban Studies literature, this goal required conducting extensive archival work and interviewing urban planners, historians working for the Metropolitan Historical Commission and Lafayette caretakers with relevant historical knowledge.

In short, taking a close look at Lafayette from these various methodological angles allowed me to understand the district's managerial role in the larger, more diffuse

system of poverty management as well as the underlying and related processes by which the district came into being and without which it cannot exist and persist. Indeed, Lafayette is an informative geographical prism of contemporary trends in: urban development; the organization of the (low-wage) labor market; techniques of poverty management; and homeless people's situated subsistence strategies. Viewed holistically, the district is a site rich in the mechanisms and processes of the *structuration of urban homelessness:* place-making and order-producing dynamics overlooked by previous studies of homelessness. The Urban Studies literature has been particularly inattentive to urban structuration processes in general and has tended to treat city organizations – the loci of such processes – as schematic caricatures rather than leading actors in the drama of urban life (McQuarrie and Marwell 2009). As we will see, this oversight is not insignificant for understanding the role of Lafayette in the contemporary management of homelessness.

Understanding Lafayette

Lafayette's morphology and organizational ecology differ considerably from the sites of poverty management heretofore theorized in the sociological literature. In the entrepreneurial era, physical space is more fragmented into subunits than during the managerial era – block by block, building by building – and socially diverse/incongruous subunits are increasingly physically proximate (see Abu-Lughod 1994; Pattillo 2006). These *social morphological conditions* – which Marcel Mauss (1950:8) defined as "the material substratum of societies, that is, the form they assume in settling across the land,

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the volume and density [and diversity] of their population, the manner in which it is distributed as well as the ensemble of things that serve as the basis for collective life" – have had profound effects on *social ecological conditions* – the organizational, temporal and spatial relations which serve as the foundation for homeless life.

Due to the twin assaults of urban renewal and center city gentrification, contemporary cities, for the most part, no longer host intact skid row neighborhoods outfitted with a diverse ecology of life-sustaining organizations, but instead host smaller interstitial neighborhoods containing only a handful of non-profit and/or state-run service facilities (the exceptions are Los Angeles and San Francisco) (Lee and Farrell 2005; Farrell 2005; Lee and Price-Spratlen 2004). Even though unhoused residents can meet many of their needs with these neighborhoods' organizational goods and services, the incomplete mix of resources in these districts as well as their interstitial location in contemporary, polyglot urban morphologies often compel residents to transcend neighborhood boundaries in pursuit of auxiliary resources, bringing their daily routines in contact with those of housed residents, business people, and tourists.

The "Revanchist" City

Current debates on the municipal management of homelessness focus on the conflict generated by housed and unhoused populations' intersecting routines but have little, if anything, to say about the organizations that agglomerate and create the ecological foundation of neighborhoods like Lafayette, which operate in the cracks and crevices of redeveloping urban cores. Much recent work, in fact, emphasizes the homeless population's spatial dispersion rather than concentration (Lee and Price-Spratlen 2004). Scholars working in this tradition rely on an interdictory ("revanchist")

paradigm rooted in extreme examples of state-imposed violence – most notably the reclamation of Tompkins Square Park from the unhoused by the NYPD S.W.A.T. team, backed with helicopter air support (Smith 1996) – and leave the impression that homeless people are given no quarter. In light of this framework, the homeless are incessantly prodded from one corner of the city to another by vengeful members of the community since, by virtue of their existence, unhoused individuals threaten speculative real estate investment, the imageability of the city, and/or the perceived "safety" and "order" of downtown streets (Sites 2003; Smith 1996; Vitale 2008; MacLeod 2002; Mitchell 2003).

In *The New Urban Frontier,* for instance, Neil Smith (1996) argues that capital moves about the built environment in a seesaw-like pattern of capital (dis)investment, privileging some sites over and against others (a.k.a. "uneven development"). Areas in the city with the largest "rent gap" between *actual* and *potential* property value, he posits, become prime targets for gentrification backed by "revanchist" (vengeful) reclamation measures taken by affluent "yuppies," corporate real estate interests, and the local government. With his notion of "primitive globalization," William Sites (2003) argues that rather than mechanically reinforcing the economic logic of property speculators, as Smith implies, the local government anticipates and accommodates the short-term interests of the business community, reinforcing its preferences which paradoxically renders city government both a facilitator and victim of global-economic investment strategies.

Taken together, these two highly influential variants on the revanchist paradigm offer a powerful means of conceptualizing property speculators and the local state as vital conduits in the circuitry of uneven development; in turn, they also provide a framework

for connecting state-led redevelopment activity to the transformation of poverty landscapes. After all, given a city government's stakes in the outcome of entrepreneurial redevelopment activity it makes sense for authorities to enact "ad hoc measures to spur short-term-oriented economic activities and uproot communities" in order to "remake the city for business elites, visitors, and affluent residents" (Sites 2003: 98). This proposition as well as Smith's "rent gap" thesis is foundational to my analysis of the Lafayette district's origins, but I also contend that these schemes need to be fanned out in order to include other relevant place-making actors and notions of "causality."

Indeed, this mode of analysis comes with several shortcomings that render it unable to grasp a neighborhood like Lafayette in its full complexity. First, because either the "rent gap" or the state's accommodating activity are the key "independent variables," other capital accumulation strategies are not examined[1] (c.f. Lloyd 2006). Moreover, identifying *one* key independent variable that, once launched, creates particular place outcomes may be elegant, but it is misguided. The social (re)production of place has no tidy teleology. Establishing causality involves "tracing how path-dependent sequences of action structures emerge together" (Molotch, Freudenburg, and Paulsen 2000: 795) and examining the "complex, contested ways in which neoliberal restructuring strategies interact with pre-existing uses of space, institutional configurations, and constellations of socio-political power" (Brenner and Theodore 2005: 14).

The Rolling Inertia of Place

Harvey Molotch and colleagues (2000) offer a conceptual corrective with their model of "place as rolling inertia," in which they theorize how urban structuration processes produce a place's durable distinctiveness. This model suggests that action is

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[1] The essence of this criticism is Lloyd's (2006).

enabled and/or constrained by a historically specific "mode of lash-up" (place-configuration), which is the result of prior path-dependent actions undertaken by various (collective) urban actors who drew on the enabling and constraining hand of the previous place-configuration. The virtue of this approach lay in its assumption of an urban place's ongoing dynamism as well as its focus on empirically and theoretically specifying the "connective tissues" among all the "variables" (forces) that factor into a given place's (re)production; however, its full analytic promise, in light of the Lafayette case, has not yet been fulfilled.

While this mode of analysis can account for how a particular mode of "lash-up" persists over time, the case of Lafayette invites the complementary but different question of how a mode of lash-up becomes disassembled, (selectively) recombines in a new place, and *then* persists. As Molotch and colleagues (2000) acknowledged: "We suspect, but urge closer study of how it happens, that decay of social infrastructure and economic base can facilitate…transformations as underpinnings of prior lash-ups wither away" (818). As I will show in chapters 2 and 3, the withered underpinnings of Dodge City Skid Row indeed facilitated its transformation. Even though the "rent gap" as well as the state's accommodating activity figure prominently in this transformation process, the sequence of events resulting in Dodge City's dissolution (and in Lafayette's morphological production) had no tidy teleology and cannot be reduced to one "independent variable;" rather, the process was path-dependent, driven by the interconnected, yet conflict-laden, place-making activity of several (collective) actors, including the homeless and their caretakers.

The Revanchist City, Redux

Perhaps because scholars working with the revanchist paradigm do not theorize

the geography of homelessness per se, their analyses also tend to preclude consideration

of other key authors whose activity becomes inscribed in districts like Lafayette –

namely, caretaking agencies and the homeless. Given their preoccupation with urban

authorities' punitive interdictions, it is peculiar that these scholars do not find it necessary

to elicit the perspectives of the subjects of these regulatory efforts. Their deterministic,

dystopic depictions of the homeless reduce them to "bellwethers" of urban justice,

citizenship, globalization, and/or gentrification (DeVerteuil, May, and von Mahs 2009).

Moreover, to the extent that caretaking organizations are mentioned, they are reified and

cast as derivative of class conflict and/or imperatives of capital accumulation created by

restructuring processes. Street outreach programs, to give just one example, are

conceived as ill-concealed attempts to legitimize campaigns designed to uproot homeless

people from the streets and sweep them into voluntary agencies in which they are

"warehoused" (MacLeod 2002; Mitchell 2003).

The Carceral City

Scholars emphasizing concentration rather than dispersion similarly reduce the

role of caretaking agencies to "palliatives" but rely on a carceral conception of a skid row

institution that contains and conceals the homeless in a hermetically sealed outdoor

prison (Davis 1990; Soja 2000; Stoner 2000). Mike Davis (1990) offers a highly

influential perspective on the impact of economic changes on the regulation of the

homeless poor. Using Los Angeles's skid row as his empirical base, Davis indicates that

the city's formal policy of "containment" – a legislative wall erected around this

epicenter of human misery – is an artifact of urban authorities' conscious and concerted

effort to intern survivors of a holocaust rooted in the very same political-economic processes responsible for its adjacent billion dollar skyline. This quasi-incarceration of homeless Angelinos, in Davis's scheme, is an instantiation of municipal policies designed to promote a "profit-driven formula" that secures a favorable downtown image and homogenous redevelopment districts while simultaneously encoding middle class residents' and consumers' "demand for spatial and social insulation" into repressive social control measures through the unprecedented merging of urban design, space policing, and architecture.

It makes sense that Los Angeles inspires Davis to theorize a carceral city outfitted with its very own skid row prison. Like New York, L.A. is an extreme case regarding the regulation of homelessness and its authorities have crafted an extreme spatial solution to solve the problems associated with this population. But it would be hazardous to treat L.A. (or New York) as indicative of a more general development in the management and geography of homelessness since there is good reason to believe these social and spatial dynamics are exceptional rather than prototypical. Whereas cities across the country (including Nashville) launched campaigns to redevelop their skid rows and red light districts in the 1980s (i.e., if they escaped the urban renewal bulldozers of the 1950s and 60s) (Lee and Price-Spratlen 2004), L.A. city officials determined that their skid row – situated in the shadows of downtown, global-corporate skyscrapers – provided a site of comparative advantage vis-à-vis the regulation of the volatility generated by downtown redevelopment. The result is an anomalous, cordoned-off skid row neighborhood that still hosts a diverse organizational ecology (Dear and Wolch 1987; DeVerteuil 2006; Goetz 1992).

Street-Level Shortcomings of the Revanchist and Carceral Cities

Like purveyors of the "revanchist city," proponents of Davis's "carceral city" employ "passive-verb political economy" (di Leonardo 1998) that ignores the agency of both the homeless and the organizational actors charged with their management. Moreover, because they portray homelessness almost exclusively in terms of hostile encounters between the unhoused and agents of social control and, to the degree that they are mentioned, treat caretaking agencies as derivative of restructuring processes, these models obscure the relatively autonomous ways in which caretakers mediate the relation between the neighborhoods in which they are located and larger political and economic systems/institutions by producing and arranging neighborhood conditions, social relations and identities that structure and organize urban districts like Lafayette (c.f. McQuarrie and Marwell 2009). It is myopic to paint caretaking agencies' as residual enterprises whose primary raison d'etre is to mop up and cushion the spatial impact of urban restructuring without having ever stepped foot inside them. The nature of caretakers' goods and services is an empirical question that, in order to answer, requires actually stepping inside their walls and observing how their social relations are constituted.

Urban Ethnographies of Homeless Life

A handful of ethnographers have produced instructive studies of individual homeless shelters. These works are mainly concerned with the distinctive types of social relations – ranging from self-imposed isolation to gay "marriages," strategic alliances with staff, cooperative or adversarial inter-group relations, and psychological distancing strategies – that emerge in response to particular shelter environments and which facilitate or impede residents' (psychological) survival (Armaline 2005; Dordick 1997;

Joniak 2005; Liebow 1993; Snow and Anderson 1993). While useful as far as this mode of analysis goes, because they do not take as analytical units the districts in which these shelters are located these ethnographies do not shed much light on the key organizational mechanisms that produce social relations which structure the built environment; nor do they theorize the mechanisms that produce these agencies' internal relations in the first place. They also focus on secular rather than religious institutions, overlooking the role of religious belief systems in creating and shaping shelter life. Consequently, these studies do not for the most illuminate how (faith-based) caretaker agencies fit into neighborhood life and its respective organizational ecology.

Given their discussion of how the ecological distribution of human service facilities shapes the "subculture of street life" – "a patterned set of behaviors, routines, and orientations that are adaptive to the predicament of homelessness" – Snow and Anderson (1993: 76) are the partial exception to this rule. However, their analysis does not explain how these facilities' internal dynamics produce, enable and constrain unhoused residents' routine activities; in their scheme, caretaker agencies amount to little more than bumpers in a pinball machine (with residents being the pinballs that ricochet between the bumpers). In short, ethnographies of homeless caretakers do little to advance our understanding of how caretakers' managerial (religious/moral) authority might generate client-staff relations that shape and bound homeless life both inside and outside their walls.

Ethnographers who have taken as their empirical objects the neighborhoods in which the homeless eke out survival provide insightful examinations of the micro-structures in which social relations and consciousness is embedded in an effort to reveal

the principles around which neighborhood involvement coalesce (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009; Duneier 1999; Venkatesh 2006). For example, writing on the survival activity of residents of Maquis Park – a ghetto community on Chicago's south side – Sudhir Venkatesh (2006) suggests that homeless "hustlers"' involvement in neighborhood affairs revolves around their participation in the larger underground economy. In this context of state abdication, hustlers have symbiotic rather than antagonistic relations with local merchants and police, and also work out mutually convenient arrangements with other community actors who have a vested interest in regulating the use of public space, including parks and recreation officials, sanitation workers, and block club captains. The resulting "structure of co-dependence" between street hustlers and these other parties, according to Venkatesh, weaves the homeless into the larger community by virtue of a two-way flow of information, goods, and services.

Mitchell Duneier (1999) offers a highly influential and nuanced perspective on the impact of Greenwich Village's written matter economy on the lives of unhoused vendors, providing a provocative account of how indigent African-American men (many of whom are active crack users) co-produce a "moral order" out of their seemingly atavistic, chaotic and tertiary existence. According to Duneier, the integrative and orderly relations generated by this gray market activity – in which labor is divided among book and magazine vendors who respectively occupy the top two tiers, and solicit aid from panhandlers, who act as third-tier "place holders," "table watchers," "movers," and "storage providers" for the vendors, and who occasionally "lay shit out" (sell scavenged or ostensibly stolen merchandise) – consists of "models of appropriate behavior guided by clear norms that can be imitated or taught" (Duneier 1999: 143). The reciprocal role

obligations which flow from and make up this stop-gap economic system, Duneier contends, manufacture makeshift solidarity[2] among the vendors that is expressed in their daily encouragement of one another to "lead better lives in accordance with standards of moral worth" which ultimately enhances the social order of Greenwich Village sidewalks (Duneier 2002: 1555).

Phillipe Bourgois and Jeff Schonberg (2009) offer an alternative to Duneier's moral order with their analysis of a perverse structure of co-dependence among homeless heroin addicts struggling for survival and dignity in Edgewater, a semi-derelict warehouse and shipyard district in San Francisco. Through sustained involvement with a network of self-proclaimed "righteous dopefiends," Bourgois and Schonberg found that homeless addicts' neighborhood involvement coalesced around the procurement and injection of heroin. This "community of addicted bodies," they argue, is glued together by a "moral economy of sharing." Because homeless addicts could not effectively sustain their habits on their own, they developed a web of mutual obligations which, aside from providing a collective solution to the physical and material exigency of getting the next "fix," established the boundaries of their community. Far from the irenic portrait of mutual solidarity and beneficence painted by Duneier, this moral economy of sharing was one in which "gifts often go hand in hand with rip-offs" (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009: 6).

Ethnographic Shortcomings

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[2] Duneier clearly applies the following Durkheimian postulate regarding the non-economic function of the division of labor (1997): "the economic services that…[the division of labor] can render are insignificant compared with the moral effect that it produces, and its true function is to create between two or more people a feeling of solidarity" (17).

Each of these community ethnographies agree that homeless life is not socially

entropic and attempt to explain the street-level mechanisms that create the social relations

which structure homeless individuals' neighborhood activity. Whereas Venkatesh

emphasizes the symbiotic community relations produced by the unhoused's integral role

in the black market, Duneier emphasizes the bonds of solidarity forged among vendors

(and to a limited extent between vendors and housed customers) by the gray market's

reciprocal role obligations. For their part, Bourgois and Schonberg underscore the web of

mutual obligations generated by addiction and the resulting moral economy of sharing.

All these competing studies overlap in their analysis of homeless habitats wherein power

and (moral) authority reside in a relatively autonomous homeless community's repeated

exchange of information, resources, friendship, and/or "mentoring" with one another.

They therefore understandably posit intra-group mechanisms to account for the routine

activities of street life. Yet, in doing so, they overlook the social formations most integral

to the lives of the largest number of homeless individuals: caretaker agencies[3]. What of

homeless habitats where (moral) authority resides in the agencies on which the homeless

depend for their survival? Community ethnographers' preoccupation with small-scale

homeless groups forged in the shadow of caretaker agencies leads them to paint

caretakers as backdrops in homeless lives mainly structured by street relations.

What ethnographies of caretaker agencies and homeless communities fail to

consider is how caretakers' managerial (moral) authority produce internal relations that

also impact homeless life in the larger urban environment. Insofar as the built

environment is structured through social relationships (Lefebvre 1993), I propose that

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[3] See The United States Conference of Mayors. 2008. "Hunger and Homelessness Survey: A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities."

caretaker agencies host mediating mechanisms which produce internal staff-client social

relations that also shape and bound the neighborhoods in which they are located as well

as contiguous locales. With this proposition I seek to offer a corrective to the

ethnographic literature as well as to the literature on revanchist and carceral cities by

moving caretakers out of the background and placing them into the center of the daily

drama revolving around the management of surplus populations. Doing so requires a

conceptual framework that can illuminate the root of client-staff relations and reveal how

such organizational relations produce order in ostensibly chaotic lives.

Moral Order vs. Moral Economy

The ethnographic literature reviewed above offers a handful of helpful, albeit not

completely satisfactory, concepts to capture how a homeless population's daily activity is

reproduced and rendered orderly through their relational webs. Two concepts in

particular currently have the most analytic purchase – the notions of "moral order"

(Duneier 1999) and "moral economy" (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009). In regards to the

Lafayette case, I found the notion of a "moral economy" more compelling than a "moral

order" because the latter elides power dynamics central to any social system charged with

the allocation of resources while the former places such dynamics at the forefront.

Importantly, bond-forming assistance is never disinterested but, instead, is imbued with

power, and, aside from being a means of such power, conventionally moral behavior is

contingent on the exigencies of the situation – a point lost on Duneier. Bourgois and

Schonberg's adaptation of E.P. Thompson's (1971) "moral economy of the poor,"

however, offers little more than an analytic springboard for conceptualizing the Lafayette

district's internal "mechanism of recurrent self-reproduction" (Shils 1981: 7).

Placing Lafayette caretakers in the center of the poverty management drama requires explaining entirely different principles around which neighborhood involvement recurrently coalesces (social [re-]production). "If social processes do not take place on the head of a pin," asserts Peter Jackson, "then we need to take spatial structure seriously, not least in the production" of culturally mediated social relations (Jackson 1989: xi). By combining Jackson's insight with that of William Sewell (2005), we can view socio-spatial structure as consisting of cultural principles that generate and pattern (produce and reproduce) social relations; it is a cultural phenomenon that derives from the character and distribution of resources. Locating and illuminating these cultural-structural principles in the Lafayette district requires analyzing the culturally mediated terms, conditions, means, and (desired) ends of caretakers' distribution of the scarce resources on which their homeless clients' lives depend. Herein lies the integral role of caretakers' managerial and moral authority in structuring the otherwise chaotic situations (social relations) of unhoused clients into routine processes that organize the neighborhood and larger urban environment (i.e., the urban structuration of homelessness). Because production becomes reproduction only under particular conditions of power (Marx 1976), it is necessary seek and explain the mechanism(s) that can account for the district's central structural properties – the local regime of power on which caretakers' moral authority is produced and maintained. I call this mechanism a "moral economy of care."

Moral Economies of Care

Following Marcel Mauss's (1990) insights into the ways in which the apparently disinterested gift-economy actually results from and expresses actors' interests, we can

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understand the Lafayette district as a "community of spiritual intercession" held together by a *moral economy of care.* The caretaker organizations which form the framework of homeless men's daily life and anchor their survival strategies are, for the most part, religious-based, non-profit establishments created and run by leaders of the local faith community. Most homeless men cannot survive without the goods and services provided by these organizations. They consequently line up each day at routine, specified times to avail themselves of scarce, life-sustaining resources. "Gifts" of food, shelter and clothing are the primary means caretakers use in their ongoing attempt to create the reciprocal bonds required for the construction of their envisioned spiritual communities; on the other side of the coin, it is through the goods and services dispensed by service providers that men support themselves, become incorporated into (spiritual) social relations, and play a part in the daily life of this "community."

Rather than treating caretaker agencies as "formal organizations" per se, we will view them as the brick-and-mortar crystallization of religious "cultural systems" which consist of symbols that formulate "conceptions of a general order of existence" that, in turn, motivate structured practical activity and invoke emotive responses (Geertz 1973: 89-90; Weber 1978). Religious systems consist of five general features integral to understanding faith-based caretakers: First, each system has *substantive beliefs* that make up its core doctrinal commitments; second, each system has a *logic* that relates one substantive belief in the system to others; third, a logic-based *perspective* which identifies how a respective religious group stands vis-à-vis other groups; fourth, behavioral *prescriptions and proscriptions* flow from the preceding features; and fifth, all of these features are mediated by a *technology* consisting of means and techniques employed to

actualize believers' valued objectives (Borhek and Curtis 1975). In light of these core

dimensions we can view faith-based caretakers as *moral-technologies* that put into play

certain assumptions and objectives regarding the urban poor vis-à-vis their respective

moral economies of care.

The *moral economy of care* is in fact an imposition of spiritual ends on the

material world. It is therefore also a system of cultural production: a transformation of

inanimate objects by a spiritual purpose. Each caretaking organization has its own

internal relations of distribution, exchange, and "production." Drawing from the

structuration theories of Pierre Bourdieu (1972, 1990), William Sewell (2005), and

Anthony Giddens (1984), we can view these internal relations as well as the

organizations in which they unfold as the media and outcome of cultural schemas

(logics). Caretakers' gift-giving consists of the daily distribution of scarce resources

along moral lines supported by religious schemas. In the process, staff's distributive

practices create an organizational device that institutes a reciprocal state of dependency

between them and their clients. Staff-client transactions – the ritualized gift exchange

between giver and receiver – work on and through homeless men to produce

organizationally contingent subjectivities and generate practices and preferences adjusted

to the regularities of the moral-economic system.

The Political Economy of Day Labor

One of these practices consists of entering the adjacent day labor agencies each

morning. Whereas caretakers' raison d'etre is rooted in their respective ethical

obligations to minister to the poor, hiring halls' reason for existence revolves around

selectively siphoning otherwise unemployed men into the low-end contingent labor market which consists of flexible, short-time, temporary employment. This type of work organization provides businesses an effective way to reduce the number of workers on their payrolls during low-demand business cycles and to trim down their wage and benefits costs, while simultaneously reducing administrative costs incurred in employee recruitment, hiring, and regulation (Smith 1997).

There exists a perverse symbiosis between caretakers' *moral-economic processes* and the *political-economic processes* reconciled on the ground inside these day labor agencies. The activities of Lafayette's caretakers provide benefits to these labor market intermediaries by concentrating large pools of down and out men and propping them up with supplemental sources of social reproduction (food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, health care) denied by hiring halls' (sub-)minimum wage and irregular "hiring" practices. Inside these agencies we also find an *auxiliary regime of power* that structures the social relations of unhoused men into recurring processes that order the neighborhood and extant milieu. The work-allocation system (job queue) is the concrete, street-level mechanism that translates this contingent employment arrangement into homeless men's lives and manufactures their experience of this wage relationship. The practices and preferences adjusted to the regularities of this organizational ensemble are not, however, entirely structured by local mechanisms; they are also reinforced from without by mechanisms which cannot, per se, be found in the district under observation.

The Organizational Ghetto

In his minor classic *The Ghetto* (1928: 284), Louis Wirth argued that Chicago's early 20th century Jewish ghetto "illustrates another phenomenon in local community life…which underlies also the segregation of vice areas…of bohemias and hobohemias in modern cities" – namely, these groups' desire to "preserve their peculiar cultural forms" in so-called "natural areas" which, in the broader urban organism, performed a three-fold function by simultaneously serving as an instrument of: accommodation, toleration, and social control. Wirth's torchbearers (implicitly) dispensed with his conceptualization of the ghetto as a "natural area" governed by a competitively cooperative biotic logic and, after the Second World War, contracted the concept to signify: "the compact and congested enclaves to which African Americans were forcibly relegated as they migrated into the industrial centers of the North" (Wacquant 2004: 1; see also Drake and Cayton 1945). Contemporary scholars have retained Wirth's insight that the ghetto simultaneously plays an accommodationist and regulatory role and have reached a rough consensus that it is "*produced institutionally,* within ecological or technical constraints, by social and political struggles over competing uses of space, resources, and people" (Wacquant 1995: 427). Landscapes of concentrated poverty, of course, are not all and everywhere the same.

In presenting the case of the Lafayette district, I argue that it belongs to a broader class of institutions for the management of marginal populations and that the ghetto concept is relevant for analyzing the segregated and decayed enclaves that house what Camilo Vergara (1995) calls "the complex poorhouses of the 21st century." The institutionalist conception of ghettoization is particularly useful in that it "emphasizes the underlying and interrelated social processes that produce and maintain" relegatory space,

sidestepping misguided attempts to approach the ghetto as an "unambiguously discrete category that describes a particular urban space" (Chaddha and Wilson 2008: 384). The concept's nearly exclusive application to African American neighborhoods characterized by concentrated poverty and high rates of joblessness, however, obscures important facets of ghettoization vis-à-vis the management of homelessness – namely, how the activities of dominant institutions including caretaker agencies, public bureaucracies and welfare offices, (mental) hospitals, urban development agencies and police patrols co-produce the interstitial enclaves that house today's homeless poor.

There is no reason why the ghetto concept has to be racialized and limited to segregated and impoverished African American communities provided it is qualified and preceded by an explanatory adjective (Gans 2008). In order to conceptualize Lafayette, I add the *organizational* adjective to the term *ghetto* because its propinquitous caretaker organizations mediate the distant and proximate dimensions of their environment: (a) by absorbing the human casualties churned out by contemporary trends in welfare delivery, deinstitutionalization, mass incarceration, and center city redevelopment, and (b) by producing the local mechanisms that structure the practical activity of these socially excluded individuals into routinized processes which, in turn, translate into the street-level social (re)production of this segregated enclave for the city's most marginal members. In essence, street-level ghettoization processes are specific instances of urban structuration and caretakers are the building blocks – indeed the foundation – of the district's spatial structure.

Outline of the Dissertation

The following chapters are broken into four parts that correspond to four key dimensions of the Lafayette district's social (re)production: urban morphology, internal organization (physiology), boundary maintenance, and external linkages/structural supports. Employing archival methods, chapters 2 and 3 trace Lafayette's morphological origins by analyzing the dissolution of Nashville's erstwhile skid row – characterized by a diverse organizational ecology of single room occupancy hotels, cheap restaurants and taverns, adult entertainment venues attracting female prostitution, blood plasma centers, day labor agencies, and multiple homeless shelters and human service agencies – and its replacement with the organizational ghetto: a different, less organizationally diverse, constellation of moral management, exploitative labor and street level improvisations. I show how this path-dependent redevelopment process pitted city government and historic preservationists against businesses, caretaker organizations, and individuals that benefited from the district's old order. In doing so, I lay the foundation for ethnographically analyzing the organizational ecology of a relegatory region embedded in a larger institutional context characterized by market-driven "entrepreneurial" redevelopment, retrenched welfare provision, and punitive policing.

Part II focuses on the district's organizational physiology (how it works). Chapters 4-8 focus on caretakers' moral economies of care wherein staff enact their ethical obligations to the poor through practices intended to create the reciprocal bonds required to construct religious "community" and intercede the redemptive power of God. In chapter 4, we will analyze the first-floor intake ritual in order to illuminate the material aspects of the Mission's moral economy of care. Chapter 5 provides a detailed analysis of

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the religious schemas that animate the Mission's organizational goals and ministerial

forms and practices, of which the intake ritual is a part. Chapter 6 rounds out the

ethnography of the Mission through an explication of how missionaries' schemas pattern

the social concourse between members of their Life Recovery and Transient ministries

with regard to members' respective practical and discursive activity. In Chapter 7, we

will explore RITI's moral economy of care. Specifically, we will analyze the organization

of the agency's queuing and bed allocation process and pay close attention to the

dimensions of staff's moral schemas as well as the instantiation of the resulting spiritual

blueprint in organizational practices in an effort to reveal how these practices (are

intended to) work on and through homeless clients. Chapter 8 builds on this comparative

view through an analysis of how homeless "guests" experience, negotiate, and understand

RITI's moral-economic relations.

In chapter 9, we will exit the district's caretaker agencies and examine the

practical and social relations embedded in area day labor agencies. We will analyze how

interactions between homeless workers and day labor dispatchers create an informal

system of workplace control in a seemingly chaotic employment arrangement. More

specifically, our examination will focus on how homeless day laborers comprehend and

negotiate dispatchers' allocation of jobs (i.e., the "job queue") and show how this

interactive process provides dispatchers with a hold on an otherwise transient workforce.

Part III shifts the focus to sites beyond the organizational ghetto's formal

boundaries and pays particular attention to the social dynamics of boundary maintenance.

In chapter 10, we will examine the daily rounds of Lafayette habitués and reveal how

they strategically use the constraining order of urban space to facilitate their material

and/or psychological survival. In the process, we will see that homeless social life is a (perversely) symbiotic phenomenon that requires the group to live by the policies and time-tables of the organizations which dispense the scarce resources they require for survival which, in turn, creates the rhythm of morning dispersion and evening concentration that produces the form and structure of the neighborhood. We will also explore how these daily dispersions intersect urban authorities' boundary-maintenance efforts. In doing so, we see how the social order of the street is predominantly organized by caretakers' moral economies which are the "blocks" on which this district's historically specific, action-guiding structure is built.

In Part IV, Chapter 11, we will examine the organizational ghetto's external linkages and structural supports. In particular, we will excavate homeless men's biographical trajectories into the Lafayette district and then unearth both the *structural level* constraints created by Nashville's affordable housing crisis and its atrophied public housing system and the *conjunctural level* constraints created by the *systemic service mismatch* between welfare delivery and eligible homeless clients. This chapter shows how historically specific, political-economic forces reinforce the organizational ghetto's physiology from without. In conjunction with the preceding chapters, it reveals the mechanisms that create and sustain the recurring activity (the micro situation) that takes place within Lafayette.

The concluding chapter ties these strands together by revisiting and further specifying the organizational ghetto and its physiology as well as by detailing the role it plays in the larger system of poverty management. In doing so, it details the manner in which caretakers' managerial authority interlocks with auxiliary mechanisms to structure

the otherwise chaotic situations of unhoused clients into routine processes that organize

the neighborhood and larger urban environment.

CHAPTER II

The Social Production of an Organizational Ghetto: Urban Entrepreneurialism and the Transformation of Nashville's Geography of Homelessness, Part I

In reality the bourgeoisie has only one method of solving the housing question after its fashion-that is to say, of solving it in such a way that the solution continually reproduces the question anew…The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely

shifted elsewhere! The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also.

-Friedrich Engels (1887)

By 1974, Lower Broadway merchants were pondering the street's future. The Grand Ole Opry, which anchored the district's consumption milieu since 1943, was slated to move to Nashville's rapidly expanding suburban fringe, adding to the mass business exodus out of the center city that had already been under way for the last twenty years. "We're going to be left in pretty bad shape[4]," remarked George Linebaugh, owner of the storied Linebaugh's restaurant. "[The Opry's move is] going to kill all the night life down here, and I don't think I'll have enough daytime trade. I might have to close up. I don't know. I'll just have to see what happens. If they leave the Opry House, though, I'd still get business[5]." WSM radio, owner of the Ryman Auditorium, was tentatively planning on tearing down country music's "mother church" and selectively incorporating its parts into the new Opryland complex. Though national public outcry from historic preservationists kept this plan from coming to fruition, Linebaugh's optimism in the Ryman's reprieve would prove unfounded.

Downtown Nashville began losing retailers to the suburbs in the 1950s when Interstates 24, 40, and 65 tied a knot around the center city, providing a multi-directional connection to peripheral locations with lower taxes (Doyle 1985). "Until businesses began migrating to the suburbs in the late 1950s," observed the owner of Mayfair Furniture Co, "all the major business facilities were here, or right near here. It was natural

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[4] Pugh, John. 1974. "The Future of Lower Broad." *Nashville!* February.
[5] Ibid.

for shoppers to be drawn to this location—it was the only place to do business[6]." Elliot's

store was the next-to-last vestige of a furniture district, born at the turn of the 20th

century, which stretched west from the Cumberland River over to the 500 block of Lower

Broad. The steep hillside separating Lower Broad from Church Street, the central

business district's southern border until the 1980s, isolated the district from the hub of

retail activity and drove property values lower than comparable real estate located to the

north (Doyle 1985). Furniture retailers, who also required a large amount of space, took

advantage of the cheap real estate and built much of the street in their own image.

On the eve of the Opry's extrication, however, female prostitutes and adult

bookstores started reshaping the district with a new mould. "I feel sorry for anyone who

has to use these girls' services[7]," lamented one Broadway merchant. "They look like they

haven't bathed in six months," complained another, "they're the filthiest trash

imaginable. I've always had good clientele and I'm not going to subject them to this

element[8]." The licentious world that was colonizing the district did not stop in the street,

but extended into the adult theaters, X-rated bookstores, and massage parlors that started

moving in behind furniture retailers in the late 1960s, squatting unselfconsciously

between the honky-tonks, western wear shops, souvenir stands, and pawn shops.

Rural country music fans, however, were exposed to more than a mushrooming

sex industry and John-hungry prostitutes who milled about in the shadows cast by the

street's gaudy neon signs. "The panhandler can instantly tell whether to play on a

person's sympathy, whether to frighten his victim, or whether to make a nuisance out of

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[6] Hilman, Randy. 1980. "Lower Broadway—Once Proud, It Now Draws the Rootless, Restless, Desperate." *The Tennessean.* February 1.
[7] Pugh, John. 1974. "The Future of Lower Broad." *Nashville!* February.
[8] Ibid.

himself[9]," theorized an indignant merchant. "They spring up out of the sidewalks on weekends because they know most Opry fans are from rural areas or small towns and have never been subjected to something like this[10]," complained another. "I try to tell my customers how to deal with them: the stories they tell, the angles they work, the ruses they use[11]," said Nancy Dee, owner of the Dee-man's Den honk-tonk. "Then I'll see my customers go right out onto the street and give them money. I guess country people are just soft touches[12]."

Nancy Dee's drinking establishment, ironically, was located at the foot of Merchant's Hotel, which was increasingly populated by the population most likely to employ the income-generating strategy she mildly disdained. Built on the "European Plan" in 1892, Merchant's offered industrial era travelers a 25 cent room, and an optional meal for the same price. In the 1920s, the edifice was incorporated into Al Capone's lucrative network of speakeasies and by the 1940s and 50s, its walls absorbed the chatter of tourists and country music luminaries such as Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Porter Waggoner, Little Jimmy Dickens, and Roy Acuf[13]. As the structure and its rooms began falling into disrepair in the 1960s, prostitutes began plying their trade next door to their transient neighbors. Meanwhile, Nancy Dee was downstairs serving cheap domestic beer and liquor-by-the-shot in her seedy, smoke-filled venue, churning her share of human refuse onto Lower Broad.

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[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Interview with current owner. 1/22/07.

Many of the downtown hotels that honeycombed Lower Broad had fallen into disrepair by the late 1960s, when center city disinvestment materialized most acutely in Nashville's built environment, and were converted into single room occupancy (SRO) hotels. By 1970, the center city had a stock of 1,680 SRO units (Wolch and Dear 1993), which provided inexpensive and relatively autonomous living quarters for Nashville's otherwise homeless population: the elderly poor, seasonally employed and casual laborers, the mentally ill, and the substance addicted (Lee 1989; Wiegand 1990). These inexpensive lodging accommodations were later complemented by what two Vanderbilt sociologists referred to as a "helping milieu":

Within six blocks of one another in the Lower Broadway area are located a Salvation Army living quarters, a blood plasma center, a rescue mission servicing both locals and transients, a private agency which contracts manual day labor, an aluminum can salvage recycling plant, and a street-front ministry. Together these institutions comprise a sort of 'helping milieu' which services an estimated 800 homeless men, women, and children according to local experts (Peterson and Wiegand 1985: 217).

The Nashville Rescue Mission, located half a block south of Lower Broad at the corner of 7th and Demonbreun, anchored the city's skid row milieu, which was indelibly wed to SRO life, the sex industry, and the rough and rowdy honky-tonks.

Figure 2.1
Lower Broadway, 1980
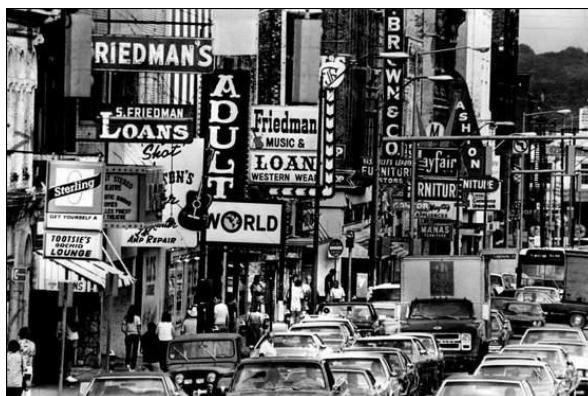
The district's decayed economic base and social infrastructure expressed the withering of its former country music underpinnings. Given that consumption is a place-making activity (Molotch et al. 2000; Zukin 1995), Lower Broad's consumer landscape—with the exception of some diehard country music tourists, aspiring musicians, and a handful of shop owners—repelled most "respectable" Nashvillians while it simultaneously attracted sex tourists, prostitutes, biker gangs, and the homeless looking for a break from the boredom of either their SRO hotel room, one of the shelters, or one of the adjacent camps on the Cumberland River. As a homeless service provider who has witnessed the district transform over the last two-and-a-half decades explained:

At that time in Nashville's history, you didn't go downtown after hours. *Especially* after hours. It was very seedy. You had a lot of dives…You also had a lot of your single room occupancy hotels…especially around James Robertson…The most notorious dives were down by the [former Greyhound] bus station and all down Lower Broad. They were within walking distance to Room in the Inn…The nicest one down there was Tootsies, but it's only still around because of its history. The population that went into those bars—those who were not afraid of elements of the night and those who had no place to be at night—that's where a lot of our [homeless] guys went to drink. Then you had the barkeeps who ended up being payees. That's where they receive [homeless men's] check and give you X amount of money. But instead of money, they'd give them what they "needed": booze.

The operation of "seedy" business venues, homeless service organizations, and the decrepit built environment recursively interacted, pulling a disreputable population into a geographical territory that served as its principal site of social reproduction and

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regulation, creating what Buddy Shupe and his contemporaries called "Dodge City-Skid Row": "You could see ten fights…anytime you walked up the street. They didn't police it" (qtd in Rouda 2004: 9). Simultaneously, this "carnival culture" cultivated a place identity that signaled the Lower Broadway area's newfound "publicly recognized character" (Paulsen 2004).

Once the hearth of country music, by the late 1970s this "street that music made" (Rouda 2004) fostered an urban imaginary radically divorced from its Grand Ole Opry heyday. A local newspaper reporter captured the essence of the cultural values (or lack thereof), identity, and locational activities that the urban elite associated with the milieu:

Lower Broadway. Today it conjures images fostered in recent years by newspaper headlines and television newscasts: Rampant prostitution, excessive and unchecked drug abuse, street brawls, muggings, bar fights, homicides, peep shows, perverts, drunks, deadbeats and weirdos…Some have called lower Broadway an untidy roost for derelicts, bums, and winos whose presence retards redevelopment and the subsequent growth of land values. Still others have tried to pray it away, legislate it away, or simply talk it away[14].

This nascent discourse of socio-economic decline presented the district in terms of disorder and expressed a disdain for the "dangerous classes" residing within its boundaries (Beauregard 2003; Brenner and Theodore 2002). Decades of comparative disinvestment in the center city resulting from suburbanization, most saliently expressed in the closed and decaying Ryman auditorium and the skid row orbiting around its dilapidated shell, cast city officials in a drama playing in theaters across the U.S.: a stagnant downtown tax base and an "obsolete" built environment. Post-war suburban development, which created an alternative geographical locus for the accumulation of capital (Smith 1996), led to an economic crisis inside Nashville's interstate loop (Doyle 1985) that translated into Lower Broad's new public identity as "Dodge-City Skid Row."

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[14] Hilman, Randy. 1980. "Lower Broadway—Once Proud, It Now Draws the Rootless, Restless, Desperate." *The Tennessean.*

Urban Entrepreneurialism and the Rolling Inertia of Place

The cultural, social, and economic practices taking place in the Lower Broadway area congealed into patterns of meaning and action that shaped and constrained the aspirations and revitalization efforts of Nashville's civic boosters since the capital revalorization of disinvested sites is heavily dependent on the reconstruction of a place character suitable for (speculative) investment. Moreover, the social and spatial practices of urban restructuring are inseparable from the discourses of decline and regeneration embossed with urban elites' cultural and aesthetic understandings of the orderly city (Murray 2008). However, the entrepreneurial discourses eventually mobilized by Nashville's civic boosters, along with their (aesthetic) (re)presentations of Nashville's center city as being in need of "revitalization" and reinvestment, were not monolithic. Rather, the disparate revitalization visions and activities of historic preservationists and a bicentennial committee comprised of some of the city's most influential players collided in the course of sheer historical chance. As we will soon see, by re-routing (re)development activity to the corner of Fifth Avenue and Broadway—which capitalized on the "affective kernel" (Lefebvre 1974) of the Ryman Auditorium, Tootsie's, and Ernest Tubb's Record Shop—their collision created the "big bang" responsible for downtown Nashville's rebirth.

The rebirth of the Lower Broadway area, of course, implies the death of Dodge City Skid Row. Contrary to the discourse of decline swirling around in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the district's stigmatized place identity and its decayed social and economic

infrastructure would prove to facilitate rather than retard its "revitalization." The area's heavily blighted infrastructure combined with its identity as the city's bastion of immorality, providing political and moral fodder for the local state's efforts to facilitate short-term, entrepreneurial investment[15]. In so doing, the local state became a vital conduit in the circuitry of uneven development: the key expression of capitalism's never-ending mobilization of places and regions as productive forces in the accumulation of capital (Brenner and Theodore 2002). Each bout of accumulation privileges some sites and places over and against others, creating a seesaw-like movement of capital (dis)investment through the built environment, characterized by: "the successive development, underdevelopment and redevelopment of areas as capital jumps from one place to another, then back again, both creating and destroying its own opportunities for development" (Smith 1996: 88).

The opportunity created by Nashville's center city disinvestment, however, was not simply created by a "rent gap" between Lower Broad property's *actual* and *potential* value (Smith 1996). This is one of the dynamic processes underlying redevelopment, but too much emphasis on this concept reduces the urban actors driving redevelopment activity to ersatz subjects who carry out the imperatives of capital accumulation like automatons. Moreover, the (re)production of urban place is an interactive accomplishment that cannot be reduced to a single process or logic since a given socio-spatial configuration exists: "in the world through the 'success' of connections among various forces and across material and ideational realms" (Molotch, Freudenburg, and Paulsen 2000: 793). The redevelopment of Lower Broad, in fact, required the reconfiguration of the chain of complementary relationships sustaining the skid row

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[15] This point is indebted to William Sites' (2003) concept of "primitive globalization."

milieu (Logan and Molotch 1987). The processes making for the district's (dis-)assembly neither had a predetermined sequence nor outcome. Rather, path-dependent sequential events reconfigured Nashville's center city spatial division of labor and simultaneously created a "new locational grid for the accumulation process" (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Molotch et al. 2000). Urbanization, after all, is driven by a dialectical unfolding of historically specific and spatially grounded social processes where differently situated actors pursue their varied goals and agendas within a given configuration of interconnected social and spatial practices (Harvey 1989).

Contrary to a prevalent assertion in the literature on homelessness (Ellickson 1996; Hopper 2003; Ropers 1988; Venkatesh 2006; Wright 1997), the case of downtown Nashville reveals that skid rows do not shrivel up and blow away in the wake of large scale redevelopment projects. Rather, this "mode of lash-up" became disassembled and (selectively) recombined in a new place. This chapter traces the political, economic, and cultural processes that interacted and channeled capital investment into Nashville's Lower Broadway area. It also examines the dialectical dance between the coercive internal pressures generated by the state agents responsible for implementing entrepreneurial redevelopment initiatives and analyzes the countervailing actions of businesses, organizations, and individuals that benefited from the district's old social and spatial order.

My chief purpose here is to analyze how this dialectical process socially produced Nashville's contemporary "organizational ghetto" located in downtown's Lafayette district. The path-dependent events that selectively destroyed skid row's complementary chain of relationships sustaining homeless (and other "deviant") life culminated in the

spatial fragmentation and re-emergence of its key institutions in three residual areas—two in East Nashville and one south of Broadway (i.e., the Lafayette Neighborhood). Given the (re)agglomeration of the city's three primary emergency services within its borders, the Lafayette Neighborhood—located in the interstices of downtown Nashville's myriad redevelopment districts—is currently the central organizing principal of male homeless life. By analyzing its history and viewing it as an artifact of skid row's "rolling inertia," we can excavate the political, economic, and social forces that account for its "lash-up" (emergence) in one place rather than another and lay the foundation for understanding "the particular modes through which these lash-ups persist" (Molotch et al. 2000: 793). The story begins in an unlikely place: Nashville's bicentennial celebration.

The Century III Committee: Re-imagin(eer)ing the Future of Downtown Nashville

Richard Fulton succeeded Mayor Beverly Briley in 1975 after spending fourteen years in the U.S. Congress. The Washington insider's adroit understanding of Beltway politics would prove useful to city boosters who sought to push Nashville's downtown redevelopment forward in the face of the greatest national economic crisis since the Great Depression. Even in the austere economic environment of the Carter and Reagan regimes, Fulton's administration was continuously successful in drawing federal redevelopment funding into Tennessee's capital city. Driven by the spirit of the "New South," the Fulton regime embraced a definition of "good government" that emphasized "efficient, comprehensive, centralized power to advance the general welfare of the community,"

rather than the Briley administration's "tightfisted reaction against new bonds and taxes" (Doyle 1985: 180).

In preparation for Nashville's 1980 bicentennial, Fulton established an eleven-member Century III Steering Committee in October of 1977, chaired by *Tennessean* editor H. David Smith, the Metro Tourism Commission, and the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA). The committee's primary objective was to work with public relations consultants in order to cultivate an image for the city's 200th birthday celebration. "Celebrating the Past While Looking to the Future," the slogan the committee ultimately chose (Doyle 1985), reflected a future-oriented vision that would shape Nashville's urban redevelopment in the following decades perhaps more than even the most impassioned booster might have imagined. The Steering Committee's ambitious early plans included the restoration of Union Station, an important piece of Nashville's industrial era legacy which had fallen into a state of extreme disrepair; a Century III Riverfront Park, intended to "revitalize" prime real estate along the Cumberland River; and the Century III Center, a 132-acre convention center site in the Sulphur Dell area located to the north of Capitol Hill, replete with a 50,000-seat stadium, a 100,000-square-foot exhibition hall, a 17,000-seat arena, and adjacent parking structures, restaurants, and hotels (Doyle 1985).

Sulphur Dell seemed to be an ideal location for the Century III Center, given the city's ownership of 30 acres in what urban officials dubbed a "dead area" and its prospects for easy expansion[16]. Private developer Ted Welch, however, aggressively

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[16] Gibson, Frank. 1978. "$69 to $80 Million: Leaders Warm to Century III Stadium Plan." *The Tennessean.* October 13.

lobbied for an alternative site in the railroad Gulch adjacent to Union Station[17]. Welch planned to develop 55 acres in the low-lying area bounded by 10th and 11th Avenues, Charlotte Avenue and Gleaves Street into a project called "Union Square." If the city incorporated the convention center into his plans Welch speculated that the Hilton Hotel chain would commit to building a larger hotel than it initially planned. The Gulch site had the advantage of stimulating investment around one of Nashville's historical landmarks, but several members of the steering committee, including the mayor, argued that it provided no room for future expansion[18].

The Century III Center could not be built all at once given the projected $176 million price tag, which would have made it the most expensive redevelopment effort in Nashville's history[19]. Economic projections, however, estimated that a downtown convention center would generate $32.5 million in annual revenues, assuming that convention delegates spent $60 a day and their spouses spent $25[20]. The steering committee consequently deemed the construction of the convention center the vital first step in implementing its overall vision. "At this stage in our report we see that the convention center might rank as the facility that deserves the most immediate attention," noted the senior vice president of the Atlanta consulting firm commissioned by the steering committee[21].

This piecemeal implementation vision implied room needed for future expansion, which the Gulch's geography made difficult if not impossible. Mayor Fulton consequently argued against Welch's proposal and in favor of the Sulphur Dell location,

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[17] Vandeberg, Marsha. 1980. "Fulton Backs N. Nashville Center Site." *The Tennessean.* February 27.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

arguing that the city "cannot enter into an agreement that benefits a private developer at the expense of taxpayers of Nashville[22]." However, less than six months later, on August 13, 1980, Fulton began pushing for a site that seemed to spring out of thin air, and which contradicted his expansionary concerns: a tract of land at the corner of 5th Avenue and Broadway—directly across the street from the famed Ryman Auditorium[23].

Preserving Lower Broad

David Paine, an architectural historian working for the Metro Historical Commission, doubtfully had economic considerations on his mind when he decided to petition the U.S. Department of Interior to place Lower Broad on its National Register. The demolition in 1974 of a large swath of Victorian architecture located in Nashville's courthouse square—a consequence of the Deaderick Street Plan (an urban renewal project)—was likely still fresh in his mind as he penned the nomination form six years later. After all, his preservationist colleagues successfully placed Second Avenue on the National Register in 1972, affording its Victorian-era warehouses a modicum of protection (Doyle 1985). Lower Broad was the only remaining downtown street with an extensive stock of Victorian architecture and until 1974 it was also the heart and soul of country music. Paine's preservationist passion would set the street along a dramatically different trajectory.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was designed to offset the wholesale decimation of the built environment by urban renewal projects that took a meat

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[22] Vandeberg, Marsha. 1980. "Fulton Backs N. Nashville Center Site." *The Tennessean.* February 27
[23] No Author. 1987. "Convention Center to Open This Week after Rocky Debate." *The Tennessean.* January 25.

axe to buildings, "historic" and banal alike. By attaching expressions of sentiment to an area's historical associations, preservationists attempt to arrest the modernist impulse to "erase the past," constructing collective memory in the process (Barthel 1996). State-enabling legislation, however, does more than simply facilitate the political cause of these patrician, moral entrepreneurs; until 1986, it also facilitated the redirection of capital into districts placed on the National Register of Historic Places (c.f. Reichl 1997; Zukin 1989). Rather than "mending the social fabric" by removing symbolically salient sites from market pressures (Barthel 1989; Paulsen 2007), a district's historic designation can ironically sew the seeds of creative destruction.

The Public Buildings Cooperative Use Act of 1976, for instance, allowed for the private development of publicly owned buildings for private and public use, while the Tax Reform Act signed into law the same year allowed deductions for renovating certified historic structures and placed no stipulations on how the renovated building could be used. Section 2124 of the law also brought commercial properties into the mix by extending tax benefits. It encouraged the preservation of historic depreciable structures by virtue of its tax breaks, and attempted to discourage the destruction of historic buildings by reducing tax incentives for the demolition of historic structures and for new construction on sites of demolished historic structures. The 1978 Revenue Act took it up a notch by offering investment tax credits for restoring aging commercial buildings, while the 1980 Technical Corrections Act extended eligibility to businesses that leased renovated rehabilitated buildings (Zukin 1989).

Paine justified the Broadway District's historic importance by stressing both the internal merit of its buildings and the external merit of its commercial and musical

associations. The two remaining furniture stores in what was once Nashville's furniture district, H. Brown and Harley-Holt, were emphasized because they had not changed locations since 1902 and 1906, respectively. The Ryman Auditorium, which was approved for National Historic Landmark status several months earlier, anchored Paine's narrative on the street's indelible connection to country music. He gave more significance, however, to two key Opry-related businesses that survived the Opry's suburban relocation, but had since adapted to the street's ascendant skid row milieu.

"Ernest Tubb's Record," he wrote, "has since 1951 been the home of the Midnight Jamboree, a radio show originating live from the store after the last Saturday night show at the Opry house. The show…gave Elvis Presley and Opry super-star Loretta Lynn, among others, their first radio exposure[24]." Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, located across the alley from the Ryman's stage door, was noted for its popularity with "Opry performers and their admirers," and, "Despite the death of Mrs. [Tootsie] Bess in 1978 and the absence of the Opry around the corner, Tootsie's and the other Opry-oriented businesses continue to draw thousands of fans from across the nation and world[25]."

Paine was neither preoccupied nor concerned with the Merchants Hotel's function as a single room occupancy (SRO) hotel. He and his preservationist colleagues saw a diamond in the rough which simply required a lot of polishing. In order to justify the building's historic significance, Paine played up its architectural and aesthetic importance (along with the rest of the buildings on either side of Broadway from the 500 to the 200 block). "As a rule the buildings in the district are not in the best physical condition," he noted on the National Register application. "In spite of this negative side, the

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[24] Paine, George. 1980. "National Register of Historic Places—Nomination Form."
[25] Paine, George. 1980. "National Register of Historic Places—Nomination Form."

architectural character and scale of a turn-of-the-century commercial street remain and much of the visual damage is reversible." Paine frankly noted that the district boasted no "architectural masterpieces," but also pointed out that: "Among the nineteenth century commercial buildings, the Merchants Hotel…with its rich cornice and truncated turret[26]" was an architectural "stand out."

When recounting the building's historical association with the street, Paine preferred to play up its role in Nashville's early industrial era when Lower Broad was the center of furniture retail, hardware, and the feed and grain trades. "The Merchants Hotel, built in 1892, was there to accommodate the many business travelers in the area[27]," he wrote. "The Merchants Hotel is still in business," Paine adds before softly lamenting, "though now to a less substantial clientele[28]." The "less substantial clientele" to which Paine refers were otherwise homeless Nashvillians who eked out an existence in this refuge of last resort. Paine's euphemism for the homeless is likely more an artifact of preservationist ideology than thinly veiled contempt, given preservationists' preoccupation with protecting buildings rather than people (Elliott, Gotham, and Milligan 2004). Historic buildings, from their perspective, have an inherent "right" to exist in their "authentic" state (Milligan 2007)—even at the expense of subordinate groups who have few shelter alternatives, since their occupancy is seen as detracting from the structure's utopic, authentic condition.

Merchants Hotel residents, however, would not have to worry about finding alternative living arrangements just yet. A chance occurrence in downtown Nashville's redevelopment trajectory would first have to interact with the Fulton regime's conscious

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[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.

and deliberate use of urban entrepreneurial redevelopment mechanisms and the serendipitous actions of the Metro Historic Commission. But this is to get ahead of ourselves. For now it is enough to note that by July of 1980 the Metro Historic Commission was celebrating David Paine's successful justification of Lower Broad's historic significance. He had indeed persuaded the U.S. Department of Interior that: "The visual authenticity of the district over all is good, has great potential for improvement, and is unique in town[29]." The newly created "Broadway Historic District," however, was imbued with slightly different significance by urban elites with interests in downtown Nashville's redevelopment trajectory.

Placing the Convention Center

Lower Broadway, despite its seedy local reputation, possessed a number of virtues that lent it strategic value in Nashville's larger system of places (Fainstein 2001; Logan and Molotch 1987). Even in the wake of the Opry's relocation to the Donelson suburbs and the ascent of homeless services and the adult entertainment industry, the Lower Broad of the 1980s continued to attract tourists who sought to (re-)connect with the birthplace of country music by visiting the legendary Ryman Auditorium and music venues like Tootsie's and Ernest Tubb's. Movie director Michael Apted even filmed multiple scenes from *Coal Miner's Daughter* (Loretta Lynn's biography) in and around the three venues in 1980 (Though, Adult World's flashy neon sign is conspicuously absent in the footage of the 400-block).

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[29] Paine, George. 1980. "National Register of Historic Places—Nomination Form."

The district's placement on the National Register of Historic Places, which partially co-opted these icons of country music heritage, both imbued it with cultural value and was capable of stimulating gentrification by creating capital incentives for the adaptive re-use of the block's Victorian buildings (especially via Section 2124)[30]. By stimulating real estate investment with federal financial incentives, historic preservation helped create embryonic market conditions suitable to Lower Broad's redevelopment (Zukin 1989), while absolving the Fulton administration from direct capital investment in the "historic district." The low-rent, "blighted" area also bordered the central business district to the south, making it ripe for both Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) financing. It also had the potential to link two Century III Committee initiatives that were slowly coming to fruition: Riverfront Park, located on the bank of the Cumberland River between Broadway and Gay Street, and the convention center.

Richard Fulton Jr., son of the mayor and MDHA's director of urban development, saw these advantages of promoting a convention center site adjacent to the newly designated Broadway Historic District. Less than one month after the storied street was placed on the National Register, he and the mayor began lobbying for a site directly across 5th Avenue from the Ryman[31]. Their logic was simple. Since MDHA already owned the property it could simply donate it to the city. Moreover, the site—bounded by 5th and 7th Avenues, Commerce Street and Broadway—both bordered the central business

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[30] Buildings, like any other commodity, tend to depreciate over the course of their life cycle. Historic preservationists' "adaptive re-use" technique reverses an "historic" structure's value depletion by encouraging interior and exterior renovation in accordance with the U.S. Department of Interior's stringent guidelines.

[31] No Author. 1987. "Convention Center to Open This Week after Rocky Debate." *The Tennessean.* January 25.

district, allowing the city to pull it south, and sat next to the building which symbolically anchored the street to its country music past. The problem was that the Century III Committee was already leaning toward a site in the Gulch.

By January 22, 1981, the steering committee dropped the Sulphur Dell site from consideration. An 8:30 a.m. vote by the 11-member committee would decide among two Gulch sites—one on the north side of Broadway and another on its south side—and the Ryman site. Union Square Limited, a development coalition comprised of three prominent local businessmen, proposed both Gulch sites. The north Gulch site included plans for a two-story convention center sandwiched between Charlotte Avenue and Church Street along with a 750-room Hilton Hotel, both of which would be connected to Union Station by a pedestrian skyway designed to cross south over Broadway. The Union Station train depot was the nucleus of the south Gulch site. The committee was leaning toward the former, because, as one member put it, "There is a substantially better chance that a convention center can be financed there without placing a burden on hotel and motel users or other taxpayers[32]."

R.C. Mathews, however, was attempting to successfully steer a less developed proposal for a convention center at the Ryman site through the committee. A.W. Fields, executive vice president of corporate planning for the Mathews Company, issued a letter to the committee which claimed that the Ryman site would accelerate the company's plans for downtown redevelopment "by three or four years" in "the $60 million range[33]." This reassurance was important because the Union Square Limited plan was designed to stimulate investment around the convention center by building a conference hotel and

[32] Vandeberg, Marsha. 1981. "North Gulch Believed Convention Center Site Pick." *The Tennessean.* January 22.
[33] Ibid.

65

two nine-story office buildings. The property taxes generated would be used to retire the $39 million in bonds the city would sell to build the convention center via the generated property taxes. This tax increment financing (TIF) scheme created "a special taxing jurisdiction around an area targeted for redevelopment and earmark[ed] future property tax revenues to pay for the up-front costs of development" (Weber 2002: 187). However, the competing private developers would have to ensure that their construction could generate $2.6 million a year in property taxes, which required the developer to secure a letter of credit from a lending agency[34]. The city could then use the letter as security in order to issue the bonds. But preliminary site approval only required a plausible and persuasive promise that development associated with the convention center would generate the necessary annual tax return[35].

Union Square Limited's thorough redevelopment proposal proved more persuasive to the Century III Committee than did the Mathew Company's, luring the committee's approval away from the Ryman site by a vote of 6 to 4[36]. The acrimonious voting session left Mayor Fulton tasting sour grapes, stating defiantly that he would continue: "exercising my influence in making known publicly, I mean to the public and to the Metro Council my feelings [in favor of the Ryman site][37]." The Metro Planning Commission, presumably in an attempt to dissuade the city council from voting for the Gulch site, issued a report seven days later that echoed one they previously issued to the council, which stated: "While the alternative gulch site offers substantial advantages over the train shed site, it falls short of equaling the locational advantages of the Ryman

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[34] Clurman, Carol. 1981. "Financial Negotiations Begin on Gulch Convention Center Site." *The Tennessean.* January 23.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

site[38]." By June 10, 1981, however, the Gulch site passed the city council's third and final

reading by a vote of 27 to 6, with 4 councilmen abstaining[39]. Mayor Fulton, who had

previously threatened to veto the city council's Gulch vote ultimately decided not to

invoke his executive privilege[40].

By December of 1981, however, Union Square Limited's hard fought and

ambitious plans fell victim to the recessionary economic climate. "We thought we would

have no trouble getting a traditional real estate loan[41]," noted Ted Welch, lead developer.

"But, as you know, the credit market is changing drastically. The kind of loan we could

get was three points above the floating prime interest rate [15.5%] and that made the

project unfeasible[42]." Welch was locked into the promise he made to the city that his

hotel and office park development would generate $2.6 million in annual property taxes

and became hamstrung by the figure. "If someone is going to build a convention center

hotel, regardless of the location, I think the mayor is going to have to give them some

help," he observed. "The city would have to give some relief on property taxes and help

in securing a UDAG [Urban Development Action Grant][43]."

Nashville's Entrepreneurial Turn

The locational battle over the convention center among Nashville's urban elite

was a harbinger of the city's entrepreneurial turn. David Harvey (1989) outlines three key

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[38] Crowe, Adell. 1981. "Planning Panel Supports Ryman Site for Center." *The Tennessean.* January 29.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Crowe, Adell. 1981. "Fulton Hinting He Might Veto Gulch Location." *The Tennessean.* January 31.
[41] Crowe, Adell. 1981. "Welch Ends Bid for Gulch Site." *The Tennessean.* December 12.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

tenets that capture the shift from managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism: (1) *Public-private partnerships*, which combine a long-standing tradition of civic boosterism with the unique powers of local government, enabling the magnetization of external funding streams, direct investment, and new sources of employment; (2) *Speculative*, rather than "rational and coordinated" public-private investment, where the public sector assumes the risk and the private sector benefits, distinguishing entrepreneurial governance from an earlier tradition of civic boosterism where city government was relatively less risk-averse (e.g., urban renewal); and (3) The *political economy of place*, such as the construction of a new convention center or the "enhancement of conditions within a place" (e.g., labor market retraining initiatives) is stressed over the *political economy of territory*.

Nashville, like its U.S. counterparts, is anchored to the political-economic foundation of "municipal mercantilism," a finance system that compels the local government to maintain and/or enhance revenue by attracting investment that adds to real estate market value (Fainstein and Fainstein 1983; Logan and Molotch 1987). The Fulton regime depended on capital investment in both the local labor market and the built environment, and was ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the Music City economy. Given the increased geographical mobility and technology-induced volatility of goods production in the wake of the recessionary 1970s, an emphasis on tourism and the production of entertainment districts prove(d) to be seductive solutions for urban regimes seeking to sail out of the economic doldrums (Harvey 1989); even for Sunbelt cities like Nashville which began selectively absorbing industries fleeing the Rustbelt (e.g., Saturn). The consequent symbiotic (which is not to say conflict-free) relationship between the mayor's office, the city council, and the business community vis-à-vis the convention

center construction—resulting from the former's access to federal and local funds (and the policing powers to implement them) and the latter's ability to invest in a redevelopment plan provided the vision was commensurate with its short- and/or long-term accumulation strategies—was temporarily disrupted by the ensuing contention over the most profitable convention center site and developer Ted Welch's failure in the credit market.

Less than one month later, the growth machine began driving back toward Mayor Fulton's favored Lower Broadway site. Nine days into the new year of 1982, Chattanooga developer Franklin Haney proposed to build a 22-story, 714-room hotel on top of the city's convention center provided Nashville's urban officials chose the Ryman site[44]. The $68 million proposal included a $10 million Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) needed for the acquisition of approximately 20 land parcels on 5th and 6th Avenues that stood in the way of the convention center/retail complex[45]. By the time the proposal was approved one month later by the mayor, MDHA, and ultimately the city council, the UDAG figure climbed to $15 million[46]. In April, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved a figure $5.5 million below the requested amount[47]. The $9.5 million redevelopment grant, however, was the largest ever received in Tennessee history—perhaps a suitable milestone given that the three-phase, $161,871,000 project was the largest in Nashville's history[48].

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[44] No author. 1987. "Convention Center to Open this Week after Rocky Decade." *The Tennessean.* January 25.
[45] Crowe, Adell. 1982. "Metro Asks Grant to Build Center." *The Tennessean.* February 3.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Gibson, Frank and Adell Crow. 1982. "$9.750 Million from HUD: Convention Complex Grant Approved." *The Tennessean.* April 1.
[48] Ibid.

Redevelopment per se is not the objective of entrepreneurial federal policy. Rather, tools like UDAGs were designed to stimulate physical upgrading in order to promote economic growth (Fainstein and Fainstein 1983). The goal of entrepreneurial policy, in other words, is to *structure the marketplace* by facilitating the creation of a market environment conducive to enhancing tax revenue and its purported associated benefits. UDAGs, introduced in 1977, were the template for urban entrepreneurialism. Despite their eventual dissolution by the Reagan administration, they set a policy precedent by forcing urban administrations to increase their initiatives designed to promote speculative private-sector involvement in urban redevelopment, and required them to secure private-sector commitment to a project before applying for federal aid (Fainstein 2001).

Even before the Reagan administration's re-embrace of neoclassical economic principles and its advance of a neoliberal urban policy orientation was publicly announced, it seems Nashville's urban elite had already received the message. *The President's National Urban Policy Report*, issued on July 8, 1982, translated the administration's emphasis on self-sufficiency, autonomy, and individual responsibility into urban policy by instructing city officials to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit and compete with other cities for enhanced (or renewed) economic prosperity in the (inter-)national market (Judd and Ready 1986). "State and local governments," the report warned, "will find it is in their interests to concentrate on increasing their attractiveness to potential investors, residents, and visitors" (qtd. in Judd and Ready 1986: 215).

While federal-funded redevelopment programs such as urban renewal in most cases did more harm than good to disadvantaged groups (at least to those in the path of

the bulldozers), they were at least designed to add to the municipal tax base in order to

support service provision required by structurally disadvantaged groups (Fainstein and

Fainstein 1983). Entrepreneurial redevelopment mechanisms (i.e., tax abatements, lease

financing, and TIF), to the contrary, were entirely divorced from the notion of social

service provision, since:

The evidence clearly indicates that many of the goals of American society can best be realized by developing a system of incentives for private firms to do those social jobs which business can perform better and more economically than other institutions. Indeed, the entrepreneurial thrust of business…may well be indispensable in achieving a permanent solution to urban and other socioeconomic problems that have badly overtaxed the capacities of public agencies.[49]

Rather than directing tax revenues to the coffer as was done under "spatial

Keynesianism" (Brenner and Theodore 2002), entrepreneurial city governments began

channeling them toward specific redevelopment projects with the help of state legislation

(Fainstein and Fainstein 1983).

The Capitol Mall Redevelopment Plan

In order to materialize the convention center project, the Fulton administration

crafted a redevelopment plan for the Ryman site that both capitalized on a pre-existing

development plan and discursively rendered the project area commensurate with UDAG

criteria. The "Capitol Mall Redevelopment Plan," an addendum to the awkwardly titled

"Capitol Boulevard Extension Bicentennial Park and Housing Development Plan," pulled

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[49] Committee for Economic Development. 1982. *Public Private Partnership: An Opportunity for Urban Communities.* Committee for Economic Development. New York. (Qtd. in Judd and Ready 1986: 215)

the property strategically located across the street from the Ryman Auditorium (a historic landmark) into the central business district and under MDHA's jurisdiction. Under Tennessee state law, a redevelopment plan grants a local housing authority the power to utilize a set TIF amount and commission/implement criteria for design review of a redevelopment area, along with the ability to:

[C]arry out any undertaking hereinafter called a "redevelopment project" and to that end may: (1) Acquire blighted areas; (2) Acquire other real property for the purpose of removing, preventing, or reducing blight, blighting factors, or the causes of blight; (3) Acquire real property where the condition of the title, the diverse ownership of the real property to be assembled, the street or lot layouts, or other conditions, prevent a proper development of the property and where the acquisition of the area by the authority is necessary to carry out a redevelopment plan…(TN Code Annotated 13-20-202).

Given the land parcels' shoddy state of repair due to several decades of center city disinvestment, the property in the project area was strategically stigmatized (Weber 2002) in accordance with UDAG criteria—which mandated that a project be located in a pocket of poverty—and state law, which stipulated that:

"Blighted areas" are areas, including slum areas, with buildings or improvements that, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, deleterious land use, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community. *"Welfare of the community" does not include solely a loss of property value to surrounding properties, nor does it include the need for increased tax revenues...* (TN Code Annotated 13-20-201 (a), emphasis added).

The highlighted clause in the state-enabling legislation exhibited above expresses a fundamental contradiction in the redevelopment plan, in light of the imperatives of entrepreneurial urbanism.

Since TIF depends on the increment (i.e., difference) between property taxes at the time of blight designation and the project's completion, the "welfare of the community" is inseparable from the protection of property values and "increased tax revenues." Nashville's boosters and investors had a vested interest in targeting an area of the city with the widest "rent gap": Real estate is ripest for TIF when the value curve has

bottomed out, and speculative interest in investment in the area exists (Smith 1996; Weber 2002). Only city officials and real estate speculators have the local knowledge required to get in on the ground floor, and only the former have the ability to secure the speculative vision by force (Weber 2002). Thus, contrary to the *laissez faire* fiction embedded in entrepreneurial ideology, local state power over the redevelopment process is ironically intensified and extended (Harvey 2000). Since the local state takes more of a risk than its private partners, it takes an active role by attempting to create a "rational landscape" by virtue of a spatial framework it backs with political legitimacy and coercion in order to facilitate orderly capital accumulation (Fainstein 2001; Harvey 1985, 2000).

The stair-step shaped project area descending from the corner of 8th and Commerce to the corner of 5th and Broadway (see Figure 2.2) placed two of Nashville's SROs—the Sam Davis Hotel (Tract 64A, corner of 7th and Commerce) and the Bell Hotel—along with the Greyhound bus station (Tract 73A) and several retail stores located in derelict properties in MDHA's crosshairs. Historical chance and political-economic opportunism channeled entrepreneurial urbanism away from the Gulch and into a strategically placed corner of Dodge City Skid Row, giving the local housing authority the power to: "provide for the redevelopment of the Project Area, wherein deleterious land uses, dilapidation, obsolescence, the present subdivision and ownership of land and a combination of these factors *precludes the orderly assemblage and necessary changes in the use of land*" (Ordinance 82-845: 4; emphasis added).

Figure 2.2
Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project Area

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PROPOSED LAND USE MAP

COMMERCIAL/RETAIL
COMMERCIAL/RETAIL ON TOP OF GARAGE PARKING
PEDESTRIAN WAY ON TOP OF GARAGE PARKING
CONVENTION CENTER
HOTEL ON TOP OF CONVENTION CENTER
AIR RIGHTS DEVELOPMENT OVER PUBLIC STREETS
SURFACE PARKING

CAPITOL MALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, AN AMENDMENT
TO THE CAPITOL BOULEVARD EXTENSION, BICENTENNIAL
PARK AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

R.P. MAP
NO. 2

METROPOLITAN
DEVELOPMENT
AND
HOUSING
AGENCY

FEBRUARY 9, 1982

Ironically, seven months before Mayor Fulton signed the redevelopment plan into law, a group of investors announced their plans to spend $1-2 million to renovate the Sam Davis in order to create a moderately priced alternative to higher end hotels like the Hyatt-Regency, which was located in the financial district to the northeast. The investors, of course, could not have anticipated the convention center site's sudden shift from the Gulch to Lower Broad. Eviction of the hotel's 200+ tenants, comprised of transients and elderly pensioners, it seems was already immanent. Only now, their fate would be determined by the erratic, piecemeal progression inherent in urban redevelopment. After all, the hotel and its occupants were clearly inconsistent with the plan's entrepreneurial vision, which was designed:

g. To make possible public and private development integrated with and important to the development and successful operation of a convention center, including a convention hotel, retail, public spaces, parking, and linkages between facilities.
h. To promote additional private investment in and around the Project Are over a long-term period.
i. To promote Downtown Nashville as a strong center for retail, hotel, and office development.

Lower Broad's skid row institutions and inhabitants—i.e., street people, prostitutes, adult entertainment industry, homeless service providers and seedy honky-tonks—would all become subordinate to the logic of entrepreneurial urbanism due to their dramatic inconsistency with the redevelopment plan's utopic spatial framework and its on-the-ground social and economic imperatives. Anachronistic actors, organizations, built forms, and institutional frameworks impeding the creation of an urban landscape conducive to market-driven redevelopment cannot, of course, be dis-embedded over night. The (re)production of urban space is a path-dependent and piecemeal process, wherein the concerted actions of elite actors that alter a landscape's social and material foundation shifts its corresponding action-shaping significations, creating cumulating path dependencies that enable and constrain their next move (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Molotch et al 2000; Murray 2008).

The "Complex Choreography" of Urban Revitalization

The Capitol Mall Redevelopment Plan—which combined cultural, class, and growth politics—catalyzed a dialectical dance between the coercive internal pressures generated by the state agents responsible for implementing it, and the countervailing actions of businesses, organizations, and individuals that benefited from the district's old

order. The Fulton administration began taking measures to clear the ground for speculative redevelopment immediately after the redevelopment plan became law. The district's adult entertainment industry, prostitutes, rowdy honky-tonks, local homeless population, and the latter's shelter options (i.e., SROs, shelters, river camps, and the sidewalks) impeded the commercial "revitalization" logic and vision succinctly outlined by MDHA director of urban development Richard Fulton Jr.:

The development will in essence tie Lower Broadway to the Riverfront Park area. It is another element in our continuing efforts to revitalize the Broadway district which has been a priority with members of the Metropolitan Council and Mayor Richard Fulton…We think in the near future we will revitalize Lower Broad to a viable business district. For several years now, they have tried to police the area with a fair amount of success. It takes more than a policing effort[50].

Between January 1st and May 20 of 1983, police indeed made 45 prostitution arrests on Lower Broad and investigated 39 robberies, 28 burglaries, 1 rape, and 1 rape attempt[51].

The historic record, however, belies Fulton Jr.'s claim that the Metro police department prioritized Lower Broad in its downtown policing efforts. The street's merchants, in fact, harnessed their collective energy and created an indigenous social control effort in response to the vacuum created by state abdication. "If Metro won't protect us, we'll protect ourselves[52]," noted the manager of Live Girl, a Broadway peep show. Robert Moore, who operated several honky-tonks over the years, acted as one of the street's "patrolmen." "They [Metro Government] told us to stop it," he observed. "We've been talking to them for a year asking for support and don't get any response. Now, when we pay for our own patrolmen, they tell us stop it. We can't win[53]." Police Chief Joe Casey, however, had a different interpretation of the street's informal social

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[50] Taylor, John. 1982. "Lower Broad to Revitalize." *The Tennessean.* March 3.
[51] Taylor, John. 1983. "Meanest Streets in Metro: Violence Rules 'Hot Spots'" *Banner.* June 28.
[52] Zabriskie, Mark. 1984. "Metro's Wishes Ignored: Downtown Retailers Hire Patrolmen. *The Banner.* June 1.
[53] Ibid.

control: "Most of these businesses have employees they call security. I call them thugs or enforcers. They keep the customers and employees in line[54]." Buddy Sharp, owner of the appropriately titled Bowery Restaurant (previously Linebaugh's), perhaps echoed the collective sentiment of Broadway merchants who profited from a social order that impeded the Fulton regime's redevelopment plan: "Fulton wants to close our businesses down. They figure they'll limit our police protection, and something bad will happen. Then they'll have a good excuse to close our street down[55]."

Sharp's conspiracy theory was partially accurate. In the spring of 1983, the Fulton regime unleashed a series of backdoor assaults on area merchants and the local homeless population through an unlikely collective vehicle. The Broadway Revitalization Committee (BRC)—comprised of a local merchants' association, MDHA, and the Metro Historic Commission (MHC)—was created 1982 by MDHA and charged with the task of: "upgrading the general appearance" of the Lower Broadway area; encouraging "favorable" commercial and residential development; assisting in planning, building and assessing the effect on the area of the convention center and Riverfront Park; creating a public awareness campaign in order to increase awareness of the "area's history" and other "positive" aspects; encouraging and facilitating the delivery of services to the area by local, state and federal governments; coordinating with other groups interested in "revitalizing" the central business district; and promoting and fostering good relationships among these groups[56]. Project director Mary Anne Eanes and Chairman

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[54] Casey, Joe. "Adult Entertainment Activities: Special Problems Created for Law Enforcement and the Community." April 16, 1984. Report prepared for Mayor Richard Fulton.
[55] Zabriskie, Mark. 1984. "Metro's Wishes Ignored: Downtown Retailers Hire Patrolmen. *The Banner.* June 1.

[56] Crow, Adell. 1982. "Broadway Buildings Choose to Get 'Face-Lifts'" *The Tennessean.* October 18

George Paine were both historic preservationists by trade. The duo, which had maintained a vested interest in the district since Paine successfully placed it on the National Register, would play a far different role in the street's future given the BRC's incorporation into the MDHA office of urban development. Their preservationist aspirations for the historic district shrouded the committee's reclamation efforts in legitimacy.

MDHA started directing capital into the district in the fall of 1982 with its allocation of $48,000 in interest free façade loans to owners of "historic" properties and by the summer of 1983. By the spring of 1984, the city began reconstructing the "blighted" area's sidewalks and landscaping with its $225,000 Economic Development Agency grant. The new sidewalks and landscaping would stretch from 1st to 5th Avenue, connecting the convention center to Riverfront Park, which the Army Corps of Engineers was in the process of expanding to the north in order to connect it with the Fort Nashborough replica[57]. The beautification of these public spaces was implemented in an attempt to catalyze private property redevelopment (Mitchell 2006).

The BRC clearly determined that more than federal grant allocation was necessary to stimulate a "revival of interest" in the district's development. Shortly after the sidewalk and landscaping improvements began, the Metro Public Health Department and the Metro Codes Department launched simultaneous surprise inspections of Lower Broad's adult entertainment businesses. Six of the businesses—Private Screenings (103 3rd Ave N), Swinger's World (400 Broadway), Adult World Amusement Arcade (412 Broadway), El West Stereo Theater (418 Broadway), Mini Adult Cinema (218 Broadway) and The Wheel (421 Broadway)—were cited for failure to provide running

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[57] Hudgins, Bill. 1983. "City Seeks Grant for Revitalization." *The Banner.* June 30

water and soap, hand towels or toilet paper in the restrooms. Jim Osteen, director of

Metro Codes, claimed: "It was kind of an impromptu inspection. I just wanted to make

sure our department was doing our part. We just routinely went down there after we saw

in the paper that the Health Department had done their inspection[58]." Mayor Fulton, when

probed by the press, disavowed any suggestion that the surprise inspections were part of

an anti-pornography campaign.

Mary Anne Eanes, however, admitted a few days later that the BRC was indeed

responsible for the surprise inspections. "I met with the mayor the other day and he is

content to have me do what I am doing[59]," she stated. Upon learning that Swinger's

World was attempting to expand its operation from 400 Broadway to the adjoining 402

Broadway building, she requested the Health and Codes departments to inspect the adult

entertainment businesses for health and building standards violations. After the BRC

voted to deny Swinger's World's expansion, Eanes met with Health Department attorney

Bob Eadie. "I told him of the possible expansion plans and asked the Health Department

to inspect for violations," said Eanes. "I'm not trying to harass them, but I want them to

know that I am keeping an eye on them[60]."

Meanwhile, Police Chief Joe Casey had his department keeping its collective eye

on the sex industry and launched an undercover pornography investigation. In a report he

forwarded to Mayor Fulton two months later, he noted that:

[T]he sanitary conditions inside the 'bookstores' and peep shows…are dirty, filthy and nasty. My officers tell me that the floors are literally coated with semen—that their feet stick to the floor as they walk through the hallways and viewing booths. These booths are havens for perverts and degenerates that frequent these businesses. The activities that take place behind these doors include masturbation, oral sex, anal sex or any variety thereof…The girl behind the glass [in peep

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[58] McKnight, Gail. 1984. "Lower Broadway Adult Shops Dealt Double Punch." The *Banner.* February 4.

[59] Hilman, Randy. 1984. "Broadway Checks Asked by Revitalization Panel." *The Tennessean.* February 6.

[60] Ibid

shows]…pays $60 to $100 a night for the privilege of using the booth…There is a strategically placed opening in each of the glass partitions. Through this opening she is able to earn enough money to pay for use of the booth and make $100 to $200 for herself[61].

Casey's frank and explicit report goes on to explain to the mayor and city council that:

Obviously the patrons of these establishments create a ready marketplace for the street prostitute They often use the customer's car…A doorway or alley may be used. On occasion they will go into a peep show and use one of the booths. This creates problems with the management because this means lost revenue for his girls. The prostitute is threatened or dealt with violently. This in turn may cause her pimp to retaliate with a similar violent act[62].

The remainder of the Police Chief's observations pertained to the industry's purported

disorderly impact on the downtown milieu:

[T]he criminal activity and unsafe environment generated inside spills out into the street and into the surrounding area. There are shootings and other violent acts occurring inside these businesses and in their parking lot…Competitions among the businesses creates gang wars. I remind you of the car load of dynamite found at the Classic Cat on Broadway. Or the explosion at the Jolar Bookstore further down Broadway…Many of the girls dancing or entertaining in these places are associated with the various motorcycle gangs…Gang members have found that by vandalizing the cars and threatening the patrons of other similar businesses, they can channel the customers back to the business where their girls work[63].

Casey's dystopic depiction of Lower Broad as a human cesspool animated the district's

latent redevelopment tensions by shrouding the BRC's reclamation campaign in another

layer of legitimacy. This hillbilly noir image, here in its nascent stages, fortified and

propelled the Fulton regime's development-induced reclamation efforts forward by

layering it in a discourse of moral turpitude.

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[61] Casey, Joe. "Adult Entertainment Activities: Special Problems Created for Law Enforcement and the Community." Report prepared for Mayor Richard Fulton. April 16, 1984.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

CHAPTER III

The Social Production of an Organizational Ghetto, Part II

Architecture is the will of an epoch translated into space.
--Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

The "Complex Choreography" of Urban Revitalization Redux

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Demolishing the SROs

L.M. Hecht Jr. and Miriam Grief never received their form letter from Herbert L. Harper, executive director of the Tennessee Historical Commission. The letter resulted from George Paine's preservationist effort, and would have informed them that their property at 401 and 403 Broadway was under review by the State Review Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Had they received the letter, which is dated July 26, 1979, they would have learned about provisions in the 1976 Tax Reform Act, Section 2124 in particular[64]. In light of an inspection by the Metro Health Department two years earlier, however, it is unlikely that the tax incentives would have been enough to make "rehabilitation" of their 19th Century structure feasible.

"Extensive and major expenditure items will be required to bring this severely dilapidated hotel into compliance with applicable codes," notes the health inspectors' report on Merchants Hotel and Restaurant[65]. "From the general appearance of the building, both inside and out, conditions from structural, safety, health, and aesthetic standards are far from acceptable." Among its laundry list of codes violations, the report details the structure's: "faulty and leaking plumbing;" its virtually inoperable sanitary facilities, including a sink with a drain that "merely ran into a plastic trash can which was periodically emptied as needed;" "weather and maintenance neglect damage;" "soiled linen which appeared to have been on beds for several days;" faulty electrical wiring; insect and rodent infestation; fire damage on the third floor; and "unacceptable" ventilation methods evidenced by: "The urine odor in one restroom [which] was so

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[64] Harper, Herbert L. 1979. Formal correspondence with L.M. Hecht Jr. and Miriam Grief. July 26.
[65] Hager, G. Brent and Jerry R. Rowland. "Merchants Hotel Inspection and Recommendations." Report prepared for the Director of the Metropolitan Health Department. July 13, 1977.

pungent one could hardly breathe." This is to say nothing of the restaurant located on the first floor which the inspectors gave a 55 sanitation rating.

Despite its dilapidated state, the business taking place inside the edifice was unfettered until 1984 when the Health Department saddled its restaurant proprietor with $30,000 in repairs and the landlord subsequently terminated the lease. A *Nashville Banner* reporter described the venue as one that: "served as a place for transients and street people to drink and talk about their problems." Paul Shumaker, the restaurant owner, noted: "Both the fire department and the health department said they didn't want the homeless to congregate here." The hotel, which was renamed The Resting Place, failed a fire code inspection in December of 1984 and by January 3 of the new year it was shut down and put up for sale[66]. The owner was ultimately forced to shut its doors and evict the tenants due to his inability to comply with the fire codes. Consequently, this five dollar-a-day, 26-room SRO was removed from the skid row hierarchy of shelter alternatives.

The Sam Davis, located in the footprint of the convention center site, had nearly ten times the shelter capacity of The Resting Place and was the last of the large SROs remaining. Gerald Nicely, MDHA executive director, took an unannounced tour of the Sam Davis in November of 1984 in order to inspect the structure his office would inevitably condemn. His tour uncovered, in his words, "some conditions which we thought warranted closer attention by city authorities. It included some things that looked like fire hazards[67]." Immediately after Nicely reported back, Mayor Fulton ordered Metro Health, Codes, and Fire departments to inspect the Sam Davis and by the end of the day,

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[66] Jarrard, David. 1985. "Merchants Hotel for Sale, Owner Says; Building Violates Fire Codes." *The Tennessean.* January 3.
[67] Lewis, Dwight. 1984. "Firefighter Watch Ordered for Hotel." *The Tennessean.* November 3.

on November 2, 1984, he ordered a 24-hour fire watch. "The condition of the Sam Davis makes these steps necessary," he informed the public. "It is rather easy to see how this condition came about since both the city and the owners of the Sam Davis have known for some months that the plans called for the city to purchase the hotel.[68]"

Metro Codes director James Osteen, who only nine months earlier had launched an assault on the adult entertainment industry at the behest of the BRC declared that the hotel constituted: "a fire hazard, public nuisance, and a serious hazard to the health and safety of occupants of surrounding properties by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, and deterioration[69]". Osteen's declaration forced the owner's hand by mandating him to either bring the building up to code or the building would need to be demolished. "The property is already under subject of condemnation by MDHA," said Nicely, "and it is almost certain that the owner will not undertake to make repairs[70]." Metro Codes inspector Jim Anglea's assessment, however, implies that the building's mere presence and clientele rather than its "hazardous" condition was the main obstruction: "Structurally, it is not in bad shape. The worse thing about it is age[71]." The Sam Davis, according to Anglea, "is just like so many old hotels—they cannot maintain the clientele to keep them going good[72]."

On November 13, MDHA filed suit in Circuit Court to condemn the structure. Gerald Nicely, MDHA executive director, cited the hotel's "hazardous conditions" as the reason for the condemnation suit. This move legitimated the forcible eviction of the

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[68] Author unknown. 1984. "Watch Put on Sam Davis Hotel." *The Nashville Banner.* November 3.
[69] Gordon, Tam. 1984. "Metro to File Suit to Condemn Sam Davis Hotel." *The Nashville Banner.* November 12.
[70] Gordon, Tam. 1984. "Metro to File Suit to Condemn Sam Davis Hotel." *The Nashville Banner.* November 12.
[71] Lewis, Dwight. 1984. "Firefighter Watch Ordered for Hotel." *The Tennessean.* November 3.
[72] Ibid.

hotel's 175 tenants. "These people are like family to me," said desk clerk Zoa Dearman the previous year, after learning of her hotel's immanent demise. "You have to listen to all of the heartaches and financial problems. I am going to miss them, and I worry about some of them, about what they are going to do[73]." Eight days before the hotel's demolition, the Sam Davis's owner had his attorney file a Circuit Court appeal requesting the city return the hotel or ensure that the city pay the structure's appraised rate of $2-$2.5 million, rather than the $1.5 million the city deemed "fair market value." The city, according to the lawyer, paid nearly three times for the nearby Bell Hotel (another SRO) what it offered for the Sam Davis. Hollingsworth's defeat etched the condemnation procedure in stone. On February 16, 1985 it was demolished to make way for a corner of the convention center parking lot across the street from what would become the Stouffer Nashville Hotel (currently the Renaissance).

Figure 3.1
Convention Center Construction, 1985

Figure 3.2
The Sam Davis Implodes, 1985

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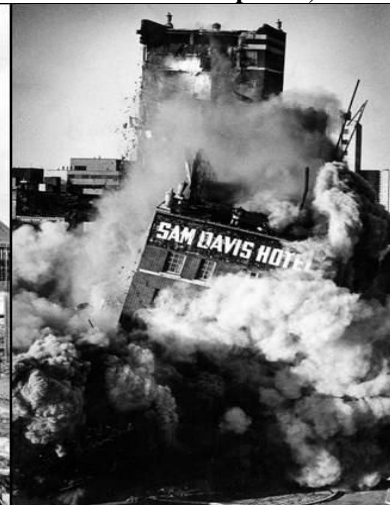
[73] Gregory, Ed. 1983. "Moving: Residents of Doomed Hotel Waiting, Wondering." *The Tennessean.* August 14.

In accordance with UDAG stipulations, MDHA offered displaced residents relocation assistance. According to Gerald Nicely, 40% of Sam Davis residents were placed in public housing, while the remaining 60% was placed in private housing[74].

The problem for the local homeless population and the homeless service providers, however, was that the Sam Davis's demolition permanently removed 200 units from the skid row shelter system. Even though its current residents were relocated, the structure's demolition collapsed the three-tiered hierarchy of shelter alternatives (Hoch and Slayton 1989), making the street and the unprepared shelter system the only options for struggling Nashvillians in dire need of inexpensive lodging. The director of the Nashville Rescue Mission had a pretty clear idea about the implications of the Fulton regime's destructive actions. "The Sam Davis Hotel is not the kind of place where you or I may want to live," said Carl Resener. "But for these people it is their home of last resort. A place like the Sam Davis is unique, where somebody can make a life for himself on an income of $300 a month. They know how to manage their lives, they know how to pinch pennies. But the whole basis of their survival is having a hotel to live in, a place like the Sam Davis, and it is the last one in Nashville[75]." "When it is gone," Resener theorized, "they will start drifting. They will stay at the mission for a month or two, and then they will become part of the forgotten society[76]."

Service Provider Row

Service provider row stretched along Demonbreun Street between 7th and 2nd Avenues. The Nashville Rescue Mission anchored the strip, which included the Salvation

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Gregory, Ed. 1983. "Moving: Residents of Doomed Hotel Waiting, Wondering." *The Tennessean.* August 14
[76] Ibid.

Army, the department of social services, a plasma donation center, and a day labor office. In the mid-1980s, the street's two homeless shelters could only accommodate about two-thirds of the city's approximately 800 homeless citizens. The Mission had a 300-bed capacity, but could sleep as many as 440, while the Salvation Army had 50 beds. These two operations consequently referred destitute Nashvillians to hotels like Merchants and the Sam Davis on a daily basis. The demolition of the Sam Davis thus placed an increased strain on service provider row, which was already overburdened due to the destruction of the Bell Hotel, the Ross Hotel, and the forcible closing of The Resting Place. The demolition of Nashville's remaining SROs created disequilibrium within the skid row milieu by excising the last two inexpensive hotel options. This catalyzed a self-reinforcing cycle in which the street population gravitated to Demonbreun Street's pre-existing shelters which only had a combined bed capacity of 490, heightening the district's spatial contradictions in the process. "What's going to happen," predicted Carl Resener, "is you're going to see more and more people sleeping in parked cars. The crowds here at the mission discourage many people[77]."

Resener's predictions proved correct. In addition to sleeping in parked cars, Nashville's 700+ homeless individuals began carving out life in camps along the Cumberland River and the train tracks running parallel to it (Lee 1989). They also began occupying the central loop's back alleys, vacant buildings, bus station, and even hospital waiting rooms (presumably in North and West Nashville) (Lee 1989). Between December of 1983 and December of 1985, the number of Nashvillians making the street "home" increased by over 100 percent and inched upward through 1986 (see Table 3.1).

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[77] Gordon, Tam. 1984. "Sam Davis was 'Last Resort' for Many of City's Homeless." *Nashville Banner.* November 22.

Colder months, of course, are less amenable to sleeping in interstitial spaces unintended

for human habitation (i.e., "sleeping rough"). Between the winter of 1983 and the winter

of 1985, the shelter population increased by 25 percent. While service provider row was

able to absorb individuals locked out of the housing market, its resources were pushed to

the limit.

TABLE 3.1.   Distribution of Nashville Core Homeless Population, 1983-1988

	% of population counted in			
Date	**Shelters**	**Hotels**	**Streets**	**Indoor/Street Ratio**
Dec. 1983	67.3	25.9	6.8	13.6
June 1984	56.0	31.9	12.0	7.3
Dec. 1985	84.5	0.7	14.8	5.7
June 1986	75.5	0.1	24.4	3.1
Dec. 1986	85.4	0.0	14.6	5.9
June 1987	69.4	0.0	30.6	2.3
Dec. 1987	83.6	0.0	16.4	5.1
June 1988	75.0	0.0	25.0	3.0
Dec. Mean	80.2	6.6	13.2	7.6
June Mean	69.0	8.0	23.0	3.9
Grand Mean	74.6	7.3	18.1	5.8

Adapted from: Lee, Barrett.1989. "Stability and Change in an Urban Homeless Population."

The East Nashville Exodus

Community Care Fellowship (CCF), a storefront outreach of McKendrie United

Methodist Church (located on Church Street), set up shop a half block off Lower Broad at

the corner of 4th Avenue and Demonbreun in September of 1984. Known to the local

homeless population as "Ken and Carol's" even to the present day, the faith-based

organization created the first drop-in center and "personal hygiene station" in Nashville's

history. The storefront was outfitted with three showers, two restrooms, one washing

machine and dryer, a "baby room" equipped with cribs and miscellaneous childcare

items, a storage loft, a soup kitchen and dining area, a 60-seat assembly area, and a prayer

room called the "Brother Rock Chapel." In 1987, at the end of its three year lease, CCF

elected not to exercise the additional three year option. An internal document that

outlines the organization's institutional history explains:

> The redevelopment of Lower Broad was picking up steam. The homeless were being strongly
> encouraged to leave downtown and property owners were anticipating higher rents for their
> property. After looking for another location close to downtown without success an offer by an
> individual, who served on the Coalition for the Homeless with Bro. Ken, to match a fund raising
> effort to build a building was begun…A suitable location became the next question that had to be
> faced (3).

Reverend Marion McBay and church members Bill and Jennettee Underwood offered to

allow CCF to build its new center on the property of Nancy Webb Kelly United

Methodist Church, located across the Cumberland River at 511 S. 8th Street. CCF

members serviced the Lower Broadway homeless population from a mobile unit while

their new building was under construction in East Nashville.

As CCF members patrolled the interstices of Nashville's downtown streets,

distributing sanitary items in their mobile unit, the Salvation Army was looking for a

larger building to accommodate the recent deluge of homeless Nashvillians. Major

Charles White was attempting to increase the number of beds by 125 (55 beds for

families, and 70 for men), and in the absence of CCF he hoped to expand the walk-in center, offer laundry facilities, job counselors and storage. The Army's 50-bed men's and women's emergency shelter facility was located two blocks north of CCF on a half-acre lot at the corner of 6th and Demonbreun. Its thrift store and 70-bed alcohol rehabilitation center were located in East Nashville on N. First Street, where it is still located today[78].

The Army, which unsuccessfully attempted to relocate twice before—the first attempt fell through when they tried to swap buildings with Vocational Rehabilitation Services at 88 Hermitage Avenue, and in the second attempt the Metro Center City Commission (discussed in detail later) proposed it move to a Metro Tow Lot located at 112 S. First Street—was planning on moving across the river onto its thrift store and alcohol rehab property. Major White cited commercial gentrification, a failing farm economy, and the demolition of SRO units over the past 3 years as the key reasons his facility was overburdened. "It is going to [continue] for a while as Nashville continues growing," he observed, "by the very fact that we're tearing down more housing units and not replacing them[79]." If the Major's newest relocation plans were thwarted, he planned on tearing down a storage site/warehouse adjacent to the current shelter. One year before joining CCF in the East Nashville exodus, Major White instead leased it to a youthful Catholic Priest named Charles Strobel, who had a creative vision that involved leveraging the resources of the faith community in an unconventional fashion.

Filling the Void

In the winter of 1985, from his bedroom window at Holy Name Catholic Church, Strobel began witnessing what Reverend Carl Resener predicted. More and more

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[78] Ibid.

[79] Butler, Lacrisha and Phil Williams. 1987. "New Site for Homeless Shelter Eyed." *The Tennessean.* January 5

Nashvillians began parking in his parking lot, taking evening refuge in their vehicles. He and his congregants converted the East Nashville church into a temporary shelter and started inviting the car dwellers in for the night. The following winter, Strobel wrote letters to the editors of both *The Tennessean* and *The Nashville Banner*, requesting churches to open their doors to the homeless. The logic behind Room in the Inn (RITI) was simple, even if the logistics would prove difficult. Area churches would pick up homeless men and women from a central location in their church vans and buses and transport them back to their house of worship for dinner, lodging, and if possible provide them with shower and laundry facilities, along with a change of clothes. Each morning, the church van would drop their homeless "guests" back off at the central location, and the process would repeat itself the following evening.

By Thanksgiving of 1986, four congregations began participating in the RITI. On Dec. 9 of the same year, tragedy struck the Strobel family. Mary Catherine Strobel, the priest's mother, disappeared in the course of her day's voluntary work. Two days later, her dead body was found in the trunk of her own car. Catherine Strobel's murder seemed to have galvanized the faith community, and by the end of the winter 27 more congregations began participating in the program (West 2004). Major White gave the fledgling program space in the warehouse adjacent to the Salvation Army, integrating it into service provider row. The following winter, RITI moved into a MDHA-owned building located at the corner of 6th and Demonbreun, and 68 congregations started taking part. By 1990, over 100 congregations were involved in RITI, giving Strobel's operation the capacity to shelter nearly 200 homeless people each winter night (West 2004).

Strobel's fledgling program essentially filled the void left by the Fulton regime's redevelopment initiatives. The demolition of Nashville's SROs, however, also meant that more homeless Nashvillians were spending their time on downtown streets during winter days and more and more opted for outside sleeping accommodations during summer months (Lee 1989). The East Nashville migration of CCF and the Salvation Army also altered the homeless population's spatial practices by expanding the circumference of its daily migration pattern.

Feeding the Downtown Monster

Nashville's tax increment financing scheme stipulates that any enhancement in the tax base resulting from property redevelopment (i.e., the increment) must be reinvested in the same redevelopment project area. This reinvestment mechanism, the logic goes, will ultimately help the city pay off its debt in a more timely fashion. In so doing, it propels the conflict-laden process of feeding "the downtown monster," where "every new wave of public investment is needed to make the last wave pay off" (Harvey 2000: 141). Given that sixty percent of the $45.5 million Nashville Convention Center ($27,500,000) was funded with TIF, it is unsurprising that nightstick-brandishing police officers aggressively patrolled Lower Broad[80] while Nashville's elite enjoyed its ribbon-cutting ceremony just one block north, at the corner of 5th Avenue and Commerce Street[81]. Lower Broad's adult entertainment industry and highly visible population of street prostitutes and homeless people, along with Demonbreun Street's burgeoning strip of homeless service provision, effectively held Fulton's symbol of political virility hostage by virtue of their proximity and incommensurate social activity.

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[80] Fisher, Greg. 1987. "Center Beckons to Public." *The Tennessean.* January 31.
[81] Bostick, Alan. 1987. "Police Deny Extra Patrols Linked to Center Opening." *The Tennessean.* January 31.

An anti-pornography sentiment among Nashville's urban elite was already salient by 1985 and the Metro Center City Commission (MCCC)—formerly the BRC—began plotting new legal ways to stamp out the street's adult entertainment industry. The commission, which was still hamstrung by an ordinance requiring one area of the city to be designated for adult entertainment, framed the success of the 20-year Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project as contingent on putting retail or office establishments in the place of movie theaters and bookstores, along with finding a solution to the downtown homeless problem. "We've got to really face some issues and Broadway is an important part of this plan[82]," stated commission head Mary Anne Harwell (formerly Mary Anne Eanes). "There have been some renovations on Broadway—some positive and some not so positive. It's going to take a change in the use of the buildings that have adult entertainment. That is the responsibility of the owners[83]."

The Ryman Group—a private development consortium comprised of Opryland USA, the Mathews Co., and Central Parking Inc.—offered a partial solution to the MCCC's problem, feeding Fulton's downtown redevelopment initiative in the process. In the spring of 1987, the development group submitted a $320 million plan to redevelop the north side of Lower Broad from the Ryman (5th Ave) down to rapidly redeveloping 2nd Ave and the nascent Riverfront Park. The proposal consisted of plans to refurbish the dilapidated Ryman Auditorium and turn it into a museum which would be linked to the Opryland complex in Donelson via riverboat[84].

The Fulton administration in conjunction with MDHA converted the plan into law by drawing up Ordinance 087-1695, another addendum to the Capitol Mall

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[82] McKnight, Gail. 1985. "Porno Stores Group's Target." *The Tennessean.* October 30.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Author unknown. 1987. "Transforming City Eyesore into Vital Part of Nashville." *The Banner.* April 12.

Redevelopment Plan (See Figure 3.3). Only property on Lower Broad's north side was incorporated into the project boundaries of: Commerce St., Broadway, 5th Ave N, and the alley between 2nd and 3rd Aves. The addendum gave city officials the advantage of an anchor tenant (i.e., the Ryman) that had the potential to stimulate "desirable" private investment that synergized with the convention center. The plan's expanded boundaries also increased the Fulton regime's coercive capacity by placing most of the remaining adult entertainment industry under its jurisdiction, backed with the threat of eminent domain.

Figure 3.3: Capitol Mall Redevelopment Plan
(Ordinance 087-1695)
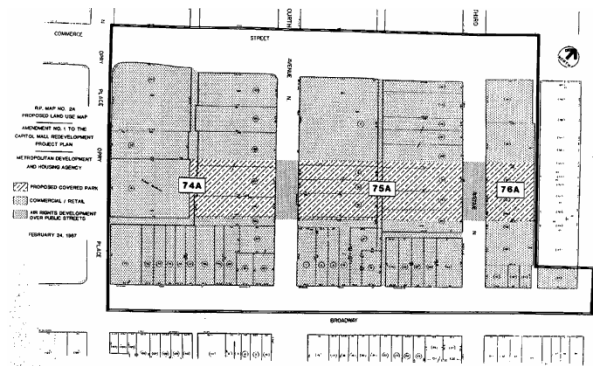
Property owners who failed codes inspections had 90 days under the legislation to bring their property up to code. A building qualified for exemption from condemnation if:

[T]he owner of any such parcel agrees to eliminate any non-conforming use on the parcel as may be requested by MDHA, to rehabilitate all structures on the parcel, use the land and structure in accordance with the provisions of this Plan for its duration, [and] acquire such land as deemed necessary by MDHA to conform to local zoning and codes requirements…exemption shall be made conditional until the owner has complied with all of the requirements of a contractual agreement to be executed by and between the owner and the MDHA (Ordinance 087-1695).

In a letter to the editor, Lower Broadway merchant George Gruhn revealed that at least two land uses would not meet MDHA's tacit exemption criteria: "On April 17, Gerald Nicely, executive director of the MDHA, mailed letters to all property owners on the north side of Broadway exempting their property from condemnation if they meet codes, maintain or repair the facades of the buildings according to the recommendation, provide rear easements, and do not use their buildings for adult entertainment or manufacturing[85]."

Inspectors from the Health Department, Metro Codes Administration, and Fire Department launched an intensive two-month codes inspection of both the north and south sides of the street less than two months after Ordinance 087-1695 was signed into law by Mayor Fulton. Over one-third of the properties failed what Cecil Herrell, MDHA director of urban development, characterized as the most comprehensive codes inspection in Nashville's history. "I think the problem down here has been that no one's been willing to go out on a limb and make an investment if they weren't sure their neighbor was going to," said Herrell. "This process will assure them that everyone will have to do it[86]." By the spring of 1988, the adult entertainment industry—comprised of only The Wheel, El West Stereo Theater, and Adult World—was confined to the 400-block.

Mayor Boner's Punitive Interdiction

Although El West Stereo Theater was still playing films such as *Titilators* and *Oral Majority*, city officials' revitalization priorities had shifted to erasing the presence of seedy honky-tonk habitués, the remaining street prostitutes, and the local homeless population that was more visible than ever. Mayor Bill Boner, who took office in 1987

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[85] Gruhn, George. 1987. "Broadway Merchants Desire Area Clean-up." *Nashville Eye.* May 27.

after barely beating his opponent Phil Bredesen in an election run-off, carried his

predecessor's redevelopment efforts forward with zeal. Despite the fact that Nashville

was facing a $60 million revenue deficit, Boner took a hands-on approach to revitalizing

the street, establishing a large-scale "clean-up" effort. In a speech to the Broadway

Merchants Association (BMA), the mayor noted:

> I think we have reached a point where we need to make some decisions about what direction the historic Broadway area is going to take. There are a number of things that this government can do, and there are a number of things that the individual owners and the tenants of the property can do. The police department will continue to target the Broadway area in an effort to alleviate some of the problems in this area[87].

Several months prior to his BMA speech, Boner rolled up his sleeves and

surveyed the street with his advisors. In the wake of his tour, he implemented measures to

sanitize the sidewalks, literally and metaphorically, by committing tax dollars to

rebuilding the street's planters and launching an assault on "public intoxication" and

street crime by assigning beat officers to nightly foot patrols. Increased police presence

quickly eroded the open-air drug and prostitution markets. "A year ago people were

selling drugs in the doorways, there were fights every night and there were prostitutes all

over the place," observed the owner of Squires Music City Lounge, "but since Kenny,

Rick and the other officers have been down here, it is a lot safer[88]." "The prostitutes

know they can't work the street if two uniformed officers are walking around," stated one

of the officers on the beat, "so they have moved out of this area and we don't see them

very often anymore[89]."

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[87] Moore, Linda. 1989. "Boner Tells Merchants He Wants Better Looks, Life on Broadway." *The Tennessean.* June 24.

[88]Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

Figure 3.4
Street Prostitution

Source: Bill Rouda (2004)

The status offenses of homelessness and "honky-tonkin" were fought under the cloak of Boner's "anti-intoxication" initiative. The manager of the ill-reputed Rhinestone Cowboy honky-tonk complained: "It's excessive police presence. There have been times when there have been five or six officers in here at one time. And there have been people obviously in their 50s or better who didn't have any identification, so they were run out[90]." The owner of the Turf, another maligned honk-tonk, lamented over the ten officers that were permanently assigned to the 400-block: "They've killed business. Is there anything normal about 10 police officers being on one block anywhere?[91]"

Between January and August of 1989, police continuously swept panhandlers off of the street and arrested 470 homeless people on Lower Broadway for public intoxication[92]. Police Chief Bob Kirchner justified his department's punitive interdiction by drawing a distinction between the purportedly docile homeless person of yesteryear, and what he characterized as a contemporary aggressive atavist: "We're talking about a

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[90] Eisenstadt, Todd. 1989. "Business Drying up as Patrols Continue on Lower Broadway." *Tennessean.* October 12.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ritchie, Carol. 1989. "Cleanup on Lower Broadway Merely Shifts Street People." *Banner.* October 2.

different kind of street person down there now. Used to be they'd just ask you for a dollar, but now if you don't give it to them, they can get aggressive. I'd like to see that area like Bourbon Street, not the Bowery[93]."

Boner seemed to take satisfaction in his administration's dispersal of the street's homeless population. "I'm not sure where they come from," he observed. "I'm not sure where they spend their time [But]…I know they're not spending it on Lower Broadway[94]." In the wake of the regime's reclamation of the street, the homeless population began clustering around homeless service providers' property and interstitial spaces in the downtown. Central Precinct Captain Emmett Turner pointed out: "They've just kind of expanded out. To East Nashville [around CCF and Holy Name], across the river, Eighth and Broadway [near the Mission and Department of Social Services], McGavock and Demonbreun [near the Mission]. They've just sort of dispersed[95]." To the chagrin of bus commuters, the MTA Transit Mall on Deaderick Street also became a popular day spot. Two hundred MTA customers signed a letter, which was forwarded to Boner, complaining that an "undesirable element" had invaded the bus terminal: "When closing time comes around for the state offices and other businesses…this group of unruly drunks will have grown anywhere from 10 to 12 to 15 (or even more) in number, all drinking, all very loud and offensive; sometimes, abusive, vulgar and frightening[96]." "They're moving, and we've had complaints in other areas," stated the central precinct

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[93] Floyd, Cynthia. 1989. "Boner, Chief Defend Broadway Cleanup." *Tennessean.* September 20.

[94] Ritchie, Carol. 1989. "Cleanup on Lower Broadway Merely Shifts Street People." *Banner.* October 2.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.

captain. "We are aware of the problem at the bus shelter, and we're taking steps to correct it[97]."

Despite the measures his administration took to safeguard the public-private investment in Lower Broad's revitalization, Boner's actions were not necessarily driven by punitive lust. His was the first administration to establish a city-run homeless service facility. As the director of the non-profit who has since assumed the facility's operations (with the help of ever-diminishing city subsidies) remembers:

Bill Boner was the mayor in the late 80s. One nice thing he did was he staid a few nights on the street as a homeless person. What he found was that there was nowhere for people to connect into services, there was not a place to go to the bathroom, to take shower, to do laundry. His administration created the Service Center for the Homeless. He placed it in the Health Department. That is where the clinic now sits. That was a major provider. They did day shelter, they helped you get into entitlements.

The facility was placed in an MDHA-owned warehouse located in what is now dubbed the Lafayette Neighborhood, a blighted, light industrial warehouse district five blocks south of Lower Broad. Boner's "clean up" campaign presaged the final stage of Dodge City Skid Row's deterritorialization.

As of 1989, the remaining service providers located in the Lower Broadway area included the Mission (8th and Demonbreun/Broadway), RITI (7th and Demonbreun), the Salvation Army (7th and Demonbreun), the Downtown Clinic (7th and Clark Place), and Focus Storefront Ministries (8th and Broadway). Their maintenance of the service dependent population a block south of Lower Broad still dampened revitalization efforts. Area merchants began referring to the Mission as a transient "anthill," and blamed it for the remaining the street violence[98]. "It's the places between 5th Avenue and the alley at 4th Avenue that are the problem," one business owner theorized. "The minute you change

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[97] Ibid.
[98] Atkinson, Brannan. 1989. "Lower Broadway Bars Stiffen Policies." *The Tennessean.* June 29.

that, you change the whole atmosphere…If we had good entertainment and restaurants we would have good night life[99]."

The Tipping Point: The Organizational Ghetto Takes Shape

The Boner regime's punitive interdiction tamed much of Lower Broad's perceived disorder. In so doing, it took another step forward in actualizing the entertainment corridor envisioned by his predecessor. Under Phil Bredesen's subsequent administration, Nashville ascended as a major southeastern city. Aside from running an aggressive pro-growth campaign that prioritized economic development in finance, manufacturing, and health care (Friedman and Mason 2005), the Bredesen regime carried forward the re-imagineering initiatives put in motion by the Fulton administration which sought to enhance Lower Broad's amenity profile. As Friedman and Mason (2005) point out:

Between 1990 and 1995, 118 companies relocated to Nashville and the city was recognized in the national business press as having one of the best business environments in the country…The downtown core underwent a revitalization based on new entertainment and cultural amenities. The area was anchored by a $120 million arena that was proposed by Bredesen in 1993. Funded by a property tax increase, the arena construction addressed a deficiency noted by the city's country music industry; despite Nashville's reputation as Music City, USA, the city had no suitable performance venues with a capacity exceeding 4,500…(97).

Bredesen's administration utilized a well-worn tactic in order to clear the ground for the new arena site, located directly across Lower Broad from the already obsolete Nashville Convention Center. The city council approved MDHA's expansion of the Capital Mall Redevelopment Plan for the third time in eleven years, and the addendum became law on September 24, 1993. The new project area descended southwest from the corner of McGavock and 4th Ave to the corner of 7th Avenue and Lafayette Street[100],

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[99] Ibid.
[100] Part of McGavock was cut off with the construction of the Gaylord Entertainment Center

stretching its boundaries four blocks south and two blocks west (see Figure 3.5). The

addendum pulled RITI, the Guest House and the Downtown Clinic under MDHA's

jurisdiction in the process. The half-city block abutting the boundary's northwest corner,

at the corner of 7th and Demonbreun/McGavock held the Rescue Mission's cluster of

buildings. The RITI and the Guest House sat on the block bounded by McGavock, 7th and

8th Avenues, and Demonbreun (adjacent to the bisected block in the northwest corner).

The Downtown Clinic was located one block south, at the corner of 7th and Clark Street.

Figure 3.5
Ordinance 093-774
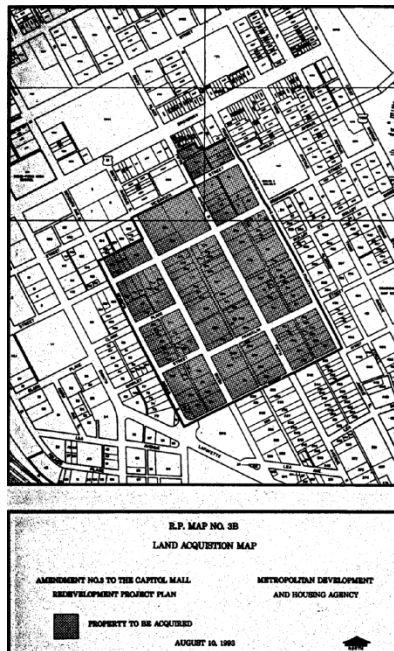
Bredesen's entrepreneurial vision partially depended on the coercive cooperation

of the homeless service providers operating within the boundaries of the redevelopment

plan. Given their critical role in the landscape of homeless service provision, city officials

assisted Charles Strobel in finding a new location from which to operate RITI and the

Guest House. One of Strobel's staff, who was instrumental in successfully relocating the

two operations, explains:

> The Salvation Army had already moved across town, the Guest House was already under our leadership…We were in the footprint of [the Gaylord Arena]. The Mission basically said: 'Over our dead body.' That was a headline. Room in the Inn, Charlie, said 'We will do whatever we need to do' not knowing what that would be; because we were in MDHA property. [Mayor Bredesen] said he appreciated that, and he helped us find this building. He let us look at a lot of buildings.

Strobel, however, had few options but to go along with Bredesen's alternative

arrangements since his operations were located in *MDHA-owned* buildings situated

within the parameters of the new redevelopment plan. As the same staff member puts it:

> We saw the writing on the wall. Charlie writes a letter saying we'll do what we can to move. We're friends with Bredesen. In return he helped us. MDHA purchased this building with us in mind. They didn't already own this building. It just made sense. If the Mission was already gonna move behind us, if the Service Center was already here, it was the beginnings of a comprehensive center…We didn't feel pushed, we just felt pressured. We had to move *somewhere.*

The site was an old warehouse located at 532 8th Avenue South, across a narrow alleyway

from the city-run Service Center for the Homeless.

Meanwhile, redevelopment pressures forced the hand of the last service provider

located on the north side of Lower Broad. What might have been a tragedy proved

serendipitous, given the imminent relocation of RITI and the Guest House. The current

director of what is now the Campus for Human Development explains:

> On 8th Ave across from Broad, you had Focus Storefront Ministries. It was congregationally based a lot like we were congregationally based. They did daytime services. Focus Storefront lost their lease at the same time and they merged with us. Their staff came when we merged together.

It made sense. They did daytime, we did nighttime. Focus Storefront Ministries, Room in the Inn, and Guest House…we merged together to form the Campus for Human Development in 1995. And the mission moved down here [to the Lafayette Neighborhood]. So we all moved to a consolidated site.

In the summer of 1995, the embryonic Campus for Human Development began servicing homeless Nashvillians in the Lafayette Neighborhood, dramatically altering the landscape of homeless service provision in the process. The creation of the city's new organizational ghetto, however, was not yet complete.

While the Campus for Human Development began servicing homeless clients from its new location, the director of the Nashville Rescue Mission (NRM)—who lamented the demolition of Nashville's SROs—began searching for a building where "clients could live, pay a bare minimum amount of their income for living expenses and provide for themselves the essentials of living" (Ragan 2001: 89). The NRM board attempted to acquire the 160-room Mercury Motel located on Lafayette Street (a.k.a. Murfreesboro Road), adjacent to the J.C. Napier public housing projects. After the business community thwarted the initiative, the board set its sites on the recently vacated Sears building at the corner of 7th Avenue S. and Lafayette Street (Ragan 2001). The NRM acquired the 5.5 acre 170,000 square foot building—linked to the Service Center for the Homeless and the newly dubbed Campus for Human Development by a narrow alleyway—for $530,000.

As they simultaneously fought off investors interested in their cluster of buildings located off of 7th Avenue and Demonbreun Street, the NRM board began renovating the former Sears building. By April of 1998, the Mission opened its 40 transitional living apartments on the second floor, where it relocated graduates from its drug and alcohol

rehabilitation center[101]. Two months later, Mission officials announced that they intended to move their entire operation into the Lafayette site. The decision was informed by both a shrewd economic and logistical logic. "The [Demonbreun Street] facility was built to take a couple hundred people, period," stated a NRM official. "It's just really cruddy up there." The Lafayette site was over three times larger than the original site, and offered a blank slate upon which the NRM administrators could inscribe with their new "rehabilitative" mission. "[Our] motto was, 'Soup, soap and salvation,'" noted a NRM representative. "Now it's not just a matter of feeding them and sleeping them. It's a matter of getting them off the street it's about recovery."

The NRM board was able to finance the construction of the new facility with the proceeds from its prime Demonbreun real estate, which was in close proximity to the recently opened Gaylord Entertainment Center, the Frist Center for Visual Arts which was in the process of renovation, and the new Country Music Hall of Fame taking shape in the safe confines of the same redevelopment plan responsible for displacing service provider row. Ironically, the Mission profited from the redevelopment activity that disrupted the operations of its counterparts. Five hotel chains considered buying the $3.25 million property, but moved too slowly (Ragan 2001). First Baptist Church, a faith community ally, expressed interest in the property and the Mission sold the half-city block for $800,000 less than its original asking price in December of 1999. The Mission had three years to vacate, but did so in two.

Before this new homeless subsistence niche was even fully formed, city officials began devolving responsibility for its only homeless service organization to the non-

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[101] Whitaker, Monica. 2001. "New Mission to Offer More Space, Structure." *The Tennessean.* February 6, 2001.

profit sector. The Campus for Human Development took over the city's Service Center

for the Homeless, allowing the Downtown Clinic to move into the building it left vacant.

The Campus director explains:

At the time you had your first public-private partnership in this area…About 15 years ago, we subcontracted with the Health Department and took over their Service Center because we had volunteers, we were congregationally based, we had education; there was a little more about the relationship than just warehousing people. Then the mission, the next year, moved to the Sears building. So really, if you're working at the [Greyhound] bus station, you don't have to know what every agency does. You can just say, 'Down the street two blocks.' That began our single site of services.

The city's three main homeless service providers—continuously injected with displaced

individuals by the Greyhound bus station, Interstates 65/40, and area housing projects—

became compressed into one square block on the Lafayette neighborhood's northwestern

border, creating what service providers and city officials envisioned as a "one-stop shop

for the homeless." A trash-strewn, drug-abundant alley dubbed "the homeless highway"

connected the Mission, the Campus, and the Downtown Clinic, creating what one local

merchant derisively referred to as the "Super Wal*Mart of indigent services."

Figure 3.6: MDHA Redevelopment Districts
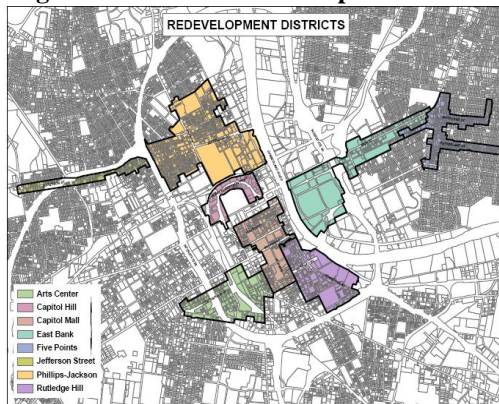
Figure 3.7: Aerial Shot of Downtown Nashville (Highlighted Space is Lafayette Neighborhood)

Conclusions

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This organizational ghetto located in the Lafayette district is the conjunctural product of historical accident, historic preservation, entrepreneurial development policies, state-enforced displacement, and the homeless service agencies' deliberate, if constrained planning. Such socio-spatial formations are largely unplanned productions due to three key structural realities: urban land-use planning is typically divorced from social planning, making urban planning discourse silent on issues of community-based human service configurations; human services are provided under variable auspices (public and voluntary) and are supported by discrete funding sources, making the coordination of their services and activities difficult; and the creation of an organizational ghetto implies the appropriation of urban space subject to NIMBY pressures (Wolch 1996).

Consequently, both displaced and nascent service providers typically follow the path of least resistance, where both de jure and de facto opposition is weakest and real estate is inexpensive. Each city, however, has a finite amount of low-resistance space that coincides with the locational and organizational logics of homeless service providers. Thus, their (re)aggregation in the same neighborhood is more an artifact of uneven development than deliberate agglomeration given their tendency to appropriate a place left (for the moment) uncoded by market-led urban development. The Lafayette Neighborhood in fact is the only inner loop territorial unit south of Lower Broadway that is not under the jurisdiction of a redevelopment plan (see Figures 3.6 and 3.7).

Once (re)positioned in close proximity to one another, however, service providers form an interlocking "campus" geared toward the management of the homeless poor. The resulting organizational synergies form a neighborhood which pivots around:

A shared interest in overlapping use values (identity, security, and so on) in a single area…A neighborhood is far more than a mere collection of houses; rather, it is a shared experience of an agglomeration of complementary benefits…The concentration of a large number of similar people stimulates the development of agglomerations especially appropriate to their needs (Logan and Molotch 1987: 108).

In the case of the Lafayette district, an agglomeration of service providers draws in and concentrates a large number of similarly situated people. Shortly after this new institutional ensemble came into existence and started magnetizing the local homeless population, day labor agencies began insinuating themselves into the neighborhood's social fabric, creating a perverse symbiosis in the process. Says one service provider: "By the late 1990s, these day labor agencies began setting up shop. There used to be one where the swinger's club is [in between the Mission and the Campus]. Now there's four a stone's throw away."

The case of Lafayette is a concrete testament to the fact that Nashville's skid row district did not simply shrivel up and blow away in the wake of center city redevelopment. Lafayette in fact suggests that such spaces of relegation *roll through time*, even while their location, function, and identity shift in the process. In contrast to its skid row predecessor, Lafayette is not a tightly bounded neighborhood comprised of a diverse organizational ecology. Rather, it is a permeable yet bounded landscape that is less organizationally divers and which concentrates skid row's least autonomous organizational vestiges, creating a historically specific configuration of requirements necessary to sustain homeless life. The internal functions of this organizational ghetto's human service and commercial institutions are the "blocks" on which its historically specific, action-guiding structure is built. Given that their moving parts and interrelations require ethnographic analysis in order to discern what makes a place like Lafayette "tick," it is these processes to which we will now turn.

CHAPTER IV

The Moral Alchemy of Rescue Work

I can hear the shuffle of stiffs as they slouch in front of the door outside. They lean up against the sides and sprawl on the curb. They are waiting for nothing. They are too late. There are plenty of beds left in here, but they are too late. You have to come early and listen to the sermon if you want a flop in this joint. They are too late. I lie here and wonder, since when did Jesus Christ start keeping office hours?

–Tom Kromer (1935)

Lafayette's Rescue Mission occupies the center of the district at the intersection of 8th Avenue South and Lafayette Street. Identifiable by its crimson, heart-wrapped-crucifix insignia, the agency's otherwise nondescript façade is the best-recognized landmark south of Lower Broadway. Unlike the district's other two caretakers, the Mission was not originally a light industrial warehouse. Its prominent size and location in the neighborhood hearken back to its days as a Sears department store. Whereas financially sound Nashvillians once made an intentioned path to its rear parking lot, Music City's most marginal members – homeless men – now make their way through the lot each evening en route to the Mission's white cinderblock courtyard, located on the first floor.

Figure 4.1: Men's Evening Trek to the Courtyard

Rescue missionaries have converted the first floor of the 170,000 square foot structure into what they call their "Transient Ministry" – a linear series of discrete spaces through which a homeless man proceeds each night on the way to the scarcest of all street commodities: a dormitory bed. The second floor now houses what missionaries call their "Life Recovery Program" – subdivided into a "Program" segment, where unhoused proselytes proceed through a graduated series of moral-education courses in which they study Biblical prescriptions that allegedly hold the promise of steering them away from their deleterious "homeless lifestyle" and down a morally efficacious path back into mainstream society, and a "Single Room Occupancy" segment where Program graduates can live for up to two years for a subsidized fee.

Despite surface appearances, these dual-track ministries are not discrete entities. Rather, all of the Mission's internal spaces and associated practices are organized according to a strategy of "recovery" designed to facilitate homeless men's religious conversion. Because missionaries' raison d'etre revolves around the "salvation" of homeless men by virtue of their salvation in the Life Recovery program, the first-floor transient ministry is a vital conduit in the building's circuitry of spiritual intercession – that is, in its *moral economy of care*. In fact, the first-floor ministry helps missionaries overcome a salient proselytization paradox in that the marginal and punitive nature of their fundamentalist message means they cannot rely on a steady supply of "congregants" who voluntarily attend their sermons and enroll in their Program (see also Ammerman 1987). To maintain their Salvationist raison d'etre and worldview, missionaries are consequently pressed into cultivating a "market" for their religious "goods." They promote acceptance of their doctrines, ameliorative prescriptions, and socio-spiritual

bonds by distributing scarce, life-sustaining resources to the homeless men whose "souls" they believe they have been "called" to "save."

Indeed, saving homeless men's souls involves drawing them into a recurring process of communication which constitutes them as subjects who lack a proper relationship with God, before inciting them to claim the life God intended for them by enrolling in Life Recovery. As Chaplain Brown put it:

Food and shelter are goodwill gestures to be able to get a person under our roof so that we can begin to talk to them about our program. The first floor is kind of a recruiting ground for our chaplains to be looking out into the courtyard at any given moment to see if there are any new faces and counsel guys who are already down there to try to get them into the Life Recovery program, which is upstairs.

By distributing scarce resources along moral lines supported by religious schemas, Chaplain Brown and his counterparts act as *moral alchemists* who transmute material goods into a conduit of religious authority that propagates their supernatural classification of homeless men's (sinful) life conduct.

The purpose of this chapter is to elucidate how this alchemic process works. In doing so, our analysis of the first-floor intake ritual will illuminate the *material* aspects of the Mission's *moral economy of care.* We will pay particular attention to how the intake ritual envelops missionaries and unhoused men in bonds of reciprocal exchange as well as how these staff-client relations bring into the realm of practical conduct missionaries' spiritual goal of interceding Christ's redemptive power. But we will leave detailed analysis of missionaries' religious schemas to the next chapter. By granting analytic priority to homeless men's experience and negotiation of the intake ritual, this chapter also reveals how the spiritually defined, segmental roles in which they are cast by missionaries impact their collective sense of self. We will pick up on the relational

implications of this dynamic in Chapter 6. For now, let us step into the first-floor

"recruiting ground" and look around through the eyes of homeless residents.

The First-Floor Recruiting Ground

Life-sustaining items such as food, shelter and clothing, are scarce resources

because they are difficult to obtain outside the shelter system; their objective scarcity

makes them valuable to homeless men. "The only relevant question apart from the direct

enjoyment of things for their qualities," wrote Georg Simmel (1971), "is the question of

the way to them. As soon as this way to them is a long and difficult one, involving

sacrifice in patience, disappointment, toil, inconvenience, feats of self-denial, etc., we call

the object scarce" (68). The inability to reciprocate for help received imposes on the

Lafayette homeless an obligation to offset the resulting disequilibrium in the exchange

relationship with "supplementary rewards" (Blau 1964). Subordination to the intake ritual

is converted into a medium of exchange in the Mission's moral economy of care.

The Intake Ritual

Rituals are communicative devices designed to channel people's perception of the

world; they draw individuals into emplaced moral, interpersonal, and (inter-)subjective

relations. A religiously-oriented ritual's classificatory power is rooted in a group's

religious cosmology (Tamiah 1979; see also Jensen 2005) – that is, the corpus of

conceptions that categorize the universe as an ordered whole and its governing norms and

processes – and sanctions particular experiences and life conduct as normal, while

condemning others as immoral, impure, and/or wrong. Put differently, ritual animates a

religious group's cosmological scheme. It is a medium – a culturally constructed system of symbolic communication and material practices – that transmits, in this case, missionaries' evaluation of homeless men, their depictions of men's place in the world, as well as their respective moral judgments of and ameliorative prescriptions for the deleterious "homeless lifestyle." The daily intake ritual draws homeless men into this process of proselytization, which involves the transmutation of scarce resources into a conduit of religious authority through the "alchemy of symbolic exchanges" (Bourdieu 2000).

Communication – at the heart of this transmutation – converts *material relations of power* into durable relations of *symbolic power* by translating goods and services into the dissemination and (feigned) recognition of missionaries' belief system (cf. Bourdieu 1990 for a discussion of the relationship between material and symbolic power). Economic asymmetry is turned into a system of organized dependence designed to enable the resident to effect a spiritual "cure" and "reconciliation" with God. The object of this ritual action, in essence, is to produce an effective exchange between God and homeless men via the mediation of missionaries' religious authority. Missionaries' power-laden symbolic propagation (i.e., proselytization) acts on homeless men from *without* (through constituent practices) and from *within* (because the incitation to yield to missionaries' regime of truth becomes inscribed in their subjectivity). The resulting ritual experience of the homeless residents – situated at the vortex of these external and internal dimensions of ritualistic force – reveals the fissures, resistances, and reappropriations of the self-conceptions missionaries feel obliged to maintain of residents in their ongoing attempt to

enlist them in Life Recovery—that is, in order to "win souls" for the Lord. "Successful" proselytization, we will see, is thus partial at best.

The Daily Schedule

Nonetheless, the (partial) realization of the goal to "win the souls" of individuals begins with concrete activities. The Mission's "clockwork environment" (Zerubavel 1981) is rooted in missionaries' moral economy of care. The Puritanical critique of idleness inscribed in the daily schedule is a vestige of John Wesley's friend and associate Reverend John Clayton's *Friendly Advice to the Poor* (1755). In this report, which Clayton submitted to Manchester officials, he warned against the "slothful spending the Morning in Bed" and prescribed "The necessity of early rising [which] would reduce the poor to a necessity of going to bed betime" introducing "an exact Regularity" into their lives (qtd. in Thompson 1967: 83). The seriation of the Mission's successive activities is designed to inculcate homeless men's "time-thrift" (Thompson 1967), creating a disciplinary structure that organizes the way in which residents make use of the Mission's goods and services:

Jim Holliman (administrator): We've got rules, regulations, structure. What you learn…is that most addicts have no structure in their life. 'I'm gonna do what I wanna do, when I wanna do it.' One of the things that changes quickly is that you can start to set your clock to the structure. Early to bed, early to rise. You have to learn to make the best use of your time every day.

The daily schedule husbands residents' time by stringently regulating access to life-sustaining goods, establishing in the process the temporal and spatial rhythms of the first-floor recruiting ground, as well as the time-space rhythms of both Lafayette and the extant sites to which men disperse each morning. The time-table residents must follow is highly structured and follows the same pattern each and every day (with the exception

that men must attend chapel twice on Sunday—once before lunch and once before bed-

time):

5 a.m.: Wakeup
5:30 a.m.: Breakfast
6 am: Breakfast opens for street population (men who slept elsewhere)
6:20-6:30 a.m.: All first-floor men out of the mission
12 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.: First-floor lunch
3 p.m. – 4 p.m.: Distribution of clothing
4 p.m.: Bed-ticket line opens
5 p.m.: Bed-ticket line closes for Life Recovery dinner
5:30 p.m.: Bed-ticket line re-opens
5:30 p.m.: First-floor dinner line opens
6:30 p.m.: Curfew, doors shut (unless below 34 degrees)
7 p.m. – 8 p.m.: Chapel
9 p.m.: Lights out

"Any marked rhythm," wrote Radcliffe-Brown (1964), "exercises on those

submitted to its influence a constraint, impelling them to yield to it and to permit it to

direct and regulate the movements of body and even those of the mind" (249). Indeed, the

experience of the temporal constraints of the daily schedule – which creates the co-

presence of myriad urban outcasts at regular daily intervals – produces the feeling of self-

surrender. Willy's definition of the situation is representative of his homeless peers:

[They] schedule the day to manipulate your time. You eat lunch at 12 p.m. You have to line up
for a bed at 4 o'clock. If you want clothes you have to line up at 3 o'clock. They keep that open
for about an hour. Then they open the doors for dinner at 5 o'clock. The clothes are distributed
from the laundry room inside the building; you have to access from the courtyard. It limits where
you can go. My whole day is programmed. You gotta do this, you gotta do that.

Having control over the duration of residents' life-sustaining activities is a central

manifestation of missionaries' social control over the male homeless population. Poverty

scholars have historically argued that the "principle of less eligibility" is a defining

feature of poor people's organizational lives (Hopper 2005; Piven and Cloward 1971;

Snow and Anderson 1993). Benefactors, according to the principle, discourage

dependency by ensuring that the relief recipient's provisions are less desirable (i.e.,

"eligible") than those of the poorest independent laborer (Piven and Cloward 1971).

However, the Mission's time-regime, in conjunction with its non-existent length-of-stay

restrictions, reveals that missionaries have developed a moral-economic treadmill of

dependency driven by a "rhythmics of time punctuated by pious exercises" (Foucault

1977: 150).

In order to impart the flavor of the Mission's ritual force and the ritual experience

of homeless men who have not (yet) entered Life Recovery, in the next section I employ

a narrative account of the succession of (proselytizing) activities and spaces through

which men progress en route to a dormitory bed: one of the scarcest and most precious

resources operative in street life. Subsequently, I will explicate recurrent features of the

ritual experience vis-à-vis missionaries' activities and doctrines. Where appropriate, I

also discuss the social arrangements men make with each other that makes first floor life

(un)bearable. I begin in the middle of the sequence, with the evening bed-ticket queue,

which leads men into the Mission's courtyard: a space of containment and

proselytization.

The Courtyard

At four o'clock each evening, the Lafayette homeless begin streaming into the

courtyard. Its ten-foot-tall, white cinderblock walls separate a sea of indigence from the

adjacent art supply store and Mercedes repair shop, whose owners vociferously oppose

the Mission's daily operations. Sparkling Gulch condominiums peek over the western

wall as if keeping watch over their down-and-out neighbors. By 5:15 p.m. the courtyard's

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inner confines start to overflow and a queue of ragged men forms and snakes onto the sidewalk before it slithers north along the Mission's easternmost wall.

The nearly 400 men who wait for a bed ticket on a typical evening range in age from the late teens to the mid-60s. About two-thirds are black and the remaining third are white; a handful of Hispanics can be found waiting on any given evening. Many are street-hardened "veterans" of the daily intake ritual (several like to claim they have a "PhD in homelessness"), recognizable by their blasé disposition toward the motley mix of desperate men who make up this social landscape of human tragedy. Newcomers' sensory overload translates into an agitated bodily posture that betrays their outward façade of studied indifference, making them ripe targets for the "vultures" who studiously monitor their peers for signs of weakness and naïveté. Dante, a 10-year veteran of the Mission, puts the logic of the courtyard (and the surrounding neighborhood) this way:

Everybody knows when you're new. You're gonna walk like a new person, you're gonna talk like a new person. You're gonna ask questions like a new person. So, immediately, you gotta look out for everything around you. Because the vultures are gonna be flyin lookin for what they can take you for; what they can talk you out of. What they can steal from you. If you have money, you better get a locker.

Jamal puts it a little more colorfully. "The vultures done given up morally about little bitty things," he explains. "I'm talking about the simplest of things. Look, you could lay a *shit* sandwich down, turn your head, come back, and somebody done stole the stank out of it!"

Keeping What Belongs to You. The courtyard confronts the newcomer and veteran alike with a daily problem. "If you don't have a locker you can't put your stuff down," explained Deshawn one evening as we waited in line. "You come here, you have *nothing* and you wanna get out of the situation, but whatever you do have is in your bag. *It's all that belongs to you. It's all you have left in the world.*" A man's bag of belongings is an

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extension of himself and his dramatically circumscribed autonomy; it contains items to which only *he* has rightful access, consequently acting as a bulwark against a totalitarian existence in which he only has access to homogenizing life-sustaining resources and identity props that are also used by his peers. Because it is one of his last repositories of self-sufficient selfhood, men like Deshawn go to great lengths to guard their duffel bags and backpacks. Mission policy requires men to leave their bags in a designated section of the courtyard if they cannot afford to pay $25 a month for a locker. Since men are allowed to loiter in the courtyard while others proceed through the intake ritual en route to dinner, bags left in the courtyard are susceptible to theft. Dave, who learned the hard way about the vultures last week, seconds Deshawn's definition of the situation:

As soon as you go in the courtyard door, they're taking your backpack and they're going the other way with it, and there goes your clothes. I just lost all my clothes and meds last week. So now all I own is what I have on. So now I got to wait and take some money to the thrift store again. I ain't got money for my meds.

This institutional reality allows some men to support themselves by acting as bag-watchers. "Ray makes a living watching your belongings for the day," explained Dante as we ate in the chow hall. "You pay him. He has his little area over there. Everybody *knows* that that's his place." Ray's services, which cost a dollar an hour or 5 dollars for the day, are advantageous for those who need their bag watched on an ad hoc basis. He also accepts underground currency in the form of bus passes, cigarettes, crack and clothing. "Man look," explained T.J., a local crack-runner. "Whether it's illegal or what, I make do with what I got. There's certain thangs I do for Ray. In the morning, I give him a little incentive [a dime rock]. Sometimes I give him 5 bucks to watch and move my bags for the day." Ray, who would not talk to me out of fear of jeopardizing his income-generating strategy, also sells coffee in the courtyard each morning. He stores two coffee

pots (one decaffe, the other regular) in his locker and sets them up each morning on a

picnic table, along with Maxwell House coffee grounds, sugar packets (even artificial

sweetener), artificial creamer, and 12 oz Styrofoam cups, which he sells full of coffee for

a dollar a piece. Ray's entrepreneurial activity appears to generate about $20 a day in

coffee sales alone, but his bag-watching role is critical to his peer's daily survival.

Many of those who can neither afford Ray's services nor a Mission locker adapt

to the bag-theft exigency by hiding their most valuable items in strategic spots in the

neighborhood before entering the courtyard for the evening. The first night I slept in the

Mission, Howard (a key informant) and I met his girlfriend Gina, a formerly homeless

woman who now lives in a downtown public housing unit. He gave her all of his money

and I gave her my camera. When we reached the courtyard Howard instructed me where

to place my bag before placing his on top of mine. "Now we just put it in God's hands,"

he said, meaning that we had no control over what happens to our bags from here on out.

He then contradicted his admission of vulnerability.

Howard: There's a whole lot of unspoken rules. Just like in the penitentiary. It's like the food
chain. The weak over here, and the strong over there. Won't nobody touch that bag.

DW: What keeps them from touching it?

Howard: From them knowing me. And they'll let everybody know. 'Man, that's Howard's bag.
Don't fuck with that bag! He will hurt you.' That's why I write my name in it in black marker.
The [Mission] administration know too. I've knocked out about 6 people down here. I'm talking,
knocked them the fuck out for messin with something that's not there's! If it's not yours, why
touch it?

DW: How's that like the penitentiary?

Howard: It reminds me of bein in the penitentiary because I used to see white kids get locked up.
Their parents would send em something in the mail. Shoes or whatever. Before they can even get
back where they goin, somebody done stole their shoes. Number one, tell your folks to quit
sendin you this stuff if you *can't keep it.* It's the same thang down here [the Mission and the
surrounding neighborhood].

The ability to "keep" one's belongings amid a sea of indigence and "petty hustling" marks one's status in the tenuous pecking order which organizes the courtyard. "Don't hold on to stuff if you can't keep it" is a logic of the prison system that becomes operative in this milieu given the large concentration of ex-offenders who utilize the Mission's services. The Mission is just another (quasi-)total institution to which these men can apply adaptive techniques learned in a similar institutional environment (Goffman 1961). Yet, the fact that Howard routinely leaves his most precious possessions off-site with his girlfriend suggests that the Darwinian philosophy men espouse primarily operates as means of self-fortification against the situational assault on their masculinity.

Marginal Masculinity. By seeing themselves as sitting on top of the Lafayette "food chain," and defining the bulk of the population as "weak," men like Howard derive an empowered self-concept by constructing a provisional masculinity hierarchy. The sheer transience of the population ensures that even if someone like Howard has a "reputation" as someone that "nobody wants to fuck with," there are always new people coming in who are unaware of local status distinctions and who might engage in opportunistic theft. However, in all-male settings like the Mission, the desire to be perceived as a "real man" becomes translated into one's invocation of fear, intimidation, and the performance of (symbolic) violence. The daily performance and (re-)enactment of a hyper-masculine ideology that legitimizes violence toward others becomes a means of dealing with the suffering embedded in an institutional environment where men, homogenous in their dispossession, are brought together each day and forced to contend with each other as well as with the milieu's symbolic and material degradation and emasculation.

This interpersonal and subjective survival tactic, however, expresses what missionaries dub the "prison mentality" and reinforces their definition of men like Howard as "sinners" who need to reconnect with God. The courtyard is the first of a series of internal sites where men's subjective and interpersonal logic of survival collides with the religious logic that animates mission work. By virtue of their participation in the intake ritual, homeless men step into a spiritual relation officially defined as relevant. Howard and his counterparts participate in terms of their institutionally-defined status imbued with asymmetrical obligations and expectations.

Moral Memory. In order to keep the peace with their benefactors and ensure they have relatively steady access to the scarce resources they provide, transients typically show or feign gratitude toward their benefactors. Georg Simmel called gratitude under such asymmetrical conditions of exchange the "moral memory of mankind." The norm of reciprocity creates transients' provisional sense of (antagonistic) solidarity with missionaries. This structure of dependence guides daily exchanges and enacts "moral constraints" which structure transients' interactions with staff and leads them, more often than not, to at least feign receptivity to missionaries' daily proselytizing efforts.

Chaplains view the courtyard as a corral of lost souls ripe for harvesting. Each evening they "witness" to transients. One evening, for instance, Howard and I entered the courtyard and were intercepted by Chaplain Thomas, a short, 50-something African-American man with salt-and-pepper hair. "Do you know where you're going after you die?" The chaplain asked us. Caught off guard, Howard and I both stared at the chaplain blankly. Howard then broke the silence, "No sir. Do you?" "I've been washed in the blood of Christ. I know where I'm going. We can give *you* a place upstairs where you can

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get your life right," the chaplain replied. "Man, I just need a job," Howard curtly replied.

"Some day you'll get sick and tired of being sick and tired," Thomas said,

condescendingly, before moving on to the next man in line.

"Their program," Howard muttered to me, "it's a religious-based program. He

continued, in a hushed tone:

Howard: A lot of people don't believe in the same faith. I'm Catholic. And the way to get a man to turn his life over spiritually is to let him decide that for himself. You can't force spirituality into a person, and the mission is based on spirituality, but ain't nobody down here trying to help anybody. They throw all of this spirituality out there at you, but they got a policy that at nighttime, if you ain't in by bedtime, then you can't come back in unless it gets below 34 degrees. That is almost freezing! They're trying to force a product called religion on you. They need to be forcing some of them guys to bathe.

DW: Is there some reason why you didn't argue with him?

Howard: Well, they're the powers that be. They clothe me when I need to be clothed, feed me when I need to be feed, and give me a bed when I need to sleep. Why would I want to disturb their control of my destiny? I don't wanna rock the boat. The least I can do is listen to the man, even if I think he's wrong.

Howard's commentary suggests that men's moral memory is the subjective point of entry

partially pried open by missionaries' unilateral distribution of life-sustaining resources.

The Chow Line

Missionaries' daily distribution of food reveals the moral and social intentions of

the Mission's moral-economic system. Mary Douglas (1984) notes how "hospitality" is

part of a reciprocal exchange system in which the moral intentions of the benefactor are

actualized. The unilateral distribution of food in the Mission's chow line amounts to a

"lopsided food gift" that, by virtue of their inability to reciprocate in kind, communicates

to homeless men their spiritually-defined subservient status. Unlike their peers in Life

Recovery who "earn their keep" with daily "work therapy," transient men have only their

"gratitude" to offer missionaries.

The food counter is the point at which the routine activities of transients, program members, staff and volunteers coalesce each afternoon and evening. In this milieu, even the food holds a lesson for homeless residents. The food itself is of variable quality, ranging from desiccated hotdogs on a stale bun to men's overwhelming favorite: fried chicken. "Chicken night," as it is called in the Lafayette vernacular, is typically every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The fried chicken was either of the "spicy" or "regular" variety, leading men to place "special orders" for their preferred flavor (sometimes for health reasons). Chicken night was such a heavy draw that kitchen staff typically ran out of it before the dinner shift was over, angering men whose hopes of a palatable (even savory) meal were dashed. Adding insult to injury, the replacement was often hot dogs or runny beef stew. Observations on chicken night threw into sharp relief the ways in which the distribution of food allowed missionaries to communicate their religious message with minimal overt resistance from residents.

The moral maxim of being "thankful for whatever you get" was invoked and leveraged by both missionaries and Life Recovery members whenever men were either denied their preferred chicken flavor or complained about the supply of chicken running out. For example, one evening my acquaintance Jeffrey and I approached the food counter together. He asked a volunteer for a piece of "regular" chicken due to his stomach conditions. When the volunteer indulged his request, Carl, a staff member who monitored the food line virtually every evening, furrowed his brow. "Turn around. Turn around," he shouted at Jeffrey. "*Put that piece of chicken back.*" Jeffrey put his tray back on the counter, and the volunteer removed the piece of chicken. Carl then loudly reprimanded the volunteer and the Life Recovery member working beside her. "They

transients. They take what we give them. He homeless coz he act a fool like this. If he wanna place a special order, he can *work* and go to Burger King. Plus, if you do that for him, you got to do it for everyone." "Come on Carl," pleaded Jeffrey, "the chicken just goin in the trash." "Take the first tray on the counter and git on outta here!" shouted Carl. "We're havin a hard time feedin everyone as it is."

On a different evening, men were scanning the twenty or so pre-made trays sitting on the stainless steel counter. Those who wanted spicy chicken knew to look for trays with darker pieces and those who wanted regular chicken looked for trays with lighter chicken pieces. After reading the situation, they would pick a tray from the mix and proceed en route to the chow hall. "You're not supposed to reach over for trays," warned Carl. The men continued ignoring him so Carl stormed into the food line from the corridor. "Hold on, hold on, *hold on.* Stop them trays!" He then instructed everyone in the line that no more trays would be made until those on the counter disappeared. "You need to be thankful fo what you git!" he exclaimed. "You want a special order, you start doing something with your life. We gotta place fo you upstairs if you wanna pick and choose." Somewhat begrudgingly, the men claimed the trays from the counter as they proceeded through the line. Meanwhile Jim, a Program member, manned the silverware station and handed each man one thin paper napkin, rationing them as if they were a precious commodity. "Can I get another one man?" asked Archie, a disheveled black man. "No. We don't have enough sir. If y'all would learn to be responsible with them I wouldn't have to do this," he said in a sarcastic tone.

Charles, a resident who harbored deep animosity toward Carl, widened his face into a shit-eating grin as he observed the situation. "You need to get rid of that tone Carl.

You need to get read of that tone." "No sir. I'm not gonna argue with you," Carl shouted back. "I don't have to get rid of no tone. If you don't like our accommodations, you can hit the door! I didn't axe you to come in here! Go ahead! Get on through the line. If you wanna eat, you bettah get through the line. God have mercy on your soul!"

Missionaries and Life Recovery members mete out verbal assaults each afternoon and evening in the food line. The routine slights are imbued with moral value that communicates to homeless men the reason they have failed to live up to society's motivational schemes: their lifestyle is all wrong, and that if they want to get out of their predicament they need to bring their lives into accordance with the statutory prescriptions of Life Recovery.

Chapel

Chapel attendance, which promptly follows dinner, is the principal commodity of exchange on the first floor recruiting ground. It facilitates missionaries' transformation of material self-interest in maintaining a congregation into a legitimation of their "total solution" to problems in homeless living: Life Recovery. The outlines of this process were first revealed to me one evening after I followed Willy, an African-American man in his 50s, into the 400-seat chapel around 6:30 p.m. After spending the day laboring at an auto auction, we each bought beer at Cee Bee's – a grocery store located across Lafayette Street from the J.C. Napier Homes – after we picked up our checks from Ready Body, the day labor agency that sent us out to the auction. After chugging two Icehouse tallboys a piece, we submitted ourselves to the rhythms of the intake ritual and, after eating, began searching for two seats in the crowded venue.

In the course of our search, we encountered Chaplain Wilson who was watching us from his post at the chapel's entrance. Willy and I were visibly tipsy, but non-disruptive. "Can I talk to you for a minute?" asked the chaplain. "Sure," Willy said, speaking also on my behalf. "Do you know where you're going when you die?" "I don't know, and you don't either," Willy told the chaplain. "Let me ask you something," he continued. "I'm not trying to be smart or anything, but I come to get me a bed. You know I've been drinking and all this and I really don't want to do this right now." "When you die, do you know where you're going?" Wilson insisted. "How do you know where you're going? I may go and you may not go. How do you know you're a better Christian than I am? How do you know? You don't know these things. So many things you don't know."

The chaplain grew visibly irritated and Willy fanned the interactive flames. "I don't look up to you. You're not my Lord and Savior, I got one, you know. And I'm not going to treat you like the Lord." Realizing he stepped over the chaplain's line, Willy quickly retrenched and offered an obsequious corrective. "I'm sorry sir. I been drinkin. I just want to get my bed and not argue." Chaplain Thomas sternly pointed both of us to a set of nearby seats before commanding us to "listen closely to tonight's testimony" and to "think seriously about our Program."

One of the most striking sermons I attended occurred on this same evening, when a guest reverend sermonized by way of a Christian rock performance. Before plugging in his guitar, the preacher told us:

I think sometimes in America, the pulpits are tryin to make it too easy. If you just make decisions for Christ or say a prayer it's just gonna be all peaches and cream from here on out. Everything's gonna be wonderful, hunky-dory. And then when they come, and find out we lied to em, it don't end up like that.

Presumably in the spirit of the Country Music Awards (CMA) festival taking place four blocks north on Lower Broad, the reverend then put on a Willy Nelson wig—brown strands of hair tied in two ponytails and wrapped in a red bandana. As he situated the wig on his head, he informed us that:

We can't always see what God's doin in our lives. We don't know. We cannot trust our feelins. They get in our way every time. The words of God we can trust. They are true and pure. His words and promises to us never pass away. Sometimes God tries to test us like he did Job so we can testify to His goodness. If you ain't never been through nothin what kind of testimony can you have? I know you guys are here tonight goin through some hardships.

He then began playing Christian rock over his electric guitar. "Thou must sayest the Lord, who created Jesus," he sang. "He who has performed evil, fear not for I have redeemed you. I will be with you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned. Nor shall the flames torch you, for I am your Lord. They will give you light in darkness."

Meanwhile, Willy began squirming in his seat. "These high blood pressure pills, they make you pee, like crazy," (the beer didn't help either) he whispered. He then stood up and began to exit the chapel. "Where do you think you're going to?" asked Doug, the head of security. "Bathroom," Willy replied. "No, you're not, I don't think so," Doug said sternly. "If you leave, when you come back, you ain't got no bed" he added. Willy reclaimed his seat and swallowed his contempt for the remaining 30 minutes of the sermon. "White-bread mutha-fucka."

As Willy quietly seethed, the preacher doubled his former "drug-addicted," rock star self against his gospel-addicted *Christian* rock star persona, rhetorically forging what he perceived to be a common ground between himself and we lost souls seated in the audience. "Back in the day, we used to record music on reel-to-reel," he explained as he clasped his thumb and pointer finger together and hit a fictitious marijuana joint. "We

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used to get high while we waited for the reels to rewind." He then threw on a black blazer

and began playing a Johnny Cash song. After finishing a rendition of "I Walk the Line,"

he played a Waylon Jennings song, then bowed on his knees, clasped his hands together

and pressed them against his chin. As he prayed, he pointed out that "it is not weights,

but *prayer* that makes one strong," before asking us: "Is there anyone who wants to live a

life of prayer? Don't be afraid to talk to me about the work being done upstairs in Life

Recovery."

The Shower Room

Each evening after the gospel service ends, a chaplain walks down each row,

calling the dorm letter followed by a range of bed numbers: "A-1 through 10; A-10

through 20," etc. By the time the chaplain calls dorm E – the "handicapped" dorm also

known as "the penthouse" – as many as 400 men have formed a line into the shower

room. The first night I spent at the Mission, my bed ticket was A-45 and my informant

Howard's was A-43. After the chaplain yelled "A-40 through 50," we beelined to an area

in the shower room that contains six long benches. Everyone lined up against the

cinderblock wall to the right of the bed-roll window. Upon reaching the window, Jay, a

Program member, handed me a green, nylon mesh basket and asked, "What size, man?"

"Small," I said, guessing the size of my pajama bottoms.

After Jay handed me the blue, pocketless pajamas and the basket, I walked into

the shower room. I could barely see the tile floor through the foot of yellowish-gray

standing water. Nearly 50 naked men waded through the quasi-cesspool en route to

several open showerheads protruding from the shower room's ceramic tile walls. The

scene cast new light on a moral distinction Shorty, an African-American crack runner,

expressed to me in the courtyard several days earlier. He became incensed by a man who

walked by us whose intense body odor suggested it had been awhile since he bathed:

Shorty: They say cleanliness is next to Godliness, but a lot of people have given up, morally—how they smell and how they look. That's my every day ritual. I got to get in some water. There ain't no use bein afraid of water. You spent 9 months in your momma in water in a water sack. There ain't no alligators in there. Get in that water.

Many men adapt to this regime of bodily mortification by avoiding the Mission's

showers altogether. "It's ridiculous what they ask you to do," Talib complained one

morning as we hung out in the courtyard. "They put 500 people in a room and ask them

all to take a shower and get dressed in 10 minutes. If I have to go to the Mission, I put my

clothes in the bag and get in bed." This adaptation is unsurprising given the undignified

treatment meted out to men while they are in engaging in a degrading "hygienic"

practice. Talib's discussion with Asante in the hiring hall queue several days after our

courtyard discussion conveys a unique instance of a general dynamic, which expresses

the overarching social tone of the intake ritual:

Talib: There was one guy. I had waited until the end of showers. It was crowded. I couldn't get a shower. So I waited til the end to take my shower. This Program guy came in and said, 'Shower time's up. You need to come out.' I still had soap all over me. So I continued to get the soap off and he raised his voice, cussing me out, told me if I didn't like it I could hit the door. I told him I *didn't* like it. We got into a shouting match and other staff was called. I ended up getting kicked out for the night.

Asante: I know man. It's nasty. You get athlete's feet. The bathroom's always flooded. When you're walking through somebody's urine and shit on the wall and all that, it's ridiculous. There's pee on the floor mixed with the water. You know, you're stepping in water or pee or whatever you're stepping in and then. The Program. They're supposed to clean up that place. I don't understand it.

This salient problem in social reproduction was first conveyed to me by Ronnie, as we

left the drop-in center after retrieving some aspirin. He started lecturing me after I asked

him why he never showered at the Mission:

Ronnie: Look man. I don't like working day labor, but like I said, how can I go put in for a job and I ain't got nowhere to take a bath decent because you know it's 700 men over there? Don't

you know when you go in them showers to take a shower -- *don't you know that all of your meat on your toes will come loose??* Don't you know I got athletics' feet about four times? Don't you know it's not mandatory to take a shower? And half of them guys don't even take showers?

Given the scene in the shower room, I decided to go unwashed, and locked myself in one of the bathroom stalls in order to change. It took what felt like an eternity, because I had to figure how to stash my valuables. I had two small field notebooks, a cell phone, a digital recorder, two IDs, and an ink pen. Luckily my t-shirt had a front pocket, since the pajama bottoms did not. I stuffed my phone and IDs in my shirt pocket, and stuck my electronics in my waistband. My new attire put me into a new state of mind. Having been stripped of my own clothing, a last vestige of autonomous self-hood, I felt depersonalized. The attitude I took toward myself after putting on the institutional blue pajamas, of doubtful cleanliness, became depreciatory. Interviews with residents revealed that this feeling of degradation is widespread:

James: When they make you change into pajamas. That's jail style. They try to say for security reasons, I can understand that, but, now this is what gets me: when they first come out with the pajamas, they said in a week or two they were going to have shirts, but they never got them. And if you don't have no t-shirt, you have to sleep just bare-chested. But to me, it just puts me in mind of jail, you know. It really do.

DW: Can you describe what it's doing to you inside?

James: It makes me depressed. Every so often I get a little sad. But I can't blame anyone because, myself, you know, I put myself in this position in a sense. That's the way I look at it: it's my fault. But it ain't something that lasts for very long. Because I always try to look at the brighter side. But all of a sudden, that sadness will come in, but I don't dwell on it and I will not let it stay. I refuse. I've been across the world [in the military]. I can adapt to any kind of environment.

After changing into my pajamas, I stuffed my jeans in the basket and placed my bed ticket in a clear plastic pocket on its front. I then handed my basket to a Program member who was standing behind the window in exchange for a sheet and blanket. "No pillow?" I asked. "Y'all always walk off with em," the Program man informed me. "They don't clean the beds anyway," said a man behind me, in an ironically consoling tone. "So

you might catch any kind of thing in that bed, crabs or life threatening events. It's been known to happen."

Dorm Life

Each of the Mission's four dorms accommodate approximately 100 men. The fifty bunk beds per dormitory are spaced about five feet apart. Sleeping is perhaps the most vulnerable of all human practices, and the prospect of putting oneself in such a position amid 100 strangers is enough to make anyone think twice about trying his luck outside. My first dorm experience in the Mission followed a 24 hour stretch on the street which physically wore me down. The bunks looked far more luxurious than the two pieces of cardboard I slept on the previous evening. I needed to lie down in order to regain my strength, and eagerly sought out my bed. After some searching, I located bunk A-45. It was pressed against a cinderblock wall. Glass block created a quasi-window, allowing me to gauge the time of day by the amount of sunlight it let in. I spread out my white sheet on the rubber mattress, and had to use a significant amount of upper-body strength to hoist myself on the top bunk since the bed (unlike the others) did not have a ladder. Following Howard's advice, I took off my shoes, stuffed my belongings in them, and used them as a pillow.

Sleeping on one's shoes is both an organizational adaptation and a routine indignity of dorm life. Missionaries claim that they do not distribute pillows because there is a high incidence of theft. Their explanation seems implausible, however, given that a man must return his bedding each morning in exchange for his belongings. Since shoes must be worn on the premises at all times, even men who can afford lockers cannot store their footwear in them. Because the dorms are intentionally hardened and

depersonalized in order to encourage men to enter Life Recovery, they lack private storage places. These organizational deficiencies interact with a logic of prison life – "Don't have stuff if you can't keep it!" – spurring men to develop a private stash spot for an item they have a difficult time living without. Men thus convert their shoes into a pillow, which turns the bed into a personal storage space that thwarts the would-be thief's appropriation of this scarce and precious resource.

Other amenities too precious to stash in the neighborhood, leave in the courtyard, or leave in the shower room's green nylon bag – medication, electronics, ID, etc. – are typically concealed in the underwear or elastic band of the blue pajama bottoms. Following several informants' advice, I stuffed several of my valuables down my pajama bottoms after climbing in my bunk. I then tucked myself underneath the blanket in order to create another barrier to the surrounding environs, and then stared directly at the wall, pretending as if no one else was in the room. The din of 100 broken down men, however, was impossible to block out. Bickering, wheezing, hacking, coughing, laughing, and acrid foot odor fill this human warehouse each night and permeate one's consciousness.

Larry, a black man who always wears a set of headphones over his salt-and-pepper dreadlocks, was on the bottom bunk to my right. He kept yelling: "Metro comin tonight! Metro comin. If you got a warrant, watch out." After about the tenth time he repeated this, a man from across the dorm shouted, "I ain't got no warrant nigga. Shut up!" Another man repeatedly yelled: "Anybody got any crack?" "I need a strong narcotic," shouted another man in kind. My bunk mate, who arrived after lights out (i.e. 8 p.m.), began cursing when he found his bunk. "I hate this fuckin bed. Man, shiiit. I *hate*

this fuckin bed," he said while shaking the whole bunk, making me feel partially sea sick. He would not shut up about the bunk and Larry offered to switch bunks with him.

Shortly after claiming the bunk beneath me, Larry began whispering: "Hey man. Lemme have that bunk!" The third time he said this, I realized he was speaking to me. "White boy. Lemme have that bunk," he continued, this time shaking the bed frame. Howard, whose bunk was next to mine, woke up to the sound of my bunk rattling. "Leave him the fuck alone!" he shouted at Larry. "I'm a break my foot off in your ass if you don't!" he added. "Man, fuck you!" Larry shouted. To my relief, Larry left me alone for the rest of the evening. But, it made for a very light sleep. At breakfast that morning, Howard explained to me that Larry wanted my bunk because: "First, you was new and he was testing you. Second, your bed is private. Can't nobody see what he doin if he curl up against the wall." "Couldn't you see what I was doing?" I asked in disbelief. "Yeah. But it's relative man. He may have wanted to jerk off or somethin. Plus, outta habit, you always want a top bunk coz you don't ever know who on top of you. What if he take a shit or piss and you beneath him?"

Contaminative Exposure. Communal sleeping arrangements expose residents to the "contaminative exposure" (Goffman 1961) of fellow residents. A bunkmate's urine, feces, or semen are potential sources of physical contamination, as well as the olfactory offenses incurred through close proximity to dorm mates' flatulence, foot and body odor. Another social source of contamination stems from the Mission's hybrid function as a catch basin for distinct sub-sets of Nashville's marginal citizenry. Ex-prisoners make up the largest proportion of the residents, but ex-mental patients, another de-institutionalized

population, fill the dorms each night. Ray's narrative paints a particular nightmare that

stands in for his generalized experience of dorm life:

Ray: Oh, the crazy people. There' s one old boy that makes it really hard to sleep. I forget what they call him -- but rumor is he stabbed his -- he killed his wife a long time ago, went to prison, got out -- he's nuts. He literally like walks in a circle talking to himself.

     So this guy, I'm sitting there and I hear this sound and I'm going, "What the fuck is that?" I look up and I look around, and I can't really pinpoint what the noise is. I hear it again. I finally get up and I'm looking and I spot what it is. It's this boy walking around naked, barefooted, no shirt, and he's just walking around and he's standing right in front of the door and he'll put his ear up to it and he'll back up and he'll start punching in the air, like somebody's there or something; real weird-like and underhanded; not even like a punch, but making that noise.

     And he would sit there and he would stop, and he'll go back and go lay down. About 2, 3 minutes later, he'll get back up and he'll walk back over there and he'll do that again. It seems like a person like that would be somewhere else, I mean, because he's not one of these guys just trying to draw a check. I don't even think he draws a check. Guys like that make it kind of hard to sleep, and the staff does nothing about that.

DW: So how does that make you feel?

Ray: Uncomfortable as hell. How do you go to bed, you know, with this guy -- and you know, that was probably 20 feet away from me and you just don't know if you're going to wake up and the guy's going to be, you know, stabbing you or anything because a weapon's really easy to get in there.

     Street life's absence of heterosexual opportunities creates a second source of

social contamination. This dynamic was revealed to me by Reggie, several weeks into my

field work. As we hung out in front of the free clinic he told me:

Reggie: All kind of hell-raising in them dorms. People arguing. You got the mental patients, who might be talking to themselves or just blurting out some obscenities or whatever the case may be. Then you've got the guys who like the homosexual activities, and then you got the guys who masturbate. So you have all that going on around you every night.

DW: Homosexual activities and masturbation?

Reggie: This boyfriend-girlfriend, whatever you want to call it. They pretty much always get a bed right by each other, you know. Then they get under the covers, break out the butter, and do there thang. One night they got carried away and saw em both butt naked.

DW: Butter?

Reggie: It's like Vaseline. These guys don't care. You've got some guys that just literally don't care. They just masturbate and everyone hear it, you know? I just try to shut it out. I study my Bible until I be sleeping, and I pray, and I roll over and go to sleep. I don't let it faze me. I don't let it bother me the least little bit. I mean, this is my philosophy. What the other person do, it doesn't affect me. I don't let it. I could feed into it, but why? I have enough problems of my own.

Securing a Top Bunk. Acquisition of a top bunk provides residents with a means of drawing a boundary around the self-terrain violated by the physical and social environment of the dormitory; it allows one to employ a kind of physical and symbolic ostrich technique that creates a wall of privacy and security in an inherently public and insecure milieu populated by strangers. Since the odd-number bed tickets that entitle one to a top bunk are distributed to only half of the resident population, many men devise schemes for securing these scarce commodities.

Many men barter with one another for a top bunk, trading street currency such as bus passes, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and clothing. This practice was revealed to me the night I met Jerry in the courtyard. He had been released from prison four weeks earlier, and made his way to Lafayette by Greyhound. Thirty minutes into our conversation, he told me: "I was raised slingin drugs," before taking out a yellow pharmaceutical bottle and shaking it like a maraca. "SEROQUEL. I'm gonna take two of these tonight and sleep like a baby." Jerry then sidled up next to me. He positioned his cupped right hand and whispered, "Here. Take this, but don't tell anyone." I stuck my left hand beneath his right and he dropped what felt like a piece of chalk. As I grasped it, he whispered: "Half a SEROQUEL. It'll help you sleep tonight." "Thanks man. Appreciate it," I said[102].

As the chapel service started wrapping up, I learned that I had been drawn into a personal debt. "Where you sleepin?" Jerry asked. "B-43," I replied. "How about you?" "A-22," he replied. I made my way into the shower room nearly 15 minutes after Jerry, and found him waiting for me. "Hey man, you know I gave you that SEROQUEL. Why

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[102] I later learned that this is an "antipsychotic" drug used to treat bipolar disorder and schizophrenia

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don't you come off that ticket?" "What's it matter, man?" "I like to be closer to God," he said sarcastically. "Just switch beds with me."

Many men transmute the logic of prison life into the logic of dorm life by engaging in brute intimidation. "You can kind of tell which guys are newly from the penitentiary because of the mind reasons," explained Dante as we hung out in the courtyard. "It's a very hostile place, as far as like punching people or being stabbed. Just spending a night in the place is just stressful. So if some guy is buff and looks like he just got out the pen, lookin all crazy and shit, I just give him my bunk." Tyson, an imposing 6-foot tall, roughly 300 pound African-American man, has a reputation for intimidating other residents into giving him what he wants. He came to accept me after he learned I was Howard's "boy," and explained his nihilistic logic of interpersonal violence:

In prison, I could *call shots.* But that took away from the self-gratification of me doin it myself. Even today, I can fall back into that sadistic son-of-a-bitch I can be. But, I'm working my way away from it. Just don't let me go into that zone on you. I started boxin at an early age. Golden gloves, AAU. It's all about survival out here. I ain't afraid to die, The only thang I'm here to do is die. You know that sayin, 'All you got is death and taxes?' I ain't gotta pay no taxes, I just gotta die. So if I *want* that bunk, I'm a *get* your bunk.

The Hidden Injuries of the Intake Ritual

One might argue that there are as many Missions as there are residents. Each man brings to this religious organization his own needs and background, leading him to forge an idiosyncratic interpretation of life within the material and symbolic confines of the first-floor recruiting ground. Different men certainly see the conditions of proselytization differently, and place different emphases on its most salient elements. However,

examination of the way homeless residents perceive the social and physical environment created by the missionaries reveals a consensual core of perceptions with regard to the nature of life on the first-floor.

Rescue Work as Psychic Punishment

Deprivations and frustrations of Mission life are created by a ritualized series of situations men perceive as an affront to their sense of self. The symbolic implications of the intake ritual are, from many residents' perspective, psychologically sadistic:

Clark: The daily routine, the ritual, to put a label on it I think you just feel there's such a lack of respect given in the mission. Day in, day out it's just kind of the degrading kind of environment. It's depressing. It affects you negatively in maybe different ways besides physically, you know, psychologically.

Moral condemnation by the missionaries – communicated *verbally* in the courtyard, chow line and chapel, and conveyed *materially* by the shower- and dorm-room's constituent bodily mortifications – leads men to interpret rescue work as an exercise in psychic punishment further evidenced by perceived deprivations regarding life-sustaining resources and physical security relative to their counterparts who have joined Life Recovery. "They add insult to injury," as Renaldo put it. "They say, 'Well, if you're in our Program we're just going to really treat you really good. But if you're in the transient population we're just going to punish you for being fucked up, treat you like shit.'"

Detroit built on Renaldo's commentary as the three of us loitered in front of the free clinic:

Detroit: They promote themselves as a spiritual place, I spiritually feel worse after leaving that place every morning. I feel like going through that process and procedure it's like I'm a number. They call row by row and you still got to wait for them to tell you to move. You wait there for them to call, you can't move, if you go back outside you lose your spot. You got to do what they tell you, wait in line to get a bed to hear your number. It's belittling. You're being warehoused. You're not a human that's being given a safe place to stay for the night. You're just being put up on a shelf on the first-floor with a bunch of crazy thugs; unless you want to join the program.

The Spartan accommodations and condemnatory social relations that animate the

first-floor express in objective form the Manichaean opposition between dark and light,

sin and salvation (Manichaeanism will be discussed in the next chapter in great detail):

Chaplain Brown: If we make things too comfortable downstairs, too welcoming, then men will never want to leave our transient ministry. Through the work we do down here, we try to be a reflection of God and the way God wants us to live our lives. Through that influence and through that talking – staff members all the time sit down with guys and talk with them – all we do really is provide a platform for a person needing God to get on board and do what they need to do; to come into the light.

Residents' basic needs may be met by the transient ministry – they can indefinitely obtain

food, shelter, and clothing – but a man finds his material environment inadequate relative

to Life Recovery members' insofar as he responds to its:

[O]bjects socially or in a social fashion (by means of the mechanism of thought, the internalized conversation of gestures). Any thing – any object or set of objects, whether animate or inanimate, human or animal, or merely physical – toward which he acts, or to which he responds, socially, is an element of what for him is the generalized other; by taking the attitudes of which toward himself, he becomes conscious of himself as an object or individual, and thus develops a self or personality (Mead: 218).

By instantiating the conceptual boundaries which order the fundamentalist-

evangelical cosmology (discussed in the next chapter) in the architectural spaces through

which homeless men ritualistically circulate, missionaries create an organizational

environment that addresses "mute injunctions" (Bourdieu 1999) to homeless men's

bodies and, accordingly, their sense of self. The physical space of the Mission, in

essence, acts as a medium which converts missionaries' desired moral order into

residents' mental structures by equating their spiritually contaminated status with the

material deprivations and bodily mortifications of the first-floor. Missionaries'

construction of residents as men engaged in the collective denial of God's socio-moral

order – as evidenced by their alleged lack of piety – casts them in the "transient" role

they must play in their daily negotiations of this spiritual milieu:

Ritchie: They don't seem they really want to help you get out of here. They seem like they want to *keep you* here. The mission is not here to *help* you. Not in that aspect. They don't care about you going to work. They designed to feed you, clothe you and give you shelter. But as far as helping you, uh-uh. It's not designed for that. Unless you gonna join the Program. If you don't do that, you're stereotyped. And you're labeled with stigma. And that's what they stand on – 'Every homeless person in society is hooked on drugs and alcohol' – we all sinners. We all *transients.*

By taking missionaries' attitudes toward themselves vis-à-vis the physical accommodations of the transient ministry, men become conscious of their depreciatory position in the Mission's moral order—a status reinforced by missionaries' nightly attempt to align residents' subjectivity with the statutory ethic described in the next chapter, as well as its constituent salvationary quest in the chapel service.

Marketing Religious Goods

"The soul," wrote Michel Foucault (1988), "cannot know itself except by looking at itself in a similar element, a mirror. Thus, it must contemplate the divine element" (25). Proselytization in the pulpit involves holding up a mirror to the homeless congregation through the symbolic depiction, evaluation, and prescription of/for residents homeless lifestyle – its constituent unbelief (sin), non-existent spiritual relations (disconnection from God), and institutional dependence (reliance on the transient ministry). Preaching is a semiotic source of missionaries' power given their ability to constitute a "congregation" which lacks access to the life-sustaining resources granted in exchange for their chapel attendance. By converting its religious capital into men's submission through this religious labor, missionaries' moral economy of care creates a captive market for their otherwise worthless religious goods.

The aim of the symbolic drama enacted each day on the chapel's stage is the subjectivation of Biblical Truth. Missionaries believe that recurrent exposure to relatively invariable sermon content will eventually lead homeless residents to memorize what they

are told each evening and seek to convert these truths into scriptural-based standards of conduct in the context of Life Recovery. Consider Jim Holliman's explanation:

We've got guys that's been in our system for 10 or 15 years and all of a sudden they go to chapel service, then go to a counselor and say 'I need to join your program.' Why that happens, and it's taken 15 years to happen, I don't know. But the *formula* of continuing to do *every single day* – providing God's Word – it really is up to God and that person what they're going to do. Guys stay homeless because they're not sick and tired of being sick and tired. Until they finally look *within themselves* they won't see the cause of their destructive lifestyle. In Chapel, we try to get them to *look inside their soul*. Then all we do is provide a platform for someone who needs God to get on board and live according to the Bible's eternal truths.

Holliman links the Bible's statutory prescriptions to homeless men's selves by positing one and only one solution to poverty: the soul's purification through its reconnection with Christ. Only undergoing a spiritual conversion in the sacred space of Life Recovery will end a man's suffering.

Oberschall (1993) points out that religious ideologies contain "a cognitive, moral, and emotional structure expressed in terms of frames and symbols without which [they] could not be communicated, learned, remembered, and believed" (364). Missionaries' Manichaean cosmology, which we will explore in the next chapter, serves as a prism through which they refract the doctrines and interpretation of Biblical text intended to speak to the lives of homeless congregants. By invoking Biblical images and narratives of transgression, reconciliation, and conversion preachers designate their target audience as "fallen" individuals who lack the proper connection with God, and hence suffer the tribulations coupled with a resultant impure soul. In doing so, sermons turn homeless men's style of life into an object of intervention missionaries have the tools to "fix." Put differently, missionaries attempt to link homeless men's lived experiences to their ideological framings in an effort to actualize the operative goal of rescue work: saving souls by steering men into Life Recovery.

The men whose inner lives (souls) are transmuted into an object of spiritual intervention respond to the Biblical images and narratives missionaries use to frame the "homeless lifestyle" through a complex mix of negation, reinterpretation, and/or disregard. By briefly digging into men's subjectivity through the analysis of both field conversations and interviews, it is possible to open a window on how they mediate and respond to the interface between their life experiences and missionaries' discursive construction of their existential problems in living and life conduct vis-à-vis Biblical doctrine ("Truth").

Reactions from the Pews

Many men seated in the pews, for instance, do not believe that the gospel of reconciliation explains how their biographical trajectories channeled them into Mission life, as revealed in a conversation I had with Ray and Deshawn in the courtyard one morning:

Ray: They tell you that the reason why you're homeless and the reason why you're at the rescue mission is because God has taken you in because God is trying to tell you something and he's trying to get your attention. So he has me be homeless and at the rescue mission for a reason. 'God has brought you here to hear what I have to tell you.' 'God has given me a message, and here it is. *You're a sinner*.'

DW: Really?

Deshawn: They always say you're a sinner, come back to God. What else would they tell *us* down here? As if your monetary possessions has any reference to your relationship to God. That's the thing that gets to me. I don't think that God is judging you by your worldly possessions or that it's any type of sign of what kind of relationship you have with God.

Even though evangelical fundamentalists replaced the doctrine of predestination with Arminian freedom of the will (Riesebrodt 1993) – i.e., rather than resulting from a lack of good works, unbelief is the condition for exit from God's Kingdom – men respond to the Calvinist flavor of this reconciliatory precept by negating its equation of abject poverty

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with a sinful way of life stemming from one's disconnection from God. The internal locus of blame embedded in this tenet of evangelical-fundamentalist ideology fails to resonate with men's life experience, leading men to reinterpret the recurrent communication of this precept as an exercise in psychic punishment.

Men have a similar reaction to the narratives that missionaries use to translate their congregation's alleged behavioral deficiencies and existential state into moralistic terms commensurate with their belief system. These stories, which communicate to men their depreciatory spiritual status, become inscribed in their subjectivity. At the drop of a hat, they can rattle off the key allegorical vehicles missionaries employ each evening:

Maurice: Job or the prodigal son. That's the number one thing that they preach. They preach that all the time. Every reverend that comes there preaches one of those particular sermons…Whatever book that they'll preach out of, there's always someone that's done bad; let's say like Samson and Delilah. There's always somebody that – like Adam and Eve, Daniel, Job – somebody that's tested God. John Bunyan, who's born again. It's always like telling us we get punished for the bad things that we done.

Jerry had a similar observation. In the chow hall one evening he told me that: "It's always the hell-and-brimstone thing. It's never about his love or his compassion. It's always about someone who had to quit doing what they're doing or they're going to hell."

Rather than motivating men to "look within themselves" these relatively invariable narratives are often experienced by men, as with the gospel of reconciliation, as spiritual affronts to their self-conceptions. A salient instance of this general pattern is captured by a conversation I had with Michael and Calypso in the courtyard one afternoon:

Michael: It's always about being homeless. It's always about crack or whiskey. They're knocking you down instead of picking you up. They throw all of this negative at you, man; they knock you down, like they're trying to keep you down. Every sermon, once they start, it's, "God wouldn't like you to smoke that crack. God didn't mean for you to smoke it." And the sermon just keeps on and on, and the trouble is it don't ever change. It's like, all of a sudden, it's not about religion no more. It's like more of a testimony than a sermon.

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DW: What do you mean it's a testimony?

Calypso: They sit there and call you derelicts and alcoholics and drug addicts all to your face. It's like they actually think they're talking above your head, but anybody with any kind of common sense knows that they're only looking down on you the whole time.

Men seize on the invariable stories preachers use in their attempt to describe homeless life in Biblical terms. They do not believe the moral allegories used by missionaries adequately frame their experience of poverty, nor do they find the moral calculus equating such allegorical depictions with substance use and a sinful lifestyle logically satisfying. The concept of the "fall" is perhaps the most unsatisfying causal explanation for a man's unhoused existence. Consider Jamal's discussion of this Manichaean imagery:

Jamal: If I went to your house for just one hour a day and told you everything that you were doing wrong and why you were doing it wrong and that you're a bad person for doing it, after a while it would wear on you. They have this automatic assumption that because you're homeless that somehow you've fallen out of the grace of God…If we take their logic, it means that because someone's wealthy and because he's got a home, you know, he's a son of God.
    So to imply because I'm in the situation that I'm in that it's not because of an economic reason or any other thing. To say that if I had a right relationship with God that every other problem that I have will be easily overcome and you'll be on your way out of that homelessness avoids a whole lot of very different things, like the price of an apartment or whether you're 47 years old, haven't worked in five years and have bad credit.

Jamal's commentary is uncharacteristically eloquent, but it captures the essence of his peers' rebuttals to this key element of evangelical-fundamentalist ideology. He negates missionaries' moral calculus by invoking structural impediments to successful social reintegration. Reconnecting with God, from his perspective, will hardly erase the economic hurdles erected in his path over his 5 year stretch of homelessness. However, the excessive haranguing to which he is exposed in the chapel each night – "it would wear on you" – appears to ultimately take effect in the minds of some residents. By attempting to get men to "look into their souls" through a mix of coercion and persuasion,

sermons, in conjunction with other aspects of the intake ritual, missionaries indeed channel some men into Life Recovery.

Summary

In this chapter, we have seen that missionaries envelop homeless "congregants" in bonds of asymmetrical exchange through their transmutation of life-sustaining resources into a conduit of religious authority designed to inculcate Biblical (statutory) prescriptions in the minds of homeless beneficiaries with the intent of morally re-engineering their depraved "homeless lifestyle." In part, this moral-alchemic process casts homeless men in the dual organizational roles of potential converts and tropes that personify the deleterious and sinful "homeless lifestyle" Life Recovery is designed to "break." For the most part, men's collective ritual experience flows from their begrudging occupation of these roles. The hidden injuries they incur from the intake ritual leads them to experience rescue work as an exercise in psychic punishment given the barrage of symbolic affronts missionaries and Life Recovery members level against their collective self-concept. Because he becomes what he is through his recurrent relations with missionaries who both assign him a depreciatory position in their spiritual order and expect him to behave in accordance with his supernaturally vilified status, a "transient" is pressed between two options if he desires continued access to the Mission's goods and services: yielding to missionaries' moral prescription of entering Life Recovery or continuously incurring the intake ritual's material and symbolic assaults. In

Chapter 6, we will explore how these two organizational routes affect social and inter-subjective concourse between missionaries' two client groups.

In light of the next chapter, we will see that the daily transactions between missionaries and "transient" men vis-à-vis the intake ritual brings into the practical realm missionaries' otherwise virtual religious schemas; they express in objective form symbolic oppositions and hierarchies that order the cosmological universe inhabited by these self-proclaimed shepherds of the Lord. That is, up unto this point we have only gestured toward the religious belief system instantiated in these practical relations without taking its ethical/ideological dimensions seriously. In order to fully understand missionaries' *moral economy of care* we must therefore turn to a discussion of its *symbolic* components – missionaries' spiritual logic (schema) as well as the doctrines, ethics, social obligations, constructions of homelessness, and managerial prescriptions refracted through this logic. For, it is these ethical/ideological dimensions that shape the meaning and purpose behind their distribution of *material* life-sustaining goods and services in both the first-floor transient ministry as well as in the second-floor Life Recovery Program.

CHAPTER V

Recovery, Sin, and Salvation: A Manichaean Moral Economy of Care

One day I had a sort of trance or vision. I was singing at my work and my mind became absorbed and it seemed as if I was working for the Lord down in the Fourth Ward. I had a house and people were coming in. There was a bath and they came in and I washed and cleansed them outside *and the Lord cleansed them* inside. *They came at first by small numbers, then by hundreds, and afterwards by thousands…Something said to me, 'Would you do that for the Lord if He shall call you?' I answered, 'Yes, Lord, open the way and I will go.' I felt that I would go down there where I had always lived. I was used to the filth and drunkenness.*

Field Notes   June 2008

"God has shown me that there's men at the rescue mission who walk closer to Him than I have," shouts Reverend Johnson in a thick southern accent. His stark white hair threatens to break free from a heavy coat of pomade as he shakes his gargantuan frame to-and-fro behind the brown, wooden lectern. The large white cross behind the reverend intensifies his flushed red face, which stares out at over two hundred homeless men. "Normally I preach about keepin the straight-and-narrow. Tonight, however, I decided that *some* of you are already with the Lord." Johnson pauses, wipes the sweat from his forehead with a red-and-white polka-dot handkerchief, and begins to read scripture—Isaiah Chapter 50, Verse 10:

Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of His servant, who walks in the darkness and has no light, yet trusts in the name of the Lord and relies upon his God? But all of you are kindlers of fire, lighters of firebrands. Walk in the flame of your fire, and among the brands that you have kindled! This is what you shall have from my hand: you shall lie down in sorrow.

The reverend places his well-thumbed Bible on the lectern, walks to the front of the stage and casts a discerning glare at the members of his "congregation," many of whom are either engaged in hushed conversations or are nodding in and out of consciousness. "I believe the Bible speaks of *two* kinds of darkness," he explains to them. "I believe it speaks of *one* being *evil.* And I believe it speaks to *another* of being *perplexed.* And sometimes God will allow darkness to *test our hearts.*" "Not *my* heart," jokes Reggie, who momentarily lifts his nose out of Louise Merriwether's *Daddy was a Number Runner.* Allen quietly protests in kind, "Man. This is where I come to *sleep.* I don't need none of this!" "Amen brother, *Amen!*" says Jeffrey in blasphemous jest.

"The apostle Paul said he was 'perplexed,'" shouts the reverend in a booming voice. "We're talking about a man who *fears God*, who is struggling. And if you think you're in sorrow and darkness right now, you best get right with God. Did you know that

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the Devil is tryin to make you feel like there's no period to the end of your sentence?

God's tryin to save you!" "Amen, *amen!*" Jeffrey sarcastically shouts. Johnson lapses into

an ecstatic trance and, as if channeling the Holy Spirit, recounts the parable of John

Bunyan:

He was born over three hundred years ago in England. He grew up as a young man who had never been to church much. He never heard about the Lord Jesus Christ much. As he got older he started fallin deeper and deeper into sin. He'd go out on the prowl for loose women, he'd go to beer joints, he was a brawler.

But he overheard people talkin about the Lord Jesus Christ. He was heavily interested and started reading the Bible every night. He learned from the Bible that Jesus *died* on the cross to take away his sin. And in his log cabin with nothing but him, his Bible, and the Holy Spirit, John Bunyan received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and he was *born again.* He began to preach the gospel *immediately.*

And in those days in England they wasn't preachin much about men bein saved. Men bein born again. So people were leavin the church and goin out to hear this man preach. John Bunyan continued to preach for God and therefore he was thrown in prison. And in a dark, gray, cold prison John Bunyan wrote what I believe is the best book outside the Bible in the Christian faith: *Pilgrim's Progress.*

A mullet-cropped member of the mission's Life Recovery program gets up from

his designated front-row seat. He stands inches away from the stage as Johnson shouts

"*Progress*" and starts jumping up and down. His sandy blonde strings of hair leap like

whips attacking his Hawaiian shirt. "Child molester," Allen mutters. The reverend smiles

at the Life Recovery man's enthusiasm and expounds on John Bunyan:

When we accept the Lord in our heart, and we're saved, we rejoice, we read our Bibles and God speaks to us. Everything seems to be going good then, *all of a sudden*, Life *closes in*. You get knocked down, then get back up and then get knocked down again. And the first thing you or I ask ourselves is: *Why? Why* has God allowed this sickness to strike *me*? *Why God? Why* have all these things happened to me?

The truth is, if God wanted us to know why, he'd show us. But it doesn't do him any good to explain things to us. *Trials and tribulations* can come down on us at *any time.* Friends, this is not Heaven. God has given us a promise. In Heaven there's gonna be no more sorrow, no more cryin, no more pain. He talks about *Heaven.* He talks about *eternity.* But, Jesus said of this life—John Chapter 16, Verse 33—'in the world you will have tribulations.'

There are different trials and tribulations that each one of us are gonna face. A man's not livin in reality if he thinks that's not true. Jesus asked *why* to the heavenly Father. I believe the real question is not '*Why?'* The real question we need to be askin is *'How?' How* are you and I gonna respond to these things in our life. *How* are we gonna *respond* to the trials and tribulations. In the Old Testament, if a man was having trials and tribulations they were *spiritual* problems.

Reverend Johnson begins pacing back and forth on the stage. With an intense and anguished look on his face, he begins witnessing. "I was once like all of you," he tells the congregation before pausing in front of the rightmost LCD screen, which reads, in white block letters: "JESUS IS THE ANSWER!" After collecting his thoughts Johnson continues his self-narrative:

But, 20 years ago I came to a Mission like this one and they helped me concentrate on getting my life right with God and that made sense to me. It was a matter of, 'I can't depend on people around me. I couldn't depend on half the people I was runnin with because I can't depend on myself. The only thing I can depend on is – if I care about God – I got to do what God wants me to do. And God doesn't want me to be out there *drinking and doing drugs*, and *living a bad, homeless lifestyle*. He wants me to be a *productive individual*.

"There's gonna be hardships that come along with tryin to serve God," shouts the reverend before returning to the scripture—Job Chapter 19, Verse 8:

'*God* has set *darkness* in my midst.' Job had plenty of questions to ask God. There are things God can teach us *in darkness* that he cannot teach us *in the light*. Job was a man who loved God with all his heart and had evil brothers who sold him into slavery. Daniel, you remember Daniel? He was thrown in a Lion's Den. So what do we do when darkness, heartache, despair, and trouble comes? *Trust* in the name of *the Lord.* Just trust in *Jesus!!* When we *find ourselves in darkness* – in the middle of a trial, heartache, or despair – we don't need explanations. We need *God!*

Reverend Johnson collapses to his knees and clasps his hands together as if to pray and begins softly weeping. "If you're here tonight and you feel as though the sun has set on you, I want you to know that it will rise again," he cries out. "If you're going through darkness I'm telling you there's comin a better day. Just keep trustin in God and believing in Him." "*Amen!*" shouts the man in the Hawaiian shirt who continues hopping in front of the stage. The reverend stands back on his feet and, with an electrifying jolt of energy, bellows:

I know some of you are tryin your best to lay before God, trust him. The *Lord* is the *one* you need to turn to, *right now.* If you're here, and you're not trustin in Jesus Christ, you remember I said there's *two* kinds of darkness? The Bible speaks of another kind of darkness: an *everlasting darkness*. Those who do not know Jesus Christ will leave this life and go to a place of *eternal* darkness and their *sun* will *never* rise again.

"Oh Lord, here it come," Reggie says as he closes his book. "Friends, today is the day of *salvation*," Johnson shouts. "*Now* is the time to accept Jesus Christ. Submission to God's Will shall end your separation from Him. Please talk to me about our Program. If you

wanna come and pray, now would be the time. Won't you come down and accept Jesus into your heart?! Do not be afraid to come forward and accept the *salvation* of the Lord."

A Manichaean Moral Economy of Care

Reverend Johnson's sermon dramatizes the convergence of the Mission's organizational dynamics and the tensions inscribed within them. In part, it is illustrative of the deep cultural schema that lay at the root of rescue missionaries' belief system and "rescue work." Sermons are the primary vehicle through which they articulate and promote their Manichaean view of the world in which *darkness* is identified with the realm of the material and corporeal – which harbor base, contaminative temptations – and where *light* is identified with the realm of the spiritual. Homeless men are told they are in an endless, heroic, internal battle with themselves. Their bodies – the realm "of the flesh" – are enmeshed in a world dominated by Satan, while their spirit must continuously fight to maintain its predisposition to act for "good," on behalf of God. *Sin*, from a Manichaean vantage point "appears as a reprehensible and headlong fall to earth from the realm of purity and clarity into that of darkness and confusion, leading to a state of contamination and deserved ignominy [disrepute/dishonor/degradation]" (Weber 1978: 524).

The root imagery of homeless men's "fall" from grace is indelibly wed to missionaries' premillenarian eschatology; they reject the "world" and emphasize the personal nature of one's relationship with God which they believe is the key to eternal *salvation* after death or upon the immanent return of Christ and His passage of final judgment on all non-believers (i.e., "The Rapture"). Restitution for the fall, homeless

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men are told, can only be made by subjugating oneself to God which, in the organizational context of a rescue mission, means submitting to the religious authority of his disciples: the missionaries. The deep cultural structure of the battle between God and Satan is essential to understanding the organizational "methodology of salvation" (Weber 1978) – i.e., the rescue mission and its Life Recovery and Transient ministries – missionaries have constructed to facilitate this reconciliation. "Rescue work," at its core, involves missionaries' daily attempts to convince homeless men that their "homeless lifestyle" is responsible for their current economic (and moral) status and that the key to successful reintegration into mainstream society can be found in the second floor Life Recovery Program: the locus of "salvation." Homeless men, in other words, must cross over from "darkness" into the "light."

In the last chapter, we explored the social dynamics of the Transient Ministry's intake ritual and revealed how it both envelops homeless "congregants" in bonds of asymmetrical exchange and casts them in the dual roles of potential converts and anathematic tropes. In this chapter, we will excavate the symbolic "building blocks" of missionaries' belief system in order to reveal the ethical/ideological underpinnings of the Rescue Mission's organizational goals and ministerial forms. Doing so allows us to understand the juncture between missionaries' schematically structured ethical obligations and their material, ameliorative practices. To achieve this objective, we must return to the deep structure of Manichaean dualism and trace how this symbolic drama between "God" and "Satan" – the symbolic foundation of missionaries' ideological belief system – becomes instantiated in a "moral system" that reminds "the [homeless] community of its corporate relationship with that system" (McRoberts 2004: 194).

Enacting an Evangelical Orientation

Rescue missions differ from other faith-based charitable organizations – such as the Salvation Army – in that missionaries see themselves as providing outreach ministries for all Protestant churches. Once united in their quest to facilitate homeless individuals' "salvation" from their headlong fall into darkness, the Clinton administration's introduction of the "charitable choice" clause – which forbids proselytization – has created a continuum of rescue work orientations. Open dialogue with "clients" marks the left end of the continuum, while evangelizing to "lost souls" marks the right end. Most rescue missions, including the Lafayette Mission, do not accept state funding out of fear that its anti-proselytization stipulation will undermine their fundamental reason for existence (Chavez 1999).

"We do not apologize for our Christian principles and philosophy," explained Carl Resener, the frail and gray-haired octogenarian who founded the Lafayette Mission. "If you take care of a man for 50 years on the streets and he dies, all you have done is taken care of the body; the *soul* is neglected. And that is not what God called us to do." He and his staff refuse to accept government funding, "because we would have to give up the religious emphasis, and that would take away our purpose. Therefore, we protect our right to *minister to the soul* by maintaining strict discipline as to who we cooperate with and with whom we associate." "A person can come in here every single night for food, shelter, and clothing, *no strings attached*" added Jim Holliman, a Mission administrator. "*But*, if it's above 34 degrees outside you're required to go to the chapel service. That's your only quote-unquote payment for coming in. That's the reason we're here. We've been here to evangelize since we came on line."

Rescue missionaries like Jim Holliman, Carl Resener, and Reverend Johnson hold what scholars of metropolitan ministries call an "evangelist orientation," consisting of a belief that "God has given them a message that must be shared with their friends and neighbors, and the message itself – the need to respond to God's saving action in Jesus Christ – is at the center of congregational life" (McRoberts 2003; Roozen et al. 1988). Evangelical ideologies, united in their articulation of a large-scale socio-moral crisis (i.e., poverty, vice, and the dissolution of the family), are not, however, cut from the same cloth. Evangelicals who engage in "utopian thinking" – such as African Methodist Episcopals (AME) – imagine an ideal social order that can only be achieved through progressive social reform or revolution and consequently enact an "ethic of conviction" (Riesebrodt 1993). Lafayette rescue missionaries, on the other hand, see the world in "mythical" terms (Satan and God literally have a this-worldly presence) and believe that the return to the ideal order shattered by America's crisis – the collective "fall" from God's grace – can only be achieved by society's return to the Bible's scriptural authority. This "statutory ethic," to borrow a phrase from Riesebrodt (1993), is enacted by Lafayette missionaries who, in contrast to their *social reformist* counterparts in the AME, are *fundamentalist* evangelicals.

The Gospel of Reconciliation

Rescue missionaries believe that restoration for the "fall" proceeds by the precept of "reconciliation." Because they believe Christ will soon return to earth and grant eternal salvation to believers and relegate unbelievers to eternal damnation, saving homeless individuals' "souls" creates the fundamental basis of group life inside the Mission. But how does the status of homelessness equate with the status of unbeliever (i.e., "sinner")?

Uncovering this moral calculus requires first turning to missionaries' belief in the "gospel of reconciliation," a theological principle which maintains that "man" is separated from God by his original sin, but anyone who accepts Christ as his savior can be reunited with the Lord. Even though an individual may fail to recognize it, God seeks this reconciliation to take place and will guide him to a point of contact where the reunion can occur. If one suspends his doubt, ceases searching for his own solution to his problems in living, and accepts Christ "into his heart," he has "taken the first step" toward spiritual redemption – this is the root of evangelical "conversion."

Statutory Prescriptions

The decline of the Bible as a guide to daily life, missionaries believe, has led to a societal loss of faith which has facilitated society's moral decline and the resulting moral "crisis[103]." The symptoms of this moral decline – divorce, criminality, hedonism, the unbridled pursuit of profit, and drug and alcohol use – are caused by the perpetrator's unsaved status, his/her "*sin*." Alcohol and drug use, seen by missionaries as resulting from socially degenerate shifts in personal habits and leisure time pursuits, produces licentiousness, crime, and poverty.

Rather than social amelioration, the chief function of urban rescue missions is thus the conversion of sinful individuals. Because society's moral decline/crisis is rooted in the decline of the Bible's authority in guiding individuals' conduct of life, a return to its "statutory prescriptions" (Riesebrodt 1993) holds the key to both individual restoration and eternal salvation. These prescriptions, missionaries believe, will inculcate Biblical norms and values that regulated behavior and motivated action prior to the socio-moral

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[103] This is consistent with Martin Riesebrodt's (1993) penetrating analysis of fundamentalist ideology.

crisis. The premillenarian thrust of this belief emphasizes personal salvation in an inherently debauchery- and crisis-plagued world.

The logic of missionaries' statutory ethical regulation of conduct is conveyed in their organizational handbook and, boiled down to its simplest outline, can be summarized as follows (each quotation is followed by the Biblical passage in which it is rooted): (1) "Our clients are coming out of a lifestyle of pronounced self-destructive behavior, with associated damage socially, mentally, emotionally and physically…[W]e consider the primary problem to be *spiritual*: *sin*, stemming from the universal fallen condition of men, broken fellowship and disobedience" (Genesis 3); (2) "Despite man's *inherently sinful condition*, he is responsible for his actions. He knows, but suppresses the truth" (Romans 3:23); (3) The Bible is the "inspired, inerrant Word of God" (2 Timothy 3:16); (4) Biblical scripture, therefore, provides "incomparable doctrine, correction, and instruction in right living," (2 Timothy 3:16-17); (5) "Our society is saturated with a sense of victimization, entitlement and excuses for immorality, which are crippling, passive substitutes for taking responsibility for a healthy resolution to one's own circumstances…by the grace of God our clients are encouraged to 'work out their own salvation in fear and trembling'" (Phil. 2:12); (6) If the "client/sinner is justified, delivered from the penalty of sin, the program can concentrate on sanctification, *deliverance from the power of sin*" (Leviticus 11:44); and (7) "The truth about who we are is liberating and it gives meaning and purpose to life" (John 8:32).

There is one and only one morality which is eternally valid and applies to all social situations – homelessness does not absolve one of responsibility for his problems in living. The major implication of this religious logic is that the meaning, explanation,

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and significance of a homeless man's suffering is not found in "structural violence"

(Farmer 2005) – inegalitarian social structures and processes that translate into the

personal distress of marginalized populations – but in a man's socio-moral departure

from divine precepts that prescribe and set one down the path of a morally righteous,

purposeful, and efficacious way of life. Missionaries do not necessarily deny empirical

antecedents to homelessness such as a dearth of affordable housing or ex-prisoners'

difficulty re-entering society, but these antecedents can only be understood by reference

to the eternal dual between good and evil and Satan's temporary worldly victory as

evidenced by society's increasing rejection of God's inerrant Word as the blueprint for

daily life. As Jim Holliman once put it:

We have to be experts on homelessness and causes like problems in affordable housing or the
criminal justice system. But, we're hoping that our staff is always a reflection of God and the way
God wants us to live our lives; through that influence and through talking with guys who enter
our building, *we're hoping they see God has led them to us for a reason*. We tell them that in our
Program *we focus on practical aspects of the Bible* such that *if you apply these principles to your
life*, these things fall off the radar screen. We believe that when people live their life the *God-
designed way of living*, addictions—problems won't go away—but the *problems that you
currently have that are self-inflicted or touched by the Devil's hand will go away*. That's the
essence of Life Recovery (emphasis added).

The conversion of sinful individuals ensnared in the world's web of debauchery is

a Wesleyian goal rooted in 1 John 2:16: "For everything in the world—the cravings of

sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not

from the Father but from the world." Missionaries believe that problems in living,

including poverty, are caused by immorality (drug and alcohol addiction) and all

immorality is the result of unbelief; immoral individuals have chosen Satan over God,

darkness over light. Tolerance for moral decay is consequently a sin because it allows the

scales to remain tipped in favor of Satan. "Rescue work," is therefore premised on curing

poverty by delivering homeless men from the devil's grip by reconnecting them with

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God; this is accomplished by giving men a platform to learn and believe in the scriptures and, ultimately, live according to their precepts. The most important theological distinction between missionaries and their non-fundamentalist, faith-based counterparts is thus the distinction between: "those who repudiate the Bible as the Word of God and *want social service*…in its place [i.e., social reformists]…and those who believe…that the *Bible is the very Word of God* and that *its program is to be followed*" [i.e., fundamentalists] (emphasis added; *King's Business,* 1919, qtd in Riesebrodt 1993: 61).

Life Recovery

The Mission's Life Recovery program is the organizational manifestation of missionaries' attempt to create an ideal Christian community built on the Biblical infrastructure of God's eternal, universal, moral prescriptions for a righteous way of life. Members of Life Recovery, according to the spiritual blueprint, will undergo a moral transformation as they ascend through a graduated series of Bible lessons designed to break what Lafayette missionaries and the current head of the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM) call the "homeless lifestyle." Says Burger, AGRM head:

Our experience teaches us that America needs nothing less than a reformation in the way we think about homelessness. Many traditional and government-funded approaches fail not for lack of money but for a deficit of vision: They do not treat the *whole person*. They neglect the familial and *moral aspects* of a person's life. They refuse to challenge *the homeless person's fundamental way of thinking* [i.e., lifestyle]…Men and women who *walk away from their jobs, their families, and their homes* do so because, fundamentally, *they are turning away God and His claim on their lives.* But government-funded policies, by definition, must exclude this vital dynamic from the discussion. It is a prescription predestined for failure (emphasis added).

Life Recovery programs, guided and reinforced by this programmatic perspective, are one outcome of the AGRM's expressed purpose to: "Develop programs that mutually

advance the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ[104]." "A lot of people don't realize it,"

explained Jim Holliman, "but when you bring all of the rescue missions together under

the AGRM it's the largest charitable effort in the country. But we're not recognized that

way because we're all *individual*. We swap ideas about programs and share our numbers,

our statistics on how we help. We're under this umbrella, but our efforts are individual."

The individualized organizational action taking place underneath this sacred

canopy means that the concept of "recovery" is not uniformly implemented in AGRM

missions. Some have adopted a hybrid model that combines a "school of spiritual rebirth"

with quasi-spiritual tenets of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. Others,

like the Lafayette Mission, reject both 12-step and professionalized, therapeutic

ideologies in favor of a pure, theological solution to "addiction":

Jim Holliman: We worry so little about the addiction that it's crazy. We feel that *true* recovery is about a lot more than quitting drinking and drugging. It's about *being able to claim the life that God promised you in the first place*. We teach from that vantage point. We don't believe what the American Psychiatric Institute says about addiction and the principles that say, 'I'm powerless over my addiction' and 'I'm the recipient of a terrible disease.' These are excuses that society puts in place to be able to take the guilt off of a person so that they can go recover.

  Personal responsibility is something that those programs, like AA, lack in our opinion. The Bible says that we're powerful over *all* things. We've all been victim-*ized* in some ways, but we're not victims. We are *responsible* for *everything* we do, whether we're under the influence or not. We teach from a different vantage point and we don't focus on addiction. The Bible refers to it as *sin*.

The Proselytization Chain: Steering Men into Life Recovery

One salient dimension of rescue work consequently involves convincing homeless

residents that they are "addicts" whose "homeless lifestyles" keep them mired in abject

poverty and, even worse, from claiming the life God promised them before they steered

down the path of darkness. The first-floor "Transient Ministry" is designed to facilitate

this central facet of "soul care," as some missionaries call it, by organizing the first three

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[104] AGRM Mission Statement.

steps in a four-part, sequential chain of proselytization: (1) the provision of life-sustaining resources, (2) informing the poor about the spiritual thirst that accompanies their physical dehydration, (3) telling them of Jesus Christ who can quench both their physical and spiritual thirst for an eternity, and (4) offering them entry into Life Recovery. "There is a chain that leads straight from food, shelter, and clothing to my action, which eventually gets to my testimony that Jesus Christ can solve your deepest problems," said Chaplain Thomas before citing John 4: 13-15. In this scripture, Christ is in dialogue with a Samaritan woman while he was in his pursuit of water, the most essential life-sustaining resource:

'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.'

Carl Resener built on Thomas's discussion of the proselytization chain when he described rescue work as a:

[M]inistry of the Lord to meet the physical and material needs in order to get a chance to meet the needs of the spiritual. In fact, it is a great shock to some who come to the Mission for help that we include religious activities. God has always told us to take care of the needs of the poor, but to do more for them than just feed and clothe them. We must help them to accept God's love, even in a time of great misery. My obligation to the man on the streets is the same as a pastor to a man who comes to his church. We are all ministers and we all have the obligation to reach and win the souls of individuals. I have a message, that these people can be helped by the Lord. That's what the ministry of 'rescue' is all about.

Christ's love cannot be imparted through the provision of resources alone. Food, shelter, and clothing mediate missionaries' message of eternal life and guide wayward souls to the locus of their salvation.

The indelible connection between the provision of life-sustaining resources, the attraction of souls in need of conversion/transfiguration/recovery, and the creation of an organizational system designed to facilitate this interpersonal and spiritual pathway to

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salvation is rooted in John 4: 34-37. Christ's disciples – who were off gathering food

while Jesus spoke of eternal salvation to a Samaritan woman – offered him something to

eat upon return. Christ told his followers:

'My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and complete His work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest?' But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages [i.e., the reward of gathering believers] and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here, the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor.

Jesus sows, his disciples reap, and the harvest comes from the labor of Christ's life,

death, and resurrection.

Summary

In essence, the distribution of life-sustaining resources is the essential promotion

tactic missionaries employ to open extensive interaction with potential converts. Their

provision of food, clothing, and shelter would be nothing more than a benign effort to

help the homeless poor if it were not for the cultural schemas that constitute their

Salvationist raison d'etre; but given these schemas, the life-sustaining provisions they

give away each day become a means of bringing homeless men under the control of their

religious authority. We have already seen how these symbolic components of the

Mission's *moral economy of care* are expressed socially and materially in the Transient

Ministry's first-floor intake ritual. In the next chapter, we will explore how

Manichaeanism is instantiated in organizational practices employed by missionaries to

mitigate an inherent tension operative in rescue work – namely, cultivating Program

members' "life recovery" while simultaneously maintaining a pool of potential converts

who, according missionaries' spiritual logic, threaten Life Recovery men's incipient purity. In doing so, we will briefly return to the intake ritual and consider Ron's moment of "awakening," which embodies missionaries' intended outcome vis-à-vis the intake ritual: a man's acquiescence to the moral prescription of entering Life Recovery.

CHAPTER VI

On Darkness & Light: Boundary Maintenance in the Rescue Mission

Thou silent murderer, Sloth no more
My mind imprison'd keep;
Nor let me waste another hour
With thee, thou felon Sleep.
　　　–　　H. More (1830)

Ron's Moment of "Awakening"

Since spiritual transformation ("rebirth"/ "conversion") is the primary goal of rescue work, effecting a shift in residents' causal locus is a desired outcome of missionaries' chain of proselytization. If missionaries are successful in their calling, homeless men will take responsibility for their deleterious style of life and realize that Biblical text holds the solution to their suffering. The radical redefinition of how God works in one's life – a moment of "awakening" – is, however, only one among several avenues that lead residents into Life Recovery. Over the course of my fieldwork, I witnessed numerous men cycle in and out of the Program for three other reasons: (1) Running the "rehab circuit" (i.e., A survival strategy consisting of the perpetual movement from program to program), (2) Meeting the conditions of parole, and (3) Avoiding the routine indignities of first-floor life. It is thus dubious to equate *membership* in Life Recovery with *conversion* (cf. Snow and Machalek 1983).

Ron's story, however, is emblematic of a moment of awakening. While the particulars of his story are unique – with respect to the particular ideological facet to which he eventually yielded and his vocabulary of motive – field discussions and interviews with residents reveal that the basic scenario (i.e., a shift in causal locus) holds for many other residents. Prior to his arrival in Lafayette, Ron lived a relatively comfortable life in North Nashville. As a middle class African American, he borrowed prestige from his upper class neighborhoods: Nashville's black bourgeoisie. But alcohol binges and missed work days following his divorce eventually led to job loss and, ultimately, housing foreclosure. A physical altercation with a live-in girlfriend eventually landed him in jail. Upon release, he had no home to which he could return. Couch-surfing

at friend's homes was a partial housing solution that ultimately ended when, as he put it, "I burned my last bridge."

When Ron arrived in Lafayette he befriended Allen, my key informant. The duo became virtually inseparable for a four-week period. Ron would frequently launch into diatribes against missionaries and their religious message while the three of us hung out. "Poverty pimps," "soul molesters," and "zealots" were three of his favorite words. I was consequently surprised one morning when I encountered him in the courtyard and he told me that he had "joined the Program."

I asked him to explain, step-by-step, the process that led him to make this decision. "I went and talked to a counselor and see if they can suggest some place to get help getting off the street," Ron explained. "At first I was okay being a transient. I was going to go work temp services [day labor], and stay in the Mission, and try to work my way out of here. The transient system made me feel so *low*. It's rough. I went from stayin in a $100,000 dollar house to this right here. You know what I'm sayin? I damn near flipped out. But this counselor he says, 'You know, we have a Life Recovery program, but you can't work [outside of the mission] while you're in the program.'" After sleeping on it in a transient dorm, Ron met with the same counselor first thing in the morning:

Yesterday morning I went for an interview and they got me in the Program. The counselor stressed to me that maybe you need to get your life right with God. And I said, 'What do you mean by that?' He asked me, 'What's your past experience with church and God?' And I told him and he helped me recognize that I allowed man to come between me and my God. I *woke up to what my key problem was.*

He said, 'Well, maybe that's something you need to work on and you can work on it here. We can't make you love God. We can't make you follow God's orders. It's something you have to do on your own. We can show you what you can do to get there, but you got to do it on your own.' I decided that, 'I'm okay for six months. I'm not going to have any money. I'm going to do my chores, go to classes, get my mind right, get my head right, and get my spirit right.'

Inferring the cause of one's behavior and life circumstances is an essential aspect of any individual's interpretive process. We can glean from Ron's account that he used the gospel of reconciliation – "I allowed man to come between me and my God" – to interpret the reason he became homeless. A formerly peripheral discursive construction of his lifestyle shifted to the center of his self-understanding (Snow and Machalek 1983). Consider his reaction to a sermon four weeks prior to his decision to enter Life Recovery:

When I hear my own personal beliefs being slandered by preachers who get up there and witness – they're not qualified to be speaking on behalf of God but they proclaim that they are, and they're pretty much telling you it's our way or the highway. It's personally offensive, but it's one of those things that you have to listen to…What about my $10,000 in credit card debt? No job? 'God has led me here for a reason' alright! To tell *you* what it takes to be a *real* Christian!!

Missionaries' moral calculus it would seem eventually wore down Ron's psychological defense mechanisms, leading him to attribute his problems in living to his flawed relationship with God.

It is virtually impossible to definitively unpack the conditions under which men like Ron "convert" to missionaries' belief system. However, because language is a form of practical consciousness, a shift in "attributional talk" suggests a shift in consciousness (Snow and Machalek 1983). Over the course of our conversation in the courtyard, it became clear that Ron began to attribute blame to his pre-conversion problems in living to internally-rooted problems:

It seemed I gave myself up by my bootstraps. I've been trying to do it on my own. The Mission concentrates on the individual getting his life right with God. I've had a problem with pride because I thought 'I made all this money at one time. I had this responsibility. I had people ask me advice on things.' Pride is one of the things that led me to drinking and feeling I was better than other people. In the Program, I can work on that.

On joining Life Recovery, men like Ron begin the transition from "darkness" into "light," from the realm of "sin" into the realm of "salvation." Doing so creates an inherent tension between the street world and cohabitants from which they have

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extricated and the nascent spiritual bonds of which their new religious community consists. Given Program members' liminal status in the Manichaean cosmology, missionaries go to great lengths to guard these men's incipient purity from what they see as transients' contaminative influence. Maintaining Program men's tenuous subjectivity as lost souls en route to eternal salvation presses missionaries into cultivating a programmatic framework that inculcates a "God-designed way of life" in part by building in the estrangement between Life Recovery and Transient ministries. In the remainder of this chapter, we will analyze how missionaries' schemas pattern the social concourse between members of these two ministries with regard to members' respective practical and discursive activity. We begin with an account of Life Recovery's basic programmatic contours.

Living Life Recovery

For a Program member, daily life involves active participation in four key aspects of the "life recovery" process: (1) performing daily chores integral to the working needs of the organization (the Transient ministry in particular); (2) attending intensive Bible-study courses; (3) adhering to stringent rules regarding proper social concourse; and (4) living by a regimented time-table that facilitates these daily activities. Compulsory adherence to these prescriptions and proscriptions distinguishes "working" the Program from life in the Transient ministry. The programmatic framework created by these interlocking components instantiates the overarching purpose of Life Recovery, which the handbook describes in the following way:

This program is unapologetically Christian in every respect, believing that a commitment to Jesus Christ is not only the right thing to do, but also that it provides the healthiest way to approach life in general. The Bible provides man's best, most adequate, answers to the most serious questions in life…The program is designed to provide long-term, residential Christian care and guidance for our clients. With an attitude of acceptance, the program seeks to maintain an environment most conducive to true life recovery for men who have been struggling with, for example, moral decay, alienation, addictive behavior, criminal conduct, educational inadequacies, financial problems, depression and/or hopelessness.

Facilitating a "commitment to Jesus Christ" and maintaining "an environment most conducive to true life recovery" requires inculcating and stabilizing an inherently tenuous subjectivity (i.e., "conversion) by shifting the totality of a member's social situation. First and foremost, missionaries must cultivate intensive interactions with and between Program men. Building the spiritual bonds that forge the cornerstone of Life Recovery requires reinforcing and elaborating the provisional assent a member has granted evangelical-fundamentalist ideology (cf. Lofland 1966). Suturing members' competing loyalties is an essential means by which this foundational aspect of the conversion process is facilitated. Intensive exposure to Biblical doctrine and prolonged association with Program staff in a "wholesome, Christian" milieu is deemed critical to a man's successful "recovery" from his problems in living. Says the Life Recovery handbook:

(a) The program attempts to provide a wholesome, Christian environment. Edifying social interaction between the men themselves, and between the men and the staff, is a crucial part of recovery…(c) All of the men are involved nearly everyday with the entire program staff in one way or another. We eat together, take outings together, and the men hear us all preach, teach, conduct meetings, praise, encourage and discipline…Clients [therefore] need to understand there is a very low limit of outside commitments and responsibilities that they can maintain while on our program. We are 'jealous' of outside influences and involvements apart from us.

Missionaries' "jealousy" also stems from their cosmological construction of street life as a realm of anomic darkness in which men aimlessly wander in perpetuity, reproducing their deleterious homeless lifestyle in the process. Life outside the

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programmatic structure of Life Recovery is, from missionaries' perspective, the realm of

"the flesh" – the contaminative cauldron from which a member's soul has been

reclaimed. Severing the social relations supporting a member's former self and sealing

him off from the sphere in which such relations were operative is essential to the

successful "transformation" of his life conduct. When pressed to define the program,

Dwight Tidwell, a Life Recovery counselor, elaborated on this programmatic logic*:*

This is *not* a detoxing facility. Or a drug rehab. It's a *transformation* program. To transform *the way you live* today, and start something *new* for tomorrow. If you're constantly trying to keep up with what's going on outside, how can you transform? So, we want *direct* communication with you. We want to be the only ones that communicate with you for the first 30 days in the program. And *then* you start getting breaks…Most addicts do what they want to do when they want to do it. On the street, they don't have any structure. We can't let them just run the streets. They are of a world where moral life is not possible. In the program, we shine a light down the path God would want them to take. If they are to take this path, they need structure; one they set their clocks by.

Tidwell highlighted how Program members are presupposed to be, and

constituted as, an inherently uncontrollable population. Strict programming is not only

essential, but is the most effective means of bringing a member's recalcitrant mind under

control, rendering it susceptible to the inculcation of Biblical truth vis-à-vis Bible study.

Kenard and Jake offered the following explication of their internment in Life Recovery as

we scrubbed tables in the chow hall one afternoon:

Kenard: It's to get you *controlled* about *how you think about people out there.* You know, it's nothing to go out there and have guys offer you drugs. They're *tryin to control your mind* so you can focus on why you're here for and not be distracted by the outside. I didn't understand it at first. Then, I got upstairs, and after goin back and forth I see. You can get on the phone when you're upstairs. When you're in Gateway you can't even talk on the phone. You can't even have *visits.* They like to have us concentratin on the gospel. Not exposed to the outside.

Jake: That's the thing about the program is that you're isolated. You know, you don't have a lot of contact with the outside world. You can talk on the phone for 10 minutes at a time. But they discourage us from talking on it cuz it can lead to relapse and puts us out *in the world*.

Only as the new elements of a man's self-knowledge (i.e., the statutory ethic)

begin to solidify is he ready for provisional re-entry into the gauntlet of the unsupervised

"world." Following this logic, the programmatic framework designed by missionaries

restricts the member's sphere of liberty to the internal spaces of Life Recovery for the

first 30 days. Kiko discussed the rules that applied to him while he worked the Program's

initial phase called "Gateway." "They want to be the only ones that communicate with

you for the first 30 days in the Program," he explained before further elaborating:

After 60 days [upstairs, not counting 30 days in Gateway], you'll get a 4 hour pass. You can go out, walk around and see things. After 90 days you get an 8 hour pass. When you become a Junior and Senior, you get a 24 hour pass. Without some structure you get chaos.

     The rules say we can't go outside the courtyard. The Gateway guys. The ones in the first stage of the Program can't. Once you move upstairs, you got Introduction, Orientation, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior. Once you move upstairs, you can walk outside the building. But you can't leave the parking lot. You can go into the courtyard. You can't *hang out* in their. You can walk through, and outside into the parking lot. But everyone in Gateway can't go out the gate. And when they in the courtyard, can't leave that bench. We can walk one lap in the parking lot every day. That's it.

The rule structure enacted in Life Recovery is an inscriptional practice that

carefully maps both the internal and external geography of recovery for all clients in

accordance with their spiritual status. Gateway members such as Kiko occupy a liminal

status in the fundamentalist, cosmological scheme of the world—they are suspended

between the realms of darkness and light. Missionaries instantiate this salvationary

ranking in the material environment by consigning men working this phase to a

segregated first-floor dormitory in which they have one foot in the transient ministry and

another in Life Recovery. For the first 30 days, they attend chapel with the "transients"

(but sit in a designated front row) and use the same wash facilities (in the morning, when

the facilities are cleaner), while they simultaneously work in the kitchen with more

advanced members who have been admitted "upstairs." Outside exposure is limited to a

designated bench in the courtyard dubbed the "bullpen," and one lap a day around the

half-block-sized parking lot. When asked to explain the regulatory structure of the

Gateway phase, Chaplain Brown had the following to say:

The thing is you have to earn your way into Introduction. Then you get to Orientation. Then you go from Freshman to Sophomore to Junior and Senior. We want to make sure that you're here for the right reason. A lot of people just come in, just want to get off the street and do other things besides learning the word of the Lord. This is apparent in how well they handle the Biblical principles we teach them and how much they show us they want to be here.

Convincing missionaries that they are "here for the right reason" requires a Gateway

member's earnest adherence to the rule structure as well as the statutory prescriptions

taught in morning Bible study.

<center>*"Upstairs" vs. "Downstairs"*</center>

On admission to the "upstairs" phase of the Program, Gateway members

transition into a realm of incipient purity. Spatial segregation of the Life Recovery and

Transient ministries structures the social relations of conversion by physically sealing

members off from the world they inhabited before entering the Program. By employing

the building as a structuring force that advances their Salvationist raison d'etre,

missionaries inscribe their cosmology in the material environment. "Upstairs" and

"downstairs" are vertically separated spaces that take their meaning through their

opposition to each other. The practices, rights, responsibilities, and group power

associated with them are shaped by the cosmological prism through which they are

refracted. Upstairs is the locus of salvation and the sphere of light. Downstairs is the

locus of sin and the realm of darkness. Chaplain Smith explained these supernatural

divisions to me one day by simply referencing II Corinthians 6:14: "Be ye not unequally

yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with

unrighteousness? And what communion have light with darkness?"

Physically closer to God and his eternal truth, clients' sphere of autonomy subtly

expands on entering the upstairs portion of the program. Consider the kitchen

conversation I had with Antoine and his running-buddy-cum-Program-buddy Darnell:

Antoine: This is my friend Darnell right. He was in Gateway. He just got upstairs. He about went crazy sittin out there on that bench man. And now he's upstairs. Look at him smile. That's like a reward [getting upstairs]. It's a whole different world.

DW: So it's a whole lot different upstairs than it is in Gateway? What's the difference?

Antoine: Well. You have classes. You have more curriculum activities to do. But you got a big screen TV, you got a pool table, you got a big day room that you sit in and lounge on a couch, ping pong table, air hockey. For one, you don't have dorm type showers. You have your own personal bathroom. Four people to a room instead of *forty* people to a room [the maximum number of men in Gateway at any one time]. It's a lot different.

Darnell: And you can get on the phone too.

Antoine: Yeah. You can get on the phone when you're upstairs. No more that 10 minutes though. It's the 'relapse line.' When you're in Gateway you can't even talk on the phone. You can't even have *visits*. They like to have us concentratin on the gospel. Not exposed to the outside. They don't want you exposed to the life you just left either. They schedule our whole day around that. Like, first thing every day, after chapel, you gotta work in the kitchen.

Mapping the External Geography of Recovery

On becoming a Junior (i.e., after 90 days in the program), members' spatial

sphere of autonomy expands to the city at large. The rule structure, however, organizes

and regulates how they can make use of Lafayette and the greater Nashville area by

demarcating illegitimate territories located beyond the Mission's walls. According to the

handbook:

The south end of the Mission facility and the parking lot between there and Drexel St. is off limits at all times. The walkway itself, from the transient entrance into the courtyard all the way around back to the Donation Center, is off limits. Men walking west to the downtown clinic or beyond should circle around the front of the building.

The south end of the Mission and the "parking lot between there and Drexel Street" host

the open-air drug market that animates "the alley" and several pockets in which men

sample the illicit wares they purchase from the drug runners who set up shop in this

"homeless highway." The sacred daily practice of life recovery takes hold in the profane realm of the street through the rule structure's spatial injunctions and prescriptive pathway "west to the downtown clinic or beyond." It is common to hear men speak of "walking through the maze" en route to the clinic for routine medical attention and their need to "stay outta the zone" (i.e., the alley).

A Junior's external geography of recovery is regulated by the strict 4-hour time-window apportioned by his "pass," which is operationally defined as a "privilege" that is subject to revocation. Moreover, he must clear the purpose of his off-site excursion with his counselor and produce appropriate verification on return. Random drug screening, moreover, creates a panoptic mode of regulation in which all formerly drug-addicted clients are enmeshed. The same rules apply as clients ascend the ranks of Life Recovery, but the time-window expands in accordance with the spiritual status inscribed in their rank. Seniors, who have nearly achieved the status of "recovery," are rewarded with 24-hour passes at the discretion of their counselor. Program members' internal geography of recovery, regardless of status, is regulated by a stringent Life Recovery time-table.

Mapping the Internal Geography of Recovery

"The life within the monastery," wrote medieval scholar Dom David Knowles, "is a common life of absolute regularity…of unvarying routine" (4). The modern time-table is an inheritance of monastic communities which sought to impose a systemic method for conducting a spiritually centered life through the invariable, routinized segmentation of study, work, and prayer (Foucault 1977; Zerubavel 1981). The daily schedule of Life Recovery establishes a time-routine that synchronizes members' process of spiritual

restoration with the organizational imperatives of the first-floor transient ministry,

creating a quasi-monastic milieu in the process:

6:00 a.m.: Rise & Shine / Make Bed
6:15 – 6:45 a.m.: Breakfast
7:00 – 7:35 a.m. Roll Call / Exercise
8:00 – 8:45 a.m. Roll Call / Devotions
8:45 a.m.: Meeting with counselor (If he is here)
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.: Work Therapy
11:15 – 11:45 a.m.: Lunch
12:00 – 1:15 p.m.: Core Class (Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri); Group Counseling (Wed)
3:30 p.m.: Roll Call
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.; 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.; 7:15 – 9:00 p.m.: Work Therapy
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.: Dinner
6:30 – 7:15 p.m.: Roll Call / Program Chapel
9:30 p.m. Curfew (To be in building) (Every Night)/Quiet Time in your room
10:00 p.m.: Lights Out

The time-discipline imposed by this rigid temporal regime both husbands

Program members' labor power vis-à-vis "work therapy" and facilitates the inculcation of

missionaries' statutory prescriptions by precisely organizing how program members live

inside the Mission itself. By regulating the temporal location and rate of recurrence of

Life Recovery's three essential activities – work, worship, and Bible study – the daily

schedule creates a framework that frees members from the impurities "of the world,"

allowing them to concentrate exclusively on activities essential for the salvation of their

souls. George, a Program member working the Orientation phase, offers a window on the

daily routine of recovery life:

You learn about the Bible, starting in Gateway. When you get upstairs you get more Bible. When you wake up, the first thing you do is, you gotta be out of bed by 6:00 [a.m.]. At 7 o'clock, you got roll call. Right after roll call, you have a walk. You walk around the loop upstairs. We walk around upstairs for 30 minutes. After that you go to morning devotion [chapel] at 8 to like 8:45 [a.m.]. You get outta ther and gotta work. At 12 o'clock we got class. Each class has their own counselor. My class right now we got Brother Schultz. That's the first class you go to [upon entering the Program upstairs]. In Orientation, you got *four* tests and you *got* to pass *two* of the four tests to move on. You gotta do what you're supposed to do. People who are messin around won't make it.

On moving upstairs, the member has "proven" that his recalcitrant mind has been

rendered malleable by his stint in Gateway. At this point in his process of "recovery,"

counselors begin their Biblical tutelage designed to break the homeless lifestyle. Consider

the conversation I had with Maurice, Ron, and Jake as they worked on the food line:

DW: What do you guys do upstairs?

Maurice: We have tests *weekly*. As a Freshman, we have Smith and you learn a lot, but we have a memory verse each week. And you also have a test on what you're doin. We're doin somethin called 'Man in the Mirror.' If you're lookin at yourself in the mirror, how do you treat yourself? How do you treat your friends? Some of the other classes you really don't *have* homework. It's just like in depth discussion where you're reading scripture, discuss it. That's pretty much it. So, obviously the higher you go, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, the more homework you start getting. In your Senior year, it's just preparing you to get back in the 'real world.'

Ron: I got a 100 on my test this week. Part of the class is how to study the Bible. The next test is on the difference between the Old and New Testament. We have to explain how many books are in the Old and New Testament total.

Jake: That's cool man. You been studying hard huh? We got so much time to study the Bible. That's what they want us to do. You got all this influence around. Everyone else is reading their Bible. Since everyone around me's doin it, I'm gonna chill out and focus on it and what I'm doin to get out of my own way. That's why we're all here.

"Work Therapy"

Biblical tutelage may be the central salvationary activity in which members

participate, but the chores they perform each day figure prominently in shifting the

totality of their social situation and establishing the spiritual bonds on which the Program

is built. Like other operational concepts in Life Recovery, the notion of "work therapy"

stems from missionaries' evangelical-fundamental belief system. The daily chores in

which men participate – working security, running the kitchen and food queue, doing

laundry, distributing bed rolls, and performing janitorial duties – are not cast as labor that

is integral to the functioning of the transient ministry. Instead, missionaries pitch

members' daily chores as salvationary activity that inculcates a methodical-rational

organization of life that will translate into clients' secular reintegration into the

mainstream labor market. Performing God's work by embellishing a ministry to which

He called them instills dependability, honesty, the ability to follow instructions, good

attendance, punctuality, and cooperation. Says the Program handbook:

These attributes are exactly what we are trying to instill in our program participants through
chores, many of whom have a long history of unstable employment, demonstrating in the past just
what it is that employers least desire from their workers…A vital part of 'recovery' as we
understand it involves (almost) daily participation in chores within this ministry…

By participating in this God-ordained activity, members learn to lead a rational,

moral, systematic way of life. The inner reward resulting from living life according to

this aspect of "God's design," as one missionary put it, transforms a man by reassuring

him that he is part of God's plan. "Daily chores remind a man that God has not given up

on him," explained Chaplain Brown. "A man may have turned his back on his job in the

past, but, in the course of his work therapy, he learns that God still has a plan for him." It

is also useful here to recall AGRM director Steven Burger's assertion that, "Men…who

walk away from their jobs, their families, and their homes do so because, fundamentally,

they are turning away God and His claim on their lives." From missionaries' perspective,

work is "therapeutic" first and foremost because it facilitates a man's reconciliation with

God and His claim on their lives, which is evidenced by his newfound pathway toward

successful reintegration into the legal labor market.

World Maintenance

Sanctification of a Program member's work in the transient ministry, however,

creates a salient programmatic tension when carried into the routine, practical activities

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of the transient ministry. The organizational imperatives of the first-floor – in particular,

the daily requirement of efficiently inducting hundreds of men through the intake ritual –

manifest in a division of labor in which Program members have more contact with

"transients" than the missionaries. Recurrent exposure to the first-floor recruiting ground

jeopardizes missionaries' inculcation and stabilization of clients' tenuous conversion

process. Transients' potentially discrepant worldviews are the most prominent source of

recontamination, leading missionaries to devise programmatic mechanisms to protect the

ideological charge of the statutory ethic. Such world maintenance is necessary because,

as Durkheim (1995) put it:

The mind experiences deep repugnance about mingling, even simple contact, between…[the sacred and profane] because the notion of the sacred is always and everywhere separate from the notion of the profane in man's mind, and because we imagine a kind of logical void between them. The state of dissociation in which the ideas are found in consciousness is too strongly contradicted by such mingling, or even by their being too close to one another. The sacred thing is, par excellence, that which the profane must not and cannot touch with impunity (Durkheim 1995: 37-38).

Temporal Segregation

Missionaries encode their worldview in the daily schedule, which dichotomizes

Mission life in accordance with their cosmological scheme of the universe. In doing so,

they employ time to construct a semi-permeable membrane around Program members

which minimizes clients' sociable interaction with the cohabitants "of the world" they left

behind. Members may be performing God's work in the realm of darkness, but the daily

schedule ensures that their relations with transients are purely instrumental. The

mission's dual time-tables establish a mechanical regime that safeguards the tenuous

symmetry between members' practical activity and subjective definition of their place in

God's universal scheme. The result is an asymmetrical temporal structure wherein

Program members and transients participate in the same temporal order, but do so with minimum opportunity to engage in social concourse.

Meal time, for instance, is a social medium that facilitates the creation and maintenance of social relations; communal eating is both a physical event and a vehicle of communication. Program members' loyalty and commitment to the statutory ethic would thus be jeopardized if they were allowed to break bread with their transient brethren. Sammy, kitchen manager and Life Recovery senior, revealed the boundary- and reality-maintaining purpose of the asymmetrical time-tables one evening after a hectic dinner shift:

DW: Wouldn't it be more efficient if everyone just came through the food line at once?

Sammy: No. No. Because, we have guys on the program right…So you give them 45 minutes to eat. Then, we start feeding the transients. We try to keep a low communion with the transients. A lot of guys in here just came off the streets, and they don't want them to get with the transients who'll say 'Hey I got some dope to sell' or 'I can go get you some dope.' That's why we eat separate. That's why we don't follow back to back with guys who are still of the world.

The reverse side of this temporal structure is the cultivation of interpersonal similitude among Program members. Temporal asymmetry is the principle which organizes daily relations *between* the Life Recovery and transient ministries, but temporal symmetry is the central organizing principle *within* each ministry; *inter-group boundaries*, in this organizational context, imply *intra-group solidarity* (Zerubavel 1989). By constructing a quasi-monastic place of spiritual renewal in which Program members work, worship, study, eat, sleep and recreate at the same time each day, missionaries promote the bonds of solidarity that create the conditions of possibility for actualizing their programmatic goals, stated in the Life Recovery handbook in the following manner:

The goals are: (a) to see every client enter into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and/or restore and improve fellowship and commitment to the Lord; (b) for every client to improve as

needed in terms of physical and emotional health; and (c) for every client to complete the program and live thereafter in sobriety, stability, service and support himself financially.

Definitional Segregation

Temporal segregation of the Life Recovery and transient ministries is at best a partial resolution of the inherent tension inscribed in the organizational imperative of clients in the former interacting with inhabitants of the latter in the course of work therapy. Program men's instrumental relations with transients still afford ample opportunity for their former cohabitants to impart disconfirming definitions of recovery life. Missionaries attempt to resolve this discursive threat to Program members' fragile subjective state by reinforcing the in-group sentiment fostered by the socio-temporal order. By converting "transients" into a trope imbued with the images of contamination, identifying acts, and life conduct Life Recovery is designed to overcome, missionaries bifurcate the undeserving poor into a low- and high-status group, positioning Program men on top of the symbolic hierarchy. Definitional segregation facilitates Program men's disaffiliation from their previous world through the reorganization of their "conversational apparatus" (Berger and Luckmann 1966).

Instructing members to write the rules of Life Recovery is the first step in this process which facilitates the symbolic disaffiliation of members from their previous world and the plausibility structure that sustained it by discursively unyoking them from the transient non-believers. Ray, a Gateway member, explained the pre-conditions of being admitted "upstairs":

Ray: You gotta *write* the rules before you come upstairs. It's a booklet like *that* thick. There's like *69* of em. Some of them rules is a page long. You gotta hand *write* every single one of em. When you write em you learn, you learn em a lot easier. And you *read* em. It took me a week. You get *hand cramps.* Everybody in Gateway who's goin upstairs writes those rules.

DW: What are the key rules?

Ray: No talkin to transients. No dealin. No sellin of property. I could just go on.

Rules 59, 15 and 67 of the booklet to which Ray refers offer the following proscriptions:

59. Do not 'hang out' with transient men for any reason, especially not with men who recently have left the program. Such men often try to pull others down with them. *Transient men represent what program men are all supposed to be seeking to move away from.* Being with transients sends all the wrong signals to the staff. If you meet a transient friend, say hello and move on. Don't linger in conversation (emphasis added).

15. In the event that a man, for whatever reason, misses curfew, he will be asked to spend the night as a transient and see the director the next morning (or Monday). The man is confined to the property until that time.

67. [O]nce a man has left the program he needs to confine himself to the courtyard or the *appropriate transient areas on the first floor* of our building. This specifically excludes the 'bullpen' under the canopy or the walkway or parking lot where men on the program congregate to smoke, etc. Do not loiter with program men; either exit the property or come into the courtyard. And, neither should program men do anything to encourage transients to loiter in program areas.

The 69 rules by which Program men are expected to abide form the regulatory foundation of their recovery. The act of writing each and every rule before ascending into Orientation – "You get *hand cramps*" – inscribes the Mission's moral taxonomy in members' subjectivity. Rule 59, in particular, draws a distinct boundary between Program men and men who have not (yet) joined Life Recovery by converting transients into an anathematic trope. Co-mingling with transients "sends all the wrong signals to staff" because they represent the deleterious homeless lifestyle Program life is designed to break. Rule 15, moreover, communicates operative status distinctions by converting a night (or weekend) spent in the Transient ministry into a form of punishment. That both rules 59 and 67 address the dangers of backsliding – from different sides of the programmatic boundary – suggests the threat it poses to the plausibility of Program life's pious definitional status.

Cognitive Segregation

The moral taxonomy inscribed in the rule structure is transferred to the cognitive level by virtue of its power to rearrange the Life Recovery man's conversational apparatus. If we take seriously the proposition that conversation is the most essential vehicle of reality-maintenance, shifting Program men's partners in conversation is a vital means of ensuring the continuity of a viable plausibility structure (Berger and Luckmann 1966); especially when it is backed by the coercive power of eviction. Steve, a freshman in the Program, conveys the cognitive dissonance created by this symbolic segregation mechanism:

Steve: I can't talk to my friends no more. That's totally off limits. And I don't understand that either. You get caught talking to one of the transients, you probably end up being out there with them.

DW: Really?

Steve: Yeah. I can't understand why you can't -- I mean, they're human beings too. They might just need to talk to somebody. But you can't talk to them. You have to back up away from them. But sometimes people just need somebody to talk to. But it's not like that. You talk to one of them, you'll probably end up being with them.

DW: Who enforces that?

Steve: The entire staff. The staff has the power to tell you to pack your bags and get off the premises. It's the first thing they tell you when you go into the program. "No conversating with the transients. No relationship with any transients."

A discussion I had with Steve several months later, on the eve of his graduation, suggests that missionaries' moral boundaries become internalized and begin to become a cognitive force in Program men's work therapy. As we cleaned up the chow hall after a hectic dinner shift, he revealed how his cognitions became bifurcated vis-à-vis missionaries' cosmological dualism:

Steve: The reason why they don't want us talkin to the transients outside is because they're *of the world*. They're still in that mindset of drugs and alcohol, things we're not supposed to be into.

DW: It helps you stay focused?

Steve: Right. That's the thing about the Program. They line you up with classes, they line you up with church, they have jobs for you. The only out time you have you gonna be reading the Bible, in the prayer room praying, focusing. They want you to be bored. You got all this influence around you to read the Bible. Everybody else is reading it so I'm gonna read the Bible and chill out and focus on what I'm doin. That's how I realized that we have to keep low communion with transients.

DW: So the transients are of the world?

Steve: Oh yeah. They don't have no religion. They don't want you to interfere with that coz if you talk with them [the transients] you might see them doing drugs and start thinking about it; that lifestyle. You know, 'I can hit it just one time.' You know what I mean? We're talkin about your *soul.*

Ron existentially casts transients as being "of the world" – a world that is plagued by the "mindset of drugs and alcohol" which, in the mission milieu, refers to a "homeless lifestyle" that results from men's lack of religion. He and his Program peers see their former selves reflected in the "transient" population with whom they deal each day in the course of "work therapy." Evangelical-fundamentalist ideology achieves a measure of its cognitive force through its inscription in Program members' interpretive schemas, which they enact each day in the transient ministry. Moreover, the in-group solidarity cultivated by Life Recovery's programmatic framework creates the foundation of members' collective conception of self-worth.

The Search for Distinction

Michèle Lamont's (2000; see also Lamont and Mólnar 2002) study of working class men illuminates how individuals of marginal social and economic status "develop alternative measuring sticks" that form the basis of their self-worth (147). Morality, she finds, is a central category by which men evaluate themselves vis-à-vis other men and draw symbolic boundaries, which she and Mólnar define as "conceptual distinctions

made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space"
(Lamont and Mólnar 2002: 168). However, her analysis does not address how religion
shapes and, in turn, is shaped by the recurrent articulation of moral boundaries. Lamont
treats religion indirectly as part of a larger "cultural repertoire" that influences the
construction of moral hierarchies. However, as we will soon see, Mission residents draw
on a *local reservoir of morality* to place themselves on a symbolic hierarchy and make
sense of their different positions in the Mission's spiritual order.

Homeless residents' boundary work – the inferences of similarities and
differences each client group employs to define its collective identity – is linked by
homology to the deep cultural schema of God vs. Satan; these two "levels" of the
Mission's cultural system are mediated by the Mission's moral reservoir, which pivots on
two axes premised on what I will call missionaries' "statutory code." The first axis is
premised on missionaries' discursive construction of homeless men's personal
characteristics. Homeless men are: (a) fallen (confused, lost souls), (b) sinful ("of the
world," dwelling in darkness, seduced by contaminative temptations, alcohol & drug
dependent), and (c) unwilling to make the restitution for the fall by embracing
missionaries' statutory prescriptions. On the relational axis, (a) homeless men have
abdicated responsibility (family, work, home, problems) and (b) have repudiated God.

Life Recovery members' organizational definition of cultural membership is
premised on the opposite pole of each axis around which the moral reservoir orbits; they
are personally: (a) ascending from the fall, (b) in the process of being delivered from the
sinful homeless lifestyle, (c) by adhering to missionaries' statutory prescriptions.
Relationally speaking, these men are: (a) taking responsibility for turning their backs on

family, work, home life and/or their drug and alcohol problems by (b) reconciling their relationship with God.

View from Life Recovery

In comparative talk about homeless men who have not joined the program, Life Recovery members invoke a symbolic hierarchy of moral worth based on the criteria of God-centered living, interpersonal and subjective restraint, and nascent self-sufficiency. They employ this hierarchy to strategically construct a morally superior self vis-à-vis the transients. By avowing capacities that transients purportedly lack, program men situate themselves as powerful and assert a *pious self* that forms the basis of their collective identity.

The statutory ethic is reinforced and elaborated on in the course of program men's intensive interaction with missionaries and each other, and becomes a central interpretive lens through which the convert-in-process's past life and current circumstances are evaluated. Missionaries' moral calculus – wherein homelessness is equated with a sinful lifestyle – becomes internalized and cognitively structures their definition of self and other:

Hakim: I needed *living behavior,* as far as the right of God. I'm a Christian by faith, but see if my actions are not applied, then I'm not a Christian. We can say one thing, but *to do* is a different thing. Some people can quote scripture of the Bible. Even Satan himself knew the Bible. It's easy to quote the scriptures, but the question is 'Do you apply it to your life daily?' You *walk the walk* and don't just *talk the talk.* It's like Missouri; show me the money. So I don't wanna be just a talker, man. The word of God is true, and accurate. I got a long way to go, and a short time to get there before *the coming of Christ.*

DW: So you didn't come here to get off drugs. You already got off drugs before you came?

Hakim: The Lord *delivered* me. Galatians 3[.13]: 'I have set you free from the yoke of bondage.'

DW: Gallations chapter 3?

Hakim: Right. I'm going back into the world, *slowly.* Otherwise I'll be led back to drugs, alcohol, women, partying. I don't need that. I'm a *certified* builder. I have an Associate's degree in

carpentry…I'm workin with different people who got a different attitude. I'm *humbled.* They got rules, regulations, *authority.* All authority is written by who?

DW: God?

Hakim: There you go! The rules and regulations flow from God…We're all the children of God, whether we hear our calling or not, right? That's up to the individual. He don't want us to be like robots, he wants us to come *freely.* A sinner's a sinner. Whether you a murderer, a rapist, a robber, drug addict, prostitute. Sin is sin.

Program members morally assure their membership in missionaries' religious community by drawing on the sacred side of each of the moral repertoire's discursive axes. Leading a "God-centered life" is the central aspect of missionaries' statutory prescriptions and cuts across both axes. "I've learned to center my life around Jesus Christ," a Life Recovery freshman named Jake told me, invoking this global discursive logic. "You know, you stop sayin' 'I'm a Christian, I'm a Christian' and not bein a Christian. You know, prayin and cussin all with the same mouth. Here I have Bible study." "We're all about studying the Bible. If you live that life, alcohol and drugs aren't gonna be part of it. It's a 7 month spiritual program. It's a long program and it's spiritual," said Ron.

Men also draw on the discursive construction of "transients" as sinners unable to restrain themselves from the contaminative temptations lurking in "the streets." "I been here about three weeks now," Jimmy told me as we worked on the food line. "I done been through hell once. I decided I need help." "What do you mean by that?" I asked. "Spendin time in them streets. I graduated [from the program] and I done went *right back* out there. I didn't have God. And I couldn't git away from dem wiled people I was hangin out wit. So I decided to come back and *change locations,* you know what I'm sayin? I done fell right back down. Smokin crack and out on dem streets. I lost self-control. That's what the *Word* is givin' me back." The emphasis on the connection

between scriptural authority and restraint was echoed by dozens of Life Recovery members, including Jerry. "Stayin off drugs and alcohol is hard *work* man" he said. "It's something you gotta *want*. I try real hard, and do it for the Lord. His Word gives me control over my urge to get back in that mentality of drugs, like when I was on them streets."

Program men also pride themselves on their incipient self-sufficiency. They invoke the sacred side of the statutory code's relational axis by stressing their reclamation of responsibility for problems in family, work, and home life. "We're learning to hope for something more than just a handout," said Ron. "The Bible teaches us life lessons about havin to earn what you get. I've learned I was responsible for my family breaking up. In here, I'm learning to be productive again." Big Russ explained to me how Life Recovery "has its ups and downs." "Learnin to fish for yourself isn't easy," he added. "You have to keep the right mindset. I say, 'I'm doin it for the Lord.' It's hard on me every day, but that's what I gotta do if I want a home again."

Other men point to their ability to save money upon graduating Life Recovery as an indication of their reclamation of responsibility. Tony, a Program graduate who lives in the Mission's second floor halfway house, drew a distinction between self-sufficient men like himself and those who do not follow the prescriptions of Life Recovery:

I been out 2 years…We have to get a job and save money. I'm gettin my drivers license. I don't owe much on that. And a car. And I'll be back out there. Now, this is what you got to *do*. I'm 56 years old. And, we got guys that don't understand the concept. I'm givin you a real, overall view of what you gotta do to get outta here. Follow the Program. Or you gonna be *back in the courtyard*. Right over here. Next to this door over here [points to the elevator, which also opens into the dayroom]. You'll be right over here, in the *dayroom*.

While program members construct themselves as God-centered individuals who live a restrained and increasingly self-sufficient lifestyle, they tend to evaluate their

"transient" counterparts as Godless, unrestrained, and dependent. These attributes impute a motivational structure consistent with missionaries' imaginary of the "homeless lifestyle." By casting transients in a pejorative, anathematic role, Program men creatively combine elements of the moral reservoir and, in so doing, constitute themselves as engaged in the morally appropriate/superior way of life. Men who eke out life on the first-floor provide Life Recovery members a foil against which they cast themselves as *pious.*

As Jake, a sophomore in Life Recovery, told me while we restocked the food line: "Transients don't have no religion. Not at all. You'll see em fightin all the time, cussing each other out. You see a lot of drugs out there and things like that. A lot of em come in drunk on an almost daily basis." Jake draws a clear-cut distinction between those who, like himself, have accepted God into their lives and live according to His precepts and those who are unwilling to make restitution for their fall from God's grace, as evidenced by their vulgar behavior and sinful indulgence of drugs and alcohol. Ron had a similar deprecatory view. "The transients. You can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink," he told me while mopping the kitchen floor. "We would love for them to get in there and try to better themselves. They don't wanna do it. The chaplains go out there [the courtyard] and say 'Come on. Get in the Program.' [Mimics a transient in a guttural voice] 'Aw, I don't wanna get in no program. It ain't gonna do me no good.'"

Jamie, a witty and energetic sophomore, links transients' unwillingness to enter the Program to their lack of restraint, evidenced by their perceived preference to engage in drug-induced revelry. "A lot of em hang out in the courtyard all day," he said with a judgmental wince. "It's like a big block party. They sit out there after they go get high

and do their thang. Why would they need the Program?" Jamie's derision of the courtyard and its inhabitants was echoed by John who, while guarding the chow hall entrance, informed me that "These guys are in bad shape. They'll git there checks on the first and the third, like disability checks. They'll go stay in a motel and blow it on whatever, and they're right back in here. They ain't got the self-control they need. They're not productive."

John's construction of the transients as lacking the restraint necessary to spend their government transfer payments wisely is part of a moral evaluation he also invoked to account for what he perceives to be their dependency on the goods and services provided on the first-floor. "Some git paid on the first, and some git paid on the third," he explained. "The first is social security (SSI) and the third is disability (SSDI). Alcoholics. Drug addicts. They blow it. They [the federal government] passed a law now, finally, that if you git a check from the government and you git a drug conviction, you're not eligible for the check anymore." I asked him when the law was passed and he said, "It's done passed but it doesn't go into effect until October 20th. People ain't been doin what they're supposed to do with their checks. Getting housing and food."

John's moral evaluation is shared by his cohorts who account for transients' "dependency" in terms of the personal axis of the statutory code. "The transient guys are like disciples," said Big Russ, kitchen manager and Program senior. "They follow the Mission wherever it goes." When I asked him what he meant, he told me that:

Big Russ: It's easy to get stuff for free. Like when it was over [at its old location], a lot of the guys you see out there in the courtyard are just followers. When the Mission moved down here, the only thing they did was move down here. It's not like they *can't do somethin*. It's that it's easier to sit around and do nothing all day, get three hot meals, a place to sleep, clean clothes. They don't have to do nothin.

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Big Russ draws a sharp distinction between men who are in the process of making restitution for their fall from grace, like himself, and men who, because they are unwilling to submit to the Bible's authority (and the missionaries' statutory prescriptions), remain mired in dependency:

Big Russ: I done asked a bunch of em to come find the word [of God]. Come and see what it's all about. Don't just be, a *hindrance.* And if they would go ahead and *get a part of God,* they would find out that they don't *need* nothin but *themselves* and *God.* Instead, they sit around, do there drugs, drink and smoke their grass and do other things.

"So if they found God, they could get off the street?" I asked for clarification. "*Yeah. Right now, you know, they really don't have* morals," he said, before concluding that:

They don't *have judgments* of what's *right* and *wrong...*They're always like 'Gimme this' or 'Gimme that.' They act like *I owe them somethin.* It's not my fault they're like that [homeless]. But that's *the type of mentality they have right now.* And I'm tellin them, if they'd *come find the Lord*, get off they behind, and put one foot in front of the other, *put forth effort,* then they'd be better off than what they doin. But they don't.

Philip, a Life Recovery graduate who works security on the dinner shift and who now lives in one of the Mission's transitional living units, drew a similar (if more caustic) assessment of the general homeless population's dependency: "The courtyard is…you're just *homeless,* and you *don't wanna get up off your ass!* We offer the 7 month program to these guys. If you wanna do it. Get off of drugs and alcohol. And if you don't want to, you can *sit on your ass over here for the rest of your life!*"

View from the "Recruiting Ground"

"I enjoy hearing the word," T.J. tells me, as we sit on the concrete curb in front of Reg's Meats, a disheveled deli located behind the Mission's courtyard. "But I don't believe in forcing it on people. You have to hear it to stay there and I think that causes a lot of friction between the residents and the staff – especially between us and the Program." "They always tell us we're sinners," added Ray-Ray. "I grew up in the Baptist

church and *still* take the bus to my church every Sunday. I ain't gotta go along with that Program to be a real Christian." Men like T.J. and Ray-Ray battle their supernaturally vilified status as "transients" each day they avail themselves of the Mission's goods and services. Because their status is defined in opposition to their counterparts who have entered Life Recovery, transients re-appropriate their organizational definition and creatively rework its polluting categories. They accomplish this creative redefinition of moral membership by drawing on the same statutory code as Program men.

By drawing on the sacred side of the code's discursive axes, transient men also pull from the local reservoir of morality to place themselves on a symbolic hierarchy of moral worth based on the criteria of unmediated faith and autonomy. They employ this hierarchy to strategically construct a morally superior self vis-à-vis their counterparts enlisted in the Program. By avowing capacities that Program members purportedly lack, transients situate themselves as powerful and assert a *sovereign self* that forms the basis of their collective identity.

"I stay in prayer," Ritchie told me, after taking a swig from his cup of Tiger Mart coffee. "Even when I'm sitting up and in the courtyard, I am in prayer. That's the only thing that keeps me going is the word of God. That's what keeps me going every day. My belief and trusting that He's going to make a way for me. They wanna call us sinners. I don't need no chapel. Don't need not Program. All I need is my Bible." This emphasis on unmediated religiosity was echoed by numerous men who have not (yet) entered Life Recovery. "I think that if Jesus were to walk into the Mission today, he would get treated the same way they treat me," Elron told me with a laugh. He concluded by saying that:

Jesus would probably just humble himself and go along with the program…Regardless of whether you have a drug problem or alcohol problem, I don't see where God *excludes* you because of that. If I have an alcohol problem and you have a lust problem, in his eyes it's the

same. They're setting up *their* criteria, not taking *His* criteria and putting it into effect. Program guys swallow that.

The authenticity of men's faith is, of course, difficult to verify. What is important here, however, is not whether men are truly religious, but that they employ this discourse of self-worth as a means of drawing a symbolic boundary around themselves. They do this by aligning their self-image with the spiritually profitable side of the statutory code's personal axis, which is officially reserved for members of the Program. When Elron refers to "*their* criteria" as opposed to "*His* criteria," he highlights what he views as the arbitrary quality of missionaries' statutory prescriptions. Making restitution for the fall by entering Life Recovery is thus nonsense, and those who enter Life Recovery have been duped by the missionaries. By appealing to *God's* criteria, rather than missionaries', he casts himself as being just as much a child of God (a believer) as his counterparts in the Program. If anything, his belief is more genuine, from his perspective, because it is not mediated by what he views as the coercive and arbitrary authority embedded in a faith-based recovery program.

Men also draw on the statutory code's relational axis, which associates their way of life with the abdication of personal responsibility, to highlight their desire to be productive members of society and hence the need to preserve their autonomy. "In that chapel, you'll swear to God they're the best people in the world," Detroit told me, while we drank beer behind a nearby day labor agency. "But as soon as chapel's over, you ain't shit. They don't want you to be *tryin to do somethin for yoself*. They want muthafuckas that don't want anything. I got back child support to pay." "The program that they run up there, it's designed to keep you dependent upon them," said Philly as we stood in the bed

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ticket line. "How am I supposed to get my wife and kids back if I can't work?" Dave, an earnest White man in his early 30s explained:

The Program, they say, if you wanna get on your feet—God will help you, I can learn to take responsibility for my family, whatever—but this Program, they want you to join it. I don't know what the Program is and I don't plan on joining it! Coz if I work the Program, I'm not allowed to work, at all. If I work the program, I only get 7 dollars a week or something like that. I'm not gonna join it coz I gotta work. I'm gonna get *paid* for what I do. I got child support to take care of, got family, so I gotta work…They all know I work. I work day, I work night, I work doubles. I'm gonna take care of me, and I'm gonna take care of my girls. They call us *unproductive*, but their Program don't make you productive. Men have to work!

Dave, Philly, Detroit, and many others believe the Program cultivates an emasculating form of dependency on the missionaries that stymies, rather than facilitates both their route to a productive life and their reconnection with family and/or mainstream life. They draw on restrictive aspects of Life Recovery's operations in order to both portray themselves as moral strivers and highlight missionaries' moral contradictions. In particular, they stress the relatively unremunerated labor in which Program men must engage, which also suggests their subordination to missionaries' religious authority. By fashioning themselves as autonomous and superiorly religious men engaged in a social and moral struggle to reintegrate into mainstream life and/or reconnect with kith and kin, "transients" evoke the image of (spiritual and psychological) imprisonment to make moral judgments about men who join the Program.

The specter of the prisoner is one image that is essential to how men who live on the first-floor recruiting ground describe the differences and symbolic hierarchy between themselves and Life Recovery members. "They give up their freedom," said Allen, as he stared at the Program member's designated bench in the courtyard. "They give up their freedom. From that point on, say if I go to prison. Then the guards get to tell me what to do each and every day, each and every minute of my day." This interpretation is shared

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by men like Charles, who thinks that, "The members in the Program, they get told what to do and it's like you're a little kid. It's like prison with religion with them Mission people every day telling you day by day when to sleep, telling you when to eat, tell you when to go outside and pick up trash. It's like they done traded they life in the pen for one with 'God.'" Chuck built on Charles' analysis as we sat on the curb in front of the free clinic:

We all supposed to be sinners who in the dark, all lost like David and shit; livin this lifestyle and need to read the Bible. They read the Word in that Program, but the only free time they've got is when they go outside in the courtyard, but in the courtyard the mission people is over here, and the Program people is over here. And they don't interact, and when they smoke their cigarettes, they've got to go right back into the Program.

Allen, Charles, Chuck, and many of their peers use the analogy of prison to make sense of their counterparts who have entered the Program to make restitution for the fall by learning and adhering to missionaries' statutory prescriptions. In so doing, they reaffirm their sense of autonomy in a structurally overdetermined setting where missionaries have complete control over the distribution of life-sustaining resources. Men's portrayal of themselves as free and autonomous individuals is belied, of course, by the heavily regimented and degrading intake ritual to which they submit each evening. Their Spartan existence on the first-floor still attacks their self-image, but its permeability vis-à-vis the Program is construed as a temporary (if routine) concession as opposed to a fixed state of deferential dependency. Their perceived autonomy is thus a relative and contradictory premise on which they construct a sense of self-worth and dignity.

Moreover, the personal axis of the statutory code – which implies that men are fallen, sinful individuals who are unwilling to submit to God's scriptural authority – is neutralized by this image. The specter of the prisoner suggests that rather than being subject to the *scriptural/spiritual* authority of God, Life Recovery men are actually

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subjected to a *bureaucratic staff's* rules and commands designed to control men's behavior in the minutest detail. Life Recovery and its members are thus prisoners of a spiritual sham. This moral judgment turns the statutory code's polluting categories back on the missionaries and their disciples by casting the former as unscrupulous wardens rather than saviors, and the latter as ignorant and passive inmates rather than pious souls en route to eternal salvation.

When men do not evoke the imagery of the prisoner, they cast Program men as "brainwashed" cult members. "They're a cult. That's what *I* think," Philly told me one morning as we waited for work at a nearby day labor agency. "Them people in *the Program,* they treat them better. They gotta stay in there *6* months. They give them 5 dollars a week. They gotta clean all that shit from them homeless guys," he added, before concluding that:

The people in *the Program,* they think they better than you. They think everybody crackheads. But everbody's not crackheads. You know what a *real* crackhead is? Someone that smoke crack all day long. He's dirty, nasty. See how when I asked you for that dollah I say 'It's okay if you don't have it.' He be like 'Fuck you, gimme dat dollah.' That's a crackhead. He smoke crack 24 hours a day. They just *brainwashed* like that.

Ronnie had a similar derogatory interpretation of Life Recovery and its members. "I thought about getting in the Program," he said before taking a swig from the cup of coffee he just bought in the courtyard. "But they say for the first month you don't have no outside contact, period, telephone or nothing. You don't get to leave the program for six, seven months. Seems to me that's just brainwashing. What kind of program would tell you that you can't have no outside contact?" "I was really thinking about joining saying, 'Well, they might be right about my life,'" Hack told me as we waited in the bed ticket line. "But this guy came downstairs and said, 'It's like they trying to brain wash us.'" When I asked him what he meant, he told me that:

Once you in that Program me and you could be friends but you can't talk to me. And why is that though? I don't know what's going on between us. You might have something that I want, but I can't get you it, because you're in the Program. If they see you, they might take you out of the Program. They gettin brainwashed.

"I think they're getting brainwashed personally," Deshawn said, using the same imagery of the cult member. "The Program guys can feel like they better than all the other guys who's not in the Program. Because the Program guys can't even associate with us regular homeless guys, you know what I'm saying. They can't even talk to us."

Philly, Ronnie, Hack, and Deshawn draw on a salient aspect of the Program – the segregation mechanisms that missionaries use in their attempt to maintain the viability of their plausibility structure – and use the metaphor of the cult to make sense of Program men's lives within these material and symbolic barricades. Whereas the prison metaphor highlights the bureaucratic regimentation of Program men's lives, the cult analogy stresses missionaries' division of residents into a sacred (Program) and profane (transient) group according to their Manichaean worldview. Transients' position in missionaries' moral taxonomy – i.e., tropes imbued with the images of contamination, identifying acts, and life conduct missionaries must defend against in their cultivation of Program men's recovery – is vital here to the way in which these men construct the differences and symbolic hierarchy between themselves and those who have entered Life Recovery.

The raw empirical material for this symbolic boundary-formation is provided by missionaries' forcible suturing of the interpersonal bonds between Life Recovery members and their former running buddies. Recall Allen's buddy Ron who joined the Program and, after several months, internalized missionaries' statutory ethic. From Allen's perspective, "They done made him somethin he didn't used to be. It's like he a

zombie doin what they tell him to do. He don't talk like he used to. They done brainwashed him, but they say *we're* the lost souls." By casting Life Recovery men in the pejorative role of cult member – puppets whose strings are tugged by manipulative cult leaders – "transient" men reverse the sacred status accorded their Program counterparts and tar them with the profane side of the statutory code (i.e., "fallen," confused, "lost souls").

Rather than being passive zombies who blindly submit to missionaries' cultish dictates, like members of Life Recovery, transients construct themselves as men who actively resist the proselytizing pull of self-proclaimed diviners. In so doing, they throw a symbolically secular wrench in the supernatural gears of missionaries' belief system. In the process, they claim a position on the symbolically profitable side of the statutory code (i.e., unconfused men who refuse to submit to the religious authority of false prophets), while reinforcing the core of their self-worth: unmediated religiosity and autonomy.

These cultural meanings circulate through the first-floor in the course of the daily intake ritual. One night, for instance, I was working in the kitchen with Fred, a Life Recovery freshman, who took it upon himself to hand each man walking through the chow line one and *only one* napkin. When a "transient" man asked me for an extra napkin, and I passed the request along to Fred, he complained that "If you don't hand em out, they take three or four of em. I don't know what they do with em." A heavyset white man on the other side of the counter chuckled and said, "You *must* be in the Program." "Yes sir I *am* in the Program," Fred said proudly. "You gotta say that," the man retorted. "No sir. I don't *gotta* say nothin." "Jim Jones was a good man too they thought. Then he

had all them people drink that Kool-Aid," the man retorted. His buddy added, "Y'all are *bullshitters.*" Fred stared indignantly at the two men and said, "Y'all need religion!"

Conclusions

In this chapter, we have seen that missionaries' practical application of their Manichaean schema gives the Mission its physical design, ministerial forms and (segregative) world-maintenance practices. In turn, the Mission inculcates this schema by assigning client groups, daily tasks and life-sustaining resources to differentially coded physical, moral, and social spaces within the organizational milieu. In other words, the "passionate dualism" (Jensen 2005) between Satan and God, evil and good, darkness and light, is inscribed in the building's dual-track ministries which express in material form the symbolic oppositions and hierarchies that order missionaries' Manichaean cosmology. The mutual reinforcement of the Mission's schematic, moral, social, and material forms reproduces missionaries' fundamental(ist), binary opposition between good and evil. In doing so, this mutually sustaining relationship patterns social concourse between client groups in terms of such oppositions.

Due to this organizational context, a "comparative self" (Lamont 2000; see also Sherman 2005) – premised on the different commitments to the organizational reality required of Life Recovery members and transients – emerges in each group and becomes strategically useful in their inter-subjective negotiation of this milieu. As they eke out survival in the rescue mission each day, men who have (not) joined the Program also work to establish distinction and differentiation. They accomplish this task of self-

preservation and self-empowerment by employing internecine strategies of symbolic hierarchization – extracting from the local moral reservoir (of comparison and hierarchy) created by missionaries' discursive construction of homelessness vis-à-vis their Manichaean worldview – to secure a dignified place within the Mission's moral order.

Men who eke out an existence on the first-floor fortify themselves by drawing a symbolic boundary that repels missionaries' daily spiritual assaults designed to convince them to leave the realm of darkness and enter the realm of light: the realm of Life Recovery. As we will see in the next chapter, "transients'" collective identity as *sovereign selves* – constructed in response to their status as tropes imbued with images of contamination, identifying acts, and life conduct Life Recovery is designed to break – has social and spatial relevance beyond the Mission's interior. Indeed, this moral-economic "output" creates an "input" into RITI's moral economy of care.

CHAPTER VII

The Moral Alchemy of Caritas: A Eucharistic Moral Economy of Care

Field Notes   March, 2008

      We make our way out of Cee Bee's, a disheveled and obsolete grocery store located across the street from the J.C. Napier Homes. My ears are filled with the sound of car tires sloshing through rainwater, freshly spilled on Lafayette Street's cracked and oil-soaked asphalt. Steam hovers over the pavement like dry ice, and the smell of warm tar fills my nostrils. My "running partner" and I fall in line with an eastbound exodus of several dozen day laborers. He takes a swig from the 16 ounce can of Icehouse he bought with the fruits of his Ready Body check. The cashier cashed it, no questions asked, for a flat dollar fee. We pause by a graffiti portrait painted on the front brick wall of an abandoned tire store. "Rondell, it's me Cleo! You got that Wednesday on a low-low?" he asks a short, squatty, African-American man who approaches us from the west. "This is my boy, Damian. Don't worry. He cool. He kinda like a reporter, tellin it how it is out here."

      Wet from the drizzle of an unseasonably warm March evening we huddle together under the abandoned store's torn awning. Standing around awkwardly, I step out of the way of a persistent trail of raindrops that finds its way through the awning onto the top of my uncovered head. Rondell pulls out his well-worn, green nylon wallet before fishing a purple raffle ticket out of its inner recesses. Cleo's eyes light up. "Wednesday, regular, 72. How much you want?" he asks. "Gimme fifteen for it," Darnell says, matter-of-factly. "*Fifteen.* Niggah, you must be crazy!" "*Ten,*" retorts Darnell. "*Eight.* And five cigarettes," Cleo counters. "Alright," Darnell agrees. Cleo fishes several crumpled bills out of his paint-splattered blue jeans and forks over a five dollar bill and three singles. He then shakes out five GPC cigarettes from a crumpled soft-pack before placing them in Darnell's outstretched right palm.

      The duo slaps palms, grip each other's right hand, and separate hands with a loud snap. Darnell then darts across Lafayette Street, dodging rush hour traffic as if he is playing a game of "Frogger." "Niggah gonna go get high," Cleo says as Darnell disappears into the large track of public housing. "Room in the Inn is like Hugh Heffner's mansion compared to that Mission," Cleo says. Eyeing the raffle ticket he just bought for the equivalent of nine dollars (five cigarettes

typically fetch one dollar on the Lafayette market), he elaborates on why he shelled out almost two hours' wages:

Got shut outta the loop this week. That job out at the airport was runnin late. Once I get in and get a ticket, then I gotta go in and ask for a workin church. A workin church will bring you back early. If they don't have one, and I don't get brought back [early], then I don't get to go to work. Those temps, if you ain't there, they'll give your job to somebody else. Damned if you do, damned if you don't.

We step out from under the awning and step into a torrent of water that has overflowed the curb. The drizzle begins to turn back into rain, causing us to pick up the pace and dart toward the I-65 overpass that sutures the projects from the Lafayette district. Six emaciated black men huddle underneath the oversized slab of urine-soaked, gray concrete. A metallic scent emanates from the nucleus of the street corner group. We do not dare to pause, lest they think we are trying to "get in their business." In fact, we both pretend they are invisible. The overpass is a common site where men consume the crack cocaine they purchase on or around Lewis Street, J.C. Napier's southwestern border. It is not uncommon for men to narcotize before making the nightly trek to the Mission or Room in the Inn.

We cross over into Lafayette and beeline down the sidewalk, passing abandoned weed lots and light industrial warehouses. Within ten minutes, we join a hurried mass of men making their way east down Lafayette Street, en route to 8th Avenue. As we approach the corner of Lafayette and 8th, we see the telltale bustle of Room in the Inn. The sidewalk in front of the Downtown Clinic is overrun with prospective "guests" waiting for the queue to open. "I got tonight's ticket. 20 dollars," shouts a Black man who is decked out in a green polar fleece, baggy blue jeans, and a black Baltimore Orioles ball cap that is cocked to the side. "Wednesday on the low-low. Tonight's ticket, 20 dollars. 20 *dollars!* I'll take 15. That's as low as I go, 15."

Cleo and I take a left down "the alley." Before I know it, I find myself sandwiched in a line of nearly 200 wet, impatient and anxious unhoused men. I am immediately included in the line's angst-ridden discussion of tonight's "bed count." "Ain't got but 140 beds tonight," the man to my rear informs me. "Wednesday's count is always low." "What number you got?" asks another. "How many are already inside?", "You think I'll get in with a 152?", "How low does a regular gotta be tonight?", "Think the churches will take in any extra tonight?" It is now 5:10 p.m. Church buses, vans and private cars begin crawling down "the alley" and pull into the rear parking lot. We have to inch our way closer to the rusty, chain-link fence that separates the lot from an internal courtyard which is the first site in the bed-allocation process. The church vehicles lurk past us, park, and idle as they await their homeless passengers. "Oh, shit.

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McKendrie! They feed you *real* good!" exclaims the man in front of me. "They a workin church too," notes his running partner.

Meanwhile, dozens more men make a deliberate, intentioned path to the rutted, oil-soaked lot. "Where you been?" Cleo asks a Black man whose blue coveralls and elbows are covered in white dust. "ADW, man. Drywall. It was a late ticket," he replies. The serpentine line wraps south around the chain-link fence and extends into the alley. Electricity virtually shoots through the air when a middle-aged, blonde, white woman opens the courtyard gate. "Rachel, I need a church with laundry! Don't care whatever else, just need laundry!" shouts a man in the front of the line. The woman shoots the man a smile before saying, "I can't promise anything Harold. You know that." "They give them good churches away to they favorites," mutters Cleo's buddy. "Guilt by association," Cleo replies. "I ain't been out to nothin but ghetto churches all winter," he adds. "Coz you ain't a narc," replies Cleo's buddy.

"Red plus, 1 through 10," shouts Rachel. "Right here," shouts a man standing in the rear of the line. "Got it," shouts another man positioned in the middle of the queue. Several more men push their way to the front of the line. When they reach the woman at the gate, she checks their ticket number off of a list attached to her clipboard. She then shouts, "Red plus, 11 through 20." She repeats the process several more times and by the time she reaches "Purple regular 60 through 70" everyone around me begins to expect that the woman might be on the verge of running out of beds. Cleo's buddy shouts at him from inside the courtyard, "You better have lower than 90!" He is then ushered inside the building by a stern volunteer, who tells him, "You're not allowed outside until registration is over."

"Purple regular, 70 through 80," shouts the woman at the gate. "That's me," shouts Cleo. "That's it for now. Y'all come back at 6:15!" the blonde woman yells out. For a moment, I share in the group solidarity that emerges from a commonly focused anxiety over being provisionally turned away to the Mission. A wiry, elderly African American man toward the rear of the line complains most loudly, "I paid ten bucks for this damn ticket, and it's useless!" "Y'all can't just let a few more people in?!" shouts a teenaged white man near the front of the queue. "Come back after last count. Around 6:15," the woman repeats. "Ain't got no *room* in the inn," mutters the man behind me. "It smells like feet up in that Mission." He and dozens more make their way east down the alley toward the Mission's rear courtyard.

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So begins a typical evening at Room in the Inn (RITI). For men like Cleo, these caretakers' queuing and bed-allocation process is rife with anxiety as the logistics of "staying in the loop" (i.e., ensuring the continuity of access) require an inordinate amount of physical and mental energy. The omnipresent threat of being shut out of the loop by missing curfew and relegated to alternative accommodations prevents the RITI intake process from becoming a tedious routine. Indeed, guests' intense volition and continuous striving for a RITI bed ticket suggests a salient perceptual difference between this agency's goods and services and those provided by the Mission.

In this chapter, I provide a comparative view of another faith-based institution that manages the homeless in Lafayette through the analysis of RITI's moral economy of care. Specifically, I analyze the organization of the agency's queuing and bed allocation process. We will explore the moral-alchemic process by paying close attention to the dimensions of staff's moral schemas as well as the instantiation of the resulting spiritual blueprint in organizational practices in an effort to reveal how these practices (are intended to) work on and through homeless clients. In the next chapter, we will analyze how homeless "guests" experience, negotiate, and understand these moral-economic relations. We will be particularly attentive to the associated tensions and contradictions inscribed in staff-client relations given the ironic relational outcome they produce. Before going inside 532 8th Avenue South and taking a look, let us pause for a moment at its doorstep.

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Making Room in the Inn

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.
<div align="right">– Luke 2: 1-7</div>

Like most of the buildings in the Lafayette district, 532 8th Avenue South was originally a home to light industry. As Dodge City Skid Row transitioned from a blighted stretch of urban decay to a full-blown tourist district, the displaced staff of Room in the Inn (RITI) viewed the former plumbing warehouse with circumscribed optimism. The current director recalls her organization's coercively cooperative relocation this way:

Rachel: I think the gift that Charlie's given us is to see every obstacle as an opportunity to create something better…MDHA purchased this place with us in mind, but we renovated the building …Where they sent us to was in the adult business district. Now a lot of them have been closed down. They were on every corner when we moved here…This place was *dangerous.* I never, ever, ever came down here. [The Downtown Clinic's] staff was behind Plexiglas and basically the strong ruled and the weak were vulnerable. This place [532 8th Ave.] was just an old empty warehouse and where the Mission is was a Sears building. This was a seedy area.

The smoky gray cube of brick – one of those short and fat storehouses built before Music City's skyline grew tall and sleek – squats self consciously beneath the heavily blighted CSX overpass. Freight trains chug down the rusty tracks every hour, shaking the entire building before crossing over 8th Avenue and slithering into the Gulch. Whereas the proprietor of the plumbing warehouse would have shipped out freight by way of railroad, the edifice's current occupants dispatch a very different type of "cargo" each evening; they therefore rely on a dissimilar method of transportation. The director of volunteer services explains:

Amy: Over 150 different congregations in Nashville participate in Room in the Inn. It runs November 1st through March 31st. Different congregations will pick a night of the week to house homeless guests, and take them back to their church and get them a meal and a place to sleep, and

get them breakfast and lunch the next day, then they'll bring them back here. So we're sort of like the airport, we're the going out portal point.

"Bus station" is perhaps a better metaphor for the Campus's role in this network of service provision. The church buses (and handful of private cars) to which "homeless guests" like Cleo – who we followed in the opening vignette – are ultimately dispatched each night are part of an interfaith alliance that provides a "spatial fix" for the surplus of unhoused men concentrated in the Lafayette district (Harvey 1996). "I don't know how many people I put up in those old single room occupancy hotels for $15 a week. You got a room with a bed, a desk, a chair, and a lamp. And down the hallway, was the bathroom," recalled RITI founder Charles Strobel. "They started tearing them down and the homeless became more visible on the streets." RITI provides a makeshift spatial solution to the resultant mismatch between the number of public/affordable housing vacancies and the number of down and out Nashvillians through staff's and volunteers' daily production of an inter-organizational conduit of care.

Passage through this conduit of care is contingent on a guest securing a bed ticket after each morning's return to RITI headquarters from a host church. The distribution of beds originally followed a "first come, first serve" policy, which is the "normative basis for most forms of queuing" (Schwartz 1975: 93). Staff replaced this default means of queue discipline with a complex lottery system that assigns random chance to the bed-allocation process:

RH: The history behind the ticket system is *fairness*. We used to not do tickets, we did first come, first serve and we had one guy get his throat slashed…It was rough. And you can imagine, when all this was drunk and seedy and we were in a back alley. It was not fair to the person who got let out of the institution after 20 years. So we went to a ticket system.

That one unhoused man murdered another over access to a RITI host church speaks to the scarcity and desirability of the service rendered. By distributing bed tickets

through a complex lottery system, staff doles out a scarce resource according to a logic of "fairness" that simultaneously displaces to the luck of the draw the tensions associated with their inability to provide an endless supply of beds. Says Mary, RITI coordinator:

The number of beds varies each night…Some nights more than 200 slots are available, but on other nights the count is less than 150. Since different congregations participate on different nights of the program, the count changes every evening. This means that often demand for shelter is greater than capacity…*There is a certain level of tension in the crowd* as everyone waits to find out if his/her ticket will be called, that there may be a few extra beds at the end of the evening. Usually every night we have to turn people away. This is one of the most heartbreaking aspects of the job, to send people away in freezing temperatures because we have no more spaces left (emphasis added).

(Re)Creating "the Loop"

The basic labor system of RITI is broken into nine flexible roles that create a queuing channel which, in turn, creates a semi-permeable "loop" in which, on most evenings, only the guests who were dispatched to a church the previous evening can draw a ticket the next morning. One evening, after a hectic St. Patrick's Day shift, Mary, who plays the role of "coordinator," explained the bed-allocation system to me. She began by underscoring that, "I *always* tell people that once they get into the loop, *not to get out of the loop*." She then opened up a composition book and showed me "how the ticket system works." The book projected the bed count for each night in the month of March. "Now, the count fluctuates every day; maybe churches cancel or maybe they can take more or less guests than expected. So I have to adjust it *every day*." Here is a look at the mathematical logic behind the system on this particular Wednesday evening:

180 Bed Count for Wednesday

Subtract:
40 "No tickets" (elderly, mentally disabled, program, women)
_____
140 of the **180** Guests who return from churches Thursday morning must draw a ticket

Subtract:
80 "+ Tickets" (distributed on Wednesday morning that secure entry Thursday night)

60	Thursday "Regular" tickets (distributed Thursday morning that secure entry Thursday night, if "low" enough)

Add:

80	Friday + (made on Wed. night to be distributed Thurs. morning)

140	Tickets distributed Thursday morning (i.e., 60 Thurs. Regular and 80 Friday +)

"Bed count" represents the number of guests host churches can accommodate on this given evening. The 40 "no tickets" refer to client categories that staff gives "preemptive priority," meaning these guests receive "authorized exemptions to the criterion of order of arrival" (Schwartz 1975: 97). Mentally disabled clients, most of whom have been deinstitutionalized, as Rachel the director put it, "don't have to draw because they're special. They're mentally unable to understand the system." Anyone 65 or older is also guaranteed a bed every night since, according to Mary, "life expectancy on street is 55 years of age." Guests waiting for admission to either the Odyssey program for substance-dependent war veterans or the Downtown Clinic's rehabilitation program are also absolved from drawing tickets each morning. Women, given their small number and the distance they must travel to the women's mission if turned away (8 miles), are also guaranteed a bed each evening. This means that only 140 of the 180 (78%) guests have to draw a ticket when they return Thursday morning; all of these guests are men.

However, those who draw a ticket Thursday morning are not guaranteed admission Thursday evening due to the daily distribution of "+ tickets," which stagger bed allocation. A plus-ticket is distributed on the day before a guest can cash it in for an evening's lodging at a host church. Eighty Thursday plus-tickets were distributed Wednesday morning, meaning that 60 Thursday regular-tickets, which grant a guest

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admission on Thursday evening, will be in the mix from which guests draw on Thursday morning; the remaining 80 tickets will grant admission Friday night (Friday plus-tickets). Thus, the odds of a guest pulling a ticket for Thursday evening are roughly 43%. Even though each evening's shifting bed count alters a guest's odds of drawing a regular ticket, he is only likely to pull one, roughly speaking, every other night. This means that, if a man plays strictly by the rules, he can only gain entry to RITI three-to-four days a week. Moreover, because the only guests eligible to draw tickets each morning are those who were dispatched to a host church, the system becomes closed off to anyone who falls out of "the loop" (in a separate section, we will explore how guests create a system that counters these two facets of the queuing channel's statistical structure).

The mathematical structure underlying the loop is supplemented by a constellation of roles that give the bed allocation process its human form. Volunteers are essential to the bed queue's smooth functioning. Most of the volunteers I met over the years are members of a church that hosts guests on a given evening of the month. Others are high school students who typically have both an urge to care for the poor as well as a college resume to pad. The foundational role played by volunteers with what are, for the most part, genuine altruistic motivations, makes RITI a much lighter-hearted environment than the Mission. In contrast to what Charles Strobel calls the Mission's "prison-trustee model of social order," in which program members (many of whom experience severe withdrawal symptoms while on the job) are the organization's primary "face," RITI has a "relational model" premised on "mutual trust and concern."

In order to create a sense of continuity for the guests, staff asks volunteers to commit to working the same night each week. Guests thus not only get used to seeing the

same faces on a given night of the week, but interact with volunteers who are considerably less "compassion fatigued" than a staff who works in the "trenches" day in, day out. Despite volunteers' integral symbolic role in imparting "hospitality" to guests each evening, their primary instrumental roles revolve around enforcing the queue discipline which maintains the loop's integrity. These unpaid participants' respective tasks are determined each evening by a staff member, following the ritual prayer circle at 5:25 p.m. The respective positions in "the loop" are: "yard dog," "registrar," "registration guard," "church-assigner/announcer," "list-runner," "list-keeper," and "ticket-distributor" (this role will be discussed in a different section).

Yard Dog

The "yard dog" is the first line of "defense" in the queuing channel. This role places its volunteer incumbent in a difficult situation given the daily reality that RITI's bed supply cannot meet demand. Many men feel an intensive desire for the services rendered which, from their perspective, cannot be substituted by the Mission. Guests thus frequently "fake the funk," by creating clever ruses (some are more clever than others) designed to gain entry without (rightful) possession of a ticket. It is not uncommon for a guest to claim, "I'm on the late-list," "I just need to use the bathroom," "I left my bag inside and need to get it," "Rachel told me to come talk to her," or, if all else fails, "I'm drunk and need to go to the Guest House."

Tasked with both policing these recurrent ruses and enforcing RITI's standards of behavior – its prohibitions against drug and alcohol intoxication as well as its prohibition of "verbal" and "physical" "abuse" – the two volunteers who assume this position each night are, as one unpaid helper put it, "Kinda like bouncers. But we're like bouncers and

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counselors in one." Months before I ever assumed this role myself, I asked Greg, the

volunteer who regularly worked this post each Thursday in 2007-2008, to explain how he

saw his role. He put it to me this way:

Greg: When the guests exit the courtyard at 5:15 [p.m.] we have to get an accurate count. We get a counter. Like today, the counter already had 45 on it. It counts people already on the late list and stuff like that. After everyone comes in [who has a ticket] they take names and put you on a list. Then, at 6:15 they do the final count to see who is actually there.

DW: So staff cross references the clicker count with the final roll call?

Greg: Right. It's like a poor man's turnstile.

DW: How do you know who's allowed to come in late? Do they have a ticket?

Greg: They wouldn't have a ticket. They would've called in and left a message. Then when they get here we check a list with their names on them. Generally everyone's turned away by 6:20 so they have a chance to make it to the Mission. But, some people choose to stick around. Like last week, a couple people waited and a few extra beds opened up. We also have to screen a lot of people with stories.

DW: What kind of stories do you get?

Greg: Like, 'I called in but I'm not on the list.' Or, 'I got a ticket. I got a ticket. I don't understand why I can't get in.' But, it's like, 'Well, you're late.' About a month ago, see the crack right there [points to a gap between two portions of chain link fence]. A guy slipped right through it and I go, 'You just snuck in.' And he goes, 'Good catch man [laughs].' If you can make final count, not necessarily everyone has a ticket in hand. One night a guy came out and walked up to the fence and passed off a ticket to his buddy. That's why you're not supposed to leave the building [until registration is over]. We gotta watch people because they'll say they wanna come in and get their bag. So we let them in and escort them to their bag.

The "poor man's turnstile," as Greg called it, pre-registers each day's "no

tickets." If we stay with the Wednesday night scenario presented above, this would mean

that the yard dog's stainless steel click-counter would have 40 beds clicked out before the

evening registration process begins on Thursday. There are 200 beds total for the

evening, meaning that 140 guests with either a Thursday plus, or Thursday regular ticket

can be admitted. This also means that there are 20 extra beds on Thursday, provided a

church does not cancel for some reason.

List-keeper

The point of articulation between the yard dog and the list-keeper resides in the latter's incremental admission of guests who are counted by the former. Mary and Rachel – two fulltime staff members – typically assume this task. For instance, one Thursday evening Mary began the admission process by first admonishing prospective guests. "A lot of drinking, using drugs, and selling drugs is taking place down on Drexel street," she yelled into a microphone. "Do not let us catch you on Drexel Street. Nothing good can be happening down there. Come and join us instead. If we catch you on Drexel Street, there's no Room in the Inn. Okay?" Staying with the Wednesday-Thursday scenario, she then admitted the 80 Thursday plus-tickets, followed by the 60 Thursday regular-tickets. Mary then, following a logic of fairness, attempted to allocate the remaining 20 beds by calling the first 20 Friday plus-tickets by calling out "Friday plus, 1 through 10," followed by "Friday plus, 11 through 20." When only eight men came forward, she gradually inched her way up the queue, by calling out, "Friday plus, 20 through 30" and so on until she admitted 20 guests.

Each evening at a quarter past six, after "final count," the list-keeper returns to the gate and allocates any extra beds. Slack in the bed queue is created each night by four recurrent dynamics. First, guests on the yard dog's "late list" (6-10 on any given evening) may not arrive by the 6:15 p.m. curfew. Second, on particularly cold evenings, staff will lobby with churches to take in several more guests a piece. Third, staff always builds in slack to guard against admitting more guests than there are beds. Last, overtly intoxicated ticket-holders are routinely routed out of the bed queue and into the "Guest House" by staff and volunteers (this dynamic will be discussed in the following section). These

recurrent dynamics translate into a temporal-spatial practice wherein guests initially turned away after registration return around 6 p.m. and form an auxiliary queue.

The list-keeper uses two different strategies to allocate the remaining beds, both of which are intended to be "fair." One Thursday evening, for instance, Rachel returned to the gate in order to allocate six surplus beds. She dropped fifteen slips of paper in a bag, numbered 1 through 15 (the number of guests waiting in the auxiliary line). The six guests who drew 1 through 6 were granted admission. Other times, I have witnessed Mary take down the ticket numbers of the first fifteen guests still standing in line after they were denied admission. Men with plus-tickets for the following evening often wait in line with their peers who have the given day's ticket, hoping they will make the first cut for extra beds. On this evening, Mary took down the names of the men who did not make this cut, which gave them first priority on any beds remaining after final count.

Registration Guard

The volunteers who play what I came to call the "registration guard" share with yard dogs the dual "job description" of "bouncer and counselor in one." This position is integrally linked to the yard dog, as well as the list-keeper insofar as the maintenance of order after a guest has entered the system is contingent on the control of a guests' entry (cf. Schwartz 1975). Whereas the yard dog has an ecological support in the chain-link gate, the registration guard must rely solely on interpersonal skills to maintain queue discipline. For the most part, the volunteer who is assigned this task simply imparts "hospitality" to guests by smiling and engaging them in light-hearted banter. Guests, more often than not, are cooperative and reciprocate the feeling of "togetherness" promoted by the hospitable interaction built into the RITI model. However, this role

requires the execution of two forms of discipline, which sometimes conflict with a volunteer's overarching expressive, altruistic role.

The first night I was assigned this task, for instance, Rachel instructed me to "shadow Al," a veteran volunteer with over ten RITI seasons under his belt. He and I stood near the entrance to the day room, which channels guests to the registration window that bisects this quasi-bus terminal from the neighboring quadrant of the building that houses the support desk and two benches. As guests began streaming through the gate, he imparted the logic of our place in the division of labor:

Al: We don't send anybody out who's drunk. If they're fighting, they don't go out either. If you look out here and you see people picking on each other, then we just tell Martina [a staff member]. Because if they go out to the same church together, there could be problems. Just make sure they come through the line. And, usually, if you can smell Listerine, they've been drinking.

DW: If we find that they've been drinking or fighting, what do we do?

Al: We have to keep them in here [the day room] until all the guys have been processed. Because, if you don't do that, the guys slip in and out. It gets hard to do sometimes, but just ask them very politely to please step back into the building. If they're drunk, just get Martina or somebody, and we'll escort them over here to what's called the Guest House. That's just a place where they can sleep it off. It gets them off the streets into a safe environment.

In 1991, a decade before Dodge City Skid Row was completely reclaimed by downtown boosters, Charles Strobel was approached by several municipal court judges who asked him to help them carry out a court mandate to provide a "safe alternative to jail" for intoxicated and disruptive unhoused Nashvillians. The city injected several thousand dollars into the formerly private 501 c 3 organization, creating a provisional public-private partnership vis-à-vis the social control of the "street drunk." Amy, the volunteer coordinator explains:

Amy: The Guest House is where police will bring people who are intoxicated. The police still have the option to take them to jail. So, we're getting the same police officers who *trust us*, and understand we got help. And, they get 4 hours to sober up. And we'll talk to them. If they're interested in treatment, we can keep them in safe space until we can get them into another

program. We have a partnership with the Downtown Clinic, and they have a drug and alcohol program. We house the guys here, and their classes are over there at the Downtown Clinic.

The Guest House also functions as an intra-organizational mechanism of social control. RITI's viability stands or falls on staff's ability to maintain the integrity of its constitutive interfaith alliance. This imperative interacts with an overarching concern with enrolling chronic alcoholics in the Downtown Clinic's sobriety program and translates into staff's incessant concern with and monitoring for guests' intoxication. Yard dogs' and registration guards' nightly duties thus involve searching for guests' telltale signs of intoxication. Al, for instance, was always suspicious when he smelled Listerine on a man's breath (mouthwash is a common means of masking the scent of alcohol as well as a source of intoxication in and of itself). More often than not, however, only belligerent or blatant drunks are routed out of the bed queue and into the Guest House:

Field Notes   January 2008

As I monitor the exit to make sure guests do not exit the dayroom, I overhear a man bickering with two yard dogs. The man repeatedly exclaims that, "They done took my ticket!" "They done took my ticket!" "We can put you on the list for tomorrow," replies Greg. "They done *took* my ticket!" When I walk over closer to the gate, I remember seeing the man walk past me earlier in the evening. He pleads with the two yard dogs to let him back in, stating that he left the gate earlier in the evening (a violation of bed queue protocol). When he walks past me and Al, Al whispers, "He's been drinking," before disappearing into the day room. Several minutes later, Martina walks out, holding the man by the arm. "Have you been drinking or not, Mr. Trotter?" she asked sternly. She then shoots me a discerning look and says, "Just take Mr. Trotter to the Guest House. Take his arm."
I awkwardly reach for "Mr. Trotter's" arm, which he snatches away before angrily shouting, "Man, they took my ticket. I'm supposed to be going to McKendrie and that's a *good* church!!" "Don't shoot the messenger man," I reply. Unmoved by my attempt to deflect his anger, he launches into a diatribe:

Why did they take my ticket?! They took my ticket and it was for McKendrie. And that's a nice ticket! Why she want me to go to the Guest House. I can't *stand* her. That's how Martina is. Just low down and dirty. She told you to take me down to the Guest House. They got all these young kids out here like it's a game. Motherfucker. You a motherfucker. Man, I *hate that bitch.* Damn it! She's a low-down-dirty-bitch! Man, that bitch is trifle!

Having overheard Trotter's denunciation of me and her, Martina re-enters the courtyard. "Man Martina you done took my ticket!" he exclaims. She curtly replies, "I'm sorry. You can go to the Guest House or the Mission." "I done missed the Mission!" he protests. As she goes to grab his shoulders – her typical technique to calm down an angry guest – Trotter jerks away and shouts, "Get, you need to get your hands off of me!" "Ok. Well you can go to the Guest House," Martina replies. "I know you don't care. This is funny to you. This is my life you're fucking with," he retorted.

The registration guard is also charged with the task of becoming a human "queue prop" in order to enforce discipline where the bed allocation system is most likely to be breached; absence of ecological supports becomes the occasion for interpersonal supports. Registration provides a salient opportunity structure for the would-be queue violator, given the chaos produced by channeling nearly two hundred men into an approximately 1,000 square foot dayroom. Despite the regulation of a guest's entry by both the yard dog and list-keeper, the registration guard experiences the allocation process as one of inundation because of the lag time between guests' admission and their registration by the registrar; a trickle thus becomes a flash-flood each evening. Accordingly, the registration guard is pressed into the interactive process of routing guests into the dayroom for registration, and ensuring they do not exit the building until the registration process is finished. Easier said than done.

Once inside the gate, guests tend, for the most part, to engage in an indigenous form of queue discipline; failure to do so can result in suspension or relegation to the Guest House. In fact, the first few times I was assigned this role, several guests shepherded me through the process. Nonetheless, there exists a recalcitrant subset of the population that attempts to violate the queuing protocol each evening:

Field Notes   November 2007

Rachel simply instructs me to, "Just make sure they don't go outside until registration is over; even to smoke." On taking up my seemingly benign position, an African American man sitting in the corner of the dayroom near the exit asks me, "Are you a volunteer? You better stand

by the door so people don't go out." I oblige his admonition, without understanding the logic behind my role. A heavyset African American woman is sitting in the opposite corner from my "instructor." Presumably realizing that the guests are about to be routed into the dayroom, her lips crease into a devious smile and she warns, "Here they come. Don't let em run over you." I quickly learn that she has a much better understanding than me about what I am about to be put up against.

The dayroom becomes deluged with a torrent of homeless men, many of whom have been on the street long enough to recognize a green volunteer. Registration has only been under way for five minutes before I have my first confrontation. "Stick and move man, stick and move," a Black man wearing blue coveralls says to me. "I can't let you out until registration's done man," I reply. "You can't go out," my instructor seconds. Red, a guest with whom I have developed rapport when working day labor, finishes registering, walks over next to me and smirks. "Rock and a hard place huh?" "That's right," I say.

As Red and I talk about his painting job through ADW, another African American man approaches me and says, "Excuse me, excuse me." As he pushes outside into the courtyard, I tell him that he is not supposed to exit the building until registration is completed. He brushes me off by saying, "I said *excuse me*." My instructor's face contorts into an angry grimace. "They can't leave the building!" "I'm not a security guard. I can't control him," I retort. "Let me tell you something!" he barks. "When he goes out there, he's gonna hand that ticket off to somebody and they're gonna slip in. That means somebody's gonna be out a bed." Somewhat embarrassed, the only words I can muster are, "Nobody told me that." "Well now you know," he says in an annoyed tone.

Embarrassed by my failure to fulfill my task, I ask Red to watch the door and chase the man into the courtyard. Martina – who is in the process of admitting guests – halts the admission process, which empties the courtyard of every guest but the queue violator. "Harold, I see you talking to Bobby and I'm going to have to assume that he has your ticket." "I just needed a cigarette!" Harold retorted. "He just wanted a cigarette!" Bobby seconded. "Bobby, I'm sorry," she replied. "Harold ruined it for you. If there are beds after last call, you can be first on the list. Harold, you know you can't leave the building until registration's over! I don't care why you came out here. If you don't go back inside, I'll have to suspend you for a month."

Registrar

The RITI bed ticket both expresses staff's logic of fairness and serves as an

essential administrative prop that supports the integrity of the queue. However, the

preceding episode reveals that it is also an element of queue discipline ripe for guests'

cooptation. When Harold brushed past me he breached not one, but *two* positions in the

queuing channel designed to maintain discipline over the allocation of beds at host

churches. A guest cannot "hand off" a ticket unless he also circumvents the watchful eye

of the registrar who, in return for the lottery ticket, inscribes a man's name on a

registration form:

Field Notes   February 2008

Two running buddies approach the registration window. I am embroiled in the "flow" experience created by registering hundreds of guests in a rapid-fire manner. The organized chaos of the process makes it very difficult to ensure that every guest gives me their respective bed ticket. The duo asks me to, "Send us out together" (a common request indulged by staff). As I fill out his buddy's name, the other man cuffs his bed ticket and monitors my eyes the whole time. I pretend not to see what he is doing. After I finish filling out the ticket, he slides his hand completely off of the counter and says, "Thanks man." "I'll need the ticket back," I tell him, with a chuckle. "I was just making sure you was on your toes," he says with a smile, before returning the ticket.

Similar to a desk clerk who works at a budget motel, the registrar attempts to accommodate guests' requests vis-à-vis one or more of the five following "room amenities": shower, laundry, clothing, (non-)smoking, and (non-)working church.

Unbeknownst to the guest, however, the registrar also inscribes another salient dimension on the form:

Field Notes   November 2007

I follow Bill – a veteran volunteer – over to a window partition that separates the waiting area from a hallway, forming a reception window. Bill grabs a registration pad, and begins going over the ticket: "'S' is for is they want a shower. 'L' is for if they want laundry. 'C' is for if they want clothing." Before Bill can finish, Martina walks over and begins instructing me on how to fill out a registration ticket:

Martina: You won't be registering any women tonight. If you do, we have a problem. All the women are pre-registered. If you get an African-American, or a Hispanic, or an Arabic, or a whatever person, just start their name in [indent] about one letter. So, if you were African-American, I would put you down here [one letter to the right]. If you were Caucasian, I'd start it over here [left-justified]. But don't make it *too* obvious to the people who are out there. It's for registration. I don't want to send one African-American person with all white people, and vice versa. I'm not profiling or anything, *I'm just trying to make it fair*. I'm not gonna send some Hispanic person with all people who speak English. I'd rather put Spanish-speaking people together (emphasis added).

DW: And you're gonna determine that [Hispanic] by their last name?

Martina: Usually. But if you indent, I'll know they are a minority. Well, not really a minority since Black and White is about 50/50 now. But anyway, that's how to do that. I just want you to be respectful of it, and don't do it in such a way that the person's gonna ask you, 'What are you doing?' Then they'll say you're racially profiling. Then I'll be getting a whole EEOC thing, which I don't need, thank you. So if you just do one here, and one right there, it doesn't have to be exact. I'll know what you mean. Just give me one letter [indention]. Ok? And if they're a worker they all go to one church. I don't have any choice. And, we ask for smoking [if they smoke]. So, 'S' for smoking and 'NS' for non-smoking. I got a couple non-smoking churches. So I'm looking for non-smokers, not smokers if you know what I mean.

"Sure," I say. She then walks returns to the "hospitality desk."

The two volunteers who step into this role each evening begin the process of transmuting guests' bed tickets into another type of textual artifact that creates a vital link in the central nervous system that runs through and coordinates the interfaith alliance that *is* RITI (i.e., "the loop"): the registration list. The registration window, in other words, is the point in the process at which the guest's bed ticket is converted into a textual object that partially determines the host church to which he is sent.

Church-Allocator

The recurrent administrative practice of inscribing a man's race/ethnicity on the registration form follows from staff's overarching logic of "fairness" and prominently factors into the bed-allocation process. Race/ethnicity, refracted through the logic of this practice, becomes an organizing principle that conspires with the other dimensions on a registration form – i.e., preferences for shower, laundry, clothes, smoking, and (non-)working – and translates into staff's church-allocation criteria:

Amy: We assign guests [who request it] to churches with shower, laundry, and clothes until we run out. However, because we have to be *fair* about sending out a racially balanced mix, it's usually not first come, first serve. We try to do first come, first serve, and balance it with the need not to send out one Hispanic guest with 11 White guests, or Black guests. Working churches go to the first X amount of guests that register and ask for them; there too we try to take race into account.

Moreover, because RITI's viability rests on staff's ability to maintain its interfaith alliance, a guest's reputation periodically factors into which church he is assigned:

Field Notes   January 2009
Rachel calls three guests' names over the intercom. "George Sims, Randall Collins, and Jim Smith, please come to the hospitality desk." When the three men arrive, Rachel tells them why she called them over. "We had some problems at Brentwood Baptist last week. I need y'all to go there and set a good example. I know y'all know how to behave." "That's right," George says with a smile. As the three men return to the dayroom, Rachel explains, "Two guests snuck in alcohol last week and caused a ruckus. I had to drive out there *in the middle of the night* to pick

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them up and bring them back to the Guest House! If they drop out of Room in the Inn, that's 12-15 beds *a week* that disappear."

Staff's allocation criteria – undergirded by a logic of (racialized) fairness which combines with the organizational imperative of maintaining the bed count (i.e., stemming the dissolution of the alliance) – materializes in the final textual prop that maintains queue discipline: "the list."

List-Runner

"We take a list from them [the church-allocator]," a veteran volunteer named Sean explained to me one November evening,

They'll announce it on the intercom. And the guests will come up here [the lobby]. We meet them at the door with the list. Then we check them off. And then we walk em, and escort em to the bus. Usually the driver is around here and he'll pinpoint where to go. Once you get them in the car or the bus, then you, again, go through the check list. Coz you don't want anyone in *here* sneakin out *there*. So you got to verify the count *here* and *out there* at the bus. And you give the copy [of the names] to the driver.

It would take little effort on behalf of a queue violator to surreptitiously squeeze in line with his peers as they exit the courtyard and climb aboard a host church's idling vehicle. "The list" thus serves a three-fold objective in the bed queue in that it acts as a passenger manifest for the host church, which a volunteer simultaneously employs as a means to ensure that only guests with a "right" to the church's "hospitality" are inside the vehicle. The list-runner's "roll call" in the church vehicle also guards against a guest being left behind. The list's function as a passenger manifest, moreover, completes the circuitry that makes up "the loop." Staff's distribution of bed tickets each morning acts as the catalyst that sets in motion a recurrent course of text-based action that coordinates the ongoing activity of managing homelessness across time and space. The resultant conduit of care creates a spatial fix by recursively dispersing the homeless out of Lafayette and

into adjacent neighborhoods, as well as to the suburban hinterland, before re-concentrating them in Lafayette each morning. The purpose of this conduit, however, does not reside solely in its instrumental function of circulating indigent bodies.

Enacting the Eucharist

"'What's behind the curtain?'" Charles Strobel asked rhetorically. The ex-Catholic priest paused and stared into his empty coffee cup several seconds before remaking eye contact with me. With a sly grin he answered his own question:

It took the dog to figure it out – the wizard [of Oz] is just smoke and mirrors – but they found that because of his spirit, they had the *inspiration* to *make the journey*. They had the *courage*, the *heart*, and the *mind* to figure out *the journey*. And that's about the most we can do is give people *hope* and *inspiration* even when they're not optimistic. Because we'll feed them and tomorrow they'll be hungry again. But how do you get people to find *hope* and work their way through the journey?

In Strobel's view, RITI's reason for existence revolves around nurturing and sustaining guests by satisfying their physical and social needs as well as by providing "inspiration and hope" to facilitate "their way through the journey." "*Optimism*," Cornel West[105] (1993) reminds us, "is a notion that there's sufficient evidence that would allow us to infer that if we keep doing what we're doing, things will get better," whereas "*hope*, that's something else. Cutting against the grain, against the evidence…*[F]aith* being the *courage to act* when doubt is warranted" (emphasis added).

The conduit of care through which Strobel's homeless guests circulate each day is intended to impart hope-inducing "hospitality" – what Strobel calls RITI's "original grace." Hospitality, RITI staff believes, is what guests need "not only to survive, but to

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[105] Commencement speech at Wesleyan University. www.humanity.org

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thrive;" it creates the conditions of possibility for a guest to have the courage and inspiration to cut against the grain of evidence and, ultimately, make it to the end of "the journey." Rachel Hester, executive director, put it to me this way one afternoon in her second-floor office:

Rachel: We actually have core values that we answer everything by. We offer *hospitality* first. No matter what, funding cuts, we will *never* stop Room in the Inn as long as we can. Because if we don't offer hospitality, we can't offer any more. That's what we found out when we moved to this building. We had to start with relationships. *Hospitality* offers *Hope* with *Respect* in a *Community* of *Non-violence*. When a person feels *respect*, there is *hope*. Hope raises their self-expectations. If we raise their self-expectations, they might be able to eventually find housing and employment.

RITI's operative goal is encapsulated in the five "core values" Hester invokes above – i.e., "*Hospitality* offers *Hope* with *Respect* in a *Community* of *Non-violence*" – and this moral imperative, in her view, dramatically distinguishes her operation from the Mission and its Salvationist raison d'etre:

Rachel: I think the biggest difference between us [and the Mission] is that our spirituality is about letting people see God through what we do. It's about attraction in a way. It's also about showing God as a *hopeful God*. If I am on the streets, I can be angry at everyone, including God. There are times in my life where I do not want to sit in front of a sermon in order to get a meal. That's the biggest difference.
    Somebody at the Mission recently called themselves 'spiritual sandpaper.' I believe that it's out of my spirituality that I come down here and work. I have also found more faith in the men on the streets than I sometimes find in my own church. So for us to just assume that everyone on the streets needs saving, and that's the answer, I think homelessness is *much more complicated than that*. I think that you have to show a *God of hope*.

In the Mission as well as in RITI, the Bible is the primary text staff employ to frame the issue of homelessness. As Strobel once put it, "All of our stories are there, in the Scriptures. If you can locate yourself there, you're in great company, you're not alone; other people have been there. It's all about God. We are the story, and God is the plot[106]." RITI's "plot," however, is written by a much different deity than the Mission's. Whereas the Mission's God is individualized and vengeful toward those who "turn their back on

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[106] West (2004).

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Him" – as evidenced by the abdicant's abject poverty – RITI's God is a God of unconditional acceptance, a "God of hope":

Strobel: There is acceptance in the song 'Amazing Grace.' How did they save a wretch like me? What if you start with *original grace,* instead of *original sin*? Original grace says you're a child of God. You're not a wretch. Before there is *a fall*, there's a *state of blessing*. The Eden experience is rooted in a blessing, an original grace. It's only after Adam and Eve eat of the tree that they are punished by God.

Interestingly, the narrative of Adam and Eve's "fall from grace" (a.k.a. "original sin") outlined in Genesis 2 & 3 – which marks the first humans' transition from a state of innocent obedience to God's commandments to a state of guilt-ridden disobedience – is the root of both RITI's hope-inducing purpose and the Mission's individualistic quest to convert the homeless. Strobel's scriptural interpretation, however, dramatically diverges from his counterparts at the Mission. Whereas rescue missionaries exhort their unhoused residents to make restitution for "the fall" by undergoing spiritual conversion in Life Recovery, RITI staff focuses on "building relationships" with homeless guests on their own terms by providing them with a hospitable stay at a host church – an agenda rooted in the theological image of "original grace" rather than "original sin":

Strobel: I don't think there's a need for us to force people into any way of thinking. The less we say, probably the better. As long as we respect their human rights. *Respect* is the operative word. To respect another person is to respect them *as they are*, *not as we want them to be*. We say that if *God is to be experienced in the community,* if love is to be experienced in *relationships,* we want that to be an experience for folks (emphasis added).

Like rescue missionaries, RITI staff converts life-sustaining goods into a conduit of religious authority that propagates a supernatural classification of homeless clients. However, where missionaries constitute unhoused residents as sinful souls lacking the proper relationship with God, RITI staff constructs their guests as a "sacred image of an invisible God." Because "God is to be experienced in the *community,*" "building relationships" on the foundation of unconditional "acceptance" and "love" is paramount

to both doing God's work (i.e., acting as a "disciple") and cultivating a guest's

experience of "something divine in their life" which, in Strobel's formulation, is

synonymous with the experience of hope:

Strobel: When people say, 'What about evangelization?' Rachel says, 'We believe in letting people see God in *what we do,* not in just what we say.' Let the conclusion come from whoever receives the hospitality and love we offer. There is that expression, 'By this shall all people know that you are my disciples by the love you have for one another.' The love we can show *inspires* people to experience something divine in their life; it gives them the hope necessary to hope in mysteries of faith.

RITI staff finds God in the homeless community, just as they hope the homeless

community finds God in the hospitable daily operations of RITI. This reciprocal vision of

God's grace accounts for the different moral-economic structures operative in RITI and

the Mission. Whereas the unhoused resident has only his "gratitude" to offer in return for

the Mission's goods and services, at RITI he mediates the very deity who staff seeks to

serve vis-à-vis their ministry to the poor. Giving and receiving, from staff's perspective,

thus collapse into each other, creating a spiritual gift exchange in which both parties

honor the norm of reciprocity simply by virtue of their recursive interaction. Says

Strobel: "Rachel always says, 'Room in the Inn is a place where there's both giving and

receiving and you can't tell the difference.' The homeless do not understand how they

impact people."

The spiritual reciprocity rooted in staff's vision of God becomes expressed in

their attempt to neutralize the embarrassment felt by unhoused recipients of RITI's goods

and services. Moreover, it becomes encoded in a clear "feeling rule" (Hochschild 2003)

that prohibits staff's expectation of a guest's "gratitude":

Strobel: I've told staff over the years, 'I never want to hear anybody say, 'They oughta be grateful!'' Be grateful for what? Casserole? A mattress on the floor? There's a sense that people who give want to be rewarded by *gratitude…*In the gospel of Luke, chapter 17, Jesus tells the

story, 'What if you had your servants in the field working all day. When he came in, would you say to the servant, 'Now cook my dinner?' Would that servant be grateful?

Strobel's prohibition of staff's grateful expectations is, moreover, grounded in a distinctive aspect of the Catholic ethos: the ethical imperative of "caritas," which means charity.

In contrast to the individualist (Manichaean) prism through which Protestant rescue missionaries view homelessness, RITI's prism is forged out of the Catholic imperative to stem what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* refers to as "sinful inequalities" that "are in open contradiction to the Gospel." Rather than viewing the homeless as lost souls who have "fallen from grace," RITI staff believes the homeless have experienced a structural descent through the safety net's torn fabric:

Strobel: They've fallen out of systems that have been created to help you and me. Systems of education, mental health, healthcare, and employment…There's no easy answers…Because we're dealing with the X-rated portion of life…Do it night after night after night after night for *years* and do it when there's vomit and puke and crap and violence and keep doing it. You don't find necessarily the consummation of God. You find the *abandonment* of God.

Whereas rescue missionaries believe homeless men have "abandoned God and His claim on their lives," Strobel believes the unhoused suffer from a double-abandonment by the State and God. Moreover, this abandonment thesis expresses Catholicism's ethical underpinnings of fault-forgiveness and the legitimation of dependency which lay at the root of the ethical obligation to serve those in need. Says the *Catechism:*

Without the *help of grace*, men would not know how "to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives in to evil, and the violence which under the illusion of fighting evil only makes it worse." This is *the path of charity*, that is, of the love of God and of neighbor. *Charity is the greatest social commandment. It respects others and their rights. It requires the practice of justice, and it alone makes us capable of it.* (emphasis added)

Given this "doctrinal commitment to altruistic concerns" (Wuthnow 1990: 13), the RITI ministry seeks to manage and ameliorate the fallout of the sinful inequality rooted in unjust political and economic structures by respecting guests' human rights. In contrast to rescue missionaries, RITI staff view the homeless as victims of a sinful social order rather than paragons of moral turpitude whose sinful "lifestyle" expresses their repudiation of God and their abdication of personal responsibility for problems in living.

RITI staff consequently frames the so-called "homeless lifestyle" as a logical adaptation to the political, economic, and social structures in which they are ensnared:

Strobel: Looking to the future, the obstacles they face require so much courage and determination from them that they often 'give up,' appearing resigned and hopeless. Thus, they can be mistaken, on the surface, as *'choosing' their lifestyle*. When failure is so prevalent in their past, success is difficult to imagine. Here is where…[we] must model relationships among staff and volunteers in such a way that the homeless actually enjoy being here. When they *feel our warm hospitality* welcoming them, they can feel what it means to belong to a community of hope[107] (emphasis added).

Because Strobel and his team do not view abject poverty as the aggregation of morally bankrupt individuals' free individual will, they do not believe that evangelizing and "converting" the homeless will remediate their personal troubles; unlike rescue missionaries, moreover, they duly recognize the stop-gap nature of their operation as they cannot single-handedly reverse-engineer the systems that produce an overabundance of "guests." Nonetheless, staff believes that RITI can provide guests with the courage and determination required to extricate from street life by pulling them into the affective bonds of a hospitable community that radiates and mediates a hopeful God's grace.

RITI's conduit of care is thus intended to serve an important theological purpose for staff, volunteers, and guests alike. "I used to think of Room in the Inn in lots of images," Strobel explained. "I've described it as 'An oasis in an asphalt dessert,' 'A Red

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[107] "The Journey Home." Campus for Human Development Newsletter. Pp. 17.

Cross tent in a war zone,' 'Ellis Island for urban refugees,' 'A place of sanctuary,' and 'A gathering of friends.' But the one I land on more than any other now is how Christ himself talked about a 'Communion meal.'" The term "communion" is rooted in the word "community" and refers to the Catholic sacrament of the Eucharist in which members of a congregation consume consecrated bread and wine. By consuming Christ's "body" and "blood," a congregant both celebrates the Last Supper and receives the Lord's spirit. In so doing, the communicant becomes a vessel of Christ's spirit; his body is turned into a personified tabernacle.

Strobel invests the RITI meal with this sacred, Eucharistic meaning and purpose. In doing so, he discursively transubstantiates ordinary fare into the "host," that is, the spirit of Christ:

Strobel: In the story of the Last Supper, the disciples didn't have a clue as to what that meant. So, if congregations have the mindset of creating a meal – a remembrance meal – as Jesus does at the Last Supper, whether the folks who come and eat it understand it or not…The multiplication story prefigures the Last Supper, scriptural scholars say. So an ordinary meal can have that same power…So passing the meatloaf and the iced tea can have the same power Passover lambs and the Last Supper meal had in those earliest days. That's what I try to say to the congregations. Then they don't have to worry so much about evangelizing…Sometimes I feel like a snake oil salesman [laughs].

By framing the evening meal as a "remembrance meal," Strobel seeks to make a spiritual purpose rooted in Catholic caritas palatable to members of his interfaith alliance of host churches, which includes Jewish Synagogues and Evangelical churches, the latter of which, as Peter Berger (1967: 112) put it, "cut the umbilical cord between heaven and earth" by divesting worship from most of the Catholic Church's sacraments, including the Eucharist.

Moreover, in "selling" this religious schema to congregations with disparate orientations toward both worship and the poor, he attempts to turn RITI's conduit of care

into a network of spiritual intercession. Christ's spirit, from Strobel's view, is mediated to a host church's volunteers through their encounter with guests, just as a guest experiences God in the web of hospitable relations into which he is drawn each evening. What is more, from Strobel's perspective, when a guest consumes the "communion meal" he receives the spirit of Christ whether he knows it or not ("In the story of the Last Supper, the disciples didn't have a clue as to what that meant.") and, in doing so, is suffused by a sense of divine hope and inspiration:

Strobel: 'The stranger in our midst has the power to reveal Jesus.' So when you're breaking bread with strangers, rather than thinking you're doing something for them, it's them *revealing* to you *Jesus…*We say that if God is to be experienced in the *community,* if *love* is to be experienced in *relationships,* we want that to be an experience for folks. So, it's important that their names be known and meals be served. Not just a meal, but a *communion* meal.
 You can have 12 people at McDonalds and you can say they're all eating a meal. But they're all *isolated*. A meal can be just a group of individuals sitting around eating. Or, it can have *connections.* Each of us has a center of energy that radiates out and all these interlocking circles that connect. If I have these interlocking relationships – that are truly *gifts of hospitality* – I have *hope* and *inspiration* to take care of myself. Maybe I can go into the world and find housing and employment and contribute as a member of society.

 RITI's raison d′être – providing the "gift of hospitality" – is rooted in the Eucharistic schema proffered by Strobel and his staff, "Because it is there that the Spirit becomes manifest socially, in those congregational meals." "When someone experiences hospitality," Strobel elaborated,

they experience safety and a feeling of belonging; they experience sanctuary. Sanctuary is defined by the people, not the space. Everyone can become an expression of sanctuary. Ultimately, sanctuary offers one an experience of something sacred, something holy. Hospitality brings this – God's – grace to the guest.

God's Spirit and grace are mediated by the "communion meal" which, as staff sees it, incorporates guests into a hospitable religious community that radiates and mediates the inspiration and hope required for guests to make "their way through the journey." RITI's conduit of care is thus, from staff's perspective, a sacramental apparatus that

mediates a "God of Hope;" the commonplace RITI meal is infused with a religious force which emanates from the collective assembly it underwrites.

The Eucharistic schema constituting RITI thus shapes the value and effects staff imputes to a bed ticket which, from their perspective, provides guests with more than access to scarce resources such as food, shelter, and clothing. Given this religious schema, the bed tickets distributed each morning at the hospitality desk, are intended to be a means of suffusing guests with the redeeming power of Christ's original grace of hospitality and, consequently, of enacting the ethical obligation to ameliorate sinful inequalities through the provision of caritas; the bed ticket is a means to commune with God:

Strobel: Not to have housing is to be living a sub-human existence. To live like *animals.* There's no justice in that. There's nothing good about it. How do you maintain people's spirits when they know there's *nothing* good about my life except that I'm getting a meal – some casserole and a friendly face. A [RITI] ticket is a key to more than a meal and a bed. It opens the door to a congregation's hospitality. Room in the Inn is the Eucharist, in a different context.

Conclusion

In essence, a bed ticket, and the conduit of care to which it grants access, is the media and outcome of RITI's *moral economy of care*, that is, its operative schema defining the role of religious authority vis-à-vis the spiritual and material amelioration of homelessness. The ticket is a material expression of both God's sacred energy and staff's Catholic collective identity. "The ticket," in Rachel Hester's words, "is a gift given; a gift of hospitality, the gift of communion in a different context…I *hate* the fact that people sell tickets. I hate it. But in order to allow people to have any control, it's a *gift given*."

CHAPTER VIII

Negotiating "the Loop"

When we reverse the perspective and look at how men view the church-allocation process in general, and a bed ticket in particular, there is a process of reinterpretation and mobilization of RITI's goods and services in terms of schemas different than that which staff enacts to activate them as a conduit of religious authority. Instrumentally speaking, the bed ticket is a "boundary object" that creates a vital link in the central nervous system that runs through and coordinates the interfaith alliance of which RITI is comprised (i.e., "the loop") and 532 8th Avenue South is the "obligatory passage point" standing between homeless guests and host churches (the terms are Latour's 1988). The physical organization of this social service system imposes salient constraints on its clients, making the process of "staying in the loop" a central preoccupation which translates into a series of survival strategies that, in turn, translate into clients' circular movement through time and space. Through their practical negotiation of this social structure, guests act with and, sometimes, against staff and volunteers. In doing so, they use the constraining order of the loop to their advantage by partially conforming its operation to the exigencies of their situation.

Because staff cannot effectively police what guests do with a bed ticket after they draw one, it is the element of the RITI queuing channel (i.e., conduit of care) most amenable to cooptation. It is consequently an object of central concern toward which men recurrently orient their practical survival activity in Lafayette. Unhoused men's common preoccupation with securing this artifact in order to "stay in the loop" – when the

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adjacent Mission's accommodations require less negotiation – suggests that a bed ticket satisfies a "durable desire" (Bourdieu 2000). Indeed, a ticket's durable desirability is rooted in several organizational and interactive dynamics that, from men's perspective, dramatically contrast with those they encounter at the Mission. A ticket's value, in other words, is mediated by men's interpretation of the terms and conditions of the goods and services it secures vis-à-vis those rescue missionaries provide.

The Durable Desirability of a RITI Bed Ticket

"Ah, man. It's like goin to Hugh Heffner's place, the Playboy mansion. That's what this is like compared to the Mission," Darnell told me with a chuckle as we sat in the RITI dayroom, waiting for the church buses to arrive. Darnell had been coming to RITI since November 1st and told me that, if at all possible, he would avoid the Mission all winter. Rayshawn, an emaciated Black man who was seated next to Darnell, chimed in: "Went to E Dorm last night [in the Mission]. Laid down on one of them mats, and piss done oozed out of the cracks!" Darnell doubled over in laughter, nearly falling off the bench, before joking with Rayshawn: "You got you a Mission shampoo, huh?" "Naw, man. It fucked up my jeans man. My *good* jeans. I don't put my head near no crack, man," Rayshawn clarified, failing to find humor in Darnell's comment. "Come on. It's not really *that* bad over there, is it?" I asked. Darnell gave me a sarcastic, head-to-toe once-over before answering my question:

Darnell: Man you green [chuckles]. How long you been hanging out around here?! Man, it's the worst smell you can smell. It's rotten. Gangrene is what I'm talkin about! Trench-foot-type-feet. You know like when you walk past a dead dog and you smell that?! That's what it smell like when people lay down…

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Then they got E Dorm where you go in there and you get a mattress, throw it on the ground. You don't get no sheet, no pillow, no nothin like that. You just got the mattress and you sleep there. And that's about 20 guys in that room there. And it don't hold maybe about 12.

Then you got the day room. You gonna smell feet in E Dorm coz you don't take showers. And you don't take showers when you go in the day room. In the day room, the biggest problem is you gotta sit up in the chair *all night.* You can't lay on the floor. You just gotta sit there all night. If you can go to sleep sittin up, you got it made. But if you can't go to sleep sitting up, you got a *long night.*

So it smell, it stink, and you got all that madness, them crazy people. [He scans the lobby to see if he can find a "crazy" person] Lemme see, there ain't any in here at this moment. But there's a lot of insane people in there [the Mission]. And they do bizarre things *all the time.* So you gotta put up with that. You got them faggots let out of jail too [sex offenders].

And then you got them guys that is just *evil.* If they feel like they wanna take they frustrations out on you, it's nobody there but you and them. You sorta in a town with no law. A lawless town in the day room and also in E Dorm. Coz in E Dorm, some of them guys, they'll take your shoes and throw em out the window. If yo feet stank, you gotta deal with that.

And in the [regular] dorms, people take your bunk. You get assigned to a bunk [feigns typing], it's a computer situation. When you go in, they announce yo name, they hit the computer, and they give you a bed. Now you might go to yo bed and somebody might be *in* yo bed. Especially if you got a top bunk. And ain't nobody gonna be responsible for you going to sleep *but you.* And if you can't deal with that person that sleepin on yo bed, you might have to sleep on the flo or find *his* bunk. But he probably won't tell you where it's at. So you have to learn to accept that kind of behavior.

A lot of people think there ain't no fighting going on. But there's fights *every night.* But they don't get reported because the people who *work* in the Mission keep things on a down low. Sure, if somebody get bust in the head it get reported. Anything that involves blood. It's gotta be reported coz it's a health thang. As long as nobody don't get they head busted or they nose busted; if it ain't blood it didn't happen.

Darnell's interpretation of the Mission was, again and again, echoed by guests

when they explained why they preferred a stay at RITI (though never so colorfully). They

frequently drew on the same characteristics of the Mission's operations that affronted

their self-image – that is, the environmental contamination produced by unwashed

bodies, unclean facilities, and proximity to ex-mental patients and sex-offenders; ascetic,

overcrowded and anarchic sleeping arrangements; and the associated threat of

interpersonal violence and/or retaliation that looms over every night spent in a dorm.

More often than not, guests also contrasted the Mission's "prison"-like protocol with the

relative autonomy they have at a host church:

Ritchie: It's like a prison. You gotta take everything out of your pockets. Then they run a wand all over you…And before you gotta go to bed, you gotta give em all your clothes. You gotta put

on *their* clothes. You know what I mean?? You can't sleep in your own clothes. Everybody got the *same* uniform on, just like you in prison. And once you get in, you can't come back outside like you can at Room in the Inn.

Missionaries proselytizing activity, moreover, was a central interactive dynamic they sought to avoid by utilizing RITI's goods and services:

Ron: *Religion*. You got religion, that's cool. But, it oughta be *my choice*. Freedom of religion. A lot of things I hear up there is really off the hook. I get tired of hearin I'm goin to hell if I drink, or if I do this. They preach a lot of hell. What about heaven? If you go in there drinkin and stoned, it don't matter. Room in the Inn ain't like that.

Whereas at RITI a man plays the role of a "guest" who is the "sacred image of an invisible God," at the Mission he plays the role of a "transient" whose deleterious "homeless lifestyle" rescue missionaries seek to break. In the Mission's moral taxonomy, he is a trope imbued with images of contamination, identifying acts, and life conduct that denote "sin." "Staff is a bit harsh [at the Mission]," Eric explained to me in the RITI courtyard one evening. He threw his lit cigarette butt on the ground and stomped it with his foot before adding that, "They call you a 'transient' and say you're going to hell because of your lifestyle." Dennis, a heavyset African-American who resembles the cartoon character "Fat Albert," stared down at Eric's smoldering cigarette and offered his comparison:

Dennis: The staff at the mission, they talk down at you. But the staff at the Campus is just the opposite. They talk to you like you a every day person. They don't try to talk down to you. The staff at Room in the Inn, it's kind of strange, they more like family.

Dennis's imagery of the "family" is perhaps a bit more irenic than that painted by staff members who often refer to their relations with guests as analogous to a "dysfunctional family." Nonetheless, when men stay at RITI, they tend, on balance, to cite that they experience a more accepting "family"-like environment. The RITI

experience, moreover, does not press them into occupying a vilified status they must

inter-subjectively combat:

Ray-Ray: The fact that Room in the Inn is such a big offer relays what's actually happening at the Mission. The fact that I can go to church where there's church people actually welcoming, saying 'Hello' and 'Welcome' to me and 'What's your name?', you know, does that kind of thing versus what happens at the Mission where you're just kind of a bum whose going to hell for your lifestyle.

RITI staff consistently makes reference to guests not only as members of a

religious community, but as bearers of rights who are worthy of dignity and respect.

Unsurprisingly, then, much of guests' valorization of RITI's goods and services focus on

the way in which the organizational status they occupy enhances their sense of self.

Consider a courtyard conversation between me and two running buddies:

Wally: They treat you with dignity, especially them churches treat you with dignity; they don't look at you like you manure. Even the bad ones is better than the Mission. They treat you like you're a human like I'm talking to you right now. 'What can I do for you?' 'Have you eaten today?' They treat you like you're human, man they don't treat you like you're no dirt and you go down there and they treat you like dirt down at the Mission down there and I don't like that.

Butch: It's not just that the food is better and the accommodations and everything [than the Mission]. It's the attitude [of RITI staff] and the church volunteers on the whole. I feel like I have my life back to a degree, at least for the night. Some churches, like the People's Church in Franklin, they treat you like you're long lost family. I know quite a few churches treat you that way. They give you things, give you bus passes and clothes, but that's just icing on the cake. It's *attitudes* that makes all the difference and makes you feel like you're a normal person again. Even if it's just for the night.

Breaking bread with housed Church volunteers, men like Butch are quick to point

out, cultivates feelings of (provisional) acceptance and belonging. He and many other

guests construct the conduit of care through which they circulate as a portal that offers a

provisional escape from Lafayette's agglomerated misery; it provides them with an

opportunity to connect with others outside of the Lafayette milieu, partially offsetting the

intense feelings of loneliness and isolation endemic in street life. Dispersal to a host

church, moreover, provides men with a brief respite from the stress of street life and

gives them the opportunity to relax and decompress. Moreover, the low density, more

intimate church settings shifts guests' subjectivities and relieves the social and emotional

effects of eking out life in the Mission's high density dormitories:

Clark: At the churches, most people, not all, but most people, no matter how they are, when they get in -- just being in a church makes them not be themselves. People that usually use a lot of profanity don't. People that usually do a lot of stuff, they won't do it, not because they don't do it, but they just won't do it in a church whereas at the Mission they'll do it anyway because once they close in the doors at the Mission then we just in there. That's why I try to keep a ticket for each day. Because it's a lot less crazy than the Mission – I just have to deal with about 12 people, instead of hundreds.

A bed ticket thus gains its value from the crucial and significant differences

between RITI and the Mission vis-à-vis the subjective effects created by men's embodied

encounters with the social and material relations that make up these two organizational

milieus. The ticket, from a guest's perspective, increases his control over the conditions

of his life, providing distance from the Mission's spiritual and material denigration as

well as from the concentrated suffering and intense loneliness endemic to street life.

When a man secures a bed ticket, he is attempting to secure a sense of self-worth and

dignity denied by these other organizational and spatial environments by provisionally

insinuating himself into the communal bonds of which he believes a host church is

comprised.

The mathematical logic of the loop, however, impedes a guest's ability to secure a

ticket that grants him entry to a host church *every* night; demand always exceeds supply,

leading staff to displace the tensions associated with this structural reality to the luck of

each morning's "lottery" draw. In the context of RITI's moral economy, the bed ticket's

subjective value is intensified by its objective scarcity. "It is only the postponement of

satisfaction through impediment," wrote Georg Simmel (1971), "the anxiety that the

object may escape, the tension of struggle for it, that brings about the cumulation of

desires to a point of intensified volition and continuous striving" (56). Staff's distribution of tickets each morning thus serves as "the inaugural gift in a series of exchanges" (Bourdieu 2000: 193).

Staying in the Loop

Drawing a Ticket

"What they gonna do is they gonna take three tickets and put them in front of you," Reginald told me. Reginald – who was in unusually good spirits this Saturday morning due to his stay at Brentwood Baptist (a "good church" in Lafayette parlance) – pulled an apple out of the sack lunch his hosts sent back with him to 532 8th Avenue South. "One of these a day keeps the doctor away," he joked, revealing his crack-ravaged teeth as he grinned from ear-to-ear. "Everybody knows there's numbers on the back of the tickets," he explained, shifting back into his "professor" persona (he commonly joked that he received his "Ph.D. in homelessness"). "Now we gotta network in line. That's why you don't wanna be the first one to pull a ticket like that niggah up there, because you never know what number you're gonna to get. We gonna work off of his number."

"Did you get a Saturday? What are the digits?" he asked "that niggah up there" when he passed by. "Sunday, 932," the man replied. Reginald repeated the process with the next four men who passed by us after drawing their tickets. They respectively replied, "Saturday, 877," "Saturday, 862," Sunday, 922," "Saturday, 801." "We want *tomorrow, Sunday*," Reginald instructed me. "So we gonna try to draw a 800." "Why an 800?" I asked. Reginald often took delight in being able to elevate his street wisdom above my

"book smarts." "You got all them book smarts, but you didn't just see what happened did you?" "Quit breaking my balls man. Just tell me why." "We done established us a *pattern.* Today, 800s are Saturday and 900s are Sunday. You can also determine what's a high or low number if you inquire *diligently* enough," he replied, pronouncing "diligently" with his impersonation of a white college professor. "For Sunday, they doin minuses; minus 40. That mean a 940 lower than a 900."

"But today's Saturday," I protested. "Why don't you want to draw tonight's ticket?" "Because. *Damn.* How long you been watchin us do our thing out here?! You always be scribbling thangs down in that book. But you don't *see*." "Just tell me why, man!" "*Because.* They done flushed tickets yesterday. That mean if I want to stay in the loop, I gotta run *two new tickets*. I want to pull a Sunday because Sunday is hard to get. And Saturday is a little easier to get, so I'll buy a Saturday. Saturday cost *less* than *Sunday*. I ain't no *gambler* baby. I'm a *hustler.*" Rayshawn, who was eavesdropping on us, chimed in: "If you don't know the number system, you're gonna have to just randomly pull one of the three tickets. So *then* it's basically by *chance* whether you get the ticket you want or not." "That's right. *Chance*. And Reginald ain't dumb to this here system," Reginald added, waxing his subcultural capital. "That's right. We ain't no fools to this here system," Rayshawn said. "I want to pull a Sunday, so I'll buy a Saturday because this is the beginning of the week essentially. On Friday you can only get a Friday ticket. So tomorrow morning, since I will [hopefully] have my Sunday ticket already, I wanna pull a Monday."

Local Knowledge of the Loop

"Staying in the loop," as Reginald and Rayshawn reveal, requires the skillful

analysis and dissection of the complex mathematical structure underlying RITI's church-

allocation queue. Indeed, when asked how the system works, even veteran volunteers

underscored its opacity with their common (cliché) refrain, "I think if you ever figure it

out, they have to kill you." The challenge of negotiating the loop lay in acquiring the

"local knowledge" required to gain entry to RITI Saturday through Friday when the odds

of the draw only grant entry, on average, every other night (the term is Geertz's 1973).

Not "being dumb to this here system" presumes knowledge of a host of local practices

called "staying in the loop": positioning oneself far enough back in the line to be able to

establish a pattern; knowing to ask men who draw before you what day and "digits" he

drew; knowing that the last three numbers of a six digit series correspond to a particular

day of the week; knowing what, for a given day, constitutes a "low" number and why

drawing a low ticket is important; knowing on which days of the week buying a ticket or

working a trade are more difficult; in short, knowing how to partially de-randomize a

randomized system. Knowledge of these internal exigencies comes with experience that

is inculcated through either explicit or implicit socialization. While knowledge of how

the system operates *in toto* is unnecessary, successful negotiation of the loop requires

knowledge acquisition regarding both the exigencies of ticket distribution and the

exigencies of the black-market.

Supply and Demand

The Lafayette street economy is an interstitial space of exchange defined by "its

evasive posture with respect to the legitimate realm," but is also the primary economy in

which Nashville's homeless men are enmeshed (Venkatesh 2006: 380-381). Socks, shoes, shirts, pants, watches, bus tickets, narcotics, cigarettes, and sexual favors are common commodities purchasable in the neighborhood's various nooks and crannies. The exchange of these life-sustaining goods and services, at its core, is situated in a field of relations which uneasily balances some men's self-interested predation with others' circumscribed benevolence (these two orientations, of course, can exist within the same person). The street economy's utility vis-à-vis RITI lay in its readymade human infrastructure through which a bed ticket can orderly and predictably circulate during winter months. Once a ticket becomes absorbed into this flexible web of exchange relations, however, it is converted from a "gift" into a commodity subject to the lumpen law of supply and demand.

"If you don't get the ticket you want, because sometimes you're gonna get all the same day, no matter what," Dante told me one afternoon as we sat in front of the Downtown Clinic, "then your option is to swap a ticket with someone. They want Sunday and you want Saturday and you swap. Or, the final option is buy a ticket." The black-market exchange of a ticket is driven by an inverse relationship between the cost of a bed-ticket and the bed-supply. Given that RITI's conduit of care is comprised of an interfaith alliance of churches, the bed-count is lower than average on: Judeo-Christian holidays; evenings when church services are held; evenings when a church has competing voluntary obligations; and evenings on which it is difficult for volunteers to work an evening "shift." Wednesday and Sunday nights, for instance, have the lowest bed-counts each week (typically 30-40% lower than Friday, the night of the week with the highest bed-count) because both church services and volunteers' next-morning work obligations

conflict with the provision of "hospitality" (If, say, Christmas overlapped, the bed-count would be even lower).

"Tickets are usually $5, but if it's a prime day, a harder day because it's a low bed count," Dante informed me, "it's gonna be a $10 ticket. I've almost always paid $10. One time I bought one for $5." "Paid 15 [dollars] for one last Christmas," Cleo added. The black-market bed ticket provides men with both a source of income and a means of overcoming the randomization of the ticket system. In these straitened circumstances, however, the trade in bed tickets typically amounts to a variation on what Lloyd (2006: 193) calls a "ritual exchange of money" in which the "profit" one yields from a ticket sale is re-injected into the economy in order to secure another ticket. Says Kendrick, "Yesterday, I had a Monday-plus [he bought earlier in the week] and pulled a Monday-regular. I needed a Tuesday, so I sold this boy my regular for 5 [dollars] and bought my Tuesday for 5 [dollars]."

Staying "A Ticket Ahead"

This ritual exchange of money underwrites a common strategy men employ to stay in the loop. "Running two tickets" or "staying a ticket ahead," as men interchangeably call it, was outlined by Reginald when he told me, "I basically have to buy one ticket a week so I have a ticket in advance. That makes the whole week smooth." Other men employ a variant of Reginald's ticket ahead tactic by "running" two tickets instead of one because, as Eric informed me, "If you only buy one ticket, you can still be shut out of the loop if you don't have the right breaks."

The church-allocation system produces the wrong "breaks" when, under certain conditions, the bed count is lower than usual on a given night. For instance, churches

periodically withdraw their services when they have either competing obligations or lack

the requisite number of volunteers to host their guests. When this happens, it means that

more tickets have been distributed than there are beds. Staff responds to the resulting

mismatch by only granting entry to guests whose tickets are inscribed with numbers

below a given threshold (i.e., the new bed count). "On Sunday, bed counts are low,"

Reginald explained, as he showed me the ropes. "So, you might have a Sunday ticket and

might not get in because they got enough tickets for Sunday, but if a church cancels,

that's 20 beds gone, so, you know. So then, you know, you got -- they call up to 145, you

got 148, you know you not going anywhere." This recurrent dynamic leads men in the

know to attempt to pull a "low ticket" each morning. "You always pull the lowest number

you see after you see what direction it's going," Rayshawn added. "They only give you

three to look at. All you're doing is drawing in as much information as you can, and

stacking the odds in your favor as much as possible."

"Luck" may also short-circuit the one-ticket-ahead strategy when the morning

draw yields only tickets for one given day. Staff shuffles the tickets in a plastic bin before

distributing them, but this mixing-method often does not produce a purely random

distribution of tickets. Even though guests like Reginald and Rayshawn establish a

pattern by correlating a ticket's admission night with its last three digits, their strategy is

disrupted by this introduction of "noise" into the odds of ticket distribution. Men with

enough money adjust to this exigency by "running" *three* tickets (i.e., staying two tickets

ahead) in order to stay in the loop. Eric explained this variant on the ticket-ahead strategy

to me this way:

Eric: Sunday's the beginning of the week. It's a hard ticket because there's less beds. So I buy a
Sunday ticket, and then I buy a Monday ticket. So now I've got two tickets. When I go out
Sunday night and I come back [in the morning] and say I draw another Monday. Then I trade it

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for a Tuesday. Somebody who wants to come in on a Monday night, they'll easily trade me their Tuesday for my Monday. Now I've got Monday and Tuesday. So I stay ahead on the tickets now. *Now the math works out to where everything I draw is useful*, because I can easily trade it for that night's ticket. I'm ahead on that night's ticket already (emphasis added).

While running two tickets turns the loop's mathematical structure more squarely to one's advantage, the ride ends each Friday when the staff, in street parlance, "flushes the tickets." Friday has the highest bed count of any day of the week, ranging in the mid-to-high 200s. This is due to the larger supply of host church volunteers. Staff also intentionally distributes more tickets than there are beds, because they anticipate that guests will intentionally fall out of the loop in order to secure a room at cheap motels such as the nearby Drake (which boasts a sign ironically proclaiming it is: "Where the Stars Stay"). Fridays that fall during the first week of the month (a.k.a. "check week") are overbooked to an even higher degree because staff expects a substantial proportion of guests to ride their checks at adjacent motels until they can no longer pay "rent." On Thursday mornings staff thus distribute a high volume of tickets for Friday night only, stamped with the disclaimer "If Room."

This weekly dynamic floods the street economy with Friday tickets, creating, on one night of the week, a rough equilibration between supply and demand. The relatively balanced ratio results from the fact that, on average, only 300 men are in the loop at any given time and, since many avail themselves of the Drake's cheap lodging on Friday night, the number of bed slots often corresponds to the number of prospective guests. Ticket "flushing" also blocks the ticket-ahead strategy by damming up the flow of tickets. James's complaint is a common one: "They have a system that eliminates that [running two tickets] on a weekly basis. On Friday they flood the market so much that the tickets are not worth anything. So now you have to redo that again for the following week."

Friday tickets, however, are not always worthless. Host churches periodically withdraw their services and, on occasion, fewer guests than expected extricate from the loop. When this occurs, the disclaimer "If Room" becomes operative and staff only admits guests with ticket numbers below a threshold which corresponds to the adjusted bed count. This dynamic feeds the recurrent practice of attempting to draw a "low" number and also makes a "low Friday" valuable on most any week. Explains Eric:

Say I drew a Friday ticket Thursday, and when I come in Friday I draw another one. They flooded them, so I'm gonna draw *another* Friday ticket. So now I got two Friday tickets and they're pretty much worthless…The only thing that would make my Friday worth trading is if it's an *early* ticket [low ticket]. A Friday *low* ticket, which means if I get in early, I can go to a worker's church. If I don't get in early, I can't go to a worker's church. Worker's churches will be all filled up. Those guys who work want an early ticket so they can get on the worker's churches.

The Gamble

When running two tickets does not give a prospective guest the "right breaks," he has the option of employing the strategy known as "the gamble." "I might've already had tonight's ticket from a previous night and, by the luck of the draw, got another tonight's ticket. If I'm not lucky enough to trade or buy one," Frank told me, "then I just go on through my day and come back at 5:30 p.m. or around that time maybe and I still can make a deal." This strategy is known as "the gamble" because its effective execution requires adroitly maneuvering within RITI's and the Mission's overlapping temporal structures; failure to do so can result in being shut out of both organizations or relegation to undesirable sleeping quarters. "The idea is to get a bed ticket at the Mission soon enough that you can get to Room in the Inn and then try your luck there," Frank explained. "So I get there [the Mission] about 4:00 p.m., but then they have this weird thing where the people issuing the bed slips take their supper at 4:30 p.m. -- between 4:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. and I just sit there -- stand there an extra half hour just waiting for

them to eat, after I'm trying to get in fast enough having to wait that boring half hour, I'm really relieved when they call me in just under the deadline!"

Securing a Mission bed ticket early in the evening is an insurance policy against being relegated to the Mission's overflow space if one is turned away from RITI after the 6:10 p.m. final count; in the dead of winter, if one lines up at the Mission after 5:30 p.m., he is invariably relegated to spending the night in a dayroom chair with about 100 other men. If a prospective guest cannot find a ticket to buy or trade at 5:30 p.m., he shifts gears into the next phase of the strategy. "The first thing I do in the morning after I draw is look at how many beds are posted for Room in the Inn that night and that'll give me a rough idea," said Frank. "Like, say there's room for 200 beds. I have a good idea that those people are going to get in, but if it's a night like a Wednesday where there's a lot of church activities, then there's only maybe 140, 150 beds, I know my chances are -- it's going to be a tight squeeze. And what I do, I'll walk around the crowd and count people, but then they'll mess you up by a whole bunch of people coming in like the last five minutes. Sometimes that works, sometimes it doesn't."

By taking the number of beds into account, the guest who uses this strategy attempts to gauge the probability that staff will have extra beds after final count. It is not uncommon for men like Frank to ask the yard dog how many guests she or he has registered in order to obtain a more accurate calculation of the probability of entry. "You're always gambling on there being enough beds leftover, and you have to try to be the first in that line – you better be in line by 6:10 p.m. because final count is early sometimes – but they'll let you know definitely at like 6:15 p.m. so you can still get back to the Mission." Frank's comment indicates that executing the gamble requires sewing

together RITI and the Mission by using the latter as a hedge against being shut out of the former. This recurrent strategy translates into a spatial practice that involves toggling back and forth the two organizations in accordance with their dovetailed schedules by way of "the alley."

The temporal division of labor that makes this strategy possible results from RITI staff's logic of fairness. Says Rachel Hester, "The reason we do the final count at 6:15 [p.m.] is that they [the Mission] were not willing to change their hours…[W]e design it with our *guests* in mind. It's not fair if guests wait for Room in the Inn and, because we're full are left without a safe place to sleep." This temporal coordination of life-sustaining services creates a bond between two organizations with counterpoised spiritual commitments and animating religious ethics. By interlocking its time-table with the Mission's, RITI staff has created interdependence with its spiritual adversary which, in turn, functions as a central basis of the district's organic solidarity. "Whatever strategy you use it's worth a try," observed Frank. "If you gamble right, you don't have anything to lose. Hell, even if you pay $15, it's well worth it, because you're in a bed, you're away from the Mission's madness, you get a good meal and you'll probably go somewhere with clothing and they'll have a shower."

Waiting for Hospitality

Waiting, Barry Schwartz (1975) observed, is "part of the connective tissue by which interactions are held together and ordered, according to the principle that the temporal separation of engagements constitutes the very condition of their inner

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coherence" (193). Indeed, waiting for a host church's "hospitality" is an *interaction,* not an *intermission* between dominant involvements, because the dominant engagement at church is indelibly wed to the preceding waiting period in the RITI dayroom. Guests' experience of waiting, and the meanings they assign to the experience, pivots around the anticipation of the church to which they will be dispatched. Interactions in both the dayroom and the courtyard are filled with discussions that revolve around which churches have the "best" and "worst" accommodations.

Guests translate the quality of a host church's accommodations into a binary classification of "good" and "bad" churches. The criteria for making these fine-grained distinctions are simple. A "good" church is thought of as one that: has shower, laundry and clothes; provides low-density sleeping quarters and comfortable bedding; provides a plethora of palatable food; does not proselytize; provides a guest with the autonomy to go outside before lights out; and is run by hospitable hosts who take a sincere interest in the lives of their guests. A "bad" church is the reverse. However, these six dimensions create a continuum of quality since, depending on the guest and his immediate needs, any one dimension can overpower the other five.

<center>*"Good Churches"*</center>

"The Catholic church Saint Ignatius is a small church," Roderick explained one evening in the dayroom, "but what they do is they allow us to occupy their Sunday School room, two or three people per room. This gives us the dignity of some of our own space. It's also a good church because it provides laundry, clothing, has a good shower, washer and dryer. They don't use army cots. A bad church has none of that. That's why Saint Ignatius is a favorite destination." George, who was seated next to Roderick,

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reading the newest edition of *The Contributor* (the street newspaper), added his two

cents. "Brentwood Baptist is a *really* good church," he exclaimed. "I think it's the best! It

feeds you real well, and you can go back for seconds and thirds if they have it. It has nice

clothes, a washer and dryer, fixes you breakfast in the morning, sends you back real

good. Plus it's a nice, big church."

On a different evening, Frank told me that "People's Church in Franklin, the rule

is you can only have two guests to a table, six church members for every two guests so

they can mingle and get to know each other and then like for instance, this Monday I

went there they had this girl named Alexis, who's been volunteering since she was ten

and now she's 17 and she's trying to be a country or Christian singer and she performed

for us for about 45 minutes and then they had a prayer request and I never felt -- I've been

to so many Mission services and never felt the spirit and never felt any kind of warmth of

love, but at People's Church I was feeling goose bumps and I was feeling like these

people really, really care." Ronald, who was seated next to Frank and me, seconded

Frank's assessment. "I hadn't been there in two years and they all knew my name," he

noted. "These people fill their hearts and that's what makes the church great, because

whatever they give you is going to be gone; the food will be forgotten the next night, but

the caring, the warmth of these people, which I would say is half the people in the Room

in the Inn churches, but it seems like it's mostly people in well to do neighborhoods that

are more anxious to help."

"Bad Churches"

The resource-rich environments of affluent suburban churches – particularly those

located in Brentwood, Franklin, Hermitage, and Donelson – furnish, for the most part, the

material, spatial, human, and emotional resources that make a church "good." "But a church around the immediate vicinity," Jermaine told me, "we call a bad church, because they ain't got all the luxuries that these big churches got; your million-dollar churches. Because you've still got churches from the hood, you know, trying to participate, showing their love. But they ain't got all of the nice clothing and the big old gyms to sleep in. But they make room for you." One of the "worst" churches, from guests' perspective, is Greater Bethel, located just a mile west of Lafayette, in the Edgehill Projects. "The innkeepers don't make you feel welcome at Greater Bethel," Shawn explained one night after learning that he would be dispatched there. "They act like they wish they weren't there. They wish you weren't there and they feed you and then they go off to themselves or sit at the table by themselves and they won't sit with you and talk with you." It's location in a drug-abundant neighborhood, moreover, meant that it was a "non-smoking church" that sealed its guests in on arrival. "You better smoke now and get you some bubble gum," joked Jermaine one evening. His nineteen fellow guests failed to find humor in his admonition. "They lock you in. You can't get out til morning," he added.

Even though most of RITI's 150+ churches provide, from guest's perspective, goods and services superior to those provided by rescue missionaries, churches like Greater Bethel are considered inferior to or on par with the Mission. Guests submit themselves to a night at these undesirable houses of worship because they are typically no worse than a stay at the Mission and, more importantly, because they fear being banned from RITI for failing to go along with the program. When a man aims his daily activity toward staying in the loop, he is doing so to experience the goods and services of a "good

church" but, all the while, has to deal with the attendant possibility that, once admitted, he will be dispatched to a "bad" one.

The Mystified Church-Allocation Process

"Through the grapevine you learn which churches are the good churches," Eric explained one evening as he waited to be dispatched to a host church. "And look, *favoritism* goes on here too. The same as who gets to go out at the day labors. There are those who *always* go to good churches and there are those who *never* go to good churches. I've come in last in the door and gone out first. I've come in *first* in the door and gone out *last.* There are other people, they come in first, last, they *always* get good churches. But those are the kinds of people who are always up in their [staff's] face, saying 'I wanna go here. I wanna go there.'" Eric's commentary alludes to an arrived-at interpretation of staff's allocation criteria. He signals the mystification and frustration felt by guests who watch the church-allocation process and theorize about how it works.

Staff does not explain the logic behind bed-allocation to guests. As a result, despite staff's attempts to be "fair," the church-allocation process becomes a friction point that fuels resentments cast in the idiom of "favoritism." "It's *very* frustrating," Jamal complained. "You come in here, you try to play by all the rules, but it's not a level playing ground. No matter *what* you do, you're not going to be able to experience the better churches." "It's a matter of *who* you know and whether they like you or don't like you," Ronald said, in response to Jamal's observation. "It don't matter what you do or don't do, unless you're somebody's little pet person. If you're the pet person, you'll get all of the perks. I guess that's just how society is, and Room in the Inn is no different. And certainly it's a source of frustration for me. I'm *often* involved in conversations with

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guys like Jamal. We're standing outside, and we're like 'What's up with that?' Whatever is going to be given, the favorites get the perks. It's always the same people. It's just a known fact. You're either in that little clique or your not [laughs]."

Guests interpret church-allocation to be an indication of their reputational status vis-à-vis staff members who play the role of church-allocator. Jamal and Ronald's allusions to the "favorites" that "get the perks" make reference to their perceived inability to garner the favorable relationships required to invariably experience "the good churches." These meanings contradict staff's expressed allocation criteria rooted in the notion of "fairness." Confusion with respect to the allocation of churches is rooted in the co-existence of the "fairness" principle's two key dimensions – numerical fairness and racial/ethnic fairness – with the organizational imperative of maintaining the bed count (i.e., stemming the dissolution of the alliance). When applied to a pool of churches with variable "quality," these co-existing logical dimensions become expressed in staff's conditional "first come, first serve" allocation criteria which creates distortion in the queue that, in turn, generates the surface appearance of favoritism:

Eric: They know what churches have what you need. When they make the list, they go down the list and say 'I'm gonna send so and so there.' Someone's doing that. Because, when you check in at the window, the lists are taken randomly. But they're not called that way [laughs]. I know who I was standing with. All 8 of us got on the same paper, but none of us went to the same church [laughs]. Obviously someone made a decision *which church* so and so is going to.

"If you wanted to get in the clique, what would it take?" I asked Jamal. "You'd have to be a tattle tale mostly," he said. "You'd have to tell on everybody on what's going on." "In what sense?" "Who's doing drugs, who's drinking, who's sellin drugs. Who did what at the church. All those little things that are going on around there. If I were to inform the powers that be, keep them informed, then that would enter me into the

clique [laughs]." "Why? What happens when someone gets narced out?" "Usually they're

not going to be allowed to participate in Room in the Inn. And that's all that has to be

said is that someone saw you. And that's sufficient to get you 86'd. If not that, when you

do get checked in you'll get what they call the 'bad' churches [laughs]."

Guests' fear of being found guilty by association is not unreasonable. According

to Margaret, a full time staff member who often allocates guests to churches, "Guilt by

association is if say you and Wendy [a staff member standing next to us] are hanging out

in the alley and I see Wendy smoking crack and you're standing next to her, I assume you

are too. Why else would you be standing next to her while she's smoking crack? And

that's something we explain during orientation. There's no good that comes from you

hanging out with her while she's smoking crack. So you're suspended for guilt by

association. And people are aware of that." "It's generally treated as if you were

[breaking a RITI rule]," Wendy clarified. "Right," said Margaret. "We're not going to

catch everything. But we have a responsibility to the participants here who are trying to

stay sober and trying to do well, and also to the guys who are in [drug] treatment. They

live next door at the Guest House and they have to walk back and forth across the alley

everyday to go to classes. *They're* trying to be in treatment and do well. We have a

responsibility to everybody, and with all the drugs and alcohol and violence, that's why

we have guilt by association."

"It seems that there's some people that go to those mega churches so consistently"

James noted. "You wonder, 'Are they pets?' Some people will snitch and say, 'Well

Rachel, when we were at this church I saw this guy steal something out of the clothing

room.' So they get rewarded for being snitches. Gotta look out for that when you go out

to them churches." James' concern that a fellow guest might "snitch" to staff, coupled with the perceived threat of "guilt by association," leads him and many of his peers to isolate themselves out of fear that they will either be banned from RITI or invariably relegated to a "bad" church. Ties with other guests, in the RITI context, are a liability rather than an asset. Guests' fear of being implicated for a rule violation leads them to avoid conversing with their peers because divulging too much information might result in suspension. Rather than creating the "experience of sanctuary," as Strobel and his staff intend, RITI dinners are thus more complicated subjective affairs for the guests.

"I just keep to myself," Ron told me one afternoon in front of the Downtown Clinic. "If I let out too much information, it'll come back and bite me in the ass." "I stay off to myself coz I don't want to draw negative attention," Jermaine told me on a different afternoon. "But, if it's a good church, I *always* conversate with the church people. They good people, you know? Treat you like long lost family." The misrecognition that "snitches" receive the "best" church assignments creates a low-grade siege mentality that translates into constraints on interpersonal relations. Because he believes that avoiding guilt by association is critical for maintaining reasonable odds of being sent to a good church, a guest's isolation from his peers is, consequently, a survival strategy he employs to protect his reputation when he enters RITI's web of social relations.

The reverse side of the same coin is imprinted with guests' convivial interactions with host church volunteers. Here too potentially damaging information must be concealed, but dinner conversation gives the guest a platform to showcase his uprightness. The same underlying structure is operative in 532 8th Avenue South because

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guests believe that good relations with staff and volunteers are essential to either becoming a "favorite" that is dispatched to a good church more frequently or to avoid being stamped with a spoiled reputation that relegates him to churches with a straitened amenity profile.

It is here that staff's Eucharistic schema (and its attendant altruistic motivation) conspires with the subjective distortion encoded in the church-allocation queue to create "soft" control over the Lafayette homeless at a regular time-space interval. The sense of self-worth and dignity a guest attempts to secure vis-à-vis the RITI bed ticket cannot be equally actualized by every host church; it is, rather, embodied par excellence in a good church. Guests' durable desire for this scarce subjective experience, and their misrecognized fear of being invariably denied it for guilty associations, leads them to choose lines of action that translate into and reinforce RITI's communal ethos (c.f. Lloyd 2006).

Conclusion

We have seen that because God is found in the community rather than in one's individual relationship with Him, RITI staff focuses on "building relationships" on the foundation of "acceptance." Each staff and volunteer interaction with the homeless is intended to weave a "tapestry of love," which staff sees as paramount to both doing God's work and cultivating a guest's experience of "something divine in their life" which, in staff's view, is synonymous with hope-inducing hospitality. However, the bed ticket queue and the conduit of care to which it grants access have the sequential effect

of: mystifying the church-allocation process, manufacturing guests' collective misrecognition, and creating a perceived group of "favorite" guests that disproportionately gains access to "good" churches. The misrecognition that "snitches" receive the "best" churches creates a low-grade siege mentality wherein fear of being relegated to the perceived non-favorite group for "guilt by association" leads guests to estrange themselves from each other. Ironically, self-imposed isolation and/or circumspect interaction becomes a survival imperative in the context of an agency designed to promote guests' communion with God, staff, volunteers and one another.

CHAPTER IX

The Drama of Contingent Work: Homeless Day Laborers' Negotiation of the Job Queue

The irregularity of [the hobo's] employment is reflected in the irregularity of all phases of his existence. To deal with him as an individual, society must also deal with the economic forces which have formed his behavior, with the seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in industry.
—Nels Anderson (1923)

Willy is a lanky, 6-foot tall African-American man in his early 50s. Three months ago he was released from a Tennessee state correctional facility and has since assumed the life of a homeless Nashvillian:

I just got out in April, but I went to Philadelphia for 3 months. And there wasn't no jobs so I just came back down here. There wasn't no jobs and plus the crime rate is so high up there and I'm 51 years old…I said I'll come down here and *work*. Save up and shit… In Philadelphia it's all unions and stuff. You can't really get a job…I be stayin here [the rescue mission] until I save up enough money at these labor joints. I been workin everyday since I got down here. You know to just get outta here.

I follow Willy into "Ready Body," a squat and unkempt brick structure located less than a block away from the rescue mission he calls home. Its grimy windows, encased by black wrought iron bars, allude to the shady character of the economic operation that takes place behind its walls: brokering un(der)employed "warm bodies" to flexible client firms. The front counter is shielded with a Plexiglas window, sealing the dispatcher off from direct contact with "employees," and an entire office comprised of seven staff members is set up behind the partition.

It is only 5:15 in the morning and a crew of bleary-eyed day laborers streams into the building in order to sign the work-allocation list. After completing this morning ritual,

they fill up a separate room containing about 50 mismatched chairs and begin watching a 13" color television broadcasting a grainy image of a local news station. Job orders will not be issued for another two hours, but Willy's buddy Reggie exits the waiting room and tries to lobby for a "good" job with the dispatcher. He quickly returns with a grimace on his face. "They only send me to the garbage truck," he contemptuously mutters. "I told her, 'That ain't all I can do.' And she said, 'Well, I know that. But if you don't like it, you can just go down the road [to another agency].'"

This hiring hall illustrates how surplus value is extracted from structurally disadvantaged inhabitants of both the nearby public housing projects and the adjacent organizational ghetto. Day labor agencies like Ready Body are notorious for their flagrant violation of minimum wage laws and exploitative fees (Cook 2002; Kerr and Dole 2005; Roberts and Bartley 2004; Theodore 2000, 2003), both of which are abetted by the deliberately opaque nature of the triangular employment relationship[108] (agency/worker/client firm) responsible for their very existence—job placements are at the dispatcher's discretion, while wage rates, and terms of negotiation with client firms are guarded industry secrets (Freeman and Gonos 2005; Gonos 1997; Peck and Theodore 2001). Despite these potential legal liabilities and according maltreatment of its workforce (c.f. Kerr and Dole 2005), the day labor industry has burgeoned (Theodore 2003), extending its reach into pockets of deeply "discouraged workers." Even the homeless cannot escape neoliberal[109] economic imperatives. The work-allocation system (job queue)

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[108] Gottfried (1992) refers to this work arrangement as a "triangulated" employment relationship, while Peck and Theodore (2001) refer to it as the "triangular employment relationship." The latter term is applied in this article given its less cumbersome quality..

[109] Neoliberalism is characterized by the belief in "increasing privatization of the public sphere, deregulation in every economic sector, the breakdown of all barriers to trade and the free flow of capital,

is the concrete, street-level mechanism that translates this contingent employment arrangement and the overarching flexible accumulation process[110] into their lives.

Willy, Reggie and the other homeless men watching TV, of course, are not mere pawns of flexible accumulation. But why do they travel down this menial, extremely low-paying, and often hazardous road of the contingent labor market? Given their seemingly more self-directed options in the informal economy (e.g., panhandling, recycling, theft, etc.) and the significant human services to which they have access – a rescue mission with no length-of-stay restrictions, a drop-in center, and a free health clinic – how do we account for those who rely on day labor for a disproportionate share of their income? How do they experience and negotiate this type of work arrangement? Moreover, how do dispatchers maintain a hold on this transient workforce?

Although the budding literature[111] on the formal day labor industry has illuminated the novel and contradictory problem of workplace discipline in this heavily precarious employment regime, its nearly exclusive focus on formal externalization mechanisms and its privileging of the role played by dispatchers vis-à-vis the (in)formal social organization of the hiring hall precludes a fuller understanding of how the industry creates "flexibility from below" (Burawoy 2000). Indeed, our understanding of how the industry's structure and dynamics play out in the lives of homeless day laborers is limited to analyses of either

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attacks on the welfare state and labor unions, and other efforts to reshape the power of established political and territorial authorities…" (Soja 2000: 216).

[110] Flexible accumulation is comprised by "flexible specialization," which is characterized by "derigidfied hierarchies of labor-management relations and reorganized production processes and technologies that allowed clusters of small and middle-sized firms, no longer bound to old Fordist urban agglomerations, to take the lead in economic innovation and the generation of new 'possibilities for prosperity'…" (Soja 2000: 168).

[111] See Williams (2009) for a detailed explication of the day labor literature.

their grievances or the strategies they use to combat anonymity (Kerr and Dole 2005; Bartley and Roberts 2006; Snow and Anderson 1993).

By taking the perspective of homeless day laborers and focusing on how the interactive dynamics that take place inside the hiring hall emerge, an important set of processes that remain hidden in the current discussion can be revealed. Specifically, the reasons homeless workers see day labor as a "sensible" income-generating strategy and the ways in which they comprehend and negotiate the job queue – the central, supply side regulatory mechanism with which they contend each day – illuminate both the ways in which they co-produce the regime of workplace discipline that regulates the temporary-labor process, and contribute to the ongoing reproduction of the day labor industry's micro-foundations which, in part, reproduce social relations that structure Lafayette. The purpose of this chapter is to advance our understanding of these processes.

Labor On-Demand

Day labor dispatchers are presented with a recurring problem in that they must ensure they are in a position to fill work orders if and when they increase. This problem is partially solved through day labor agencies' geographical logic. Hiring halls have very tight profit margins and "employees" are their major cost, key asset, and basic product (Peck and Theodore 2001). Given its production of low-rents and a spatially fragmented labor market, uneven development facilitates these contingent labor market emissaries' extraction of cheap and flexible labor. Districts like Lafayette are thus strategic landscapes in which day labor agencies strategically cluster around the source of cheap,

vulnerable employees. However, this geographical logic only partially solves the dispatcher's problem.

Unlike their counterparts in human resource departments, Lafayette day labor dispatchers do not have at their disposal bureaucratic mechanisms to instill loyalty and maintain control over their workforce (e.g., promotion up the job ladder). Moreover, their workforce – predominantly comprised of homeless men – live lives attuned to caretakers moral economies of care, but do not necessarily have any incentive to structure their lives in accordance with the bottom-line imperatives of neighboring hiring halls. Yet, dispatchers are paradoxically tasked with maximizing the continuity of homeless men's employment for at least 2 reasons: (1) Clients prefer the relative stability it generates, and (2) Dispatchers have an easier time filling tickets quickly and predictably with "good" workers in order to protect an important account from the threat of "problem" workers.

Studying the social organization of the formal day labor market, Jamie Peck and Nik Theodore (2001) suggest two informal sources (and sides) of worker discipline that aid dispatchers in maintaining a hold on an otherwise transient workforce. The first springs from: "The agencies' work allocation systems [which] favor 'reliably contingent' workers who are available every day and whose work attitudes, job capabilities, and personal attributes render them acceptable to employers" (492). The second stems from: "Competition within the labor supply—arising out of economic necessity—[which] helps agencies retain a hold on their workers" (484). To date, only the first source has been given any serious consideration (Bartley and Roberts 2006; Peck and Theodore 2001; Theodore 2003). However, since the work allocation system (i.e., job queue) is the

interactive spring of hiring halls' internal dynamics, it is the fount of *each side* of the regulatory process.

By analyzing how homeless day laborers comprehend and negotiate the job queue, we can extend Peck and Theodore's concept of "reliable contingency" and, in so doing, gain a sense of how these two facets of workplace discipline conjoin and produce an informal system of workplace control in what at first glance appears to be a chaotic employment arrangement. In other words, we need to cast light on how interactions between dispatchers and workers create order out of chaos, in part by structuring homeless men's daily rounds into a routine employment practice. We can accomplish this task by taking seriously Everett Hughes' (1994 [1951]) proposition to study the "drama of work" wherein we analyze "the social and social-psychological arrangements and devices by which men make their work tolerable, or even make it glorious to themselves and others" (61).

The rest of this chapter is an attempt to understand the drama of contingent work by analyzing how homeless day laborers comprehend and negotiate dispatchers' allocation of jobs (i.e., the "job queue"). I begin with an explication of how their schemas both shape their experience of the employment relationship and serve as "inputs" into this employment arrangement. I conclude by analyzing workers' comprehension and negotiation of dispatchers' job allocation (the job queue) and consider its regulatory functions, extending and reconstructing the concept of "reliable contingency" in the process.

Homeless Workers' Schemas for Doing Day Labor

Slim, an African-American day laborer in his mid-50s, has been a fixture in the

Lafayette district for the past year. He took up residence in the rescue mission after

completing a 25-year prison sentence in a Tennessee State correctional facility for a drug-

related murder. While Slim's case is extreme with respect to the nature of his offense, his

slide into homelessness exemplifies a more general dynamic where blocked economic

opportunity translates into the adoption and valorization of an income-generating strategy

commensurate with the abject and unstable conditions inherent in homeless street life:

DW: When you got into the neighborhood, did you start looking for a job?

Slim: The second or third day…I said, 'Man, where them employment agencies at?' I'm thinking
he gonna tell me about state employment agencies. He say, 'There Labor World. There's Ready
Body. They work the [hockey and football] games.' I said, I'm not gonna argue coz in the
penitentiary, I started working for 17 cents a day. After hundreds of thousands of dollars done
went through these hands [selling crack], I was makin 17 cents a day.

DW: Did you look for any other kind of job when you came here?

Slim: Yeah. But what was messin me up was the felony conviction. People don't mind hiring you
whether you black, white, or whatever. But there's just certain crimes, especially violent crimes. I
may never get another decent paying job again in my life. But the thing about it is, *I'm happy and
I'm content*. I'm not out robbin nobody. I'm not out doin wrong to nobody. I'm like, 'Slim, you
done went from complicated all the way to simple.' That's how God wants us, simple.

Day labor is a sensible income-generating strategy in Slim's case, given its bump

in income and autonomy relative to the prison economy in which he was ensnared for

half of his life. This expression of his labor power is also a fount of a moralized identity

that shapes his self-concept and informs his everyday experiences. "I'm not out robbin

nobody," and similar mantras ("It beats stealin!"), ubiquitously float through the hiring

halls each day. Doing day labor provides homeless workers—many of whom are ex-

prisoners and/or substance users—an (ephemeral) escape from the stigmatizing

"criminal" social identity with which they contend on a daily basis (see also Duneier 1999; Gowan 2003). By converting day labor into a self-directing practice and inverting this otherwise degrading work into a wellspring of dignity, workers reclaim some of the autonomy stripped from them each day by local service providers, and find an outlet to express and validate their masculinity:

Philly: I'd rather say that I worked for this little bit that I've got and put forth some effort than having…to depend on handouts…I'm an able-bodied man. There's nothing wrong with me physically that I'm not able to go out and do some work. There's not anything wrong with me mentally. There's not anything wrong with me psychologically…So therefore, there's no excuse why I don't go out there and try. Even if it's day labor, even if it's not the best pay, it gives me a sense of worth knowing that I went out and tried instead of just relying on the quote-unquote 'system'.

"Try" is the operative word in Philly's next-to-last statement. Instability is inherent in the labor process, and the majority of workers respond by creating a routine—which involves arriving at their preferred hiring hall by 5 a.m. and jumping from temp to temp according to their idiosyncratic criteria (e.g., which type of work the temps have and/or their perceived likelihood of getting sent out)—that carves out a micro-geographical and temporal order that inverts an otherwise anomic existence into a meaningful life project:

Mike: I stay within a 10 to 15 block radius, a big circle. The [Drop-in] Center, the Mission, Labor World, Ready Body, ADW, Staff Zone, and way up there where I haven't been yet, is Labor Connection…That's how much runnin you gotta do. That's why it's so hard when you get to a temp and you wait *all* day—2 days, 3 days, 4 days. It takes you a good 20 minutes to walk from Staff Zone to Labor World to Ready Body. Then you still gotta go further up Lafayette to get to ADW. And I go back and forth between all of them, all day. That's all I do…Now you see why I'm tired and I drag ass. And I'm *still* tryin, I ain't give up yet…If I quit runnin, I'll fall apart.

Biography, (micro-)geography, and economic opportunity structure are exclusionary forces that refract through the street milieu, shaping these workers' income-generating routines and coloring the meanings they impute to doing day labor. These forces do not, however, necessarily lead day laborers to confer identical meanings on this

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common practical activity, nor do they engage it for the same reasons. The reasons they are a "dependent labor" supply (Theodore 2003) express what Bourdieu (1980) calls *diversity within homogeneity*, "reflecting the diversity within homogeneity characteristic of their social conditions of production" (60). The diverse yet circumscribed reasons these workers animate the industry's supply side can be broken into three ideal-typical schemas: (1) extrication, (2) meeting daily needs, and (3) substance use. Day labor, in other words, is the unifying *tactic* homeless workers use to execute three different *strategies.*

Extrication

With the exception of street newcomers, homeless workers do not believe they can work themselves directly off of the street with the wages of day labor. They quickly learn that the job-allocation system favors workers who have had the time to garner relationships with dispatchers. Many of my informants frequently complained about their low job-assignment rate and/or their relegation to less desirable jobs. As Tom recalls:

When I first started Labor Source and day labor I didn't know any better, you know? I thought man, they're going to pay me every day. Yippee, alright let's go. At first I thought, 'Hey this is pretty cool.' I thought they ain't getting paid every day. They got to wait til the rest of the week, or maybe two weeks. I get paid every day, alright! But I started realizing what kind of trap it really is to me. It didn't take that long to figure it out either.

Even "favorites," who get more hours and "better" assignments, do not have much faith that day labor will allow them to extricate. Ron is a favorite at Ready Body and works, on average, 30 hours a week. He is frequently issued repeat tickets, takes his work very seriously and has a habit of making fun of less successful workers. While standing in the dinner line at the mission one evening, I asked him what it takes "to get in good with the dispatcher." "Well, one, you got to always show up for your ticket," he explains. "And when you go out, always do a good job. Because believe it or not there's two ways they goin to know: the people they send you to [client company] are goin to

always ask for you back, and most temps they call and check up on you…I was told that I get a lot of favorable comments behind my work."

Despite his good standing with the dispatcher, Ron is neither immune to the constraints inherent in homeless life nor is he impervious to the industry's bottom line, both of which translate into a parasitic treadmill that keeps him mired in abject poverty:

Ron: But see the money you make out of it, depending what your situation is, almost everything you get, if you're trying to take care of yourself with it, it's spent on taking care of yourself and there's really none left. So now you're just like, if you work to get a hotel to get away from the mission, you're just like working to pay for this hotel and buying something to eat, and I might be able to get a pack of cigarettes because I've got ten hours instead of eight. And you just do that over and over, you just start seeing, like, it's useless working for them. It just seems like you're not actually getting anywhere. You're just going through the same daily grind every day, and every day, at the end of the day, the same amount of money -- they never increase it, only can bring you the same thing every day.

Snow and Anderson (1993) have suggested that the frustrations and let downs homeless workers experience while doing day labor violates the "norm of reciprocity," undermining their faith in the legal labor market. Their discussion, however, seems to relate more to informal labor corners as opposed to formalized hiring halls. Whatever the root of the difference, ethnographic observation in the Lafayette district suggests that a substantial subset of frustrated workers does not drop out of the contingent labor market, but recalibrate their expectations of the employment arrangement.

Despite the non-compete agreements they enter into with client firms, day labor agencies promote a "temp-to-hire" aspiration that is acquired by a substantial subset of the homeless workforce. Ready Body's application, for instance, informs the applicant that: "We do promote hiring and any client can hire you." The promotional literature from another agency informs the prospective worker:

From the ground up, we build it. At Labor Connection, we wake up early and stay late climbing the ladder of success. College, no college, military or sales; it is your work ethic, honesty, and ability to solve problems that we look for. As part of the Labor Connection Labor team, you can achieve your personal and financial dreams faster than anyone ever expected.

Unlike high road agencies where temp-to-hire is more common, however, day labor

agencies contract with low road producers that intentionally under-invest in workforce

development and technology (Peck and Theodore 2001) which creates less incentive for

the client company to offer a day laborer a "permanent" job. But the very fact that those

in their milieu have on occasion been offered a full time job by a client company

maintains workers' stakes in the "game" (c.f. Burawoy 1979; Lloyd 2006). They

construct the flexibility inherent in the employment relationship as an opportunity that

can afford the possibility of a route into the mainstream economy:

Mike: I'm hoping to hook up with a good company and don't need no car… You're
homeless…To get some of these good jobs around here, you just ain't gonna walk in out of
nowhere. You gotta work your way in through a temp until you fall into the right footstep. Work
a little bit, and get lucky. 'Hey man, forget about the temp. We wanna hire you on.' Then you're
rollin. But without a temp, see a lot of these companies don't wanna hire nobody. They want
temps coz they don't wanna pay the insurance. It's common sense…I'm trying to work the temps
until I find somebody that needs help and I'll work my way from there into a full time job. Temps
don't live up to all there responsibilities. They screw over a lot of people. That's why a lot of
guys don't wanna work temps. They're really screwing over hard working men who are just
trying to make it.

Mike's interpretation is shared by his homeless counterparts who are actively

attempting to escape street society. They maintain their future-orientated outlooks by

making their goals commensurate with the objective probabilities inscribed in the

triangular employment relationship. This subjective realignment becomes expressed in

two different work identities among this subset of homeless day laborers, both of which

stem from their working class backgrounds. Bill, a quick-tempered former concrete

laborer, sees himself as an independent contractor:

You need to show up on time, and come and be professional. Because I don't think of myself as
representing a temp company. I'm representing *myself*. Because if I get along with a ticket, I
know that maybe I can get hired through their company. I have to sell myself. It's just like going
on a job interview for a regular job. That's what it takes to be successful. And a lot of people are
not, because they just look at it like "Well, I'll work today, and if not, I'll have some money
tomorrow."…I don't keep it in my mentality, "I'm just a day laborer." I have to go through day

labor right now to make it, but I look at -- I have goals of not being a day laborer. I want full-time employment.

Doug is another fiery personality who throws himself into his work with great fervor. In spite of his precarious economic position, he clings to a Fordist orientation toward his work left over from his days as a forklift operator. This leads him, paradoxically, to subjectively stabilize the contingency inherent in the employment arrangement:

I was working at a factory. The factory closed up. The economy is getting bad and everything. It's really hard to say right now. Years ago you used to be able to get a factory job and it had benefits, 401, insurance and all that and everything else. Paid vacation, sick days…When I'm on a repeat I show up at 3:30. If I can't show up, I run it by the rules. I call in, just like a regular job. I let them know I'm not coming in. You got to earn their trust, just like they have to earn your trust.

Ironically, workers like Doug attempt to maintain their former blue-collar identities in the context of the contingent labor market.

Such a definition of the situation is rife with contradictions that periodically bubble to the surface. For example, after a string of single-day assignments Doug grew irritated by his inability to secure another repeat ticket. He was unable to keep pace with the permanent workers employed by the warehouse to which he was dispatched and was "DNR'd" (i.e., "Do Not Return") by the client company's manager. On the sidewalk in front of the free clinic, Doug offered his perspective of the situation:

They throw that trust away. They kick it out of the way. That's wrong. You got to learn to trust each other. Trust is one of the main things out there and they don't do that. All they care about is making that all mighty dollar for the company, getting their eight hours in, and then getting to go home. That's why I like full-time jobs.

Workers maintain the temp-to-hire aspiration, ironically, even after it becomes deferred by their life-course constraints. Larry, for instance, worked a repeat ticket with a parcel service for several weeks and impressed the manager with his work performance. Just before the assignment was about to run out, he recalls the manager telling him:

"Look, Larry. They're getting ready to get rid of the temps. Find out how many temp hours that you've had because I really want to hire you. We're going to get rid of the temps next week. We

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want to hire you." I told him upfront. I said, "Chuck, you know, I do have a felony." He said, "Oh, okay. That doesn't seem to be too bad. Don't worry about that. Just fill out the application. We'll look at it."

He followed Chuck's advice, and filled out a full time job application. The following

week, he started work as an official employee:

During that time, he submitted the paperwork, sent in the application. They run their checks and doing all what the corporate people do. It took about two weeks, and…I came in on a Wednesday. I got hired on a Wednesday and two Wednesdays later I came in and started work. I'm working about maybe an hour, hour-and-a-half. Chuck comes in. "Larry, come here. I need to see you in my office." So he pulled me into the office. He said, "Well, I don't know how to say this, but they're not going to let me --" because you had to have a badge. He said, "They're not going to let me issue you a badge. They're not going to let me hire you because something came back on your background check."

It has been nearly five months since Larry was fired from the parcel company, but his

overall extrication plan has not changed. He is able to withstand the cut and thrust of the

hiring hall by maintaining his temp-to-hire aspiration:

If I could sustain a steady ticket, then I could build up some income…Because I know people that's on steady tickets, been on steady tickets for a while. But I'm not going to bank on that, because too much happens, but at least that would be a start if I had some type of steady income as far as getting a ticket, which may lead to a position. That's why I'm going to pursue this thing with Labor Center, because my understanding is it's temp-to-hire. That's why I really want to check into that, because it's a job that I've known people to get hired from there…I mean, it's third shift, but I think that I maybe can arrange it where I could sleep a couple of hours...then after that, I could go and get in a little room or get in a little something where I could sleep in all day.

Satisfying Daily Needs

Not all workers, of course, buy into the temp-to-hire aspiration. Many become

quickly disenchanted with the job-allocation process and opt out of the queue completely.

The lure of the hiring hall, however, is never completely broken by workers like Mario

and Lonnie whose attitude toward day labor is cynically casual. They begrudgingly

submit to this capricious employment arrangement typically when they are in a financial

bind that requires quick remediation. Mario, for example, usually scurries at the end of

each month to come up with the money for his parole payment. His objective is complicated by the dispatcher's discriminatory discretion:

Last week I stopped by there and I asked Barbara [the dispatcher], I said, "Do you got anything?" "I'll put you on standby for the night and you know, go out tonight." I said, "Cool." So I go to Room in the Inn [the drop-in center's winter shelter program] and gave my [bed] ticket away, because I was supposed to work all night…I come back over there, man and she had signed on another guy…She said, "Well come back about six."…I went back down there later and there's another guy who comes in. She got this look on her face and said "Sorry." I said, "Hey, forget it." So I left. That was the last straw…She sees me the next day and says, "I tried to call you." I said, "I don't like playing games like that." You know, I'm too old for that shit.

Despite repeated encounters of this kind, Mario tries his luck in the queue several days a month. Like many of his homeless counterparts, he favors "legitimate" employment over informal economic activity such as panhandling mainly because he sees the former as less stigmatizing. "Panhandling is beggin people for money. A lot of em are not people that need the money," he explains. "They [panhandlers] beg for money for dope and beer and whatever else they can get their shitty hands on. At least I *work* for mine." Lonnie's motivation for working differs from Mario's, but they share the same moral aversion to panhandling:

DW: How come you don't panhandle? Is there a reason?

Lonnie: Yeah. Because I don't believe in it. I mean, society has a good heart. They try to help people…I feel like it's imposing on people when you do that. When they're just trying to go do their thing; tourists included, business people included. I don't think it should be done. It intimidates people…Do you want somebody to go back to Japan and say that their nation is full of a bunch of beggars?

Five years ago Lonnie was trapped in a house fire. His excessive smoke inhalation resulted in brain damage, aggravating the back injury he incurred in 1995 while lifting freight in his former warehouse job. Ironically, the flexibility inscribed in day labor is commensurate with his chronic health problems. "I was basically needing a way to get some kind of money and not wanting to resort to panhandling or illegal means of getting money," he explains. "So a person mentioned, 'Hey, you can work day labor.'

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Because…I might work a day and then be down on my back for three days…You can do

that at day labor because it's a day-to-day business." Day labor's flexible and moral

advantages notwithstanding, Lonnie sees this type of work as a necessary evil to be

shunned whenever possible:

I'm always afraid I might injure my back further. But I have to push myself through, just taking
the pain, "Man, I got to have this money." You know? Because I don't panhandle and I got to
have some way to get a couple of dollars. And so the danger for me is when I'm working on an
assignment and my back is hurting real bad I have to push through and risk even worse injury to
my back. Because I need that money.

Substance Use

Crack cocaine use, as anthropologist Phillipe Bourgois (1995) points out, is "merely

a symptom—a vivid symbol—of deeper dynamics of social marginalization and alienation"

(2). The excruciating pain and boredom of homeless life emotionally cripples virtually

anyone who it ensnares, making the pursuit of drug-induced ecstasy a logical adaptation

(Duneier 1999). Bobby is an energetic 45-year-old crack addict whose top front teeth

resemble a dilapidated, partially picket-less fence. The acrid, metallic-scented smoke he has

inhaled nearly every day for the last five years partially fosters his day labor dependence:

Bobby: I see day labor as a big trap. It's daily pay. You get a ticket, and it's a repeat ticket; this
might last three weeks. If I go Monday and get paid $40, $45 and I mess it up [i.e., spend it all on
crack], I feel bad, but then, I mean, I'm being honest with you, me and most of the workers go,
"I'm going to make another $45 tomorrow." You know, so that's the trap, you know what I
mean…Especially to a addict because I got a habit that I got to feed every day.

The social organization of the Lafayette district is an integral part of the "trap" to

which Bobby refers. Low level crack runners (who are typically homeless themselves)

surreptitiously ply their trade in the day labor agency parking lots at the break of dawn,

and they can be found at dusk cavalierly selling their product in and around the alley that

laces together the three area service providers. Those who "know what time it is,"

however, do not support the area runners because of their product's poor or fictitious

quality:

Field Notes September 2007

"I *nevah* got burnt down here," Detroit proudly proclaims as we hide from the sweltering sun under one of the few shade trees south of Broadway. He takes a swig from his Icehouse tallboy and continues. "I know the people that I fuck with. 'Here, here, gimme a 40.' They gimme the right shit. I *nevah* git burned. *Nevah. Nevah.* I know where to go, who to talk to. Coz they *roll* you down here. They sell you 'woo.' That's what they call 'woo.'"
	"What's woo?" I ask, reluctantly revealing my naïveté. "Woo is somethin they give ya that ain't what you want." "Like soap?" I ask. "Yeah. Or sheet rock or somethin. I know what time it is. I know where to go git the *real* shit. That's what I do. The problem is you got to go in the hood."

	Both the J.C. Napier and Tony Sudekem public housing projects, which form the

Lafayette district's southeastern border, host a lively informal drug economy that can be

reached in less than 20 minutes by foot. The ring of day labor agencies feeding off of the

adjacent emergency service hub has a complementary relationship with nearby ghetto

institutions, forging a crucial link in homeless day laborers' "sustaining habitat" (Duneier

1999).

Field Notes June 2008

After we return from the auto auction, Arnold and I enter Ready Body in order to collect our checks...Marge, the dispatcher, hands me my check without comment or ever looking up from her computer monitor. We leave the hall and walk southeast down Lafayette St.
	In just under 20 minutes we reach Cee Bee's, a disheveled and obsolete grocery store across Lafayette St from the J.C. Napier homes. The parking lot is heavily rutted and oil-soaked, and the front doors of the store are armored with gray iron mesh. The interior is dingy, decrepit, and in disrepair. The floor is grimy and the building hosts roughly the same equipment it did three decades ago when it was probably built. An Arab man shuffles paperwork behind a management counter that is raised about 5 feet off of the floor. He studiously peers at me through a heavily scratched piece of Plexiglass. I hand him my pre-signed Ready Body check and he stamps the back of it without even asking for my ID. I then get in the grocery line and wait for the male, Hispanic cashier to cash my check…Before I reach the front of the line, the cashier asks me if I got the check stamped. I shake my head yes, and when I reach the front of the line he throws the check in the register. He pushes a button that makes the register read: "1.00 Check Fee." He then hands me $25.46 in cash for my $26.46 check.
	On our way out, Arnold and I run into Reggie who has translated part of his Ready Body check into a paper bag-sheathed tall boy. 'Where you fittin to go?' Arnold asks him. 'I'm fittin to go find the Wizard,' [buy crack] Reggie jubilantly answers. He then darts across Lafayette St. toward the projects, dodging rush hour traffic.

Rayshawn, an emaciated man who resembles a walking skeleton, only leaves the Lafayette district when he goes on a work assignment. His black counterparts refer to his style as "country," meaning he lacks the disposition associated with urban African-Americans. His is a rambunctious, good-humored disposition that is quick to make fun of the ironies and contradictions he deals with on a daily basis. When he is out of this milieu, however, it is clear that humor is his defense mechanism. One day, as we talked on our way to the mission, he revealed how years of drug abuse and victimization have left him angry and hopeless:

I'm trying to leave it alone…I won't go buy none today. I bet you that. You know why? Because when you go buy drugs now the drug dealers beat you up, take your money, sell you stuff that ain't even drugs. I don't need rehabilitation no more. I can keep money in my pocket now because I'm mad! If I had a gun, I'd kill up a few of them!

Despite this story he tells himself ("*today*" is the operative word), Rayshawn's meager paycheck primes the parking lot drug trade several days a week. He has purchased a "dime rock" ($10 worth of crack) in the Ready Body parking lot several times since the above discussion. As he explains it:

You come over here in the morning to go to a repeat [ticket], and he'll say, "You want something before you go out?" You get a dime rock, you know. Okay. You come back in, you ain't making but $45. Now you really ain't got but $35 because you already owe $10. You owe $10 out before you even went to work, you know. So day labor, it's necessary, but it's exploitative.

In Rayshawn's and many of his counterparts' case, a repeat ticket constitutes a perverse reward that partially perpetuates an exploitative cycle of frustration and self-medication. "Doin drugs, gettin the check," he explains, "you sit up and get frustrated. 'Oh, this little bit of money, and all that hard work. I'm going to get high…I'm frustrated. Tomorrow, I'll make some money and I'll save it'…I just medicate my way through it."

From the client firm's perspective, flexibility is the signature virtue of the triangular employment relationship. It provides them an effective way to reduce the number of workers on the payroll during low-demand business cycles and to trim down their wage and benefits costs, while simultaneously reducing administrative costs incurred in employee recruitment, hiring, and regulation (Smith 1997). On the supply side, this flexibility has a perverse affinity with homeless day laborers' problems in social reproduction in general, and the nature of substance addiction in particular:

Bobby: Day labor enables me and others to live the life we live. We're responsible for ourselves, but day labor, unlike other companies, don't encourage you to be responsible. Another company, they're going to encourage you to come in neat and clean, on time. They expect you not to be a drug addict and an alcoholic, you know what I'm saying? With day labor, they don't say anything about bein drunk, high, or whatever. So they don't encourage you to be a model employee. They just want you to fill the ticket and they don't ask nothing of you, so that's one of the main reasons I go.

Rather than floating freely throughout street society, homeless crack addicts are typically enmeshed in reciprocal relationships with other crack smokers. The "sharing" of crack cocaine is the social glue that cohere these tenuous street networks. The chronic uncertainty inscribed in the labor process factors into what Bourgois (1998) calls the "moral economy" of (in this case) crack, encouraging workers to hedge against a potential "unlucky" day by sharing the fruits of their day labor:

Brian: I mean, I drink and I smoke weed and I do crack. I like to drink, but crack is so addictive, you understand, it's so addictive. So most of my money goes to crack, and not just for me. I mean…we share drugs. Okay. Me and people I mess with. So if I went today, I would buy crack, and it's going to be more for me, but I would share it, because if I didn't get out tomorrow and you got out, then you would buy it, you know what I mean. So I would save you [some] crack.

Making Sense of the Job Queue

Street life in and around the hiring hall is filled with gossip that revolves around which day labor agencies have the "best" and "worst" job-assignments, and which dispatchers are the "fairest." This gossip is driven by perceptions created in response to the dispatcher's discretionary allocation of job-assignments. The triangular employment arrangement requires the employment relationship to be renewed *each* day. This opens up space for negotiation at the micro-level, since the dispatcher has a vested interest in maintaining a "reliably contingent" workforce for at least two reasons: (1) client employers prefer the relative stability it generates (Peck and Theodore 2001), and (2) it makes it easier for them to fill a ticket (Bartley and Roberts 2006). Reliable contingency, as Bartley and Roberts (2006) point out, implies that a dispatcher's discretion plays an important role in regulating workers insofar as it gives them capricious (yet patterned) control over the job-allocation queue, also known as "the list." Non-compliant workers, they note, are typically black-listed or sent to the least desirable jobs (see also Kerr and Dole 2005).

The job queue is the central supply side regulatory mechanism that homeless day laborers negotiate. Given that it determines both *who* gets sent on an assignment and *which* assignment they receive, dispatcher discretion is a key interactional root of hiring hall dynamics, and hence, the regime of precarious employment. In order to understand how this flexible regime of discipline plays out on-the-ground, it is first necessary to understand homeless workers' indigenous classifications of job assignments.

Classifying Job Assignments

Day laborers translate the quality of the job assignments into a binary classification system of "good" and "bad" jobs. The criteria are simple. A good job is thought of as one that has the highest pay rate, has a favorable ratio of actual hours worked to hours paid (e.g., a job assignment that lasts 3 hours, but for which a worker gets paid 4), calls for the least amount of physical effort, affords the possibility for maintaining a modicum of dignity, and in many cases, offers a perceived viable temp-to-hire possibility. A bad job is the converse. Not all criteria have to be hit, of course, for an assignment to be considered "good" or "bad" as any one dimension can overpower the other three. It is extremely rare, in fact, for a good job to favorably hit more than three of these five dimensions.

A "Good" Job: The Auto Auction

One of the most coveted job assignments at three different day labor agencies located in the Lafayette district, despite its low pay (i.e., $5.85 an hour), is driving at an auto auction located on Nashville's suburban fringe. Workers consider it a good assignment because it is clean, is not physically strenuous, and only requires 2-3 hours of actual work. Since client firms must hire temps in 4-hour blocks, the workers feel like they get one over on the system. "You get to ride around in them nice cars in the air-conditionin," Ron instructs me as we barrel down I-40 toward the auction in a co-worker's 1996 Ford Taurus. "They [Ready Body] done lost half they lanes," Miles shouts from the front seat, "We'll be outta there in two hours. Get paid for 4!"

The auto auction's promotional literature describes it as the:

[W]orld's largest, most comprehensive wholesale vehicle marketplace with 145 locations in 19 countries on 5 continents. These operating locations are where live auction lane sales take place. Competitive bidding in the lanes, as well as online, drives the auction process in which licensed

automotive dealers are allowed to bid. Sellers, or consignors, may be manufacturers, rental car companies, financial institutions, leasing companies, corporate fleet managers or licensed automotive dealers.

It is located on a giant swath of land and its parking lots hold over 5,000 vehicles at a time that day laborers drive onto the auction block. The warehouse/garage-like structure that houses the activity is voluminous, replete with a large cafeteria, a sales area, and a 14-lane garage.

The following field note excerpt describes the logic of the assignment:

Field Notes June 2008

Labor Power and All Staff have sent a fleet of temps along with Ready Body. Each day labor agency has contracted particular lanes for which they are responsible. Ready Body (my 'employer') is responsible for lanes 8 through 12, and the other two temp companies make up the difference. Each lane has particular vehicles assigned to it. These lanes have corresponding portions of the parking lot where the assigned vehicles are parked. The temp drives one vehicle at a time through the respective lane onto the auction block, and then returns it to the same lot before repeating the process with a new vehicle. This process is repeated until every vehicle in the parking lot has been cycled through its respective lane, and the bidding has ended.

The process sounds easy enough. However, no one trains the temps on the protocol for dropping off one vehicle and retrieving the next. The only instructions we received when I worked, in fact, came from the dispatcher who comes out to the job site for this particular assignment:

Field Notes June 2008

"If you have to go to the bathroom for some reason, you are to ride down in a car and when you finish jump in a car and ride back [to the lot]," Brenda commands. "If for some reason I don't see you in a couple of laps, I'm gonna assume that you're not workin and I'm gonna dock your pay 15 minutes," she says. "That's just how I'm gonna control the situation." "If you don't sign my sheet when your lane's empty, you're not gonna get paid," she adds sternly.

The auction's permanent employees, who are assigned a particular portion of the parking lot (e.g., Lane 8), herd the temps through the process by shouting orders and sometimes invectives:

Field Notes June 2008

Rather than explain the process to me, the employee responsible for the vehicles I'm driving keeps shouting "*Over there! Move it over there!*" Or, "God damn it, it goes *over there!*" Before I exit the 2007 Tahoe I just drove off the auction block I pause and observe the irony of Reggie, a disheveled homeless man, parking a late model Corvette next to me. He incurs the wrath of the permanent employee when he steps out of the car: "You need to *slow* down! Be careful drivin that motherfucker! This ain't the fuckin' Indie 500!"

A "Bad" Job: The Garbage Truck

Despite the barrage of symbolic assaults that day laborers incur while on this assignment, its indignities pale in comparison to those endured when working for a local garbage company. Even though it pays $6.25 an hour (40 cents more an hour than the auto auction), workers regard this as the worst job-assignment mainly because it is dirty, physically strenuous, and permanent employees (attempt to) strip them of their dignity. "One of the hardest jobs that they've got is doing the trash for TFI," Larry tells me as we loiter in front of Labor World. "You just get physically exhausted," he adds, "You're stinking. You're nasty. You're smelling like that garbage, and then they want you to run."

This private sanitation company services a hilly, affluent suburban area that is the exclusive preserve of both country music stars and professional football players. The relative deprivation experienced by homeless day laborers like Larry is aggravated by their interactions with permanent employees who make significantly more money for doing the same work. These disparate incentive structures collide in the course of a day's work, forcing temps to negotiate the associated tensions:

Larry: You go up to these rich people's doors, up and down the hills, pushing the trash, making $6 dollars an hour. But the people that are working for TFI's making like $120 to $150 dollars a day. So they're trying to push you to hurry up, because see, they're not getting paid by the hour. They know that when they get their trash route done, they're through. You're outside in the extremes, whether it's cold or hot. You've got to push this heavy cart. You've got to go behind these people's houses. You go way up on the hill, get one bag of trash, put it in the heavy container, push this heavy container, trying to catch the truck. They want you to basically run…We're killing ourselves for $6 [an hour].

DW: Does that cause any issues with permanent employees?

Larry: They're docking you 30 minutes for lunch, but you don't take a lunch! So that means that's 30 minutes that I'm not getting paid, but I'm still supposed to work that time…Some jobs, they'll pay you for lunch. Some actually let you stop and take a physical lunch, but like at TFI, they don't. They talk to you real bad, because you're a temp.

DW: How?

Larry: I was on the truck with the driver and the other guy who runs streets. I feel like I'm working at a steady pace. Then he [driver] tells me, "Hey, man. You need to go faster. You need to go faster." I said, "Look, man, it's like 90-some-odd, almost 100 degrees. Man, I'm going as fast as I can go. I'm trying to stay hydrated." He's like, "You just need to hurry your ass up." I said, "Wait, wait, wait a minute, man. Do not talk to me that way." We're way out in Hendersonville. "Well, just get the fuck off my truck. I'll have them come and get you." So I said, "Well, fine. Because I don't want to be on your fucking truck, because you'll make me hurt you!" So I sat out on the side of the road for about 10 minutes before he comes back: "Hey, man, get on back on the truck, man. Let's finish this route, man."

Fragmenting the Reserve Army

Day labor dispatchers are petty demagogues of street society given their role as institutional agents who mediate the connection between the secondary labor market and structurally disadvantaged labor. They do not evenly distribute "good" jobs among the prospective workforce, but tend to assign them to workers with whom they have cultivated favorable relationships:

Dispatcher: The homeless guys who I send out are good workers. I have some of em who'll never get sent out [laughs]. Coz there's a lot of rules they have to follow if they're gonna be in the labor hall. They learn real quick that if they can't follow my rules, there's no way I'm gonna send em out to one of my customers. Just through experience I can weed through em pretty quick.

DW: How?

Dispatcher: Just like if you hire someone, you're gonna interview a lot of people. If you're not familiar with any of em, you're gonna take a chance on somebody. If a guy stays here day in and day out, waiting for an opportunity to get sent out, that shows me that he's determined to get out and do something. The more time they spend with you, the more you know that you've found someone you can send to just about anybody– to your best customers and your best jobs.

From the dispatcher's perspective, regular presence indicates "reliability." Men who are deemed reliable both get sent out more frequently and get better jobs. However, there are always more prospective workers than there are jobs. Therefore, one strategy for increasing one's odds of getting sent out frequently and to good jobs – aside from faithfully waiting each morning in the same hall each day – is to perform favors for the dispatcher:

Field Notes   May 2008

"Why you don't you ever send me to the auction or Gaylord, Becky?! I been here *2 hours* longer than the other muthafuckers you just sent out on them tickets!" shouts a black man whose name I later learn is Ron.

Becky stands up from behind her kiosk and defensively shouts, "We ain't first-come-first-serve. I don't just check your pulse and send you out. How do I know I can trust *you?"*

Ron: "I tell you I'm here *every mornin!* I show up every mornin!" he shouts back.

Becky: "Bullshit. I've seen you maybe 7 times in the last 2 weeks. You need a track record so I know you're a good worker. *Plus,* with the economy the way it's been, we have *a lot* of people to pick from. People with the *right* attitude. People that *show me* they can be trusted."

Acting as the dispatcher's bodyguard is one strategy used by workers to garner favorable relations. The internal dynamics of the Lafayette district's hiring are underpinned by the threat of violence. This context provides a means through which some workers express their loyalty to the dispatcher by serving as a quasi-bodyguard in the morning, when the first round of job assignments are dispensed and the tensions are highest. Workers like Ray-Ray, for instance, serve as "bouncers" for the dispatcher at their agency of choice:

Becky gets angry a lot of times. She's got a *bad* temper. She's run people out the door fightin mad. She threatens people a lot. She's always worrying about somebody doing something to her vehicle. She got two or three boys around her, like me, to keep an eye on things. It supposed to be like a bouncer kinda thing. We sort of look out for her coz so many people done threatened to do something to her.

This act of solidarity expresses the day laborer's loyalty to the dispatcher, and also signals his trustworthiness (reliability). In return, more often than not, workers like Ray-Ray are rewarded by the dispatcher with relatively steady and "good" job assignments.

Rather than citing the interpersonal root of their relative success in the job queue "favorites" moralize the practice, validating their work ethic in the process:

Johnny: They know who really wants to work, and they get you out…They know if you're a really good worker. They're not going to send this other person who's going to drag on the job with you. Because…you have to get the job done. They say, 'If you see someone dragging on the job, you tell me.' I *work* and come in on time. They say I'm a willing person. They make sure there's work [for me]. They say, 'He's the only person who'll be here every day.' They know who the slackers are, okay. So if I'm going on a ticket, or if it's raining, and I'm taking work that day, they make sure I get an inside job…Or, if they have something for four hours, after I do this for four hours, they get [me] another four-hour ticket…They make sure I have something for eight hours a day.

This manifestation of dispatcher discretion conjoins with the industry's cost-cutting practices, making social relations in the hiring hall analogous to a pressure cooker. The threat of physical violence underlies even the most banal social interactions in this milieu and, like the American ghetto, the economic foundation necessary for trust-based sociability is extremely tenuous (Wacquant 2008). Hiring halls transfer risk onto the shoulders of their "employees" through a host of personalized externalities that suppress their hourly rate, and typically manifest in an exploitative "ratio of fixed cost to variable wage" (Peck and Theodore 2001; Roberts and Bartley 2004). The real wage of homeless day laborers in Tucson, for instance, was found to range between $1.69 and $6.53 an hour, with a mean of $4.14 an hour (Roberts and Bartley 2004). Discussions with homeless day laborers indicate that this pattern holds in Nashville:

Detroit: They [hiring halls] know the mission people is weak…There's so many of em, you don't *gotta pay em.* If there's 400 people who need $20 that day, you can use them for work you're supposed to be payin people $100. They *use* the mission. There's 5 temp services…in *the area*. They *prey* on this area. You'll go to work for 8 hours and they'll give you a check for $38…You jump in the van and come work with me and see what you have to do for $20. You'll swear you made 150.

These personalized externalities combine with the dispatcher's discriminatory discretion and the moral antagonism it breeds among workers, creating a divide-and-rule dynamic that manifests in worker competition that fragments the workforce (See also Wacquant 2008).

Divide-and-Rule

As evidenced earlier, relations between non-favorites and dispatchers are often adversarial. While covert hostility is more prevalent, some workers are overtly antagonistic when they feel they have been disrespected by the dispatcher. Regardless of how they deal with the job-allocation process, workers internalize their antagonisms with dispatchers (and in some cases client employers), directing their anger and resentment toward homeless workers of a different race:

Rayshawn (50-year-old, African-American man): The highest I've ever made was when we went to Atlanta and they were paying us $7 and hour... It may have been $8 an hour, that's the highest I've ever made. She [the dispatcher] got some tickets down there now but she got certain guys that she'll pick. And most of them will be white. Now *I ain't racist or prejudiced*, but I ain't stupid. *She'll pick certain white guys* for all these $11 an hour tickets and other than that going out-of-town ticket I ain't made more than $6 an hour no matter what type of job it is…The only reason I hadn't hurt nobody is because God ain't blessed me to get nothin in my hands like a good old pistol.

Doug (55-year-old, white man): Nissan North American Headquarters, I was working out there. But…I think they all [dispatcher/client employer] got together trying to get rid of me…I always got there at 2:30 in the afternoon, ready to go and she [dispatcher] bumped me [off of my repeat ticket]…I think I got discriminated against. She wanted me to take a drug and alcohol test. I said, "This is my record. I don't drink and I don't do drugs. When I work, I work."…Then, I spread word around that all they want to do now is work all these drug addicts, dope heads, mouthwash drinkers…As long as they get a body out there to make that dollar with, they don't care what position they are in…These people that's honest and decent and trying to get back on their feet and don't do drugs, don't drink or anything, they get thrown under the table…The labor law says equal rights…No discrimination. But…it's going on. *It used to be half this and half that. Now, it's all black, just about.*

This divisive dynamic reinforces workers' docility by discouraging them from expressing grievances for fear of being black-listed (c.f. Kerr and Dole 2005) and/or

losing a job-assignment to a fellow employee. Joe conveys a more general manifestation

of this dynamic in a lecture he gave me in a hiring hall parking lot:

Through the temp services I've learned that you don't express your opinion. Just keep it to yourself and don't even share it with the people you work with because they're going to go rat on you, because there are times when you may be working somewhere and the person you're working with knows that eventually there's only going to be a need for one person there and if they can get rid of you then they have that job…*It's a matter of being pliable and versatile and doing what you're told*.

The dispatchers' misclassification of job assignments is a typical abuse to which

workers submit due to this fragmenting dynamic. An article written on an agency that

employs many of Nashville's homeless workers cited a former manager who explains this

practice:

They referred me to the skills manual, which is coded to each specific job type…But yet they weren't following the job descriptions. They put ironworkers on codes that were indicative of just janitorial. I asked why they did that and they said so they could save money. They told you that until you had a 32 percent profit margin, you just kept playing with the codes…" (Cook 2002: 69).

This abuse is frequently cited by workers who are dispatched to construction-oriented

jobs. At least six workers with whom I have spoken, for instance, complained about this

practice vis-à-vis a big box store to which they were sent. They were all designated as

"general laborers," but the contractor asked all of them to perform work that required a

power tool, which technically means that their pay rate should be commensurate with the

higher *semi-skilled* rate. Instead, they received minimum wage for their work. Only one

of the workers complained about the mis-classification:

Arnold: I was a general laborer at a Super-Mart. Then they moved me from Spring Hill to Smyrna. When I got there I was still a general laborer, then all of a sudden they put a drill in my hand, they had me on a scaffold, and a ladder. I went from a general laborer to semi-skilled, so I asked them to call down to Ready Body and tell Becky [the dispatcher] that I need a dollar and 50 cents more [an hour] on my check. They said, 'Well she might get mad at that.' I said, 'I don't care, coz I'm gonna tell her when I get back. I just want her to hear it from you, because you're the foreman…' When I got down there and they gave me my check, they said 'Arnold, you've been DNR'd.' I said 'Why?' They said, 'You talked yourself out of a job.'…Since then, gettin out's been a problem.

In addition to controlling workers at the interpersonal level, this divide-and-rule dynamic also affects their subjectivity. Human capital means little in this labor market context (Bartley and Roberts 2006). This objective reality, however, is often lost on workers, leading those with a skill set to cast the job-allocation process as a reflection of self-worth:

Joe: I went to Labor World a couple of days and just sat there on days when it was like they didn't need me. And then I knew I had value and I had to keep telling them, "You know, if you need somebody I got the skills." And they never even looked at my application. They just see a body and they send me out on jobs where they see the body. And I tried to let them know that, "Well, I have this experience here."…They kind of just let it go right over their head. Everyone tells me, "Hey, let them know you got some experience." But they just send other guys out. I'm a sensitive human being. I don't like that about myself, but I'm a sensitive human being and it bothers me. It really bothers me. But not everybody's going to see me as I see me.

Previous studies have underscored day labor agencies' promotion of "loyalty," citing the role of their "bonus" programs in fostering reliable contingency (Bartley and Roberts 2006; Theodore 2003). Indeed, every hiring hall in the Lafayette district offers such programs. One of the most popular agencies extols its virtues with a poster that boasts of its "Loyalty Bonus," informing workers that they can: "Stay with us 1500 hours and get 40 hours pay." This formal mechanism, however, is only partially responsible for workers' relatively regular submission to a particular agency. Homeless workers subjectively apprehend the job-allocation process in moralistic terms that tend to trump their partial penetration of its structural apsects, and the divide-and-rule dynamic that emerges from this structural misrecognition manufactures agency loyalty among many day laborers—favorites and non-favorites alike. Doug, for instance, explains why he only works out of one particular agency:

Doug: I only work out of Labor Force because Ready Body and Labor World is all Missionites…I don't want nothing to do with those places because they have their favorites, just like everywhere else…They don't judge on how they work or their character. When Labor Force

sends somebody out on a job they want somebody out there they can trust. They want somebody out there that they can say, "Well, I want to see this." And they'll do the job. They don't want to worry about this getting stolen, that getting tore up, and someone getting drunk last night and all they want to do is go out there and get eight hours of sleep and get paid for it.

Ironically, Doug is not a favorite. He estimates that he gets sent on a job six or seven out every ten times he puts his name on the list, but he often gets sent on what he considers a "good" job. Essentially, he views the dispatcher at Labor Force as "fair" because she neither flagrantly passes him over in the job queue nor relegates him to undesirable assignments.

Loyalty, consequently, is produced by the divide-and-rule dynamic resulting from workers' comprehension and negotiation of the job-allocation queue. The co-existence of two contradictory principles – worker's default assumption that the job-allocation system operates on a first-come-first-serve basis and dispatchers' selectively reward "good" workers with "good" jobs – creates a structural miscrecognition that produces workers' allegiance to one particular agency by turning them against each other. The informal dynamics in the hiring hall, as a result, foster homeless workers' reliable contingency. By turning workers against one another and fostering (the fear of) back-biting along with the threat of being DNR'd, black-listed, or being invariably sent to a "bad" job, dispatcher discretion produces provisional structure that enables dispatchers to retain a "reliably contingent," transient workforce. This process casts light on more robust findings that reveal the key importance of loyalty in obtaining "good" jobs and/or repeat tickets (Bartley and Roberts 2006), but complicates the picture insofar as it implies that hiring halls' re-institutionalization of "a stripped down form of loyalty through their informal job allocation practices" (54) is as much an artifact of day laborers' perceptions and negotiations as it is those of the dispatchers.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to elucidate the drama of contingent work by revealing how homeless day laborers' reliable contingency is manufactured through their subjective comprehension and negotiation of the job queue. In the case of the day labor agencies located in Lafayette, agency loyalty is produced by a divide-and-rule dynamic that emerges from and acts back upon these interpretive and interactional processes, creating a provisional regulatory structure that is embedded in the hiring hall and which is transposed to the actual site of employment. Indeed, the significance of a "socially embedded relational logic" in structuring the daily exploitation taking place inside the hiring hall has been compellingly suggested by others (Bartley and Roberts 2006: 54; also Peck and Theodore 2001; Theodore 2003). But the privilege they grant to the role played by dispatchers obscures the regulatory effects of the ways in which homeless workers incorporate exploitative dynamics into everyday life by creatively re-working their (deleterious) consequences into perceptual categories that provide the grounds for meaning and sensible action.

Indeed, the homeless reserve army marches to the beat of three different schemas that furnish "inputs" into this precarious economic arrangement. These practices and preferences structure the situation of otherwise employable men into a routinized employment practice that creates order out of chaos. However, not all Lafayette residents work day labor and even those who do are not necessarily present in the hiring halls each day. Many leave the district each day in order to facilitate the material and/or psychological survival. It is to these routine practices to which we now turn.

CHAPTER X

Geographies of Daily Practice

Field Notes   June 2008

Howard wakes me out of a dead sleep by vigorously shaking my right shoulder. "We gotta get up. It's 10 minutes til 5," he whispers. I'm surprised that I fell into such a dead sleep last night. It takes me awhile to get my bearings. As I wipe the sleep out of my eyes I come to the realization that I'm lying on the top bunk of a bed in a rescue mission dormitory. My left cheek is imprinted with the insignia of the New Balance running shoes that served as my pillow and my armpits reek of body odor. Given the shower room's several inches of standing, brackish water I elected to go unwashed last night. About six dozen of my bleary-eyed dorm mates crawl out of their bunks before stripping them of their bedding, which consists of a thin, white cotton sheet and a brown polyester blanket.

"A-Dorm," as it's called by residents, was rowdy last night. The evening's activities – gossiping, arguing, and maniacal shouting – peaked around 11 p.m., two full hours after "lights out." By then the din died down, only to be replaced by the buzz saw-like snores of my dorm mates. There were persistent wafts of fetid foot odor and flatulence so horrible I adjusted by taking shallow breaths, before wrapping a blanket around my face to create a crude mask. I finally fell asleep around 12 in the morning. Dead to my environment, I dreamt about what I would do and where I would go the next morning; that is, until Howard broke me out of my deep nocturnal slumber.

Howard waits for me to climb down out of my bunk. When my feet hit the ground, my digital recorder slips from my waistband and hits the floor. He lets out a chuckle, and shakes his head in understanding. Before we make our way to the bedding window, I put on my shoes, making sure to leave them untied. Stan, a senior in Life Recovery, is working the window and asks me for my bed number. He hands me a green, nylon mesh bag that clearly contains someone else's personal effects. The label reads "A-145." "A-45," I repeat. When Stan gives me the correct bag, I'm surprised to find the four bucks that I mistakenly left in the fifth pocket – hard won panhandling income. I quickly enter a toilet stall and strip off my blue, mission-issued pajama bottoms, change back into my clothes, and return the bag to Stan.

Howard and I then make our way into the day room, in which about forty men are already seated, waiting for breakfast. Some nod in and out of consciousness, others read, others stare blankly at the person in front of them, still others banter with one another. "Sit in that row," Howard instructs me, while pointing to a row of seats that borders the washroom. I soon learn that it is the first row called for breakfast. "They got it so structured in here you can't move," Howard explains. "If you get up, you end up all the way over there," he says, pointing to the opposite end of the day room. "Then, you're the last one to eat breakfast." Howard then makes fun of his "acquaintance" Maurice's shirt. Maurice, an ex-prison guard, retorts by yelling to the entire day room that, "Howard's just used to going to Father Ryan. He'd get out of the shower, and them Catholic priests would say, 'Come here Howard.' That's why he love Father Strobel over there so much." Howard and several others break into laughter.

It is barely 5 a.m. when a 30-something black man wearing a Gateway badge around his neck enters the room. "What's for breakfast?" Maurice asks him. "For you, it'll be extra special," the Program member says. "I'll make your tray personally." "He done got in the Program, got his and now he's complainin about it," says Howard. "I hate people like that." The man walks over to the RC machine to my right. "What's for breakfast this morning?" Howard asks him. "I can't tell you. If I tell you, you might leave," he replies. "Is it oatmeal??" Howard presses. "If it's oatmeal, I'll leave," Howard insists. "It's free," the Gateway guy quickly retorts. "That don't matter. My cocaine was free. That wasn't good for me either," Howard says. "This ain't Shoney's. You gotta have at least 5 dollahs," retorts the Gateway member. "You need mo than that," says Howard.

By a quarter past five, Fred, a Program member, enters the day room and says a prayer for us "transients." "Gracious heavenly father, we thank you for this new day, we thank you for our laying down, and for our getting up, we thank you for this food we about to partake, may it nourish our bodies and strengthen us to be holy and acceptable in your sight, be with us as we go through our day, and guide us as you see fit, in your son's precious name we pray, Amen." "Ok, handicap," he says. Six paraplegics wheel themselves down the main concourse toward the chow line. A couple minutes later, Fred releases our row. Howard, Maurice and I make our way into the line, get our trays, and find a seat in the twenty-five table, two hundred person capacity dining hall.

The menu consists of last night's "sausage" scrambled into eggs, and stale donuts. The Gateway member with whom Howard verbally sparred walks into the chow hall from the

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kitchen. "This is as good as Shoney's man," Howard sarcastically informs him. "Lemme give you a tip," he adds, attempting to deflate the man's ego. Howard fishes out a one dollar bill from his pocket and extends it to the man. "See, you can't judge a book by its cover," Howard says as the man grabs the bill from his hand. When he re-enters the kitchen, two elderly black men sitting at our table start laughing, acknowledging what Howard did. "You made him the broke down bitch," they say. "Muthafucka thought I was broke. He took it though," Howard says triumphantly.

We finish breakfast and make our way into the courtyard. Ray, a black man in his 30s, has two coffee pots set up on a picnic table adjacent to a column on which an electrical outlet is mounted. One pot has decaffe, the other holds regular. The table is stocked with the Maxwell House coffee grounds, sugar packets (even artificial sweetener), artificial creamer, and Styrofoam cups. Ray sells the 12 oz cups for a dollar a piece. I buy a cup of coffee and chug it. By now it is 6 a.m. and most men who plan on working day labor have already exited the "yard" for their preferred agency. Others have begun making their way toward their morning panhandling spots in the central business district. Still others begin walking north toward Church Street Park, where they will eagerly await the adjacent public library's 9 a.m. opening. A substantial minority will remain in the district. This subset of the Lafayette population typically plays cards and dominoes in the courtyard or sits idly with thousand-yard stares. Others ply their black market trade in the neighborhood's nooks and crannies.

For out part, Howard and I join the Church Street Park exodus. The logic is that we will hang out in Church Street Park until 9 a.m., allowing us time to "bathe" in the library's restroom, "occupy our minds" by reading the newspaper, and "chill down" in the air conditioning before returning to the Mission for our 12 p.m. lunch:

Howard: The way they [missionaries] got things structured, you can't never get too far. They basically program your whole day. All you doin is running back and forth. That's why you gotta manage your time, see what I'm sayin? If we gonna make lunch, we can't be clear over in West End. That's why we gonna hang here (Church Street Park); coz it's centrally located and when the library open we can take a bath, chill down, and occupy our minds a little before we gotta get back in that damn heat and get back around them damn missionites [fellow "transients"]. After lunch, we ain't got but 4 hours to kill before we gotta be back again. That's a little time to put our hand out [panhandle] before we back in the [court]yard.

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So begins a day in the Lafayette district. It is not, as the opening field note excerpt suggests, a day that is totally unstructured even though chaos does enter into the picture from time to time. In fact, some sort of order does sustain homeless men's precarious

existence. In this chapter, I describe this order and, in doing so, put ethnographic "flesh" on Allan Pred's (1983: 52) proposition that the "daily drudgery and drama" of (in this case) homeless life is the outcome of occupying the same general place in society and that one's place in society "means one's daily path, or one's potential reach in time-space, is hemmed in or thrown open in part by a residence which is similar in quality and location to the residence of some other persons of the same social stratum" as well as by the organizations and roles that dominate one's life.

In what follows, we will examine how Lafayette residents' segmental roles in caretaker agencies shape their more-or-less routine activities. We will pay particular attention to how caretakers' distributive practices (rooted in their moral economies) extend in time and space to structure residents' daily rounds as well as how these routines are also situated within and steered by constraints generated by the urban authorities who have jurisdiction over the greater Nashville area. Doing so casts light on Lafayette's dual morphology of morning dispersion and evening concentration, in turn revealing the central role played by caretakers in the temporal and spatial structuration of homeless men's lives. It also reveals how residents strategically use the constraining order of urban space to facilitate their material and/or psychological survival.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Glass Walls: The Rhythmic Order of Street Life</p>

<p style="text-align:center">*The Hegemony of the Time-Table*</p>

"Everybody's got an agenda," Dave told me as he panhandled a passerby during Church Street's lunchtime rush-hour. "You gotta place your agenda from the night

before. You gotta figure out where you're gonna sleep – the Mission or Room in the Inn – and what you're gonna do the next day. So you plan ahead. You know, 'I'm gonna hit this park. I'm gonna hit this place. I'm gonna bum money here. I'm gonna bum money there. I'm gonna get something to drink. I'm gonna get something to smoke. And I'll be back at the Mission for a certain amount of time before they start letting people back in.'"

The Mission, as Dave's commentary indicates, is the central organizing principle of street life. It is also an organization whose social existence is moral. The temporal order which prevails inside its walls is oriented primarily toward inculcating homeless men's "time-thrift" and is therefore based on fundamental moral considerations and assumptions. Its strict 6:30 p.m. curfew is primarily the expression of its moral raison d'etre. Because missionaries have an ethical obligation to save homeless men's souls, and because they believe that introducing structure into men's lives is a necessary condition for achieving this goal, they simultaneously attract and regulate residents by husbanding their time through the temporal-regulation of life-sustaining goods and services. In the process, the "exact regularity" missionaries seek to introduce into the lives of homeless men vis-à-vis the intake ritual extends beyond its walls and into the street, structuring what residents can accomplish on a daily basis. The cyclical rhythms of the time-table, in other words, governs the ways in which men like Dave put Nashville's urban environment to use in their survival.

By interlocking its time-table with the Mission's, RITI staff has created interdependence with its spiritual adversary. In doing so, they reinforce missionaries proscription of slothfully spending the morning in bed. In conjunction with missionaries' control over considerably vaster resources, this dynamic renders the Mission's moral

economy of care the central organizing principle of the district. The resulting temporal order structures residents' spatial practices which embody "a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routine and networks which link up places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure) (Lefebvre 1991: 33).

"All of your sleeping and eating places are concentrated in one area, Lafayette," Derrick noted one morning on returning the neighborhood from a Room in the Inn host church. "So if I venture too far and I don't give myself time to get back, then I'm gonna miss that meal or that bed check-in or if there's a clothes give-away I'm gonna miss that. I have to schedule everything to where I can go for a certain period of time and then I have to start heading back so that I don't miss out on things. If I get too far away, what am I gonna do?"

Street life, as Derrick's comments suggest, is structured by men's connection to Lafayette caretakers' resources and the rules which regulate access to them. He and other residents, for the most part, cannot eat or go to bed when they feel like it, but, rather, must do so at hours normatively prescribed by service providers. They adapt to this temporal exigency by organizing their lives around time-sensitive spatial routines. These daily rounds are guided by cognitive maps which consist of a working knowledge of the rhythmic opportunities and constraints operative in Nashville's inner loop. Men's daily rounds consequently take on a relatively routinized character.

"I try to keep everything scheduled," Gerald said, before explaining his more-or-less invariable routine. "Every day is about the same; the same routine – the Mission or Room in the Inn, down to the [Church Street] Park; from there to the library where I read

the paper til 11:30 and come back down here for lunch. On Thursdays, though, I go to Belmont [Church] for lunch. After that, I go back to library and surf the net. I go back and forth between there and the Park til about 5 [p.m.], when I head back down [to Lafayette]." "The Mission or Room in the Inn," he concluded, "anchors what you can do because you have to be back at a certain time, and it takes away your freedom coz you depend on somebody else to provide. But you have to go by their rules. That or starve and freeze."

Lafayette's social morphology is etched between the distributive practices of service providers who operate the revolving door, and the daily rounds of homeless patrons like Gerald. In other words, homeless social life, as the commentary of Dave, Derrick and Gerald suggests, is a (perversely) symbiotic phenomenon that requires the group to live by the policies and time-tables of the organizations which dispense the scarce resources they require for survival. Because these time-tables are invariable starting and ending points with which life beyond Lafayette is organized, it is difficult to understand either homeless men's use of public space or the temporal patterns of street life without taking these temporal building blocks into account.

The Temporal Order of the CBID

Downtown Nashville's public spaces are animated and organized by at least three distinct temporal loci. The first locus can be found in office professionals' 9 to 5 work regime, while the second is constituted by the 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. entertainment economy. Lafayette service providers constitute the third locus of the central business district's spatial order. This locus, however, is subordinate to the other two loci which drive the dominant spatial practices of middle- and upper-middle class workers, residents, and

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consumers. These temporal rhythms overlap with Lafayette's temporal order to partially script homeless men's downtown choreography of existence.

Homeless men's cognitive maps consist of a working knowledge of these regular temporal variations which animate the central business district. "You have to be creative" Dante told me one night in the Mission chow hall. "You have to understand Nashville, the people, the way things are set up over there. You can't put your hand out [panhandle] until 7:30 or 8 in the morning [the morning rush hour] and that dries up around 9 [a.m.]. It picks up again at 11 [a.m.] and you can usually make out til 6 [p.m.]. By then, it all moves down to 2nd and Lower Broad, but it's also time to make it back down here. Plus, that's when [police] patrols get *real* bad. If you stay out [after 6 p.m.], you better mind your 'Ps' and 'Qs'."

Cowboy, a self-proclaimed "old school tramp," added his two cents to Dante's assessment. "You can't sleep or drink in Church Street Park or Riverfront [Park] when those police patrols come by," he said. "That's about every hour. And you better look busy! They love slappin you with them green [warning] tickets." Howard backed up Cowboy's assessment by adding, "If you get enough of them green tickets, they ain't warnings no more. The library don't open til 9 in the mornin. So you ain't got no choice but either be down here [Lafayette] with all the crackheads and crazies, or in the park til then. Gotta do something with your time."

Palliative Routines

To borrow George Orwell's (1933) line, men like Dante, Cowboy, and Howard live "a squalid, eventless life of crushing boredom" (180). Each day they find themselves with a time surplus that they are forced to "kill" because it cannot be utilized. As Cowboy

himself put it, "You've got time to kill every day because it's like 6:30 in the morning. The only thing I got a lot of is time." In the absence of anything constructive to do, their waiting energy is a means to repress their feelings of uselessness, which, in the psychic economy of the street, creates an intense feeling of boredom. Men logically adapt to such "crushing boredom" by adopting the "busyness characteristic of those burdened with unimaginable leisure" (Schwartz 1975: 169). This busyness becomes expressed in several recurrent palliative routines that carry men outside the neighborhood and, in doing so, simultaneously provide a spatial counterbalance to Lafayette's agglomerated misery. As Archie put it, "I try to stay away from there as much as possible. There's a lot of the stuff I see down there, it hurts me. Especially the guys down there just mentally unstable, that are walking around, talking to themselves and all that stuff. I don't like seeing that."

The daily routines of Archie and countless others are organized around four "palliative measures" (Freud 1961) – "deflections," "substitutive satisfactions," and "intoxicating substances" – which map onto particular sites beyond the borders of the Lafayette district. Income-generating tactics such as panhandling are powerful sources of daily deflection, whereas reading, writing, and internet surfing are common substitutive satisfactions. Income-generation tactics, moreover, are often a means of securing intoxicating substances; in such cases a deflective palliative is translated into a chemical one. Far from free-formed, these palliative routines around which unhoused men organize their lives are situated in an array of temporal, spatial, political, social, and symbolic constraints which translate into their recurrent use of a finite number of structurally overdetermined settings to facilitate their material and psychological survival. Men both

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synchronize these routines with the temporal structure of Lafayette and negotiate an inhospitable temporal and spatial order enforced by residential and business interests.

The Authoritative Order of Street Life

The Nashville Downtown Partnership

Downtown Nashville's redevelopment has created new claims on its urban spaces. Over the past decade, the number of Nashvillians electing to (simultaneously) "live, work, play, and invest" in the inner loop has reached unprecedented proportions. The recent influx of relatively affluent downtown residents as well as the thriving entertainment district built from the remnants of Dodge-City Skid Row has heavily impacted how elite urban actors regulate the inner loop's public places and thoroughfares. In particular, homeless individuals' survivalist use of the Central Business Improvement District's (CBID) dense ecology of commercial activity and public areas conducive to passing time has come under intense scrutiny by residential and business interests represented by the Nashville Downtown Partnership.

Like Business Improvement Districts in other cities, the Downtown Partnership holds quasi-political jurisdiction over a geographical region in which property owners pay higher taxes in return for services and capital improvements above and beyond those provided by city government. The "Clean and Safe Team" is one such service, staffed by a small army of Segway- and bicycle-riding "Downtown Ambassadors" that patrol the CBID between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on the weekend. Their daily objective revolves around "public space

maintenance, hospitality services and safety measures" and keeping "an eye out for situations requiring police or emergency services and quickly communicate with the appropriate dispatchers[112]." One of these yellow-shirted emissaries explained his "public space maintenance" as, "The obligation to ensure that uncivil behaviors are stopped before they spread."

In the downtown discourse on public space management, panhandlers are tropes that personify these "uncivil behaviors" par excellence. At the behest of the business community, the Downtown Partnership spearheaded an "aggressive panhandling" ordinance in 2004 that failed to pass its third and final reading in Metro City Council given the bill's questionable constitutionality. Undaunted by the defeat of his ordinance, Director Tom Turner switched tactics and launched an information campaign entitled "Please Help, Don't Give." "Our approach is to see what we can do to *stop* panhandling" he explained to those in attendance at a quasi-public meeting held at Partnership headquarters. "Solutions to homelessness are complicated. The one topic we want to address is how to limit the *impact* of panhandling. What we have is an educational campaign that is targeted at those who give money to panhandlers." He went on to outline his campaign's practical goal as well as his theory of panhandling transactions.

"People who come from outside of the community and all of the people who stay at the hotels may not encounter this in their everyday life and their first reaction often is to give money to somebody they think is in need," he explained. "A lot of people who are panhandling, and who are going to these feeding places, are going to *another source* [buying drugs or alcohol] to get what they need with money. My goal is to limit their source of funds. There are a lot of agencies that do great work—the Rescue Mission, the

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[112] http://www.nashvilledowntown.com/clean_safe/

Campus for Human Development." Andy Garrett, Central Precinct Commander from 2001 until 2008, embraced Turner's panhandling theory, but added his own twist. "We're partnered with the Nashville Downtown Partnership," he told me at the end of a "Compstat" meeting[113]. "They've got the 'Please help, Don't Give' program. I agree with that. I call em street people. They're people who don't want help. They just stay on the street. I've got signs that tell people not to give to panhandlers but to call 2-1-1. 211 is the social service hotline. I don't think people should give to panhandlers. Tennesseans are giving people, and I understand they want to help out, but giving to panhandlers only keeps them on the streets."

The Central Precinct

In (quasi-)public forums where the Central Precinct joined forces with the Downtown Partnership, a hybrid of their respective panhandling theories was typically communicated to the audience. Sergeant Ruff, a liaison between the Metro Police Department, the Downtown Partnership, and the Urban Residents Association (URA), provides a case in point. At a crowded URA "public safety" meeting in Standard's Ballroom he informed Councilmembers Mike Jameson and Erica Gilmore, Brady Banks of the Mayor's office, and over one hundred URA and NDP members that, "We have quite a few homeless street people downtown. There's people who are homeless because of circumstances or whatever. They're *tryin* to get off the streets. Then we have people that *choose* to live on the streets. You could find em a home and put em in it, they won't stay there. They populate downtown. This is where they like it.

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[113] "Compstat" meetings take place every month. In these meetings, representatives from Nashville's six precincts convene to analyze geo-coded crime statistics. Each precinct Commander presents that statistics for his or her jurisdiction and discusses how he/she "moves resources" to target "hot spots" in the city.

"Why? Coz they can come down here and get fed six times a day for free. They also can get money *every day of the week.* And that's one of the things Bill [Director of the Partnership's "Clean and Safe" team] and their program ["Please Help, Don't Give"] has been encouraging people to not give em [panhandlers] money. Coz all they do—if you had time to watch em—if you give em money, guess where they go? They're not going down the street and buying health insurance. They're going across the street to get their quart of beer, their drugs, or whatever. So we try to discourage people from giving them money. It's not good for anyone, including the homeless, if we leave them on the streets instead of helping them find help; that's inhumane."

Panhandlers as Tropes of Irresponsibility

Taken together, the Central Precinct's and the Downtown Partnership's perspectives suggest that because panhandlers frivolously spend the income they generate (on drugs and alcohol), giving money to them only prolongs and exacerbates their condition. Therefore, passersby who want to help the homeless are better off donating their money to local service providers. This discursive construction of panhandlers as irresponsible and of panhandling as a cause of urban disorder rather than an expression of structural violence and its attendant desperation legitimates each agency's interdictory activity vis-à-vis this income-generation routine. Because the problems suffered by these embodiments of irresponsibility are best ameliorated by organizations that specialize in managing the issues associated with homelessness, the logic goes, it is even inhumane to perpetuate their dependency on passersby's handouts. Helping the homeless help themselves is thus consistent with both the police department's mission to protect and

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serve, as well as the Downtown Partnership's mission to make the downtown safe for all citizens.

The Urban Residents' Association

Sergeant Ruff's above-noted definition of the situation was prompted by a URA member who expressed concern for her safety over what she perceived to be a burgeoning downtown homeless population which, in turn, was prompted by the URA president's opening narrative which informed those in attendance that at "about a quarter til one in the morning, we were walking back home from the 2nd Avenue and Broadway area and we got mugged right in front of our building. A couple guys came up from behind us. One grabbed me and put me in a head-lock and threw me to the ground. I already had my wallet out. I said, 'Take it.' The other guy took Cindy's [his wife] purse, but luckily didn't touch her, and took off down Church Street."

This public safety meeting at Standards Ballroom is representative of the dozen or so URA meetings I attended during my year-and-a-half of research. Over the course of the meeting, panhandling was defined by all in attendance as an uncivil behavior that disrupted the inner loop's social order. Residents' inchoate fear and anxiety over the risk inherent in urban life became transformed, vis-à-vis dialogue with beat cops and local politicians and businessmen, into anger and moral indignation they directed toward a concrete object of blame: the panhandler.

Downtown residents' substantial capital investments in their luxury condominiums as well as their cognitive maps of the "good city" collided with their daily, on-the-ground reality of negotiating an urban milieu that simultaneously functioned as an auxiliary "sustaining habitat" for their unhoused counterparts (the term is Duneier's

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1999). The homeless in general and the panhandler in particular disrupted their "ontological security," which Giddens (1984) defines as the "autonomy of bodily control within predictable routines" (50). "That's one of the biggest complaints we get from urban residents is that they can't walk anywhere without getting panhandled," explained Lieutenant Swisher. "There are approximately 150 members [in the URA] and about 25 per cent of those people *do not own cars.* They're living, working, and doing all their shopping in the downtown area."

Panhandlers as Tropes of Fear

Because the panhandler embodied a daily threat to this vocal minority's sense of security in the course of their daily rounds and, in doing so, violated the set of customary relations and etiquette they sought to impose on their "neighborhood," they became key players in the battle over downtown Nashville's public space. Whereas the business community, through the mouthpiece provided by the Downtown Partnership, couched its concerns in terms of panhandling's "impact" on commerce and constructed the panhandler as an irresponsible steward of his income, URA members layered their concerns in a discourse of "fear" and defined the panhandler as a threat to public safety. This definition was adapted from the dependency theory of panhandling provided by the Downtown Partnership and Metro Police, but, unencumbered by the Central Precinct's need to negotiate the competing demands of housed and unhoused Nashvillians, urban residents ditched the softer premise of dependency in favor of an atavistic theory of panhandling transactions.

Despite the divergence in these two theories of panhandling, the URA's logic syncs up with that of both the Central Precinct and the Downtown Partnership vis-à-vis

the solution proffered: a panhandling-free environment in which sympathetic passersby invest their money in the daily operations of social service providers. The momentum created by the two-pronged semiotic offensive of "Please Help, Don't Give" and "Call 2-1-1" was soon translated into another legal offensive. The overlapping anxieties and (fiscal and "safety") concerns of the business community and downtown residents congealed into a unified campaign to pass a new, "constitutional" ordinance to regulate panhandling with the interdictory power of a police citation.

<center>Regulating ("Aggressive") Panhandling</center>

On January 15, 2008, District 3 Councilman Walter Hunt successfully steered an "aggressive panhandling" ordinance through the Metro City Council's third and final reading. Curiously, Districts 6 and 19, respectively represented by Councilmembers Mike Jameson and Erica Gilmore, cover the inner loop, while District 3 encompasses North Nashville, and its southern border is *two districts north of downtown*. It is thus unclear why Hunt was the bill's designer and sponsor rather than Jameson and/or Gilmore.

One month later at the "Quality of Life Forum" convened by Vice Mayor Dianne Neighbors and Councilman Erik Cole at the downtown public library, Hunt explained his sponsorship of Ordinance BL 2007-66 to those in attendance. In his address, he summarized the views of many of the downtown residents and merchants. "The reason I am so close to this is that a lot of homeless people get a bad rap" he explained. "Like people out in the audience already said, they gotta be *back to the shelter*, and I recognize that. Because, *what happens is after 6 o'clock*, we have *another* element out there and that element is out there on the streets, doing a lot more than asking people for money. I have no problem with asking for money. That element that comes down there after 6

o'clock…everyone's thinking it's the homeless when in fact, it is *not* the homeless because they're *in the shelters*. The homeless are getting a bad rap because of what happens at night and after 6 o'clock.

"No one wants to criminalize homelessness, but at the same time, no one wants these other circumstances. Drug addiction, mental illness, or whatever are no excuse for criminal *behavior*," Hunt added. "Tom Turner is not the enemy folks. As a matter of fact, he and the business community may be the answer. One of the things they did was energize the business community to bring to bear some of their resources on some of the problems we're speaking about. We have to do it together; the business community, the residents, and the people who are in the circumstance [the homeless]. Not all homeless people are street people, and not all street people are homeless. What Charlie Strobel and the Mission does is not enough. We need strict enforcement of this ordinance; not only for the residents sake, but for *everyone* who comes downtown."

The Panhandling Ordinance

Ordinance BL 2007-66 defines "panhandling" as "any solicitation made in person upon any street, alley, sidewalk, public place or park requesting an immediate donation of money or other thing of value for oneself or another person or entity," but "shall not include the act of passively standing or sitting, performing music, or singing with a sign or other indication that a donation is being sought without any vocal request other than a response to an inquiry by another person." "*Aggressive* panhandling," moreover, means "To approach or speak to a person in such a manner as would cause a reasonable person to believe that the person is being threatened with: 1. Imminent bodily injury; or 2. The commission of a criminal act upon the person or another person, or upon property in the

person's immediate possession." The ordinance prohibits both panhandling and

aggressive panhandling under the following circumstances:

B. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in an act of panhandling when either the panhandler or the person being solicited is located in, on, or at any of the following locations:
1. Any bus stop;
2. Any sidewalk café;
3. Any area within twenty-five (25) feet (in any direction) of an automatic teller machine (ATM) or entrance to a bank;
4. Any daycare or community education facility, as defined by Section 17.04.060 of the Metropolitan Code;
5. Within ten (10) feet of a point of entry to or exit from any building open to the public, including commercial establishments.
C. *It shall be unlawful to engage in the act of panhandling on any day after sunset or before sunrise*.
D. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in an act of aggressive panhandling." (BL 2007-66, emphasis added).

BL 2007-66 had immediate implications for all of the public spaces and

thoroughfares under the Downtown Partnership's jurisdiction. The ordinance places a

total ban on "aggressive panhandling," but only makes "panhandling" a civil infraction if

it occurs at prohibited times and places. The temporality encoded in the law appears to

follow from Hunt's belief that the "real homeless" have made their daily trek to the

Lafayette service providers by 6 p.m., which, in the winter (when the bill passed) is long

after sundown; only the "other element" that allegedly "gives the homeless a bad rap" is

engaged in this behavior after dark. Panhandlers in the CBID now had to stop plying their

trade in sites that dam up potential hustles – sidewalk cafes, ATM machines, and bus

stops – and had to be sure to monitor their behavior lest they be accused of being

"aggressive." The time stipulation, moreover, created a temporal prod that encouraged

would-be rough sleepers to enter the public shelter system.

Fixing Broken Windows

BL 2007-66 provided the police department with a new tool with which they

could manage public space. Commander Damian Huggins, however, was quick to point

out the difference between *civil* and *criminal* law vis-à-vis the regulation of panhandling.

When I paid him a visit at the Central Precinct, he told me that, "I think [BL 2007-66] is Metro council's way of representing the residents and the business owners by passing some type of law that restricts some of the abusive behavior that went along with panhandling. It's not just a panhandling law. It's an *aggressive* panhandling law, meaning that it restricts after hours, it restricts in certain locations, and restricts you from being aggressive about it. Meaning, I can't come up to you and say, 'Hey you! Give me ten dollars!'" When I asked him if the new law gave him regulatory leverage existing statutes did not, he explained that, "It's just an ordinance. There's a small fine attached. The enforcement of that is something that we look at and we promote and we get out there and we do what we can with it. But an ordinance is *civil.* So we're very limited in what we can do."

Even though the ordinance gave his officers a novel regulatory mechanism, Huggins suggests that its passage primarily served as a political palliative for downtown's two special interest groups. Lieutenant Andrea Swisher, Huggins' evening shift supervisor, put it this way one evening to a room full of URA members: "Even before the aggressive panhandling ordinance, we were arresting people. I would dress up and carry my Hard Rock Café bag and if they asked me *twice* I would write them up for disorderly conduct. Disorderly conduct is actually a jailable offense as opposed to aggressive panhandling, which is a citation."

Quality of Life Policing

"Not unlike any other large city you have issues with street persons and quality of life concerns that arise around some of the issues," Commander Huggins observed. "Sometimes those two things come into conflict – tourism, residents, business and

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someone who is displaced." When "quality of life" issues emerge downtown, Huggins's officers resolve the associated conflict through the discretionary enforcement of trespassing, obstruction, disorderly conduct, public intoxication, and unlawful assembly laws that govern the use of public space.

When I asked Commander Huggins to explain his philosophy of public space management he told me that, "We definitely use broken windows theory, it's important." "Little problems left unchecked lead to big problems. That's something we've *always* looked at. That's why our quality of life issues are such concern. We're always mowing the grass, we're always trimming the hedges, we're always trying to repair the cracks in the windows. We try to *never* let things get to where we go, 'Man! How did we ever let it get to this stage?'"

In order to "repair the cracks in the windows," officers typically gather detailed personal knowledge on homeless individuals who frequent downtown venues. In particular, bike and horse patrols maintain a presence in public parks and sidewalks in and on which unhoused Nashvillians frequently congregate. These patrols pass by popular day spots roughly every half hour and have an advantage over squad car patrols because they can move nimbly between the street and the public parks and alleys in which many homeless individuals pass their day. Bike officers typically cut through the local parks and scrutinize the unhoused for signs of public drinking and/or public intoxication. Should they find such grounds for "reasonable cause," officers will search the suspect's belongings and, if their hunch is confirmed, they will issue either a green "warning ticket" to a first-offender or a "public drinking" ticket. Belligerent drunks are typically slapped with a "public intoxication" and/or "disorderly conduct" citation and

are promptly jailed. Moreover, when they spot a new face, officers run an identification check and enter the homeless person into a database. As the Commander explained: "My bike cops know most of them [homeless people] by name. When new faces show up, they ask them who they are and where they're from."

Steering the Homeless Problem

When patrols meet a "new face" or encounter an unhoused person with whom they have already established contact, officers typically engage them in a conversation that simultaneously extracts information they can use in an ongoing attempt to dissuade the homeless from utilizing the central business district to facilitate their survival. Instead, officers typically attempt to persuade the unhoused to "find help" in the Lafayette district. These routine interactions translate into an authoritative spatial practice centered on "steering" the homeless to a concentrated pocket of poverty south of Broadway.

"What we try to do is steer em to places, like the Union Rescue Mission or Father Strobel's because they provide other services," Sergeant David Ruff told me. "They provide em information on drug programs and stuff like that. The population [of tourists and residents] can be as high as 130,000. So they can get all the money and all the food they want. If you just keep feedin em and feedin em, guess what they do? They keep stayin and stayin." When I asked Commander Garrett how his precinct managed panhandlers who were not violating the law, he too told me that "We offer them rides to the shelter," before adding that "We can't force them into the shelter. We just give them a warning if they're not breaking the law. Like I tell homeless advocates, I have three tools:

the shelter, referrals (to social service organizations), and arrest. I tell advocates 'Give me another tool!'"

BL 2007-66 gave Commander Huggins another civil "stick" to wield, but he too lacked any other "carrots." If after 6 p.m. an unhoused Nashvillian elects to take refuge in one of the CBID's nooks and crannies, rather than in a Lafayette shelter, he becomes subject to the logic of capitalist property relations. "If it's a location that has a trespassing waiver on it, and you're on their property," Huggins explained, "there are several options that we have. One is, depending on the time of day, we could ask you if you want to stay at one of the resources [shelters]. Charlie Strobel's, the Mission. There are certain restrictions to these locations. These are faith-based groups and they have their rules and guidelines." What happens to those who would rather exercise circumscribed autonomy instead of submitting to caretakers' rules and guidelines?

"If you persist and refuse to remove yourself, then we can enforce the trespassing laws, which would mean incarceration," Huggins explained. "But we're not going to just sit idly by and let you become a victim or let you trespass on somebody's property that's asked us to enforce that. Anybody that's got a waiver, anybody' that's got a 'No Trespassing' sign, that's giving *notice*." Rather than purely invoking the language of property rights, the Commander legitimated his department's interdiction on moralistic grounds. The strict enforcement of property rights, the logic goes, will, over time, prod homeless individuals into the shelters where they can "find help." In doing so, his officers "help the homeless help themselves" by forcibly extricating them from the "conditions" that put them at risk either to themselves or to others.

"I can tell you that 39% are reporting being victims of violent crime," he said. "And most of it is homeless on homeless. If you can remove that condition and put them in a facility [shelter] where there *are* resources and some level of protection and security you might just see crime reduction and less victimization of that same group of people. Although some might say that the police department takes a hard stance because we're enforcing trespassing laws and obstruction laws, it's exactly the opposite. We're actually promoting the security and safety and long term solutions of an issue instead of just looking at it in a snapshot; we're looking long range."

First time property offenders may be offered a ride to a Lafayette service provider. Repeat offenders, however, are dealt with swiftly and severely. "We do have discretion on how we enforce that, but it depends on the situation," said Huggins. "If we've addressed it with the same person at the same location multiple times and that condition is going to continue, then *arrest* is the *preferred* response. I'm not going to allow you to keep going up to Damian's porch and using the bathroom *every day.* You wouldn't be real satisfied with your police department if I did, would you?"

Despite this arrest policy, Central Precinct officers are frequently indicted by URA members for failing to enforce statutes. Sergeant Ruff, apparently tired of this accusation, held up the mug shot of an African-American man at the end of a URA meeting one evening. The number "440" was scribbled on top of the photocopied page. "See this gentleman here?" he asked. "You know what that number is? 440. That's how many times he's been arrested." He then read off the offenses with which the man had been charged. "*Obstructing a passageway, drug paraphernalia, pedestrian solicitation, trespassing, disorderly conduct, trespass, trespass, trespass.* He has been arrested time

after time after time. We are arresting people. We're doing all we can. I mean, four hundred and *forty* arrests! And the majority of them are trespassing, obstructing a passageway, soliciting money, and things like that. We put em in, somebody's letting em out."

<center>***</center>

Cheyenne: It was the night before last. I was up on I-40 by Déjà vu, standing on the ramp and panhandling. I was flying a sign, just about to head to the Room in the Inn. We had low tickets for that night too. I wasn't even intoxicated. Me and my buddy had just bought two pints -- he bought one, and I bought another. Hadn't had a drop all day.

Okay, a cop pulls up. Just out of the blue. He's rolling down the off-ramp, heading towards the jail. Pulls right over, and he says, "Get in, fellas. You're under arrest."

I asked him "For what?" and he said "Public drunk and soliciting on a roadway." He says "Can't have you out in the street now. You're going to jail." So he takes us in to jail.

Now you know they have sheriff's deputies that run the jail. Now there's this one woman named Newton that knows me. Okay, she says "What's the charge, officer?" He says "Public drunk and soliciting in a roadway." She looked at him and says "He's not drunk. I know him. I know when he's drunk. He comes in here all the time."

Well, they "dressed us out," is what we call it. They have to put you in an orange suit and they charge you $15 dollars for the t-shirts down to wearing the socks and the shoes. They don't let you keep them orange shoes. I'm sure you've seen them on people's feet before. Even out here, yeah, they can charge you $15 if you have to dress out. When they take you upstairs [to jail], yeah, they're going to bill you $15.

If you don't have the money then, they're going to give you what you need anyhow, but the next time you come to jail with money and you go through booking, they'll take it. Whatever you own. They get on the computer and say, like -- I probably owe them about $5,000 dollars. I try to never give them a dime.

What I do is when I know I'm getting arrested, I hide my money in my shoe. They never check your shoes. I'm homeless. How long have I had my socks on? Nobody knows. They don't want to – they just say, 'Put your shoes in the bag.' You've got to figure they probably run 600 to 800 people through their jail system every day. They don't want to sit there and smell shoes for eight hours. They're tired -- they just tell you "Put your shoes in the bag, man." That's a trick I learned. So I just let them go ahead and bill me $15 every time.

And here's another thing I'll do. They don't take your change. I don't care if you've got $50 in quarters, they won't take it. They do not take change. They take every bill you got. So what I when I'm paying now, if somebody gives me $20 dollar bill, I go buy me a sandwich or whatever, I'm doing some cigarettes and beer or whatever I'm drinking at the time, then I'll tell them, "Give me a $10 dollar roll of quarters." And I just put them in my pocket.

If they take me to jail, they don't take my coins. So I get out, I got my $10 and whatever change I got with me. They don't take your coins. That's what I do, is I convert my bills into coin. I pay for everything with silver nowadays. Now they get disturbed sometimes when I go in there and I'm buying eight dollars worth of stuff and giving dimes and nickels and quarters. That's a trick I learned a long time ago.

So they charged me with them two things. And then the D.A. says, "Well, we're going to drop the public intoxication, and we're going to hit you with soliciting in a roadway." So they give me time served on that, and I left that day, that evening.

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It takes them like twelve hours to release you after the judge says you can go. So I sat there another 12 -- I spent, like, 24 hours for something I didn't really even do. Just happened I was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I been put in jail ten times in six months. Probably twelve. And it's just for nonsense. Trespassing. Public drunk. Obstructing a passageway. Soliciting in a roadway. Disorderly conduct. What's that other one they get you for? Unlawful assembly. It's another one they come up with.

<div align="center">***</div>

The jail, John Irwin (1985) noted, is a "special social device for controlling offensive rabble" which makes it "a subsidiary to the welfare organizations that are intended to regulate the poor" (2-3). For men like Cheyenne, the Davidson County jail is indeed a familiar station in Nashville's system of poverty management. Their lives are, for the most part, pressed between the revolving doors of both the criminal justice system and the Lafayette service providers. The Metro police department's rigorous enforcement of "quality of life" offenses criminalizes the survival strategies Cheyenne and his counterparts formulate in the context of abject poverty, which, in turn, bolsters the exclusionary efforts of downtown merchants' and residents' associations.

Fear of arrest is, as a result, a chronic existential condition of street life. Regardless of how "polite" or "friendly" a police officer is with an unhoused user of public space, the coercive threat of jail and its constitutive and numerous mortifying rituals of searching, stripping, and loss of personal property and money sit behind every officer's "interview," "request" to "move along," or offer of "help." Said another way, beneath every interaction the unhoused have with a police officer is a subtext of violence and the associated, routinized terror of prospective total subjugation and immobility.

Those who are down and out in Music City adapt to the banality of this evil by taking the role of Central Precinct officers and other authorities in their subdivision of prime commercial space into gradations of "acceptable" usability. Likewise, they must

learn the different values residents attach to different regions as well as any temporal variation in the assignment of such values. In the process, they form attitudes about which types of places and which times of day or night are usable and employ these categories to negotiate the nets of discipline, and adopt strategies to make use of the constraining order of place. By manipulating the basic elements of the constructed order and, in turn, by deviating from the dominant definitions of urban space, men like Cheyenne reveal their "dispersed, tactical, and makeshift creativity" (de Certeau 1984: 96). It is in the interstices of (spatialized) power that we come to understand the homeless geographies of daily practice.

Public Thoroughfares

Panhandling

Church Street is one of the central business district's busiest public thoroughfares. Between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., it teems with men and women donned in business attire. As they make their way to the various office buildings in which they work, they pass by men like Roger who plies his trade on the crowded sidewalks. On this particular December morning, Roger has his blue toboggan pulled snuggly over his unkempt and stringy, sandy blonde hair. The rim of the knit cap draws attention to his sunken blue eyes, and his manifold wrinkles. Dingy blue coveralls protect him from the nippy 40 degree air. His teeth are decayed and his chin is covered by a scruffy gray-blonde goatee. A booger hangs from his right nostril, and every few minutes he emits a hacking cough that dislodges phlegm from the back of his throat.

"Hey my friend. I need 32 cents. Man help me out," he called out to a white 40ish passerby. The man just shrugged his shoulders and kept walking west down Church Street. "There's always a certain person you can ask," Roger explained. "You can see it in a person when they walk by." He then turned his attention to an African American woman walking by, who appeared to be in her late 40s. "Hey young lady. I need 32 cents. Can you help me out?" "I don't have any money," she replied, never breaking her gait. "Alright baby," said Roger. "It's a knack," he informed me despite the fact that he has struck out twice in a row. "Hey young lady help me out with 32 cents," he asked a conventionally attractive white woman who looked to be in her late 30s. "Naw," she said in a disinterested tone, never breaking her stride. "Come on baby. You sure *look good* in those jeans," shouted Roger. "*I know*," retorted the woman as she reached the intersection of Church St. and 5th Ave.

"You can't come off like you're being a smartass, you always gotta be amusing," Roger explained. "Like she said '*I know* I am [looking good in her jeans].' I always try to be nice to everybody. You don't never be *overly aggressive*. If you do, the majority of people now have cell phones and call the cops." "I need 32 cents. Help me out beautiful!" he shouted at another woman in her 30s. She never lifted her eyes from the sidewalk, and kept walking toward 5th Ave. "See, panhandling is not illegal. *Aggressive* panhandling is," Roger informed me. "If I ask someone for something and they say no and I say 'Fuck you!' And 'Kiss my ass!' That's *aggressive* panhandling. Then they can lock ya up."

Roger acknowledges the "aggressive panhandling" ordinance and reveals how it shapes the manner in which he interacts with passersby. Few if any panhandlers have read this law, but they nonetheless employ their own variant on what they deem to be

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proper interactive etiquette. However, the woman who "looked good in her jeans" doubtfully looked upon Roger as a paragon of propriety; subject to his male gaze, she curtly rebuffed his (sexist) attempt at humor. Still, men like Roger attempt to shoehorn their interactions into the mold of middle class propriety in order to minimize arrest and cultivate a modicum of legitimacy in the eyes of those who walk by his panhandling spot. In other words, the outward display of aggression is both a legal and "business" liability.

Panhandling is more than just an income-generating routine for Roger and his counterparts. It is also a daily deflection in that it provides meaning and purpose in an otherwise anomic existence; becoming absorbed in its interactive flow paradoxically takes men's minds off of many salient problems in living even as it simultaneously reinforces their identity as a "homeless" person. "It gives me something to do and makes me feel productive," noted Roger. "People still treat me like shit a lot, but puttin your hand out beats sittin on your ass all day down at the Mission with all that bullshit and misery. Who wants to think about that all day?"

Organizing their lives around this palliative routine, however, presents panhandlers with a recurring problem that requires an interactional and spatial solution. In order to secure the wherewithal to survive – physically and psychologically – they must ply their trade in the dominant spatial preserves of residents, business people, and tourists without getting arrested or cited by police. This problem is compounded by the conventional street wisdom explained by Charlie, a self-proclaimed "Ph.D. in panhandling": "There really is a strategy. One, look sad. People can pretty much tell. Two, the rougher you look, the more they feel sorry for you. Usually you'll make less money if you're clean cut." Mastering a doleful disposition and aesthetic, however, is a

dramaturgical strategy that cuts two ways. For every passerby that feels pity when they gaze at the spectacle of a degraded pauper, another wells up with contempt and/or fear.

Stick-and-Move

The panhandlers I came to know over the years were aware of this double-edged dynamic. Rather than setting up shop in one prime location and inviting the interdiction of police, they adopted a tactic of spatial mobility in order to curtail their visibility. "Putting your hand out comes with a routine," Clark told me. "It's called 'stick and move.' You can't stay in one place too long. You can stand here for a little while, but soon you have to move to another spot." "Why?" I asked. "I've been standing here for awhile. If you stay in one place too long, somebody who owns the establishment might see you sitting outside, see ya askin for money, and might call the police. So what you have to do is go to one spot. Go around the corner to another spot. Then go to another spot. You just keep going around to different spots. You'll learn to find out where your hot spots are. Where you're gonna make your most money and where you're gonna make *nothin."*

Dave employs a variant on the "stick and move" tactic. Rather than setting up shop for thirty minutes here and an hour there, as men like Clark do, "I keep moving. I walk. I don't do no standing around. I don't like to have a cup. I don't stand in one spot. I do a lot of moving around. And I usually catch someone that's coming towards me. Young couples are my target demographic; anywhere from 22 to like late 30s. Older couples, I don't like them much or kids, or ladies, or nothing like that. I mean, you don't want to make no wave. I don't want to make nobody nervous." The technique employed by panhandlers like Dave and Clark embodies their perception of space and balances the

needs in which their income-generating routines are rooted and the urban reality of pending punitive interdiction.

Ramping

Because panhandlers rely on a finite number of viable spaces located on streets with high foot traffic, the CBID market tends to yield lower returns on their investment than spaces in areas less consumed by the "compassion fatigue" of blasé passersby. Police patrols, moreover, are less prevalent in sites off the beaten path. For the price of a black market bus ticket ($2 for a day pass), men like Johnny can reach distant sites located in relatively wealthy districts. These sites are typically interstate off-ramps located near major shopping districts. When I asked him why he prefers "ramping" (his language) to "putting his hand out" downtown, he told me "Well, the reason is because they're constantly panhandled by people. These poor people, these business people, they can't turn two corners and there's ten people done ask them for money already." He paused, and shook his head in dismay before finishing his thought. "And that just puts them in an ill mood when they get around to me. They'll start cussing me or whatever, tell me to go get fucked or what not. 'Go get a job, you bum.' You know, they get perturbed, man because people are always bumming off them." "Besides," he added, "the police. They patrol these areas just so you can not be standing on the corner begging. They catch you begging downtown, you're going straight to jail. No questions asked. Just because they don't want you messing with these business people."

The most lucrative "ramping" locations are interstate off-ramps that lead to either the Rivergate or Hickory Hallow shopping malls. In choosing to work such locations, panhandlers attempt to solve the problem presented by an overheated downtown through

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the application of a distinctive spatial logic. As Ritchie explained: "I-24 and Bell Road.

That's my favorite spot. The bus goes right to Hickory Hollow Mall. Get off right there,

walk to the interstate. It's about a quarter of a mile. It turns right into the mall. You just

get off right there, and you walk a little over a quarter of a mile. You're right on the ramp.

Most people are coming out of Brentwood, Forest Hills, Antioch, Hendersonville. They

have money. That's where the money is. You go to where the rich people come -- I mean,

you don't never see a piece of junk coming up that ramp. The oldest car you're going to

see is like 2000."

Rather than employing a "stick and move" strategy premised on itinerancy and

face-to-face interaction with proximate passersby, "ramping" involves the stationary,

passive begging of motorists. Men like Ritchie sit expressionless, with their eyes fixed in

a thousand yard stare all the while exuding an aura of intense anxiety and desperation.

The use of a prop is also part and parcel of this spatial practice. Says Ritchie, "I fly a sign

that says: HUNGRY. I sit out there in the middle of traffic. Generally I'll sit on the

ground so people won't think I'm aggressive." Other rampers cast their doleful gaze

directly at motorists in an attempt to engender pity and invoke a charitable impulse. "I

want to see everybody's eyes," explained Ron. "Because that asshole that comes up that

ramp, if I look at him long enough, he's going to give that change in the console. I'm

telling you, it works. They're like 'Oh, shit. Here.'"

Try as they might, rampers cannot escape the threat of police surveillance and/or

arrest simply by plying their trade outside of the CBD. Their disheveled appearance as

well as their appropriation of space designed exclusively for the automobile make them

conspicuous. Moreover, by virtue of their presence on a parcel of land governed by

public space laws designed to protect pedestrians from "the dangers inherent in roadway solicitation," rampers break the law simply by setting up shop on an off-ramp. Every time they step off of a city bus and go to work, this threat looms large in the back of their minds. Nonetheless, many see in the spatial specificity of the off-ramp an advantage they would not have downtown.

"The reason I like that ramp," Ritchie told me, "is not only because there's money involved in it, but you can see the police coming off the interstate. You got a big long ramp. That gives you enough time to put your hat on your head, clutch your money and go before they get up to you." "You're already across the road and gone," he added. "That's another reason I work there. Because the police, nine out of ten times, if they catch you on that ramp, you're going to jail. Not for panhandling, but 'soliciting on a roadway.'"

Given police officers' discretion in enforcing this law, men like Ritchie take a calculated gamble by plying their trade in the interstices of its enforcement. The long sightline afforded by the off-ramp may give them time to stop panhandling before a squad car reaches them, but it is unlikely that an officer will fail to notice an out of place pedestrian. The unpredictability of an officer's regulatory discretion consequently sends a chill down the spine of men subject to the outcome of his decision.

"I was working the ramp on Rivergate [yesterday]," Charlie told me. "Oh shit, it was too late, the police were already coming down the ramp. He was hollerin all kinds of shit to me. 'Hey! Come here!' So I walked to the side of the ramp, got in the back of the car. He drives off. I don't know where the hell he's goin. I was like, 'I just got out of prison. Here's my ID and discharge papers.' I said, 'The least you could do is drop me

back off where you found me so I can catch the bus.' He got a call and said he couldn't

do it. He let me out of the backseat and told me he didn't want to see me no more that

day."

The constant threat of police interdiction, moreover, constrains a ramper's

potential profit. "How much I make depends on how long the law will allow me to stand

out there," Dave explained. "I decide what I need that day and set goals for how much I

want to make. I think 'Well, I need a fifth of liquor. A pack of smokes. I need eight, ten

bucks to eat on.' Okay, so I need 40 bucks. And if I'm able to, I'll stand out there until I

make that $40 dollars. And once I've made that $40 dollars, I get off the ramp. I'm done

for the day."

Law enforcement, however, is only one social force that constrains their use of

the ramp. Like their counterparts who panhandle in the CBD, they must also navigate the

temporal order of the Lafayette district. The Mission takes time-allocation and scheduling

precedence over panhandling and every other auxiliary task they perform on a given day.

Dave explained it this way: "See you have to be down there for a certain amount of time

at night. Coz if you don't, you won't get a bed or they'll put you in a *chair* at night. So

therefore you're set on a schedule. So you gotta schedule your time out. You gotta figure

how much time you're gonna work [panhandle] here and how much time you're gonna

work there." Charles, his running buddy finished explaining the logic: "Because you

might be able to be out here for an hour and a half or 2 hours before you get enough

money to get yourself something to drink. Or you might be out here for the same amount

of time before can get enough to get something to smoke. So you gotta take that time and

you gotta schedule it off so you can get high, then get out and get you another fix and get high again, then get *back* to where you can get into line so you can get your bed ticket."

Public Parks: "Headquarters for the Leisured Indigent"

Church Street Park's brown cobblestone paths are about six feet wide, bordered by benches and raised planters which encourage its users to sit side-by-side. Late in the afternoon, the public library casts its shadow over a circular fountain which babbles in the center, casting "white noise" throughout the quarter-acre tract of public space. Three sterling white sidewalks create the site's outer perimeter, inviting passersby to enter. Such a layout discourages those who do enter from speaking with anyone not seated immediately next to them, and converts park strollers into spectacles by forcing them to skirt past seated on-lookers. The raised planters provide a plethora of mid-day shade, but block sightlines from the street and conceal many behaviors that local authorities deem "uncivil" – urinating, defecating, sleeping, drinking, and, rarely though occasionally, drugging. The outcome is what Jane Jacobs (1961: 101) called a "headquarters for the leisured indigent" – a home base for those who have no rightful place of their own.

The park's principal reservoir of users, unhoused Nashvillians, operates on the same daily schedule. By 6:30 each morning, the benches and planters fill up with homeless men (and a handful of women) who eagerly await the public library's 9 a.m. opening. In the interim, the park continues to fill up by the bastard residents who put its amenities to use. Those who are simply thirsty or want to make a cup of instant coffee use the fountain as a water source; the fountain also serves as a clandestine source of

refrigeration for those who prefer their alcoholic beverage of choice cool. Others stretch out on the planters and benches in order to catch a few more winks of sleep. Still others take advantage of the blocked sightlines to change clothes before rearranging their oversized duffel bags. And still others sit quietly either reading one of the city's free newspapers or blankly staring at the cars and passersby which slowly but steadily animate the central business district. By 8:55 a.m., the park is typically full and a substantial number of unhoused Nashvillians crosses over Church Street and forms a line in front of the library.

People Watching

William H. Whyte (1980), pioneer analyst of "the social life of small urban spaces," observed that "What attracts people most" to parks and plazas "is other people" and, moreover, "people's movements are one of the greatest spectacles" (19, 22). Church Street Park offers free sources of *substitutive satisfaction*, with people-watching being a central pastime of the "leisured indigent." For the unhoused, however, "leisure" is a curse rather than a blessing. Whereas in the domiciled world, sitting on a park bench connotes *rest and relaxation*, the exigencies of homeless life render the very same activity *survivalist work*. The logic of the market is cast over the entirety of the entrepreneurial city. Because citizenship is consequently commensurate with purchasing power, homeless Nashvillians, by definition and circumstance, lack the right to occupy all but public space. Their additional curse of surplus time makes the re-appropriation of public parks a logical outcome of spatial problem-solving, providing as it does a quasi-legitimate pivot point congenial to ameliorating the concentration effects of Lafayette life.

People-watching provides men like Johnny and Wally with a means of becoming absorbed into a flow-like experience of normative evaluation that, simultaneously, elevates their sense of self. Domiciled passersby become subject to appraisals of attire, comportment, and attractiveness. "Did you see what she was wearing?!" Johnny asked his running buddy Wally one afternoon. "That girl's a lesbian," Wally answered. "How do *you* know?" I asked, sarcastically. ""Coz I *seen her* with her girlfriend," he replied emphatically. Barely two minutes later Johnny asked Wally and me, "Damn. Is there a beauty contest going on?!" "Can I wear your jeans baby?" Wally whispered. The duo broke out into hysterical laughter, before Wally then seized his eyes on a businessman making his way down Church Street. "Damn. He walks like something's up his ass," Wally declared. "Hemorrhoids. It happens when you sit on your ass all day," Johnny retorted. They erupted in laughter again, and repeated the process for the next two hours.

Hitting the Bottle

The park is also a locus of alcohol consumption ("hitting the bottle" in street parlance). Unhoused occupants take advantage of the blocked sightlines in order to either covertly "hit the bottle" or slowly sip their beer of choice (usually through a straw). The park, for the most part, is characterized by a quasi-anarchic miscellany of uses undergirded by the norm of "minding your own business." However, there is a tacit agreement among those who consume this intoxicating substance to keep things on "the down low," so as not to jeopardize their circumscribed autonomy. When this norm is breeched, the violator is typically shunned then ostracized. One day, for instance, a disheveled white man called "Huggy Bear" stood on the fountain's concrete ledge and began shouting indiscernible invectives at passersby. Detroit, the self-proclaimed

"mayor" of the park, got up from his bench and shouted, "Man, that's what we don't need. It brings heat!" Six more park residents shouted in kind as Detroit escorted Huggy Bear out of the park, telling him to "Go on. Git outta here with your drunk ass."

When I asked him to explain what happened, Detroit told me that, "This old man pisses himself and shits himself. He sits here and hits the bottle. He goes down to the trashcan and gets a newspaper. He shits himself and covers it up right here. He sits here all day long. These guys on these two wheeled scooters [Downtown Ambassadors]. Normally he has beer stuck in his jacket. They [Downtown Ambassadors] come down here and say, 'I know y'all ain't down here drinkin are ya?' They see it [beer] stickin out of his jacket. They say, 'Open up your jacket.' They take the beer and pour it out; if you don't, they'll call the cops. That shit just makes it tough for all of us."

Consumption is a place-making activity that attracts some groups, while repelling others. Over the course of my field work, the unhoused's recurrent survivalist use of Church Street Park became a central preoccupation of the URA who felt excluded from the only downtown green space aside from Riverfront Park. "The problem," as one member explained at a Church Street Park charette, "is the vagrants are using it and no one else wants to use it that's the problem." Because the goal of the meeting was to gather input from concerned residents on the park's problems and potential solutions, it offered a window on their cognitive maps of the proper use of the space. Invoking the public safety discourse, another member in her early 40s declared, "I don't use the park because I don't want to be molested. I simply don't feel safe." "I think we all realize that to get the park back we have to eliminate a certain element," said another member. "Or, no matter what we do we won't get that park back." "As far as the safety issue is

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concerned," said another, "they have vagrant laws and loitering laws where I'm from. You go to jail if you get caught. I think that if we have something like that we can enforce, that's what we need to do. Because we don't only want it [the park] to be *beautiful*, but we want it to be *safe*."

<p style="text-align:center">*The Cat-and-Mouse Game*</p>

In response to URA members' public outcry, city and district authorities appear to have developed a flexible policy toward the homeless population's re-appropriation of this green space. Although municipal law strictly regulates the public consumption of alcohol, park users are protected by the Fourth Amendment against the unlawful search of their person and belongings. The coexistence of these two legal premises translates into a cat-and-mouse game between the police who are charged with regulating the use of alcohol, and the homeless who keep their booze concealed. "They citate you sometimes", Detroit told me on the same afternoon he "evicted" Huggy Bear. "There's a lotta drinkin goin on here. They get out of their car, walk through the park, and look for alcohol and stuff." Not more than ten minutes later, a Metro squad car parked at the corner of Church and Commerce.

Detroit seized his eyes on the cruiser, nudged my right shoulder with his left fist, and said, "See how he creeps around?" The officer turned on the light-bar before he exited the vehicle. Like a lord surveying his kingdom, he then marched through the park, intently scanning the paupers pinned to its benches and planters. All of his subjects turned tense and silent. A second squad car then parked behind the first. Two officers exited the vehicle and flanked their predecessor, marching through the park like soldiers. As they approached Detroit and me, he whispered, "He's gonna want I.D. from you or

me. You see how he looks around. He's looking for beer bottles." The officers did not ask Detroit or me for our I.D. Instead, they jostled three men who were sound asleep on one of the planters, and told them they were not allowed to sleep in the park. From the officers' perspectives, the search may have proven uneventful. For all in the park, however, it was experienced as a routine shakedown. As one of the sleeping men put it: "What they're tryin to do is clean up the streets of Nashville. They're trying to rid the streets of homeless people. As long as they keep gettin on us, pourin out our beers, they're gonna push us outta here. That means we gotta find somewhere else to drink."

Because they use it each day for long stretches of time, homeless park users gain intimate knowledge of how it and they factor into public space management. They know when it will be full and when it will be desolate and, perhaps most importantly, they know when the police patrols will pass through. Jimmy, for instance, looked at his watch one morning before telling me that, "They'll [the police] make their rounds now. They're about due. They'll come by early in the mornin. Three of em on those little scooters. They'll come around nine in the morning. Here they come right now." Like clockwork, two white bike officers approached the park from the west. "See, they'll take a left," Jimmy said. As predicted, the officers turned left down Capitol Boulevard (the park's eastern border). "They'll go on down there to Riverfront [Park] now and check it out," he added, before informing me that, "I'm a go on into the library. People hang out in the library to get on the internet, email and read. That's the activities we have to do in the day. That way we don't have to sit here in the park all day and stare at cars, and get fucked with [by the police]. You gotta watch out when you in there though. They ban people for sleeping."

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Libraries are for Reading…and Sleeping…and Bathing

On June 24, 1997 the Metro City Council approved the construction of a new,

multi-million dollar downtown library. The mid-to-late nineties were an optimistic time

for Music City's boosters. Bill Purcell's administration inherited a downtown

experiencing a period of unprecedented prosperity. One hundred eighteen companies

relocated to Nashville, suggesting its exceedingly viable business environment, and a

nascent entertainment district supplanted Dodge City Skid Row. In this context, the three-

floor, 300,000 square foot main public library was a proud testament to the city's re-birth.

Having torn down the shuttering Church Street Centre mall, city officials expected the

ornate, Neo-Classical structure to achieve what its predecessor could not: create a cultural

epicenter in the heart of downtown that would magnetize investment and expedite

nascent revitalization.

But when it opened its doors to the public on June 9, 2001, library staff

encountered a subset of the community that held an alternative definition of the space.

"It's a survival thing," Dave told me when I asked him why he used the library. "I would

rather sit up here in the library than sit around the Mission all day; all that misery and

people wanting to drag you down to where they are. I hate people complaining all the

time. People that just complain, complain, complain." Dave suggests that one reason the

Lafayette homeless choose to spend large stretches of their day in the library is based on

social-psychological rather than utilitarian considerations. Even though as many as a

hundred homeless Nashvillians can be found seated in the library at any given time, the

dominant domiciled demographic dilutes the embodiment of abject poverty and misery

into smaller, more palatable doses (at least from the perspective of the unhoused).

Keeping Your Mind Occupied

The *substitutive satisfactions* offered by the library's cultural offerings also

provide the unhoused with a mental respite from the stark hopelessness and dumbening

degradation inherent in homeless life. By throwing themselves into "researching a news

story" for the street newspaper, researching "street law" to fortify themselves against

rights violations, keeping abreast of local politics in the newspaper, surfing the internet,

or immersing themselves in a novel or periodical, the homeless enter into an alternative

reality that mentally extricates them from the psychic suffering of grinding poverty. Pete,

a "reporter" for the street newspaper dubbed *The Contributor,* provides a case in point: "I

use the library because I'm going to have to probably be researching a story or typing

something up or trying to find an idea for my comic strip. The library is the focus of most

of us homeless people in this area. The day the library is closed, it's like your whole day

is pretty much shut down. It's the only place, other than Room in the Inn, that makes you

feel like you have your life back again; even if it's only a few hours. It keeps your mind

occupied."

Elements of a De Facto Day Shelter

Of course, the library's numerous practical amenities make it a popular informal

day shelter. Perhaps the most important of these amenities are the *bathroom facilities*.

Spread across three floors and designed to accommodate hundreds of patrons, the

restrooms are the nicest wash facilities available to the homeless. Unlike the

accommodations at the Mission or RITI, they are spacious, well-maintained, and stocked

with soap and toilet paper. *The café* attached to the first floor hosts unguarded coffee spigots ripe to be tapped by anyone with a paper cup. The *seating accommodations* are another highly valuable amenity. Overstuffed reading chairs located in the various reading areas are an almost unimaginable luxury to members of a population that, as a matter of course, eke out life on unforgiving, hard surfaces like park benches, asphalt, and concrete ledges. This is to say nothing of that fact that the controlled climate provides respite from the heat in the summer and from the cold in the winter.

Manipulating the Library's Constraining Order

The problem for homeless users of this public space, however, is that their resource-rich oasis is actually a (petty-) bourgeois utopia that assigns to their conduct a violation of the environment's proper use. On entering the central foyer, homeless men like Charles trade the surveillance and scrutiny of the police and downtown ambassadors for that of the poorly paid and sometimes surly library security force. "It's hard to get enough sleep every night," Charles explained. "You sit in them nice chairs and next thing you know you fall asleep. Oh boy. If that happens, you better look out for them guards!" Charles and his counterparts engage in a low-grade war with security personnel. Among the various infractions they must avoid are those prohibiting sleeping anywhere in the building and washing in the restrooms. The cost of violating these two cardinal sins is suspension. Says Wally, "You get banned for thirty days, and if you come back before your time is up you get banned for a year. They can pretty much tell if you an everyday person or not."

Because they are treated like second class citizens and subject to security guards' differential scrutiny, men like Wally and Charles adopt techniques to manipulate the

basic elements of the library's constraining order vis-à-vis washing and sleeping. Whereas many unhoused library users sit conspicuously in chairs located in public reading rooms, Charles spends time in the microfiche room when he needs to catch a few winks. Librarians tend to think anyone who requests to consult such media is doing legitimate research. The micro-fiche room is, more often than not, empty and is not on security guards' "beat." Others sleep out in the open by making clever use of reading props.

Howard, for instance, led me up the marble staircase on the second day of my three day stretch shadowing him on the street in order to show me how to "sleep in the library without getting caught." Before we reached the 3rd floor "special collections" room, he instructed me to grab a free newspaper. He then led me to a book alcove in the special collections room, adjacent to the Civil Rights Room. He pointed to a single pleather chair located at the end of the aisle with its back is turned to a window. "Grab that chair and spread your paper out and act like you're reading it," he instructed me. "You can *hear* the staff comin before they get here because it's so quiet. They don't come back here that often." Less than five minutes later, a security guard who caught and suspended one of Howard's associates sleeping earlier in the week, walked by and peeked down my aisle. Like Howard said, the acoustics in the room amplified the sound of footsteps, putting me on guard several seconds before the guard arrived. I sat in the seat for the next two hours, nodding in and out of consciousness, and never again saw a guard.

The children's section on the second floor hosts the cleanest bathrooms in the entire building. As Howard told me one day, "If you've gotta *use it* [defecate] this is

where to *use it.* It's the cleanest one in here." However, the security guards appear to redouble their patrols on this wing in an effort to protect the sanctity of childhood, making the bathroom a bad candidate for taking a "bird bath." The third floor bathroom, given its distance from the entrance and its relatively light usage due to the floor's primary function as a research site, is often converted into a de facto shower room. The precarious reality of the practice, however, is understood by all as evidenced by a day in which Howard and I entered the restroom to rinse off. As he and I washed our faces with sink soap and changed our shirts, he joked that "I smell homeless people in here." "Hell yeah," a man yelled from inside one of the stalls. "I can't stand homeless people," Howard continued. "I can't either," the man retorted. Howard, the man in the stall, another homeless man, and I all began laughing. "When I get done shittin, you can lock me up whenever you want to," the man in the stall yelled, making everyone break into laughter again.

The reason Howard knew the bathroom was solely populated by other homeless men was that his associate Maurice was playing the role of "look out." "On the lookout for Rent-a-cop (a term of derision for security guards who, from the men's perspective, think they're Robocop)," he said with a smile. This arrangement is an impromptu one that men employ when the bathroom has reached a critical mass of similarly situated others. So as to not jeopardize their access to this scarce resource vis-à-vis suspension, someone typically elects to look out for security guards and domiciled users who might lodge a complaint. Two quick thuds on the door by Maurice, for instance, would give everyone bathing time to desist.

Of course, unhoused men cannot use the public library as their day shelter indefinitely. Indeed, its 6 p.m. closing time reinforces the temporal order of Lafayette; after six in the evening, men must choose between taking their chances in public spaces and thoroughfares (which are more rigorously patrolled by police after 6 p.m.) and making the 6:30 p.m. curfew of RITI and/or the Mission. For the most part, men choose the latter and begin de-populating the library around 5 p.m. In fact, 7th Avenue South becomes another "homeless highway" between 5 and 6:30 p.m. as the homeless who have spent their day in the CBID make their way south to Lafayette and join a significant number of their counterparts who rarely, if ever, leave the district.

Cognitive Containment

Cognitive Boundaries

In the course of their daily rounds, unhoused men undergo experiences, interactions, and encounter symbolically laden objects, ideas, and information that create the basis of their perceptions, beliefs, and expectations vis-à-vis sites in and around the inner loop they use to advance their material and psychological survival. For many, urban authorities' two-pronged informational and interdictory "quality of life" campaign as well as the stringent surveillance of library security guards sends salient spatial signals regarding their identity and its corresponding legal and civic status. They quickly learn that they exist in a legally and civically precarious state and that their survivalist use of public space exists uneasily alongside domiciled citizens' leisured use of the same locations. As Eric observed one day as we stood in line at the Mission, "It's getting worse

and worse and worse. It used to be that you could be downtown. But they're stepping that up. They're asking people not to give, and all that kind of stuff. The day is coming when they're gonna eliminate all that. I can understand. They're building nice stuff down here. They're trying to bring tourism here. And all that kind of stuff deters tourism. I can understand their point of view."

Homeless men's place-based public identity as impediments to urban revitalization is most forcefully communicated by the central precinct's boundary-maintenance efforts. In the summer of 2007, the police stepped up their quality of life policing and began focusing on the area surrounding Able Body, a day labor agency that served as an outpost of the Lafayette district, but which extended into the heart of the CBD. Men who believed they were honoring the inner loop's de facto spatial order and who, as a matter of survival, were attempting to stay within the confines of Lafayette, soon realized that that its perimeter had been redrawn. Nearly overnight, authorities redefined the agency and the people it served as anachronistic obstacles.

"The police are so down on the homeless right now," Glen explained one morning, less than two hours after he was released from jail. "For months now. Total harassment. *Total* harassment!" he shouted, before lighting a freshly rolled cigarette. "I was sittin on a bus bench last night, waiting for a bus to Murfreesboro Road [to cash his check at Cee Bee's], across from the symphony hall. I was talking to a friend. He was in a wheelchair. We was just sittin there talking. The cop does a U-turn in the middle of the road, gets out of the car, turns the lights on. 'What are you guys doin?' I said, 'I'm waitin on a bus.' The guy in the wheelchair says, 'I'm talkin to my friend.' The cop says, 'I

wanna see some ID.' If it don't happen two or three times a week, something's wrong. Total harassment."

Given their limited access to well-fitting, clean clothing and their tendency to carry their belongings with them as they make their daily rounds, Glen and his peers have a difficult time approximating middle-class Nashvillians' styles of public self-presentation. Their signifiers of homelessness disrupt downtown Nashville's symbolic economy and create the basis for beat officers' economic profiling. Men frequently trade stories about mistreatment at the hands of police, and a common one revolves around this theme. Ronald's following commentary also suggests that he has internalized the public identity imputed to him and his kind by authorities. "If you got a backpack on you the police will stop you," he told me and Jay, his running buddy. "They think you don't have a place to go and you're loitering. They want the tourist to have the freedom of Nashville you know. They don't want to have to look at homeless people or dressed in bad clothes and don't take a shower and all that." Jay then built on Ronald's story:

Just because you're walking down the street they want to see your identification and there was another time I got picked up for trespassing. I was just walking down the street. That's when Fanfare was here. They was just picking up people, just putting them in this van, and taking them to the justice center. And I was one of them, because when I got up there, hundreds of people they had picked up, for walking in the streets. And when I got there, they tried to get me with trespass, and they offered me thirty days for trespassing. I said, "No, I don't want it. We can go to court." And I asked my public defendant, I said, "What's the max that trespassing can carry, anyway?"

And he said, "30 days." I said, "You going to come back and tell me 30 days, and that's the max it can take, and you're supposed to be my attorney?" And a lot of people was signing the paper, taking the 30 days. I said, "No, man, I'm not going to take anything. I'm walking down the street and you don't have no reason to stop me." So they came back with 18 days. And most people did sign for that, but it was me and one more guy, I don't even know his name, but I told him I wasn't taking nothing.

He said, "Well, I'm going with you. I'm not taking anything neither." Came back with 11 days, he left me. He left me there by myself. And I wouldn't take it. After that, they came back with seven days, I told them to go tell the DA where to stick it. And they thought, well, I might take it. "No, you can do seven days. Because you've already done six." They had me in there six days already then. "That's just one more day." I said, "I don't want it. You tell the DA he can keep it, okay?" So they went back and when he came back he said, "Well, by the time you get over there your paperwork will all be done and they're going to release you."

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"Voluntary Internment": Cognitive-cum-Spatial Boundaries

Repeated encounters that communicate homeless men's place-based identity as impediments to urban revitalization and that result in (symbolically) interdictory activity motivates men like Jay, Ronald, Glen and Eric to avoid the locations in which the presence of urban authorities is the greatest. Whereas their counterparts disperse each morning to several day spots in and around the inner loop, a substantial subset of the Lafayette homeless rarely, if ever, leaves the district. For the most part, Lafayette is ceded to them because caretakers are anchored there and, from the perspective of authorities, there are advantages to the heavy concentration of unhoused men in one area. Men who have both internalized these spatial boundaries and whose cumulative exposure to place-based tension has crossed a threshold of endurability "voluntarily" circumscribe their daily round in order to avoid the routine indignities and low-grade (semiotic) warfare inherent in re-appropriating public space to perform private and/or pecuniary practices.

For instance, when Jay told me that, "Anywhere in the downtown area, it's *really bad* because they're tryin to run the homeless out," I asked him how policing practices impacted how he went about his "daily business." "You don't want to go certain places," he explained. "You don't want to step out of this little community area right here in Lafayette." "Why?" I asked. "Because you know you're going to get tried and the police stop a lot of people for nothing. They always say you look like someone who did something. I just get this bad feeling that something will happen. You just don't feel safe around the police, man. I think they need to tone down the way they treat people."

"The ghetto," wrote Louis Wirth (1928), is "a form of accommodation between divergent population groups, through which one group has effectively subordinated itself to another" (4). Lafayette, from the perspective of Jay and many others, is a spatially circumscribed sphere of accommodation which also, when they view it from the perspective of urban authorities, is an instrument of social control. "This is the homeless spot," Jay told me when I asked him tell me how the district figures into his daily life. "It's where, one thing, the police will get you, if you leave there, for trespassing. But they bring you back to the alley. You know, that's where they want you at. They want you in the Mission, Room in the Inn, or the alley. You get caught out of that spot, you're going to get harassed, beat up, or just a lot of things that happen." Ronald, a self-proclaimed street "veteran," also took the perspective of the police department when he discussed why he rarely left the district. "That's where they try to run you back through; Lafayette," he explained. "They don't want you to get out. A lot of people want to get out and get jobs and do things like that too, but if you feel like you're going to be harassed. If you're in the wrong area and you don't live there, you're trespassing. It's bad!"

For men like Ronald, recurrent exposure to urban authorities' boundary-maintenance efforts becomes translated into a practical knowledge-base that heavily factors into how they organize their daily lives. They assign meaning to public spaces based on past interactions and experiences with law enforcement officials, BID emissaries, security personnel, merchants, and passersby which, in the aggregate, inculcate cognitive boundaries that translate into spatial boundaries. This socio-spatial dynamic is true for all of the Lafayette homeless, but only translates into adaptive, quasi-hermetic routines for a select group.

Male-Prostitution

The rub for this subgroup is that their "voluntary" spatial internment traps them in a sea of suffering. It is therefore unsurprising that a dominant palliative routine in the neighborhood revolves around drug sales and/or consumption. Lafayette's dilapidated, light industrial ecology is conducive to the operation of illicit economies. Its numerous abandoned warehouses, surface parking lots, and "nooks" harbor drug dealers and male sex workers. John Barnum, one of the district's few housed residents, lives on the corner of 5th and Lea Avenues where all of these ecological elements coalesce. For the past seven years he has videotaped the routine activities of the unhoused men who have colonized the abandoned lot located directly across the street from what he calls his "city house." The squat gray cube of cinder block he calls home is located one block south of "The Worlds Largest Adult Bookstore," which pulls many Johns into the area.

"I been here for *seven* years," he told me one afternoon as we spoke on his front lawn. "*Men* of all ages get in the car with other *men* all night long." He then pointed to the street corner less than a hundred yards away. "Right *there*. For *seven* years now at night, I sit and watch it. Right here, see my lot. The wall on it. The brick wall. They squat down there and smoke crack. *All night long*." We both walked over to the lot and inspected the personal effects littering the ground. Used condoms, cardboard "mattresses" suited with discarded couch pillows, and several glass crack pipes were strewn on the grass. "I've called [the police] probably a hundred times in seven years!" John complained. "There'll be guys sleepin all under here late at night. The police don't never

come! They don't take a shower. They sleep there for weeks just filthy, and then *men* picks em up and you know what they do with em. They ain't had a bath. They get out of one car, then an hour later get in another one. That is a *health problem!*"

The Socio-spatial Logistics of the Crack Trade

The block-long alley (a.k.a. "the zone" or "the alley") that laces together the Mission, RITI, and the Downtown Clinic is the primary niche for Lafayette dope sales. Its long and narrow sightlines allow drug runners to position lookouts on either end in order to keep watch over 7th and 8th Avenue. Moreover, the perpendicular alleyway that flows from this "homeless highway" down to Drexel Street gives dealers an escape route if police approach from either 7th or 8th avenues. Alternately, lookouts on Drexel can whistle if a police bike or squad car is en route to this ancillary alley, allowing a dealer to escape down one of the main alley's exits. If all else fails and police drive down all three entrances simultaneously, the dealer can escape into RITI, which forms the alley's fourth "wall."

Regulating the Crack Trade

However, RITI staff neither condones drug sales nor consumption and, given the general lack of police presence, attempts to regulate the use of the alley with the one tool at their disposal: suspension. The director of the Downtown Clinic also does what he can to stem black market activity, but lacks even the ability to suspend a homeless patron. "I shoo people out of the front yard more than ever before, but it is just a losing battle," he told me when I paid him a visit at his office which overlooks the alley. "Generally, when you tell people there's no loitering here because the neighbors complain, which they do, most people will move on and take their 16 oz. beer in a paper bag with them. They're

out here selling drugs to homeless people who don't have a lot of money. We try to keep the tennis shoes down off of the electric lines, but they still make it up there some times."

Both RITI and the Downtown Clinic have a stake in regulating illicit activity because their viability is partially predicated on minimizing NIMBY pressures and protecting the "sobriety" of the clients enrolled in their joint rehabilitation program. "There's just a lot of illegal stuff that's not good for people in our treatment program," the Clinic director explained. "They go to the Mission to have lunch then they come back and come through the front door. Every now and then they'll report that someone offered them drugs on the way in."

Moreover, because MDHA owns the buildings in which they operate, both directors have to periodically act at its director's behest. "[W]e have several reasons that we have to answer to the city," Rachel Hester told me. "For one, they give us contract money to run the Day Center and the Guest House. We also have to answer to MDHA because they're our landlord." She added that "Phil Ryan, who's the head of MDHA [urban development], called me today and said 'There's people on your street corner smoking crack. Can you deal with it?'" Caretakers' general consensus regarding the alley is expressed in Orman's observation that, "It's…not conducive to a drug-free zone, a prostitute-free zone, and a defecation-free zone."

RITI staff "deals with it" by establishing a panoptic presence in the alley by way of their periodic patrols. As Marjorie, the help desk supervisor put it: "We've actually found crack pipes by the air conditioner [in the courtyard]. People like to hang out in the nook on 8th Avenue too. We are very diligent, and it's a very important part of our job to go outside for 15 or 20 minutes or so and kinda just check it out. There will be people

standing right there [mimics holding a crack pipe in the air and lighting it] plain as day, right in the middle of the alley. So we let people know that we're here. Let em know I'm around and might just pop in on em, or whatever. And people know that." Those who they catch in the act are typically suspended for 30 days as well as those who they deem are in close enough proximity to the illicit act to be "guilty by association." Suspension bars one from using day services such as the phone and prohibits one from the evening shelter service.

Negotiating the Crack Trade's Regulation

The ever-present threat of being found "guilty by association" leads many men to self-police their use of the alley. Archie and countless others view their navigation of the homeless highway as an intricate street ballet that requires them to balance sociability with the imperative of maintaining access to a life-sustaining organization. They must be wary of lingering in conversation too long with someone engaged in illicit affairs. As he explained it: "I hate walking down that alley because [RITI] does guilt by association. I mean, I could be walking down the alley, and somebody say, 'Let me see your lighter,' just to light a cigarette. I give it to them, and then later on they get caught smoking crack, I was with them. It's association off the top." He added that, "If somebody drinking a beer and you standing there, you not even drinking any, you're drinking too so, I try to avoid that. If they think they drinking and they going to bar him for 30 days they going to bar you to because you with him." Rayshawn's observation reveals how RITI staff's panoptic presence in the alley works to provisionally regulate the public thoroughfare: "The other day, Martina and Mary came all the way down Drexel and back up 7th and came back up

the alley. They cleared it up. If they come out here, everybody's going to move. See, it's just presence; presence to make them move."

Area drug runners, however, adapt to RITI's soft interdiction by living exclusively out of the Mission. In return for lesser accommodations, they reserve the right to burn their bridges with RITI staff in the event that their income-generating strategy is compromised by staff's daily foot patrols. Runners' oppositional orientation toward staff's regulatory activity is a central dynamic of hustling crack in the alleyway economy. My first encounter with the "trail-runners," a loose crack-running clique, revealed this process of negotiation, which I later learned was a persistent source of annoyance for T.J., the main runner, and his crew.

I was hanging out with two running buddies who called themselves Detroit and Mississippi. When we entered the alley from 8th Avenue we approached T.J. and two of his buddies who were all sitting on a crumbling retention wall adjacent to RITI's fenced-in parking lot. Pookie, a gay black male with unsightly splotches all over his face, was squatting on top of the wall smoking a cigarette. "I didn't do nothin. Why you gonna fuck wit me when I didn't even do nothin?" he said, with a high-pitched lisp, to Detroit who snatched the cigarette out of his hand. "All the people that run Room in the Inn like Rachel and Martina," T.J. complained to Detroit and Mississippi, "they've come to this conclusion where they're like, 'We gonna run everybody out the alley'."

With his eyes about to bulge out of his head, T.J. elaborated on his confrontation with Rachel and Martina. "I told em today, I said, 'Look here, don't let this alley get you fucked off. Coz you gonna run across somebody one day—people will go postal on your ass about this alley.'" He too snatched Pookie's cigarette out of his hand and took two

long draws before continuing. "Number one, this is a public fareway. You can *not* stop traffic from comin through this alley. What people do in this alley, that's *they* business.' You wanna run down the alley all the time talkin about, 'You barred from Room in the Inn coz you was in the alley smokin weed or smokin crack.' Room in the Inn ain't shit." "Don't know about all that," Detroit retorted. T.J. ignored Detroit's comment and continued his narrative. "I said, 'Hey Rachel, have you ever had the *shit* smacked out of you?!' 'Whatchoo mean by that?' [she asked]. 'You gonna run across somebody, some day, that's gonna be hittin that shit, and you gonna try to take they straight shoota [crack pipe] or whatever, their weed. Somebody gonna *hurt you.'* You lucky it ain't me!"

The Crack Trade Division of Labor

The "trail-runners" were, I soon learned, engaged in a low-grade turf war with RITI staff nearly every week. T.J. was the primary subcontractor for a low-level crack dealer who operated out of the nearby J.C. Napier Homes. To ensure the viability of his "operation," he hired Popcorn, Alabama, and Capone to act as "lookouts." For an in-kind payment of one "dime rock" ($10 worth of crack split three ways), T.J.'s three lookouts monitored the alley's three entrances. If and when they spotted a police patrol, they simply let out a shrill whistle to inform T.J. They would then walk briskly into the alley and make eye-contact with T.J. in case he did not hear their initial warning.

A third of a ten-dollar crack rock may at first appear to be a paltry sum for performing a day's work as a lookout in the alley crack trade. However, the Central Precinct's scarce presence in the district meant that on most days they were "treated" to a crack high simply for passing the day on a milk crate or concrete ledge – something they likely would have done anyway. Moreover, because their posts were always at least a half

block away from T.J.'s supply, they could avoid being charged with possession of a controlled substance. Moreover, their "job" gave them a sense of purpose otherwise lacking in their lives – their participation in the crack economy was deflective palliative that gave them "respect" as well as a chemical one.

"Well, the cops are pretty – it's funny – because they don't really patrol that area all that much. Crackheads just sit around all the time, under the trees and on these old couches behind the buildings," Popcorn told me one afternoon. As he rolled a fresh cigarette, he continued outlining his perspective on his position in the hierarchy. "Going toward the Mission [through the alley], it's like Bangkok, Thailand. You can buy from a pencil to a baby down through here! But, the alley situation, you know, everything is smooth. Don't nobody try to screw nobody. When they're in the alley everybody cool about it, take their turn hitting the pipe, or whatever. And the money exchange is, you know, smooth. So, I really just gotta sit here and make sure Po-Po [the police] don't try to sneak they way in. But, shit, it give me somethin to do. At least I'm part of somethin."

On an "immediately visible personal level," notes Phillipe Bourgois (2003), "addiction and substance abuse are among the most immediate, brutal facts shaping daily life on the streets" (2). T.J.'s investment in the crack trade was, like his lookouts', rooted more in the provisional "respect" he derived from his operation as well as his addiction to the intoxicating substance he vended than in entrepreneurial motivations. Several scholars of urban poverty have found that street-level crack dealers make minimum wage or less, even while taking risks that exceed those borne by lumberjacks, the most dangerous occupation in the legal labor market (Bourgois 2003; Venkatesh 2006). Lafayette dealers like T.J. are even further down the crack industry's pyramidal structure

than their gang-affiliated counterparts who operate out of the adjacent J.C. Napier and Tony Sudekum housing projects. Because he is a subcontracted "employee" addicted to crack, his "employer" is able to substitute payment-in-kind (one dime rock for every five he sells) for cash, and, moreover, is able to impose a dependent exchange relation. In the scheme of the industry, T.J. is thus a bottom-feeder who is simply given a "taste" of the product in return for extending the crack trade into the district.

Despite the fact that all of the money generated by his sales is appropriated by his supplier, T.J. still styles himself as a high-rolling "O.G." Several weeks before he finally came clean with me on his "arrangement" with a low-level crack dealer in J.C. Napier, he presented himself in his more typical manner by proudly proclaiming that, "There's so much money in this alley! You like, 'Where all these homeless people come up with this money?' Some work. Some sell they ass. In a 10-hour period in this alley, from 8 in the morning til 6 in the evening, I may make 2500 [dollars] on a good day." "That's 250 rocks!" I said in an incredulous tone. "Don't matter," he replied. "With me, it ain't about the quantity; it's the quality of the product. First rule of economics, supply and demand. If I got a good product, you'll beat a pathway to my door to get it. And you'll pay my price. Would you rather have something this size [forms a circle with both hands] and keep having to come back, or would you rather have somethin this size [increases the circumference of circle] and then you won't have to see me no more for the rest of the day? That's why I *get paid*; I'm a real O.G. ["original gangster"]."

T.J.'s inflated sense of self stemmed largely from his position at the top of the alley's social order. Given his control over a highly valued commodity, he commanded "respect" from his clientele which he leveraged to fortify himself against the stark reality

that, despite his grandiose claims, he eked out life in the totally administered environment of the Mission. Moreover, the alley drug trade has created a niche for petty hustlers who capitalize on his steady presence and the clientele he brings into the alley. Through his ability to regulate their entrepreneurial scheme and extract a "fee," he gained control over them and, hence, gained a sense of control over his own life. "A lot of people on the street don't like to carry their utensils with them, their paraphernalia," T.J. explained. "If they wanna smoke and have to borrow a pipe, they [the "piper"] gonna get they cut too. They bottom feed off of that: 'I can just stand here all day and let people hit off my pipe.' I'm ok with that. But they gotta give a cut, now. If they fuck around, they know I'll shut this whole alley down. No selling today, uh uh!"

For the price of an artificial rose encased in a small glass tube and a box of Choreboy steel wool (less than $5), readily sold at most convenience stores, men like Reginald can support themselves by playing the ancillary role of "piper." The role is not institutionalized, but is a loosely coupled, opportunistic enterprise that involves staying in close proximity to a runner and, on learning that a client does not have a pipe, offering one for their use. The going rate is between 50 cents and a dollar per use, and, on occasion, a "taste" of "the ready" (crack) is a sufficient fee. Over the course of a typical week, Reginald estimates that he makes $20.

Eric and many other men who patronize T.J.'s operation, however, never pay for the service rendered by Reginald and other "parasites," as they are often called. Instead, they prefer to hide their paraphernalia in various nooks and crannies – nearby bushes, cracks in the walls of dilapidated buildings, and even, on occasion, in the RITI courtyard. They strategically use these hiding spots out of fear of being arrested. Eric explains it this

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way: "Even though I stay in this area, I've been in jail here a dozen times. All for trespassing and the times they've caught me with my paraphernalia on me on 8th Avenue. Those little rose things [used to make crack stems]. They'll sell em to ya, but the minute you leave the store it's illegal."

The Moral Economy of Crack Use

If hiding paraphernalia in the interstices of the district's decrepit built environment allows men to avoid both arrest and the ancillary fee of a pipe "rental," appropriating the alley to purchase and consume their crack allows them to use the landscape as cover and, in doing so, reduce their odds of getting busted. By taking the role of the police, users and runners alike come to the conclusion that the entire district is policed with a light touch and, moreover, that the alley has been, except in the course of periodic sweeps, classified as a jurisdictional void. Exploiting Lafayette's topography, however, is only a partial solution to the crack consumer's daily mission. To support his habit, he must generate some sort of income. If he does not leave the district, Lafayette's economic opportunity structure only affords him five strategies: selling cigarettes for 25 cents a piece, selling items stolen from an area service provider, working day labor, riding a VA or disability check, and/or selling one's body.

The immediacy of crack addiction, coupled with the relatively meager income generated by all of these strategies save check-riding, leads many cognitively contained addicts to pool resources in order to secure the rock-like amalgam of cocaine and baking soda around which their lives revolve. The moral economy of crack sharing is driven by the collective realization that, on their own, men cannot generate enough income to achieve the high they chase on a daily basis. "I couldn't understand the mentality of an

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addict until I became an addict," explained Darnell, an emaciated African-American man who resembles a walking skeleton. "It's not like I want to be this way. You know, I can't just quit. I didn't just start it, you know. I didn't start out, set out and say, 'Today, I think I'm going to become a drug addict. So tomorrow, I'm not going to be!'" He paused and began counting the money he generated selling cigarettes before adding that, "But you see, crack's a mental thing. I ain't gonna be all fucked up [physically] if I don't have it. But, it's just so bad out here that when I have it, I feel much better. But selling cigarettes I may get a dime a day. That ain't enough to get roped on a cloud, you know? So me and Jimmy and Clark and some other people, we all go in together."

This practice of sharing crack cocaine generates the myriad cliques that loiter in the district each day. The collective consumption of crack coheres these tenuous street networks creating, in the process, a basis for sociability and a narcotized escape from the intense misery and boredom inherent in homeless life. As Eric explained it: "If you can't go into the Mission, you got to be out on the street all day long. Temptation is right here. You've got money in your pocket. You've got access. You've got nowhere really to go. It tends to lead to negative activities. 'Hey, let's go get a little dope. And let's have a good time.' And then there we go. We done worked hard. We blow all our money. It's just like a snowball effect. But it rolls downhill, it just gets bigger and bigger and bigger, and it's more problems."

Conclusion: Spatial Routinization and Moral-Economic Relations

Although the moral economy of crack sharing is the principle around which these men form cliques, it is nested within caretakers' moral economies of care. During the day, their lives revolve around crack addiction, but as soon as the clock strikes 6:30 p.m., their lives become enveloped in bonds of reciprocal exchange with either missionaries or RITI staff. Say Eric: "Even when you stay in this little hood all day, you gotta schedule your time so you can get that one last high before curfew. That's why I always get my [bed] ticket [from the Mission] and eat early, so I can get that last hit before they shut them doors." Just as with their counterparts who employ different palliative routines, crack smokers' and crack runners' otherwise chaotic lives are structured by caretakers' moral economies of care into orderly client-staff relations designed to mediate God's saving grace. In part, these conduits of spiritual intercession establish the boundaries of the district by extending beyond their walls in time and space. Lafayette's temporal and spatial rhythms (morphology) are driven by the exigencies of these moral-economic relations and residents' segmental roles imply segmental performance in the daily drama of caretaker life; their daily rounds both within and beyond the district follow the daily cycle of shelter life.

CHAPTER XI

Entrepreneurial Governance and the Biographical Inertia of Place

In each of these cases, arrival in Hobohemia had been preceded by a different series of events (defeats and disappointments). For some it was an interim station, for others the point of a new beginning, but for many the end of the road. In the competitive, complex way of modern life, Hobohemia served a different purpose for each of its habitants. Some have proposed abolishing Hobohemia as a slum, but the many roads that lead to such a place as Hobohemia would still have to terminate at a common point.

<div align="right">--Nels Anderson (1923)</div>

Duane is a short and squatty African-American man in his mid-30s. His cornrows flop against the nape of his neck as he runs toward me from the Ready Body parking lot, a day labor agency located directly across Lafayette Street from the rescue mission. He gives me a high-five and we head north toward the First Baptist Church and take a seat on a red brick retention wall at the corner of 7th Avenue and Demonbreun—the neighborhood's de facto northern border. The clock just hit 5:00 p.m., turning 7th Avenue South into a highway of homeless men streaming from the central business district toward the rescue mission, which just began distributing bed tickets for this evening's lodging. Duane just stepped out of the adjacent 8th Avenue Greyhound bus station three days ago after leaving his native Louisville, Kentucky. "I just found out a week ago that I'm HIV positive," he says while staring at the Greyhound parking lot. "My family disowned me. My baby's motha left me. I pretty much don't know what to do. I still don't know what to do. I'm just running around waiting to die."

Since arriving in the Lafayette neighborhood, Duane has been sleeping on the bench in front of the Greyhound terminal. He has thus far avoided the rescue mission.

"I'm *afraid.* Because you don't know what's going through that person's mind. You don't know what struggles that person's goin through. You don't know if the person is gonna rob you if they try to help them. I'm intimidated because there is a large percent of homeless people that *do* commit crime. They caught a guy in the Greyhound bus station an hour ago steelin from people."

Duane points to the adjacent Gulch neighborhood, a trendy pocket of music venues, posh restaurants, designer clothing stores, and upscale condominiums. "I tried to walk into private owned business like those. I asked them let me sweep the floor and they just close the door," he says with disdain. "I'm not panhandlin. I'm just askin people to put me to work for an hour or so for 5 or 10 dollars and people say no." "Did you get out at Ready Body today?" "I ain't got no ID. They won't let me do nothing. I don't know what to do. I'm not a thief. I'm not a robber. I'm not a crook period." Duane's unsuccessful attempts to find work sting more than just his pride:

My family disowned me. My girl left. I didn't feel no need to be under all that pressure. I just wanted to go. I was tryin to escape. I was lookin for somewhere that would motivate me to want to continue to fight. You know and putting forth the effort to ask people for *work.* And then they turn ya down. The work *needs to be done.* It hurts, it hurts, it hurts. It's not a pride thang, but it's an emotional thang. It hurts. Because you're looking at the stuff that really needs to be done and you're askin for *nothin.* You know, 2 hours for 10 dollars. Minimum wage is what? 6.25? And people say *no.*

Duane quickly turns despondent, and stares down at the sidewalk. "It puts me in the state of mind '*What's it worth livin?*' What do I want to live for?" Hitting the skids in a strange city is, as Duane puts it: "It's like bein a stray dog that just wants to be takin in and just havin a family. It's mind-bogglin man. I just look around and the weather's changin. I don't know what to do, where to go, where to start." "What services have you dealt with since you got here?" I ask. "I ain't been nowhere but the mission and these day labors. Nashville Cares, that's an HIV association. A social worker back home told me

about them so I came, but these city buses. A dollar twenty-five every time you get on them. There's no transfer. So I do a lot of walkin. I'm losin a lot of weight. I'm not eatin regularly. I'm not drinkin enough fluids. I'm fallin into a state of depression."

With only the clothes on his back and twenty dollars in his pocket, Duane came to Nashville in hopes of obtaining care for his medical condition at a local non-profit agency. The informal referral network that set him into motion terminated at the Lafayette district, yet the agency whose services he seeks is located seven miles away in an economically depressed North Nashville neighborhood. Nashville Cares, however, only provides lodging for those requiring outpatient services. Even if he uses the five bucks I give him after we finish hanging out to catch the bus there tomorrow, he will still need to return to the neighborhood in order to sleep and secure food and clothing. "You haven't left the neighborhood yet?" I ask. "I stay in this area here. Coz I see this is predominantly the homeless area. A lot of people stay in this area even if they don't sleep at the mission; it's legal. The law knows that the mission's got lines too but as long as you're close to the property or on it I guess they figure this is the best you gonna get. So why bother you?"

More than one road leads into homelessness, but the common point of termination for Duane and his peers is the Lafayette neighborhood: a shared social, economic, and physical cul de sac replete with common problems in living. Nearly all of the homeless Nashvillians who utilize the organizational ghetto are men who range in age from their mid-thirties to their mid-sixties. African-Americans make up just over half of the population and whites make up another 46 percent, while Hispanics comprise only 2 percent of the populace. About 14 percent are veterans of the armed forces, just over a

quarter are mentally ill, and nearly half report that they currently consume either illicit drugs or alcohol (MDHA Shelter Count Highlights 2008). A handful says they are HIV-positive, and many have severe physical disabilities.

About two-thirds of them work either "off the books" panhandling, selling plasma, and/or recycling (54.1%), toil in the contingent day labor market (30%), or are employed in a low-paying service job (22%). A smaller percentage receives public assistance in the form of Social Security Income (SSI, 7%) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI, 4%). In order to make ends meet from one day to the next, many of them cobble together these forms of income-generation. A large proportion of men like Duane who have either physical or mental disabilities have statutorily demanded access to SSDI which, aside from providing a monthly income of over $600, qualifies the recipient for Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance), Part B (Supplemental Medical Insurance) and Part D (prescription drug coverage). Many more without a recent criminal history also qualify for both public housing and homeless-targeted housing units since they are all unable to afford market rate housing in the Nashville/Davidson County area. Yet, very few Lafayette habitués receive these welfare state subsidies (McMaster 2008). Why is this so, and how does it help account for the reproduction of the Lafayette neighborhood?

As we will soon see, the practical knowledge (un)available in the Lafayette organizational ghetto constrains homeless habitués ability to navigate the complex social welfare bureaucracy, preventing many eligible recipients from applying for welfare provisions. The men who arrive in the Lafayette neighborhood after traveling one of five ideal typical avenues become enmeshed in a social and spatial world that reinforces the inertia of their trajectories through the life course. C. Wright Mills (1959) reminds us that

individuals are biographical entities whose personal problems in living are expressed in their immediate milieu, but result from large scale public issues that transcend their local interactive setting. The district's reproduction does not therefore occur in a biographical vacuum. It is in a process of continual becoming by virtue of the common pathways that lead homeless individuals into its time- and place-bound institutional ensemble of homeless service providers and day labor agencies. As their biographies unfold in this newfound locale, the future all too often collapses into the present and they lose sight of or become frustrated with their extrication attempts. The social and economic structures that both channel them into and prolong their stay in and around the organizational ghetto are expressed in both their biographical trajectories and their subsequent daily practices and reflexive ruminations. But how many roads lead into the neighborhood and out of what are they constructed?

The first part of this chapter casts light on the prevalent pathways that lead these men into the interactive microcosm of the Lafayette service hub. The second portion adapts several key concepts from Klinenberg's (2002) analysis of the Chicago heat wave and extends their reach to the social reproduction of homelessness. In particular, it unearths both the *structural level* constraints generated by Nashville's affordable housing crisis and its atrophied public housing system and the *conjunctural level* constraints generated by the *systemic service mismatch* between welfare delivery and eligible homeless clients. In so doing, we can reveal how the Lafayette neighborhood is a "synchronic slice of reality" that is shaped and bounded by a web of extra-local social relations (Wacquant 2002). This complex of welfare state retrenchment/mismatch, biographical trajectories—which express the structural forces embodied in labor market

decline, the criminalization of (urban) poverty, the crack cocaine epidemic, the crisis in (mental) health care and/or the erosion of the family—and unaffordable market-rate housing, materially and symbolically seals the "escape hatch" out of the neighborhood for all but the most lucky and/or ambitious homeless men.

<center>Common Pathways into the Lafayette Neighborhood</center>

Biographical idiosyncrasies make it difficult to draw a neat and tidy pathway between large scale causal forces and individual misfortune, but they do not preclude the ethnographic excavation of ideal-typical scenarios. Likely due to its "boom town" status in the late 1980s, the modal pathway to Austin's streets involved job loss, which combined with lack of family support, migration in search of work, and the subsequent inability to find remunerative employment and affordable housing (Snow and Anderson 1993). Mitchell Duneier (1999) outlines the common factors that culminated in Greenwich Village sidewalk vendors' route into the informal written matter economy, which involved the interaction of formal labor market failure and drug use with a given combination of no longer searching for employment, disconnection from kith and kin, and incorporation into the criminal justice system. The link between incarceration and homelessness has been more carefully unpacked in a comparative study of San Francisco and St. Louis, which reveals a "homeless continuum" in which ex-prisoners continuously circulate between homelessness and incarceration via pathways that vary in accordance with each city's housing market, availability of inexpensive hotel lodging, and level of support of family and friends (Gowan 2002). A city like San Francisco has a large

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amount of SROs, but its exorbitant housing market and the higher level of transience in its homeless population make its homelessness threshold lower than St. Louis's.

The difference in cities' political-economic circumstances yields different pathways to and from their streets (Gowan 2002; Snow and Anderson 1993). Aside from differences in the local housing market and availability of kinship networks, cities vary with respect to their modes and levels of federal welfare provision, state social service provisions (e.g., Tennessee does not have a version of General Assistance), labor markets, geographical location vis-à-vis other cities tied together by the interstate system, and local geography of homelessness. All of these dimensions interact with biographical circumstances of impoverished members of (extra-)local communities, forming multiple conduits into Nashville's inner loop and, ultimately, the Lafayette neighborhood. In this chapter, I take wider angle lens than previous ethnographic studies and unpack five prominent scenarios that emerged from the dozens of life histories I collected with homeless men.

In the first scenario, some precipitating event—typically related to being laid off from an industrial plant or some other type of manual labor—creates some form of downward mobility in the labor market. After exhausting their unemployment benefits, they find work in a less remunerative (non-union) occupation which is often characterized by instability. For those who are married the downward social mobility creates marital strain, and often ends in divorce. Those who experience divorce typically become burdened by the debt they incur from the divorce settlement and/or child support.

Rather than riding the rails like their hobo counterparts, contemporary itinerant laborers hitchhike from city to city on the Interstate system, chasing rumors of work

and/or drifting from job to job. These workers, who travel the second common pathway, are far from "bohemian[s] in the ranks of common labor" who lack a sense of place and are motivated by "wanderlust", as Robert Park romantically portrayed the Progressive-era hobo (1925 [1967]: 160). Their journeys are typically initiated by economic hardship in their community of origin and/or some type of familial erosion. Drifting from job to job is a subsistence strategy with a wide geographical reach, and which is prone to leave those who employ it stalled out in host cities from time to time. It is of little wonder that a city like Nashville, which sits at the confluence of Interstates 24, 40, and 65 and which is located within a day's drive of over half the country, is frequently fed with these blue collar gypsies.

The organizational ghetto absorbs two disabled populations on a daily, weekly, and annual basis: the mentally ill and the physically disabled. Given their inability to offer a coherent recollection of the sequence of events leading them into homelessness and the neighborhood, this chapter will not consider the former subgroup in detail. It will have to suffice to note that service providers cite the closing of the Central State mental health facility in 1985, located on Nashville's suburban fringe, as the institutional-level impetus that drove large numbers of the mentally ill into Dodge City Skid Row. Deinstitutionalization manifests differently by region, but a national shortage of community mental health facilities which were supposed to take the place of the asylum ensures that mentally ill Americans hit the street at one point or another (Dear and Wolch 1987; Wolch and Dear 1993). When they do so in Nashville, the Lafayette neighborhood hosts the only services that can accommodate them indefinitely. Nonprofit mental health

providers do, however, have a systemic relationship with the neighborhood and make weekly outreach visits to the constituent service providers.

Those with a physical disability, such as HIV or paraplegia, follow a third pathway into the neighborhood. Millions of Americans each year fall through the cracks of the (employer-based) health care system (47 million in 2006, according to the U.S. Census Bureau; see also Gottschalk 2000). Moreover, Governor Bredesen's retrenchment of TennCare—Tennessee's government-operated medical assistance program designed for uninsured poor and/or disabled citizens who are eligible for Medicaid—put hundreds of thousands of Tennesseans who have exorbitant health costs at risk of homelessness. In 2005, the state of Tennessee cut over 160,000 people from TennCare who were not eligible for Medicaid. In addition, the program's benefits were dramatically reduced. For example, access to "Standard Spend Down," a program that aided individuals overwhelmed by medical bills, was dramatically curtailed (Pinto 2007). The Lafayette neighborhood, much like L.A.'s skid row, consequently absorbs the fallout of this malign neglect. Debt-ridden Tennesseans in failing health are typically delivered to then ejected from the hospital after a short stay, and, if they are lucky, routed into a non-profit created to provide them respite. Several of these programs exist in the greater Nashville area, but the rescue mission frequently functions as a de facto site of physical recover, while the Campus for Human Development offers a formal respite care program. The Lafayette neighborhood, then, becomes their "home" indefinitely.

In the fourth scenario, excessive consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs (mainly crack cocaine) interferes with their effective functioning in the formal economy and/or disrupts their home life. The ensuing downward spiral into homelessness is typically a

slow one, where substance use gradually takes precedence over primary needs such as employment and regular food intake—the incipient stage of what Duneier (1999) calls the "Fuck-it! Mentality." Unsustainable substance use sometimes follows from familial disruption and/or job loss, as we will see in some of the other pathways. This pathway, however, is analytically distinct from the latter in that loss of functioning due to substance use is the precipitant that severs the individual from his pre-existing residential pattern and/or social support system. This slow divestment from conventional life eventually combines with the generalized instability of substance addiction, imploding into the "black hole" of homelessness that draws one into its powerful gravitational field.

In the fifth and final scenario, some precipitating event—the most common of which is drug-related—routes them into the prison industrial complex. After serving a specified fraction of their prison sentence (e.g., 3 years at 30 percent), they are conditionally released where they are required to meet the conditions of their parole or post-release supervision. Conditions often consist of regularly reporting to a parole or probation officer, random drug screening, parole payments and enrollment in state-sponsored "rehabilitation" classes (e.g., sex-offender or anger-management) for which the ex-offender pays out of pocket. Before release, the parole board routes them either to the home of a relative, a halfway house, or some type of rehabilitation program. Complications of some sort arise in their re-entry site—such as extortion in the halfway house or rehabilitation program, "relapse," or wearing out one's welcome with family—channeling them into the emergency shelter system by default, if not back to prison for a "technical violation."

John is a 56-year-old former nuclear power plant operator. Nine years ago his ample salary afforded him the stereotypical American dream. He was married with two step children and owned a large two-story home in Florida. "I had all kinds of toys, all kinds of fishing tackle, and diving gear, and whatever else I wanted," he reminisces. "I was living the dream." In the fall of 2000 John's dream turned into a living nightmare when plant management issued a round of lay offs. "I ended up losing the job I had 17 years making about $90,000 a year" he remorsefully notes. "And nothing has been the same since." Adding insult to injury, he fell victim to a natural disaster the same year: "The hurricane hit the house we'd just bought. It did $30,000 in personal property damage…When we moved to Tennessee we put all the money we had in our property..."

His family's relocation to middle Tennessee was no panacea. John could not find stable work that provided a standard of living commensurate with his power plant job: "I found work as a carpenter but they didn't keep me busy enough. I was making $18 an hour, but I wound up working for a month or six weeks and then I'd be off -- and get off for a month. I just couldn't survive that way. I didn't have any connections anywhere else to be able to do anything." John's marriage eventually buckled under the weight of his unstable employment situation, and his wife filed for divorce.

The terms of the settlement interacted with his precarious economic position, saddling him with debilitating debt:

I wasn't getting enough work, plus the fact that the divorce settlement came down to where we paid less than $70,000 dollars for the house and six acres and her lawyer convinced her that it was now worth – four years later -- he convinced her, "Well now, we can easily get an appraisal of $100,000 dollars." I had to make up the difference so I had to refinance the house in order to pay her off and be able to keep the house…Plus I owed about $10,000 in credit card debt -- partly mine and partly my wife's -- ex-wife's, plus the mortgage, and I was having to pay something like

$800 and something dollars a month for mortgage. And I don't remember how much I was having to pay to repay the [credit card] debt.

John did not throw in the towel, but fought to maintain his retrograde position in the labor market by taking a second job installing sprinkler systems: "I hung on for about a year and a half -- literally eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches -- and not doing much else and realized I couldn't do it. I thought if I worked enough hours I could probably pay it off -- and I probably could have. But I couldn't do it because it wasn't steady enough to give me enough work to stay busy."

By 2001, John filed Chapter 13 bankruptcy and the bank foreclosed on his house. "And then, I guess I was homeless the first time and that was in 2001, but I wasn't really homeless. Some people -- some friends of mine that I worked with -- took me in," he recalls. If this salient turning point thrust John into the cyclonic pull of homelessness, his consequent depression and self-medicating alcoholism pushed him into the center of its vortex:

I was working, but I started drinking too much. I think I tried to kill myself… A friend of mine offered me use of an old truck to drive when I had to move out. I borrowed his truck to move my stuff to another location to my friend's house. I guess I got to where I didn't care anymore…I was not seeing any job coming in my future. I stayed in a motel for a night, wound up having to hang on to this truck for another day. I got kind of worried about having the vehicle because I was drinking beer at the time. I hadn't slept in two days. I couldn't sleep…I got scared about having the vehicle and I thought, "Maybe I need to go take it back." I tried to take it back in about a 20 mile drive. I fell asleep at the wheel and I wrecked the truck. I was still out cold when I heard either the police officer or the paramedic saying, "Oh, don't worry about him. There's no rush." I surprised the hell out of the police officer when I climbed out of the truck. He thought I was the walking dead.

After the paramedics rushed him to the hospital, John was charged with his second DUI in one month, which landed him in jail for six months. "I asked them, 'Hey, you got any kind of alcohol or drug program I can get involved in? I'm going to be in jail anyway.' They told me that yeah they did. I did 45 days in their program." His downward spiral, however, had not yet run its full course. Sincere in his conviction to "get my life

back on track," John both found employment digging wells and entered a halfway house after he was released from jail: "It helped me for a little while, but then I said 'Well, I can go back to drinking a little bit.' And I started sneaking and drinking a little bit of beer here and there. The next thing I know I got up with this girl. I smoked some crack and wound up basically throwing money away and getting found out in the halfway house. I had fallen back into bad habits. I got thrown out…"

After he was evicted from the halfway house, John eked out an existence in seedy motels until he injured himself on the job: "I got stupid with that girl and then wound up getting injured and having a blood test. It came back dirty so they let me go." His meager savings only allowed him to hold out in his squalid hotel room for two more days before his hand was forced. He could either walk the streets or enter Nashville's emergency shelter hub: "I was sitting down on the sidewalk [outside the hotel room]. I knew of some temp services down that way [the Lafayette neighborhood]…A guy I knew came by in his truck and I said, 'Hey, do you mind driving me to the Mission?'"

Itinerant Labor

"I was a roughneck down in Odessa, Texas," Roger explains as he takes a sip of Tiger Mart coffee from a white Styrofoam cup. His java-stained lips curl into a sheepish grin as he expresses a point of pride over his home town, "We've got a series out on TV right now, Friday Night Lights." Ironically the film to which Roger refers, starring Billy Bob Thorton, premiered in Franklin, Tennessee—a small town in affluent Williamson County. Roger certainly could not have anticipated that he would end up mired less than 20 miles away in Nashville's Lafayette neighborhood three years after his high school alma mater was portrayed on the silver screen. In 2004 he was still a moderately skilled

laborer in the oil industry (i.e., a "roughneck"). His position as a "Derrick-man" required him to run the "mud" pump, which siphoned off and circulated the water, or oil based effluent extracted by the oil rig. That summer his life took an unexpected turn. "I lost my mother and my wife all within a week and I started drinking a lot," he says with a grimace.

"Within about three months," he recalls, "I wasn't working. I was fired from my job coz I almost got somebody hurt. That drillin' rig was real dangerous, but I got all my fingers and all my toes." Roger's job loss interacted with his consequent increased alcohol consumption and the loss of his two remaining family members, leading him to languish in his single-wide trailer as he slowly drank himself to death:

I was burning through my savings pretty good. I didn't have a whole lot of overhead. I mean, utilities but I owned the trailer. The land was almost paid for. It's this little quarter-acre lot. And the old boy I was buying it from, Mr. Bryant, he wasn't worried about me, and we was real good friends. He'd come over, have a beer with me. Didn't matter to him that I was pale, bloated, and drank everyday til I passed out.

Three months into his whiskey-induced haze, Roger laid the groundwork for his trajectory into the life of an itinerant laborer:

I was actually watching the Discovery Channel. They had something on there about these guys backpacking across Europe. So I got it in my mind -- and this is after a good little bit of Jack Daniels -- that's what I was going to do. So I go down to Wal-Mart -- I call a cab because you don't drink and drive -- and went to Wal-Mart at 3:30 in the fucking morning, got the whole nine yards, you know. I got the big backpack that sticks over you -- the camping gear. Yeah, I got the tarp and the backpack and the fucking sleeping bag, and even had a little Coleman stove--the whole nine yards.

Roger's camping gear sat in the corner of his living room for a month before he hit emotional rock bottom and came to the conclusion that life in Odessa was better off viewed from the rearview mirror of a taxi cab. He consequently began making his way east along I-20, working odd jobs for the next several months:

I was running out of money when I left. I think I had about $1400. And I was like, *fuck it*. I'm gone. I took off and just hitchhiked to Lubbock. I had never hitchhiked so I called a cab and told

him to drop me off at the end of town on I-20, and I'm headed to Lubbock, and that's how it started. I made it 150 miles to Lubbock. When I got there I wasn't exactly roughing it to begin with. I'd stay at a motel for a night or two, and that made things a little bit easier. I'd go over there and fill out an application and within two days, you know, I'd have a job, you know; two, three days, get paid for work, and I'd move on.

Mitchell Duneier (1999) outlines the "Fuck-it mentality" of homeless sidewalk vendors in Greenwich Village, which he describes as a "representative moment of lethargic resignation, leading to a moment when a person gives up on culturally prescribed goals and means for living" (61). When Roger said "fuck it," however, he did not trade in life in his single-wide trailer for life on the street and slide into extreme, retreatist behavior such as sleeping in his "own or others' urine and feces on the street" (Duneier 1999: 61). Roger's compulsion to say "fuck it" and start "wandering" was driven by an attempt to relieve himself from the pain of his past and the desire to take solace in the rootless "freedom" associated with the life of a drifter:

I was real lucky in my first eight months. I'd get in a car with somebody, and say 'I'm going north,' or 'I'm going to Oklahoma,' or 'I'm going to Tennessee, Alabama,' whatever; and it just happened that they had a drywall crew, or they had a roofing crew, or they was framing [houses]. I stayed up in Oklahoma for about four months framing houses, and I just wasn't ready to settle down yet, you know, because *as long as I was moving,* you know, *my mind wasn't, wandering on other things*, and that was the whole thing. *That's why, I guess, just kind of move around.*

The situational imperatives of life on the road, however, soon became translated into a way of life. In Roger's case, this involved a serendipitous encounter with a traveling carnival. The term "roughneck," ironically, was originally applied to carnival workers before it was transferred to the oil drilling industry Roger left behind him eight months before he transitioned into the life of a "carnie":

I joined the carnival when I had got broke. I had like $50 on me. That's where I was at that time and point in my life. So I see it's the carnival. Actually, it's the Century Wheel. I figured, well, I'll help them tear down, and maybe get a little bit of money. And just happened that the old boy I talked to worked the games. He did joints; the game rooms. He asked me if I'd be interested in traveling, and at the time, that appealed to me, you know. He's going to get paid and travel, yeah, you know? Yeah, I got a itty-bitty bunkhouse, you know; you got no overhead. I started living it up.

Roger ran the national carnival circuit for the next two years, working as an "alibi agent." "When you first start working in a joint [game booth]," he explains, "you'll make like 25 points; 25 percent [of the evening's draw]. Then you got an agent and these guys can make a lot of money. He'll get you to spend like $80. It turned out I had a slight knack for it." When the carnival began "breaking down" in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he decided to take his earnings and take a brief respite from carnie life:

We had just shut down the show, and they was going to Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was a three-week fair down in Tulsa, and I told them, "Well, I'm going to stay here, rent a room for a while, relax." My boss says, "Just show up the last week of the fair in Tulsa." I was going to ride the train from Albuquerque to Tulsa. I go down to Wal-Mart and buy a couple CDs and a CD player. I had lost my ID and you got to have an ID to get a room.

After his Wal-Mart expedition, Roger's life-course trajectory took a sudden turn upon entering Albuquerque's red light district in search of cheap lodging. As he puts it:

I see this old girl standing over there at the bus stop, and it's pretty late. It's like 3:30 [am]. She had one leg. I said, 'What are you doing?' Well, she says, 'I'm looking for a date. I need some money to get a room.' So I said, 'Well I tell you what; you rent me a room because I ain't got no ID and I need a room for a week, and you can stay there tonight. I don't want no drugs, no tricks, whatever. Tomorrow, I'll buy some beer, I'll feed you.' She jumped at that. 'Oh, that'd be great.'

Everything ran smoothly for the next two days. But by the third day, his seemingly symbiotic relationship with a one-legged prostitute turned parasitic:

She stayed there about two days, and when you're in the carnival you get paid cash. And we take in a lot of $1 bills for the games; everything's $2. I had about $1200 worth of pay. So I had two stacks of money like this, right? So I had about $300 in my pocket that I was pulling out of, and the rest of it in a gym bag. She never seen it and I never made no references to it. Matter of fact, I made the comment one or two times, 'Oh boy, only got $50 left.' I woke up, I guess about that third morning and she was gone; that's cool. I took a shower, come back out, and was going to get my hygiene stuff, and my bag's gone. That's all the money I had; I had probably about $800-$900 gone. What really hurt me was my little book that I keep my numbers in. So I can't call nobody that was on with the show.

By leaving him broke and stranded with no way of contacting his employer, the hotel incident radically foreclosed Roger's field of possibilities. The demands of carnie life and its transient lifestyle further eroded what little social capital he still possessed

back in Odessa, and his radical severance from the carnival scene cast him in an atomized

role not dissimilar from an immigrant who lacks a support network. It is consequently

little surprise that his game plan involved re-connecting with his former employer:

I had probably about three weeks before the carnival was over, because you get there, you take a week to set up, then you actually play the fair for three weeks, and you leave. Their next spot was Raleigh, North Carolina. So I sit there about the rest of the time until the motel was over with and watched to see if I see a little one-legged hooker hopping around. I didn't, so I started hitchhiking. It took me about a week and a half to make it here to Tennessee. I was going to stop here for a day or two. The old boy that dropped me off, he told me where the mission was and dropped me off at a strip bar.

     Upon entering the Lafayette neighborhood, Roger saw signs of economic

opportunity and slightly modified his plans. The district's myriad day labor agencies and

the giraffe-like cranes peppering the central city landscape led him to believe he could

profit from Nashville's condominium construction boom:

So I get to the mission and stay there a night or two. And I found out that it's real easy to get your ID here. My whole wallet, it got stolen probably six months before that. I was feeling good, and I figure, well, the season is almost over. Maybe I will skip Raleigh and make some money and just go on down to Miami. But the whole day labor thing; three weeks and that wasn't working out. I was getting disgusted, and by that time, they had already left Raleigh. I went down to Traveler's Aid. It was like, "No, we can give you a 10 percent discount [on a bus ticket]." I was like, "Well, hell." I seen all the buildings going up. So I'll just get a sucker job.

The carnival had pulled up stakes from Miami by the time Roger came to the realization

that life in and around Lafayette amounts running around the rim of a socio-spatial

vortex. "It seemed like this would be a really easy place to get a good job, or a job," he

says incredulously. "Then things came to light, and it was going to be a little harder than

I thought."

Physical Disability

     "I ran down on my luck," Jermaine explains, "because I got attacked by a pit bull

on Dickerson Road, at the Krystal." Six years ago, Jermaine arrived broke and green to

the "big city"—big at least in comparison to his home town of Dixon, Tennessee:

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Population, 13,740—and took up residence in a seedy room in the Deluxe Inn, located on the same desolate stretch of urban disinvestment as the fast food joint where his life took an unexpected turn for the worse. He ironically found work at the upscale, downtown Hilton where he worked for the next year of his life. "I was the only black waiter at the Hilton," he proudly reminisces. Life in Nashville, for the most part, was rolling along smoothly until:

I was getting ready to get in my car. I stayed at the hotel next door. I had a party and had to be at work from 3 [pm] to 11 [pm]. I had a party 500 people. When I got ready to get in my car, there was a van parked next to me. And it was three teenagers in there. It was two girls and a guy. And one of the girls had a pit bull by the leash. And I could smell weed. And they were joking, having a good time laughing and they never saw me. But the van door was open on the driver side, my side. That pit bull turned around and he made eye contact with me and that was it. He leaped up at me and snatched away from this girl and he bit at me twice. He bit at me twice down here [groin]. He latched onto me, he slung me around that parking lot. He like to tore it [his genitals] off. So when I opened my leg, blood just gushed out just like a hydrant.

Jermaine laid on the parking lot pavement in agony for over a half hour before the paramedics arrived:

When the paramedics finally got there they put my pants down, they put like a blue sheet -- it's not really a sheet, it's like fine paper. They put that on and they took my pants down. And when I looked up at the paramedics, they said one thing, "You got a lawsuit." That's all they said. I mean, goodness, if you could have seen their face. Just the look on their face scared me. I was in the hospital for about a day and a half before I decided to look. It took them almost two hours to sew me up, and I was still scared to look. And when they took me up on the floor one day they came in, they was changing the bandage, right. I happened to look down there and when I looked, that was it. I rolled to the side of the bed and throwed up, man. So I've been through a lot here, in this city.

The vicious dog attack would prove to be a prominent turning point in Jermaine's life that thrust him into a downward spiral of cumulative disadvantage. His tenuous lifestyle, meager savings, lack of health insurance, and impoverished information network soon interacted and formed a conduit that eventually channeled him into the Lafayette neighborhood. From the hospital bed from which he would soon be ejected,

Jermaine called his elderly mother—who lived in a public housing project in

Chattanooga—in order to get the name of a lawyer with whom she had dealt in the past:

I got a family lawyer. He just kept messing around and messing around. And he kept lying. I kept catching him in lies, and so, I think, I'm not really sure, but I think he was paid off. My lawyer had me come to court and never showed up. All of a sudden, after a year this guy leaves town. They killed the dog the same day because the dog had bit three other people. I hired another lawyer he said he couldn't try the case. Shit, two weeks later he dropped the case. He wouldn't tell me why.

It is difficult to discern the nature of the lawyers' apparent incompetence and

equally difficult to determine whether or not Jermaine's conspiracy theory has any merit.

Nonetheless, it is probably safe to say that his lack of effective legal counsel foreclosed

his ability to secure remuneration that might have offset the debt he incurred during his

hospital stay. In less than a week, Jermaine was kicked out of his hospital bed and lost his

job at the Hilton in the interim:

I lose my job and I'm still stuck with the hospital bills. And the lawyers are out of the case. I don't know nothing about the bills. Every time I asked for information he [the lawyer] blew me off, you know what I'm saying. And I had about close to $5,000 dollars in bills. So I'm thinking, "How come I haven't got a letter?"

A knowledgeable and concerned nurse gave Jermaine the number of a halfway house in

North Nashville where he was able to allow his wounds to heal.

Given the scarcity of beds in such facilities, length of stay restrictions are

typically enforced in order to accommodate a chronic oversupply of indigent

Nashvillians. In Jermaine's case, he was evicted from the halfway house after a four

month stay. While in much better physical shape than when he first arrived, it was

impossible for him to find employment due to his recently acquired physical disability.

Moreover, Jermaine had spent what little savings he had on two incompetent lawyers

who never sued the pit bull owners, leaving him with only one option when he was

released from the halfway house: living in his four-door, 1989 Toyota Corolla. For the

next four months, he eked out life in the backseat of his car, which he parked in the

Lafayette neighborhood, around the corner from the rescue mission where he would

obtain his daily meals:

I wasn't planning on trying to go back to work because I was on some really heavy medication. For a long time I couldn't hardly do nothing, you know what I'm saying. It's kind of hard to explain. One pill they had me on was a thousand milligrams. A thousand milligrams! And I would take that pill and just sit in the car. I couldn't move. And then, I was still dealing with the lawyer. It took a long time to heal to. It took me a very long time.

Jermaine's car eventually broke down and, since he did not have the money for

repairs, it was eventually impounded because he was no longer able to park it in different

spots in order to elude the watchful eye of the police. The loss of his home base

interacted with his disabled condition, forcing him to move into the rescue mission, his

last option:

It gradually started coming on. When I got here, it was hitting me then, you know what I'm saying. I mean I had a little limp to my walk, you know. It just kept getting worser and worser. And I don't know, maybe -- like I said, I think it was about time. I think it was meant for it happen like this. I really do. But I'm glad it happened when I was already in the area. That's how I been in the mission for five years.

His condition has worsened over the years, forcing him to rely on a cane when he walks.

Consequently, his mobility is highly constrained and he rarely ventures outside the walls

of the rescue mission.

Substance Use

Reginald worked for 13 years at the Vanderbilt University. Like many of the

university's lower tier employees, he shuttled back and forth each workday between a

squalid area housing project and the elite "Vandy bubble." Each morning that he stepped

off of the city bus, he would take in the bucolic campus's pristine and finely manicured

lawns, historic 19th century architecture, and the outward signs of privilege conveyed by

the affluent student body. "I would think, man, my children—they're grown. One is

dating a drug dealer. I got twelve grandkids and don't know none of em. I met a few of

em that's sellin drugs. The black community is all about drugs and killin—drugs and

killin. This place here, it's like a different planet. What a beautiful life."

Reginald's less-than-beautiful home life turned outright unsightly when the

mutual adultery between him and his wife surpassed its threshold of sustainability: "Man,

my wife was cheating on me and I guess I was fooling around on her." Despite his co-

equal infidelity, Reginald prefers to place the blame for his divorce and ensuing job loss

on his ex-wife:

I lost that job in '96 because my wife was messing around. I'm calling home trying to catch her.
Vanderbilt Credit Union just bought me a brand new BF 1000 motorcycle. She wasn't sounding
too good on the phone and I got on the BF 1000 and shot home. I ain't never been going home on
lunch break before. After 13 years of marriage I never was doing that. But all that time I was
going through a bunch of crap. My wife wasn't cooking no more. She quit cooking and that was
the best cooking woman I ever met. But as far as cleaning went -- she was terrible. I did all of
that. But I started seeing things in the house that I couldn't afford to buy. She telling me she
playing bingo. It wasn't no bingo.

After arriving home, Reginald quickly discovered the source of the household items he

"couldn't afford to buy":

I get to my house and there was a *big* niggah in my house from the penitentiary. He looked like
Mike Tyson sweepin and cleanin around the house. Then he going to ask me who I am in my own
house. "Who are you?" And my kids sitting there on the couch. I go upstairs and get my pistol.
It's still in the same place. I'm surprised. I go back downstairs and I look at both of them and I'm
trying to figure out which one I'm going to kill first and how I'm going to do it. Then I think about
my children and I just start crying. I put the pistol in my pocket and left and I ain't seen them no
more since. I ain't care no more.

Reginald did not actually lose his job immediately after he left his wife. He

simply found another low-rent apartment in North Nashville where he lived for the next

year. However, a couple months into his new life: "All of a sudden I meet a girl that was

on drugs. And that's where things went out of control." Reginald converted his living

room into a crack den—or, "cat hole" to use the local street vernacular—where he began

spending his evenings among fellow crack smokers. He was able to toggle back and forth

between his job at Vanderbilt and his apartment scene for a little under a year before his

partying spiraled out of control: "I eventually lost my job and I gave up. The drugs will

have you where you can't work; you don't have the strength to work and your mind will

tell you: 'You don't want to do that.' I liked the fast lane and where I was at because all

the women liked to do whatever they – they would do what you wanted them to do just

for that [crack]. So I thought that I had it goin on."

In this respect, Reginald did "have it goin on," at least until he fell behind on his

rent. Three months after losing his job, he received an eviction notice. One month later he

was living out of his car. That is, until:

My dealer was just like I'll give you a 20 [dollar crack rock] to borrow your car. They break you
off a real nice something-something and they want to use your vehicle. What had happened was I
had let him borrow my car and he was supposed to went and done they thing, re-up [on his crack
supply], and got more crack and all that. But my car ended up in another city in the impound lot
where the police had pulled them over and took my car. When the police pull you over and they
find drugs in that car they going to seize your car. Then after so many days it goes up so high you
can't afford to get it out. I wouldn't trade my car for no dope. But basically it boils down to about
the same. But that wasn't the way it was intentioned.

Left without a car to call "home" and no family members in the area aside from

the children who disowned him and the grandchildren who he never knew, Reginald

gravitated toward a secondary service hub in East Nashville:

I just started walkin. I been in town all these years and I didn't know we had a Rescue Mission. I
was -- I was introduced to where I can go. I like the Salvation Army much better. I ran into a
white lady that night and she said, "I ain't going to give you no money but I'm going to take you
over to the Salvation Army and rent you a whole week." I said, "Cool with me. Can't beat that
deal." She takes me over there and the first thing the black guy at the desk tell me, "We can't take
change and we don't take checks." So the lady and I got back in her car and went to some ATM
machine. She got cash. We come back and we both standing there but the dumb thing is she don't
notice what he's doing. He took half the cash and put it in one place down here in a little safe on
the floor and the other half of the cash in his pocket. Then right after she leave, me and him get
into a little argument, and about an hour after she left I had to go.

After he was evicted from the Salvation Army, Reginald made his way west across the

Cumberland River and took up residence in the "house of pain": the old Nashville Rescue

Mission on Demonbreun Street. When the mission relocated to the Lafayette

neighborhood several months later, Reginald moved with it and has eked out existence

there ever since: "God is not blessing me anymore. I'm supposed to be dead. And I don't

really care if I died."

The Carceral Path

The first in his family or public housing friendship network to attend college,

Lawrence was surprised at his difficulty finding remunerative work with his B.S. in

psychology. His girlfriend had their second child a couple months before his graduation,

and he felt pressure to fulfill his masculine provider role:

I said, "Well, I'm going to go on and complete my undergraduate, let his momma finish school and go back." That was my plan. But in the course of my son being born, she [his girlfriend] gets pregnant again. So now, we've got a son *and* a daughter. But I said, "She needs to go on and complete her school." So I was going to work to take care of these kids. So I got a job and was working. Then you really can't do what you want in your field with no bachelor's degree in psychology. You've got to have at least a master's. I kept saying, "I'm going to go back. I'm going to go back." And just never did go back, and I was working. I lost my little job, you know. Coulda done that with a high school diploma. I was kind of short on money. I needed a vehicle.

His economic bind made Lawrence receptive to the allure of the underground

economy:

My brother was like, "Well, look. I got some connections in Knoxville. So when you get your income tax money, why don't we go to Knoxville. You can handle the business part. I'll handle the street -- the dealing. Because you don't mess with no dope. If you keep the dope, then I won't mess it up none." I said, "Hey, that's money to be made. I need the money." So boom. I get the little product, and I spent $300. I was like, "Man." And when I bagged it up, he said, "This is what you can make off it." And I said, "I spent $300 and I can make $900-something off of $300? We need to make another trip."
It just went on from there, and the money started flowing in. And like I said, I loved smoking and drinking. So man, I could trade a little bit of powder for a big old bag of weed, and then people were coming with all the pills I want. Then I had money. I could buy some alcohol, and I could eat good. I could party and get the nice stuff, get me a nice car. Then I had the big-screen TV, nice stereo. And all this started coming in. I was seeing people go steal clothes for my kids. And I could buy real nice clothes for my kids. His momma didn't know where the money came from.

The structural mismatch between his high aspirations and the objective

probability of upward mobility inscribed in his devalued Bachelor's degree conspired

with the newfound imperatives of his father role to assault Lawrence's sense of self,

routing him into the informal drug economy. His expectations of the post-secondary

educational system were imploded by the demand-side of the legal labor market, re-

activating the hustler orientation he cultivated in the public housing projects his brother

still calls home: "I've done lived on both sides of the coin. I grew up in the projects. I

grew up with that environment. I grew up in an abusive home, but I still managed to go to

college and get a degree, which is a rare thing especially for an African-American male.

But I went all the way back on the street, back into hustlin' drugs."

Lawrence's frustration became expressed in his resistance to the economic

mainstream, and was also eventually articulated in his pursuit of crack-induced ecstasy:

I ended up becoming my best customer. When I first started selling drugs, I smoked weed and ate pills and drank and stuff, but I didn't mess with no coke at all. It was my money-maker. It was my women thang. It was how I paid for weed, pills, and sex. That was what I made money on. That was my plan. And I'd just sit there and say, "Whew. Man, I can't believe I'm making all this money." But then, once I experienced it, I became my best customer…That first time I hit it, man, I said, "Whew, man, this is great. This is a great feeling. Whew. I'm off to [unintelligible]." I thought I could control it, but once I did it, it was over with, gone. I was averaging a quarter-ounce a day. Once I became my best customer and lost my roll of money, I had to get on the street and sell on the streets, and that's when I got caught up.

The slide into addiction and lower-level crack sales eventually sutured

Lawrence's already attenuated relationship with the mother of his children, disrupting his

positive definition of the situation and eroding the subjective cornerstone on which his

masculine provider role was based:

I'm looking at it [crack dealing] all the time as I'm helping her with keeping my kids…I'm looking at it as I'm able to send money. Their momma didn't know where I was getting the money from at first. She just thought I was working or something, because we lived in different cities. I was over in East Tennessee. She lived down here in Memphis. She knew I'm sending money all regular, sending clothes and coming down to visit…I can't remember how she found out I was selling drugs, but when she found out; I went and bought her a bunch of different clothes... I'll never forget it.
    She said, "I can't take these clothes. You bought it with drug money." She gave them all away…I said, "You're not giving my kids' clothes away. I don't care what you're talking about. I don't care if they was stolen…I don't care what they was bought with. You're not going to mess

with my kids' stuff." "Well, I can't do nothing about the kids' stuff, but I don't want you ever buying me anything else with no drug money." I had to respect that, but I did it for my kids. I got carried away…The money was good, but I lost a whole lot. The main thing I lost was years of my life with her and my children…The first time that I smoked crack cocaine, I knew in my mind it was something wrong. The first taste of it had me convinced that this is going to lead me up a terrible, terrible road...

Lawrence's road into the criminal justice system was paved by the U.S. drug war, which has disproportionately drawn non-violent, inner-city drug offenders into its scope:

I was out there smoking, and I ran out of dope. I figured if I go out there and sell to somebody, they'll throw me a little something. So that's what I did. I went out there, and a car came by, and I'll never forget it. It was a white lady and two white dudes came through. They said, "Hey, we need a forty." I said, "Hold on." I got the rocks and got in the car with them. Boom. Shut the door. They looked at it. "Sounds good." Handed me the $40 dollars. When I tried to get out of the car, it was like on TV. Sh-chuck-chuck-chuck-choo. I mean, the police came from everywhere. I was attempting to step out of the car. I've got these big old pants on and take off trying to run. I'd run about maybe 15 yards, and the little woman, I'd seen that she's not going to be able to catch me, but some plainclothes officer came around the corner. "Get on the ground!" When I heard that, you go on the ground, because I know they'll beat you... And I go on the ground, man…They had me sitting on the curb waiting on the little paddy-wagon…Then they took me on down.

Imprisonment is a salient biographical turning point, given its socially disintegrative effects and relative preclusion of upward mobility (Western 2006). Ex-prisoners are branded with a "scarlet letter" that disproportionately relegates them to the secondary labor market, and creates legal obstacles to securing skilled labor requiring licensure, welfare benefits, and suffrage (Holzer, Raphael, and Stoll 2004; Travis 2004; Western 2006).

Lawrence, however, would not bump up against this invisible ceiling until he was released into the community as a parolee. While in prison, his familial and other community support networks attenuated, making his sister's house the only potentially viable re-entry site. Prisoners, however, are overwhelmingly drawn from the same inner city neighborhoods to which they seek to return (Travis 2004). In Lawrence's case, this presented a problem to the parole board:

They kept rejecting my home plans…I was supposed to parole out to my sister's house. They said it was a drug-infested neighborhood. Couldn't go there. They just kept denying me housing. Everywhere I tried to go, they would deny it. So finally, I went to [the halfway house], and they accepted it. I was in a program that's no longer in existence…And you could only parole out to either Memphis, Knoxville or Nashville. So I didn't have no choice but to come to a halfway house, because I don't have any family in Memphis, Knoxville or Nashville that I could live with.

Since it is Tennessee's state capital, Lawrence figured that Nashville would be replete with economic opportunity. He planned on translating his college credential and the computer repair training he received in prison into a "decent job" after his halfway house tenure was complete. Within two weeks of his release, however, Lawrence "relapsed." This made him susceptible to a "technical violation" since he violated one of his parole conditions: abstaining from drug use. In order to avoid being re-routed into the prison industrial complex he quit his part-time job at Burger King and entered Nashville's emergency shelter system, which hosts the city's only free "rehabilitation" programs:

I relapsed and started using again, so I went into the drug program at the mission. The man who ran the halfway house knew one of the counselors in the program at the mission. He's the one that made arrangements for me to go. I didn't go to quit using drugs or to quit drinking. I went because I knew that I was violating my parole. I would have if I'd have came in there and failed the urine test. I wanted to show my parole officer, "Hey, look. I'm trying. I'm in the drug program."

The mission's rehabilitation program was Lawrence's penultimate stop in the institutional chain that funneled him into literal homelessness. After spending two months in the program, he grew weary of the recovery staff's emphasis on personal salvation and the numbing regimentation of recovery life. His parole officer was also giving him a hard time because he was unable to work while in the program. "He said he wanted me to be in a program, but not necessarily that one, because you can't work and pay your parole bills," Lawrence recalls. "He said, 'I don't know, Mr. Brown, you know you're getting behind on your fees.'" Two weeks after he received his income tax return, Lawrence walked out of the recovery program for good. "I said, 'Forget it. I'm gone, because I don't

want to be here'", he defiantly reminisces. "I didn't have no family here, no friends here, no income. So when I left the program…there wasn't nowhere else to go. I've just kind of been roaming around ever since."

Racialized Similarities and Differences in Biography

Financial vulnerability is the first parameter that circumscribes the pool from which homeless individuals are drawn (Rosenthal 1994; Wolch and Dear 1993). The life histories of Lafayette habitués, black and white alike, are peppered with tales of precarious employment. Job loss sometimes thrusts one into a precarious economic position, but more often that not a precarious economic existence interacts with job loss, eroded familial networks and other precipitants such as unsustainable substance use, incarceration, and/or physical disability. The sequential ordering and existence of these factors vary across the five key pathways and, to some extent, vary within them since there is no universal sequence through which these men must pass on their downward slide into the neighborhood. These ideal-typical biographical scenarios, aside from their service in nuancing our understanding of becoming (and staying) homeless in Nashville, are meant to provide a sort of "measuring rod" created out of concrete reality which can be used to ascertain the similarities and differences in other locales.

Since neighborhood inhabitants share the same class and gender status, but differ by race, it will be instructive to briefly tease out the racialized dimensions of the biographical long duree (how they arrived) and key daily practices that stem from it. Most African-American Lafayette habitués, for instance, are drawn from either the local public housing projects or poor working-class communities in Nashville's highly segregated north side. Whites, on the other hand, tend to come from more geographically

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distant locales—typically the rural hinterlands or other states—and were, for the most part, raised in working-class communities characterized by diverse types of settlement space.

Unlike most of their white counterparts, many African-Americans still have periodic contact with friends, family members, and their family church given their propensity to hail from nearby communities (see also Bourgois 2007). They periodically avail themselves of these networks during holidays or on the weekends to "get away from the craziness" of the neighborhood and, on occasion, are visited by sympathetic family members. They typically cannot avail themselves of their family's and friend's homes, however, due to saturated neighborhood-based support networks, stringent public housing criteria regulating the terms of their friends' and family members' accommodation of visitors, burnt bridges predominantly due to drug-motivated theft and/or sheer masculine shame. "I've stayed home with my momma for about two weeks," explains Jerome, "and then I came back and went right back to the mission. But see my mother live in public housing and they have strict rules. You can only stay for 15 days."

Moreover, African-Americans are more likely than whites to live in overcrowded residences and almost three-quarters of black households who live in market rate housing pay over 30 percent of their income on shelter, which means they are disproportionately represented in the ranks of shelter poverty (Hopper 2003). During the skid row era, black men who were down on their luck were typically absorbed by kinship networks. In the context of rising (long-term) unemployment, underemployment, the expansion of the illegal drug trade, and the punitive interdiction of local police departments, the DEA, and the prison industrial complex, black kinship networks have been eroded and

overburdened, creating multiple avenues from poor black neighborhoods into the public shelter system (Hopper 2003; Wacquant 2008; Western 2006).

Whites also reveal eroded familial networks, but unlike their black counterparts, are typically outcasts from the white working-class communities in which they predominantly once lived. Their families of origin are typically plagued with alcoholism and abuse, much of which stems from the conditions of poverty or downward working class mobility (see also Pippert 2007). Many have completely lost contact with their relatives, and no longer have their contact information. Others maintain infrequent contact with loved ones with whom they are otherwise too ashamed to interact.

Given their roots in public housing projects or poor black communities, African-Americans have a collective identity premised on a common past experience of segregation and its associated exigencies. One familiar aspect of life for many of them is crack-cocaine consumption. By far, crack is the most common illicit substance distributed and consumed in the neighborhood, but its consumers are predominantly African-American. A substantial minority of whites do smoke crack, but cheap alcohol (including mouthwash) and Loratabs are their primary vices. Marijuana use is not a race-coded practice; given the prevalence of crack, booze, and pharmaceuticals, it is in a sense a type of lumpen-champagne. These different vice preferences are often translated into racist statements like Robert's: "Those niggers steal for their crack and whatever else they can get their shitty little hands on." Or, Dante's: "Them damn [white] mouthwash drinkers stink up the whole mission." Many black and white men, of course, abstain from substance use all together, which creates another division by virtue of their feelings of superiority over the substance-using counterparts.

If drug consumption divides inhabitants along racial lines, experience with the criminal justice system seems to unite them. For reasons that will become clearer in the following pages, the neighborhood has become an integral part of what Loic Wacquant (2001: 97) calls the "carceral-assistential complex," which "carries out its mission to surveil, train, and neutralize the populations recalcitrant or superfluous to the new economic and racial regime according to a gendered division of labor…" that also feeds the contingent labor market. Lafayette habitués who carry the stigma of a felony conviction experience the translation of prison's symbolic incapacitation into material form. Just as the prison absorbs economically expendable members of the (predominantly black and Hispanic) ghetto and poor white communities, the Lafayette neighborhood siphons off the "excess" of the prison industrial complex by accommodating parolees with overly-saturated or non-existent family networks and housing indefinitely similarly situated ex-prisoners, both of whom are disqualified from public welfare benefits, save food stamps.

The Problem of Social Reintegration

Once one hits the bottom of their downward spiral, they become distributed along a continuum of dependence (Wolch and Dear 1993). One end of the continuum is social isolation, total dependence on service providers, and "disaffiliation" from the conventional society. Those who occupy the other end become adept at leveraging available life-sustaining resources, forging and maintaining a (tenuous) connection to the domiciled community, obtain income from casual labor and the modicum of autonomy it

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provides, including occasional meals at inexpensive restaurants and lodging at adjacent

cheap hotels. Regardless of one's level of functionality, social reintegration into

mainstream social life requires simultaneously accessing three key integrative

mechanisms: incorporation into the world of daily work, incorporation into an affordable

housing market, and access to basic social services (health and welfare) (Murray 2008;

Rosenthal and Foscarinis 2006). For homeless men in the Nashville/Davidson County

area, steady full-time employment is not easily acquired, the housing market is obscenely

expensive, and access to the few existing state and federal social services is not readily

forthcoming.

Spatial Mismatch and Labor Market Discrimination

Robert, a newcomer to Lafayette life, points out the key general constraints that

circumscribe homeless individuals' economic opportunity structure:

When I got my ID, I didn't have an address -- my Tennessee ID -- and so I used the mission. Now that puts up a black flag in a lot of places…I can't even donate plasma. You got to have a permanent address and a piece of mail with your name on it… I prefer to be working on a fulltime job but nobody wants to hire you if your address is at the rescue mission. I feel like I'm being condemned. So the only option you're left with, and this is what I've come to, is the day labor thing, no matter what. Save up and get a TracFone [an inexpensive cell phone service]. That would seem to be the thing to do, and at least you've got somewhere to be reached at. Then you got the housing thing, you know, you've got to make sure you're close by the mission. Plus, a lot of the good jobs ain't on the bus line. Even if they are, bus passes are what, $5 for all day, right?

In addition to their contention with a stigmatized physical address and lack of a

contact number, homeless job applicants rarely have the resources necessary to modify

their appearance in accordance with the (upper-)middle class norms of propriety that

dominate most workplaces. Mike, for instance, takes for granted that his class status (and

its reflection of his inner character) is on display to a prospective employer: "If you look

like a homeless or dress like a homeless, the companies don't wanna hire ya. They look at

you as a loser…They don't want somebody walkin onto the job site carrying duffel bags and shit."

Mike and Robert's definitions of the situation are apt in light of substantial sociological evidence that employers use race/ethnicity, class, and place of residence as indicators of prospective employees' (deficient) work ethics and (poor) work attitudes (Neckerman and Kirscherman 1991; Pager 2003; Wacquant 2008; Western 2006). Nashville's polynucleic ecology, as evidenced in Robert's statement, also complicates the job search. Entry-level and low-skilled jobs are concentrated in outer ring growth poles, creating a spatial mismatch that homeless job-seekers must confront given their concentration in Nashville's inner loop—the center of finance, insurance, healthcare, and tourism.

These structural barriers interact with several common life-course constraints, further dampening the extrication attempts of heavy substance users, and ex-offenders. Larry's slide into homelessness, for instance, manifest in an existential crisis where his self-concept and assessments of objective possibilities were misaligned with the structural realities of a crack-addicted, homeless ex-prisoner:

Most of the jobs…when I go to apply, they'll tell you: "Well, you know, we do drug tests, we're going to do a background check." I'm sure there's been jobs that I haven't been called back for because they always ask you if you've been convicted of a felony. And I always say I was, and say I will explain in the interview. Because I ain't got time to put all that on no paper. I'll just explain in the interview if you want to interview me to find out about it. I think it's hindering me from getting hired at some jobs. But I'm still going to try…I don't know what else to do. I don't know how far they can go back and what crimes they consider, because some places might just not want you to have a robbery. So they might overlook a little small charge. It's messin with my head.

Homeless Nashvillians, moreover, are not evenly distributed throughout the inner loop, but are concentrated in both the Lafayette district and in self-governing communities scattered along the west bank of the Cumberland River. Those who lack the

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social and subcultural capital—i.e., connections to nearby tent cities and/or the

knowledge of how and where one can sleep outside with relative impunity—tend to live

near the emergency shelter hub since they are further constrained by the rent at adjacent

seedy motels, the dangers of sleeping outside, and the ever-present threat of police

harassment:

Glen: I'm tryin to save up money and get *off* the streets. But, I'm tired of sleepin out too. The other alternative is to go to a motel, which now, being the first and third of the month [when SSI/SSDI checks are issued], the motels are full. They got cheap motels, one down here for 32 a night. And you got one a little further down Murfreesboro Road for 34…[But,] I can't spend all my money on a motel. I'm not getting *anywhere*…But now, the police are so down on the homeless. For months now. Total harassment. *Total* harassment.

Malign Neglect: Nashville's Affordable Housing Crisis and Public Housing Retrenchment

A combination of resource constraints, diminished capacity, and reliance on free

market logic (i.e., Section 8 vouchers) conspire to create a public housing delivery system

that is unable (and in some cases unwilling) to absorb homeless Nashvillians who, by

definition, cannot secure housing in the private market. Housing values in

Nashville/Davidson County have risen by 25 percent in the last decade[114], but real wages

have fallen by 10 percent in the same time period. This trend has coincided with a 40

percent increase in cost-burdened households since 1990. By the Department of Housing

and Urban Development's (HUD) standards, a household is "shelter poor" if it spends

over 30 percent of its gross income on housing. One-third of Davidson County's

households met the criteria of shelter poverty in 2005. Roughly ten percent of Nashville's

population only makes 80 percent of the area median income, meeting HUD's "low

income" criteria and nearly 40 percent of the population meets the HUD criteria for "very

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[114] The field and statistical data on which this chapter is based was collected or produced prior to the bursting of the housing bubble in the fall of 2008.

low income," meaning that they earn 50 percent of the area median income. Consequently, one in two Nashvillians are technically eligible for some type of federal housing aid (Housing Fund, Inc. 2008). This high degree of housing insecurity increases the probability of homelessness through eviction or foreclosure (Tilly 2006).

Only a small proportion of this large pool of precariously housed individuals end up unhoused (c.f. Wolch and Dear 1993). For those who do travel a road leading into the Lafayette neighborhood, there are only three potential avenues of escape offered by the federal government and its local liaison, MDHA: general public housing, the Single Room Occupancy Program, and the Shelter Plus Care Program. Both MDHA-operated properties and private market dwellings under Section 8 contract require Housing Choice (a.k.a. "Section 8") vouchers in Nashville's public housing system. Section 8 vouchers became the dominant mode of federal and local housing assistance after the 1986 Tax Reform Act put the brakes on public housing construction, and diminish every fiscal year (Bratt and Stone 2006).

Between 1976 and 2004 the federal budget for assisted housing fell from 56.4 billion to 29.25 billion, while the "expiring use problem" has resulted in the national loss of 60,000 units in older subsidized housing developments (given owners' conversion of previously subsidized units into market rate housing) and the loss of 40,000 units lost where owners have opted out of Section 8 contracts (Bratt and Stone 2006). The demolition of public housing without one-to-one replacement resulting from the "mixed-income" philosophy of HOPE VI has produced homelessness in some instances and has intensified the cornucopia of logistical problems the urban poor face in their search for affordable housing in others (c.f. Rosenthal and Foscarinis 2006; Pattillo 2007). Class

and race-based discrimination in the housing market and incongruence between voucher cash allotments and the going rate of rental properties has also informally purged many poor from the roles of public assistance (Blau 1992; Rosenthal and Foscarinis 2006; Wolch and Dear 1993). Punitive public housing policies, moreover, penalize whole families with eviction if a member engages in drug dealing or lies about income.

These malign interconnections are further aggravated by the fact that Nashville's Section 8 waitlist has been closed for over one year. According to the city's homelessness czar there are approximately 2,000 people in the queue. In 2007, MDHA had an allocation of 5,661 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), 119 units in a Single Room Occupancy Program for homeless individuals, and 230 units through the Shelter Plus Care Program, a program targeted to homeless individuals and families with disabilities, for a total of 5,994 units administered by its Rental Assistance Department. On average only six public housing units a week open up, making the typical wait time for a federally subsidized housing unit over nine months. The 349 units targeted toward homeless individuals can only house 15 percent of Nashville's 2,227 homeless individuals, over three-quarters of whom are men. The elderly, the disabled, and women with children, however, are given first priority for all three types of public housing, pushing able-bodied single men (without a recent/uninsurable criminal history) to the back of the line. The Lafayette neighborhood, as a result, becomes a place of both consignment and, quite often, confinement for Nashville's homeless men.

Nashville's Systemic Service Mismatch

"Cultural capital, in the form of skills necessary to hurdle complicated obstacles to care," writes Eric Klinenberg (2002), "and social capital in the shape of networks of

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service providers and social support systems, are priceless possessions in the entrepreneurial government" (158). Such an insight is in stark contrast to the nostrums of neoliberal pundits, who argue that homeless individuals' underutilization of social welfare provisions is due to their drug-induced isolation and alienation from mainstream institutions (Baum and Burnes 1993). Underutilization is an artifact of entrepreneurial urban governance which produces a "political mismatch" between the *structural level* of social networks and government programs and the *conjunctural level* of service delivery which, in their mutual reinforcement, excludes isolated citizens who do not know how to avail themselves of supportive services (Klinenberg 2002). This mode of delivering public goods not only requires city residents to be active in their pursuit, but it also doles such goods out through a decoupled political apparatus lacking clear lines of accountability. Moreover, the banality of social suffering in the entrepreneurial city is perpetuated by the lack of public will to allocate scarce public resources necessary to protect indigent residents who require more help than to which they are entitled and, due to a "systemic service mismatch," have a difficult time accessing the public aid for which they qualify.

This grim structural reality is expressed in a staggering number of "chronically homeless" Nashvillians, a status the federal government defines as: "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years." The most recent census of Nashville's homeless population revealed that 51% of the sheltered population was "chronically homeless," while 62% of the overall

population met this criteria[115]. This structural blockage translates into street theories that cast the welfare system's largely unintended (yet punitive) consequences in conspiratorial terms. Deshawn, a recovering crack addict in his mid-50s, offers a fairly representative definition of the situation:

The mission refers you to different agencies and then they run in a circle: they all refer you back to the mission. Everything is designed to turn you back to the mission. You're just in one big circle. And then the mission goes: 'Hey, well we give you a bed, we give you food. What more do you want?' So you're basically trapped in this neighborhood. That's why you see so many guys down here. There are people down here that really want a different way of life. But nobody's willing to give them a chance. All of the organizations that you touch base with, they run you in a circle: public housing, DHS, DSS. It returns you right back to the mission. So, it's designed to keep you dependent upon them. And for me, from my looking at it, I feel like it's just designed to keep you suppressed.

Deshawn, like most of his peers, has a fairly adept understanding of the structural impediments to his successful extrication. There are clear bounds, however, to his knowledge of the total situation. Knowledge and practical action are dialectically intertwined, meaning that uneven information about the system of welfare delivery circumscribes extrication attempts that occur in and around the service hub, partially reproducing the social relations in the neighborhood. The service mismatch that keeps Deshawn and many of his peers trapped in and around the Lafayette neighborhood also operates by blocking their integration into the public welfare system and/or stymieing their aspirations to pursue the few welfare benefits available to them; that is, if they are not outright disqualified from them due to stringent eligibility criteria.

Four key features of the current mode of welfare provision prove consequential for trapping homeless Nashvillians on the street indefinitely by virtue of the policy ceiling they create in their mutual reinforcement. First and foremost is the highly decentralized system of welfare provision in both a bureaucratic and geographic sense.

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[115] "Shelter Count Highlights Night of January 28, 2008: Nashville, Tennessee." MDHA Document. February 26, 2008.

MDHA's Rental Assistance Department no longer allows one to apply for public housing in its central office in East Nashville's Cayce Homes. Instead, indigent citizens must fill out an application at the particular property into which they seek entry and may select two alternate properties (MDHA Public Housing Application 2009). This policy is a logistical nightmare for any homeless Nashvillian given that Nashville's public housing stock is comprised of nineteen public housing sites which are scattered across the city. Moreover, these properties are subdivided into "traditional" (37% of the properties), "elderly only" (16%), "elderly and disabled only" (21%), and "contemporary housing" (HOPE VI, 29%) eligibility categories[116].

Even if the applicant knows the eligibility criteria for each category in order to increase his odds of successfully applying for public housing, he must supply the housing authority with: a birth certificate; a social security card; an I-94 if born outside of the U.S.; a picture I.D. of all household members 18 years of age or older; verification of income, checking and savings accounts; and verification of any assets. If he has previously lived in MDHA housing, he must: have had no poor housekeeping reports within the past 12 months; have no history of conflicts with neighbors or management in the prior 12 months; have paid in full any balance owed to MDHA (Public Housing or Section 8); and have left MDHA in good standing (not evicted). This is not to mention that, in order to qualify for the city's most substandard housing, he must: not have a bad landlord reference report; not be over the income limits (which vary depending on family size); have a satisfactory rent payment history over the past 12 months; not have a recent criminal record; and have no household members who were involved in drug-related or violent criminal activity in the past three years. These documentary and regulatory

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[116] These figures exceed 100% due to rounding up the percentages.

mismatches all but ensure that large swaths of the homeless population remain ineligible for public housing in either a de facto or a de jure sense. A point that seems lost on Phil Ryan, MDHA executive director: "This is part of MDHA's transition to more decentralized and customer-friendly operations of our apartment communities…We hope decentralizing applications will make the process more convenient for our customers[117]."

The second key feature of welfare provisions follows from the last two public housing criteria: the punitive logic embedded in federal and state social service provision. A disproportionate share of the male homeless population bears the mark of a felony record, which disqualifies many from public housing for at least three years after their initial release from prison. However, particular charges—namely, sex offenses and arson—now bar one for life. Says Will, who burned down a horse stable on a farm in rural Tennessee:

The arson charge. There's no way I can get rid of it, and it knocks out all public housing. Until I can figure out there's some way to ever get that off to where it don't pop up, then Section 8, University Court, anything like that is out. I filled out an application and went back and checked on it. They said, "We've got a problem." She said, "It might be a mistake," but she says, "if you can check into it and find out how to get rid of it or something," she said, "I'll go ahead and gladly try to get you into here." But she said, "Until we can," she said, "I'm sorry. There's nothing I can do."

Sex offenders, over 60 of whom use either the rescue mission or the Campus for Human Development for their physical address, are also blocked out of public housing for life.

Even those who are tapped into networks rich with cumulative knowledge about the public housing bureaucracy must succumb to the degradation inherent in the application process. Reggie, a 45-year-old recovering crack addict who claims to have been clean for the last year, recounts his experience with the MDHA clerk who processes

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[117] "MDHA to Move Applications Process Directly to Properties." *MDHA News Release.* February 21, 2007.

applications at the Tony Sudekum Homes that form the eastern border of the Lafayette

Neighborhood:

I applied at University Court, and they gave me what I would really call the bullshit runaround. I used to have a friend there. He was an old guy. He lived up there and we smoked crack. We smoked weed, dope together plenty of times. He was dead for at least six or seven months before I thought about moving there. And when I put my application in, the woman said, you know, "We show on our list --" You have to sign in who you want to come and visit. And she said, "We show on our list here that you used to come and visit a guy. He's a known crack smoker, and you can't qualify for housing if you're on drugs." It's just like a lot of these places now have been trying to claim like they're trying to help the homeless and can get you off the street. But then, they've got these real secret guidelines.

Reggie's account of informal "secret guidelines" and the housing authority's "guilt by

association" is representative of the stories many of his peers tell, as is his consequent

attitude which essentially amounts to rejecting a provision that has already been denied

by virtue of discrimination: "I just don't want to go through all that anymore; all that *and*

they want to put you in projects, and I don't like living in nobody's project no-way."

The third key feature is an artifact of HUD's reprioritization of homeless services

funding which has created a cottage industry in transitional housing provision, while it

has simultaneously devolved responsibility for key emergency service programs onto the

back of the faith community. "Because of the shift in funding, we lost our day-to-day

case management. Not that we don't do case management," notes the director of the

Campus for Human Development, "but we do it on a *very* scaled back level. And no

longer does someone have *one* person they can talk to." The devolutionary tensions

created by the redirection of federal funding are aggravated by the Metro government's

piecemeal retrenchment from Nashville's first ever public-private partnership. The co-

founder of the Campus recalls:

We agreed to take over the Service Center for the Homeless [previously operated by the city Health Department], which was a day center for the homeless. They agreed to pay us $200,000, and give us 5 to 6 staff members. $200,000 and two to three staff members is what we got; they didn't replace people through attrition. Today, we're at $150,000 [annual city allocation], no cost

of living increase, and no employees [i.e., caseworkers]. And we still do the same work. It costs us $350,000. But we absorb that—what Charlie says a lot of times is that the *'City's on the dole to us.'* It's something they committed to doing and then more and more they're getting out of the game and we're left still holding the bag. And people are losing the historical knowledge that it was the city's role in the first place. It takes a village. It takes public *and* private. And if the city continues to back out of it, where are we going to be?

In theory caseworkers provide homeless people, many of whom have mental health problems and substance use issues, with counseling and assessments, and ensure that they receive available services. Ready access to a caseworker who has individualized knowledge of his or her history and current situation has proven to effectively connect homeless individuals with the resources to which they are entitled, enhancing their probability of extrication in kind (Rosenthal 1994; Rosenthal and Foscarinis 2006). Only one caseworker is assigned to the Lafayette service hub, however, and she is overburdened and under-funded. Her unenviable, impossible mission is aggravated by the fact that the Nashville government only employs *one* homeless outreach worker for a population that exceeds 2,000 (over 70% of whom are men). It is perhaps inevitable that men like Dante frequently express their frustration with the Roxanne, the Downtown Clinic caseworker:

I've been calling all these housing things and stuff and I keep pushing and pushing and pushing and I finally got a briefing for the 20th. I asked her to call and she's like, "I can't do anything more than you're doing." So I said, "Well, I guess I'll just do it myself." Their resources is what really makes a social worker. She should have a list of somebody who can help you. If you don't know what you're trying to do she's like, "Well, I don't know anything." She should be like, "I can call and set you up an appointment if you can go there." She don't have any of that going on. If she knows the terrain, she's not telling everybody. If you don't get anything off this list or by word of mouth, you don't get anything.

One of the functions of the street grapevine is the supply of information about social services and their associated barriers and avenues to access. The information that travels along this peer network helps members of the homeless population negotiate the maze-like welfare bureaucracy in the absence of competent caseworkers. Much of the

information one extracts from the grapevine, however, is subject to a distance-decay

process that renders street knowledge highly uneven and full of half-truths:

DW: Why not just apply for public housing so your name's on the list?

Dave: Because there's already a long waiting list. You're not going to get in that quick. And I don't want to have to sit out here homeless for six or seven months waiting on a house when I might not even be here in six or seven months from now. I wouldn't know how to go about it, anyway.

DW: How do you know that the waiting list is so long?

Dave: I've heard people talk about it.

DW: So basically, you haven't even talked to anyone who's a representative of housing?

Dave: I'm going on the grapevine.

DW: Is there some reason you trust that information rather than just checking it out yourself?

Dave: No. I just wouldn't know where to go check it out. I don't know what -- how to go about it. Now that's just the situation.

Dave's assessment of the situation would perhaps be apt if his emphysema did not qualify

him for Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). Barring access to a caseworker who

can help him put together a viable extrication plan, however, Dave neither knows how to

go about applying for SSDI—which, incidentally, would provide him with the monthly

income he needs to qualify for housing—nor does he know that both the public housing

and Section 8 queues grant priority status to the physically disabled. This entrenched

pattern is unsurprising in light of a national study which revealed that despite the high

proportion of physically and mentally disabled members of the homeless population, only

14% receive SSDI benefits (Rosenthal and Foscarinis 2006).

The indigenous knowledge that travels along the grapevine peer network also

contributed to Jermaine's five year tenure at the rescue mission. "I didn't have a regular

income coming in," he explains. "I went up here to Howard school one day with my

buddy [who was applying for SSDI] and I was going to do it. But I got up there and they waited so long and I left. And I never tried again." Aside from illuminating the degradation inherent in any social service bureaucracy, Jermaine's statement also highlights both the grapevine's uneven knowledge and the maze-like quality of the field of social service provision: Howard's School houses the Department of Social Services, *not* the Department of Veteran's Affairs which grants VA benefits. Over the course of his first year of homelessness, Jermaine's health deteriorated to a point where he was visibly disabled. A serendipitous encounter with an outreach worker at Operation Stand Down, a yearly event that commemorates homeless Veterans held at the local Fairgrounds, resulted in his eventual receipt of a monthly VA disability stipend. His newfound income also provided him with a regular income that made him eligible for public housing, for which the same outreach worker helped Jermaine apply. If Jermaine had ready access to a caseworker, he likely would have been placed in public housing *four years ago*. This reality, however, does not seem to dampen his excitement over his pending move to the Parthenon Towers which overlook Nashville's Centennial Park and its eccentric full-scale replica of ancient Greece's (perhaps ironic, in this case) symbol of Athenian democracy—the Parthenon: "When I talked to Parthenon they told me January the 1st was the day that I was approved. They said I probably won't get the apartment until March. I can't wait to be sittin on that balcony lookin at all them trees; and the ladies!"

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed how the interaction among welfare state retrenchment, a systemic service mismatch, and Nashville's affordable housing crisis are mutually reinforcing structural mechanisms that interact with homeless men's biographies and set strict limits to what they can think, hope, and attempt to achieve in their extrication efforts. The logics of entrepreneurial governance vis-à-vis the welfare state, in particular, reinforce the "extraordinary inertia" resulting from the "the inscription of social structures" in the daily operation of the Lafayette organizational ghetto and the biographical trajectories of its homeless habitués (Bourdieu 2000). The welfare state is more than a simple (re)distribution system that transfers tax dollars into benefits and social services. By blocking access through punitive eligibility criteria, geographic and bureaucratic decentralization, and stymieing the aspirations of many eligible recipients, the federal government and its local public housing liaison (MDHA) leaves the responsibility for day-to-day management and regulation of these homeless men to the local "experts" who run Lafayette's caretaker agencies.

CHAPTER XII

Structuration and Homelessness: The Social Reproduction of the Organizational Ghetto

Every great city has one or more slums…True, poverty often dwells in hidden alleys close to the palaces of the rich; but, in general, a separate territory has been assigned to it, where, removed from the sight of the happier classes, it may struggle along as it can.
–Friedrich Engels (1845)

Federal homelessness czar Phillip Mangano arrived in Music City on April 18, 2008. Having arrived late to the Nashville International Airport, Mangano and his Housing and Urban Development (HUD) entourage reversed their order of appearance, deciding to meet with faith-based service providers before meeting with Mayor Karl Dean and the local business community. Like a scene from the movie *Men in Black,* a convoy of black Lincoln Town Cars pulled into the Mission's parking lot. A small army of black-suited HUD officials filed out of the parked vehicles and marched into the visitor's entrance overlooking Lafayette Street. After climbing up a flight of stairs, the men in black reached the administrative foyer where Jim Holliman eagerly shook each and every one of their hands before ushering them into a conference room outfitted with an oak podium engraved with a crucifix and ten circular tables. Wasting no time, Mangano approached the podium and cast his gaze on the thirty or so service providers in attendance. With the body language and verbal cadence of a used car salesman, he outlined his raison d′être:

Part of my responsibilities in Washington is convening 20 federal agencies and really sensitizing them to the issue of homelessness to make their resources more available and more accessible to homeless people and help you in your efforts to move beyond simply *managing* people's

homelessness, because that's not what you were called to do, is it? You weren't called to sustain a status quo that leaves people on the street or in the shelter. Your job isn't to make them feel better while they're in a shelter. Is it? *Maintenancing* the effort. *Accommodating* the rising tide of homeless people. Is that why you rolled up your sleeves years ago and got involved in this issue?

Mangano paused and brushed an errant strand of salt-and-pepper hair out of his eyes before shooting a smug smile at his audience which, in turn, shouted *"No"* in unison. Amid the audience's subsequent applause, he continued:

I know a lot of you come from a faith background. This [homelessness] is a social wrong. It's a moral, social, spiritual, and humanitarian *wrong*. That's what homelessness is. So the intent isn't to *manage* a wrong. I went to seminary. I tried to be a Christian. I need all of your prayers. But I studied a lot in religion. And I have yet to find any spiritual teaching, any religion where God's intent in that religion is to manage wrong. I've yet to find that passage or scripture. I've yet to find that book. Whether talking about the Hebrew scripture, the Christian scripture, the Koran, the only scriptures I see is one intent about wrong. What is it? *End it. End it.*

Mangano's commentary dramatizes the convergence between the federal government's devolutionary logic and the on-the-ground efforts of faith-based voluntary agencies in the realm of social service provision. Whereas the Keynesian state created policies that spread the risk of social insecurity through redistribution networks, the neoliberal state reassigns it by devolving authority to local networks of "experts." In this socio-historical context, non-profit caretakers perform many of the social and managerial functions once carried out by the state. Indeed, many of these caretakers are located in districts like Lafayette – interstitial pockets of poverty surrounded by a redeveloping urban core – and their managerial authority proves increasingly consequential in the lives of dispossessed populations drawn into their orbits of "care."

The central purpose of this dissertation has been to explain precisely *how* caretakers' managerial authority shapes the lives of one select group of urban outcasts: homeless men. Embarking on this endeavor has required zeroing in on the Lafayette district in order to explain: how the organizational ghetto came into existence (accounting for its morphological origins); how the moving parts of its organizational ensemble work

in concert with one another and the larger urban environment (accounting for its physiology); and how this organizational agglomeration articulates with contemporary trends in welfare state restructuring. More specifically, insofar as the organizational ghetto is structured (produced and reproduced) through social relationships, I have attempted to account for the different kinds and levels of mechanisms that (re)produce these social relations. Even though the analysis places the district in its historically specific context of constitution, it grants analytic priority to the local level where caretakers' authority has its most salient effect on the structure and process of unhoused men's lives; it is from this angle that we get the most traction on the urban structuration of homelessness.

The Morphological Origins of the Organizational Ghetto

Lafayette's social production has no tidy teleology, but is the path-dependent outcome of multiple potential routes and conflicted possibilities. A number of conjunctural factors account for the underlying and related processes by which the district came into being. The morphological impetus was Nashville's historically specific, isomorphic goal of jumpstarting a stagnant tax base by supplanting a centrally located pocket of concentrated poverty with an entertainment district – i.e., the creation of a new "locational grid" in the urban accumulation process. This goal led the city government to engage in a series of path-dependent, entrepreneurial redevelopment campaigns that ultimately reconfigured the chain of complementary relationships sustaining skid row. In the case of the Lafayette district, several key ecological attributes provided caretakers and

urban authorities with a geographical solution to the problems Dodge City Skid Row posed to these reclamation efforts: access to public transportation (the Greyhound station, city bus stops, and interstates); a glut of blighted and hence inexpensive warehouses and commercial space; the presence of suitable zoning; and limited community opposition.

The caretakers who were displaced by the gentrification of Dodge City were not, as we learned, free to move wherever they wanted. Aside from the fact that only Lafayette offered all of the above cited ecological advantages, the municipal government's purchase and offer of an abandoned warehouse adjacent to its own homeless service agency in the unevenly developed district yielded the coercive cooperation of three caretakers whose displacement was foreordained by heightened redevelopment activity. The consolidation of three previously disparate operations in this dilapidated, light industrial shell slotted a complementary organizational site into the material substratum of Lafayette. NIMBY pressures and the serendipitous location of a large and inexpensive, shuttered department store conspired with escalating redevelopment tension on Lower Broad to relocate the Mission – the city's largest homeless shelter – next to Lafayette's two nascent sites of homeless service provision, producing a new constellation of moral management, exploitative labor and street level improvisations.

I call this modified reproduction of homeless management across physical and historical contexts the *rolling inertia of relegatory space* and refer to the outcome as an *organizational ghetto*. Harvey Molotch and colleagues' (2000) concept of "place as rolling inertia" provides a model for understanding how urban structuration processes produce a place's durable distinctiveness. Whereas their model explains how a particular

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mode "lash-up" persists over time, the case of Lafayette invited the complementary but different question of how a mode of lash-up becomes disassembled, (selectively) recombines in a new place, and then persists. I propose that the *rolling inertia of relegatory space* concept answers this question. Just as time unfolds in place, place unfolds in time (Fairbanks 2003), which means that spatial structure is not necessarily a stationary, durably distinct entity, but rather can be a moving medium through which social relations are modified and (re)produced through daily activity.

This dialectical notion of urban space provides a heuristic for understanding how spaces of relegation roll through time even as their location, function, and identity shift in the process. Indeed, good reason exists to believe that the Lafayette case is not eccentric. Demographic portraits of U.S. geographies of homelessness reveal significant geographical contiguity between contemporary agglomerations of service provision and their skid row predecessors; many are adjacent to and/or located within three miles of previous skid row neighborhoods (Farrell 2005; Lee and Farrell 2005; Lee and Price-Spratlen 2004).

The local organizations and demographic composition that have coalesced (i.e., "lashed-up") in districts such as Lafayette have created a modified ensemble of things that serve as the basis for homeless life (social morphology) – a material and social base on which the meaningful action of the indigent and their caretakers is based. These synergistic constellations – *organizational ghettos* – do not become inert once they come into being, but are in a continual process of becoming vis-à-vis the material, practical, and symbolic activity of constituents embroiled in a collective place-making project.

"Places," writes Thomas Gieryn (2000), "are made through human practices and institutions even as they help to make those practices and institutions" (467). Caretakers' responses and strategies are not, as proponents of the revanchist and carceral city imply (Davis 1990; Sites 2003; Smith 1996; Stoner 2000; Vitale 2008; MacLeod 2002; Mitchell 2003), derivative of the restructuring-generated class conflict that had a heavy hand in shaping their contemporary morphological configuration; rather, they act with some autonomy and according to their own (ethical) agendas. Accordingly, they should be viewed as independent agencies with significant – indeed principal – influence upon the production, reproduction, and organization of homeless men's social relations, daily practices, and identities that, in turn, play their own part in "making" Lafayette by reproducing and reinforcing the cultural schemas (logics) that give these agencies their respective reasons for existence and shape their daily managerial practices.

The Internal (Re)production of the Organizational Ghetto

By supplying caretakers and homeless clients alike with incentives for collaborating in the provisional formation of spiritual community, these agencies' *moral economies of care* reproduce the organizational ghetto *from within* by enveloping homeless men in client-staff (giver-receiver) relations that dialectically structure their situations into routine processes that organize Lafayette and the surrounding urban environment. Let us look more closely at the various dimensions of these internally reproductive dynamics.

Moral Economies of Care: Dimensions of Difference

Moral Economies of Care are religious ethics in practice. Caretakers enact their

ethical obligations to the poor through practices intended to create the reciprocal bonds

required to construct religious "community" and intercede the redemptive power of God.

RITI and the Mission, however, are theologically distinct moral-technologies which

house distinctive moral-economic "software." Their respective moral economies of care

are rooted in divergent religious schemas (logics) which weave together different

doctrines, ethics, social obligations, constructions of homelessness, and managerial

prescriptions that shape the meaning and purpose behind their distribution of life-

sustaining goods and services which, in turn, instantiate, serve, and reinforce their

particular theological imaginary and its distinctive religious morality. Figure 12.1

illustrates the key areas of distinction between the two caretakers (see Appendix).

Doctrinal Distinctions

Each caretaker's ameliorative practices spring from divergent doctrinal

commitments. Whereas RITI's moral-economic practices are rooted in the *Catechism of

the Catholic Church* which conceives of charity as a social commandment that mediates

God's love, the Mission's flows from the "gospel of reconciliation" where charity is not a

means of social amelioration, but is a means to the end of "saving lost souls." These

doctrinal distinctions flavor each agency's religious ethic, which conceive of "sin" in

radically opposite ways. RITI's Catholic ethic of caritas views sinful behavior as the

outcome of inequitable social conditions and hence emphasizes fault forgiveness and

legitimates dependency. The Mission's (Protestant) statutory ethic, however, casts

poverty as the outcome of sinful living engendered by the Bible's declining normative

authority. Accordingly, missionaries feel compelled by Christ to deliver impecunious

souls from Satan's grip (the realm of darkness), while RITI staff views its obligation to

the poor in terms of stemming sinful (social) inequalities.

Homelessness is thus constructed differently in each agency. In RITI, the

homeless are cast as victims of a sinful social order who are also the "sacred image of an

invisible God." Missionaries construct the homeless as "sinful" souls whose poverty

flows from an improper relationship with God; because they turned their backs on Him

by turning their backs on kith, kin, and their jobs, they are victims of self-inflicted

problems in moral living. Missionaries thus believe the solution to homelessness lay in

spiritual conversion. On the other hand, RITI staff's managerial prescriptions for the

problem of homelessness revolve around cultivating communion with the unhoused.

Moral Alchemy

Herein lies the juncture between caretakers' distinct, schematically structured

ethical obligations and their material, ameliorative practices. "Goods are not only

economic commodities," as Claude Levi-Strauss (1969) aptly observed, "but vehicles and

instruments for realities of another order: influence, power, sympathy, status, emotion"

(54). Access to and control over the allocation of scarce goods and services allow

caretakers to bring otherwise virtual religious schemas into the realm of practical

conduct. Given RITI staff's Eucharistic schema (logic), the daily distribution of resources

is a means of suffusing guests with the redeeming power of Christ's "original grace" of

"hospitality" which consequently enacts the ethical obligation to ameliorate sinful

inequalities through the provision of caritas. Missionaries put their Manichaean schema

into practice by transmuting material goods into a conduit of religious authority designed

to inculcate Biblical (statutory) prescriptions in the minds of homeless beneficiaries with the intent of morally re-engineering their depraved "homeless lifestyle."

In both cases, caretakers act as *moral alchemists* who convert profane goods and services into "instruments for realities" of a sacred order through alchemic practices of symbolic exchange. They do this by constructing brick-and-mortar agencies and organizing their internal workings into *moral-economies of care* designed to accumulate spiritual capital by distributing charitable "gifts" of food, shelter, and clothing with the aim of obtaining either a homeless recipient's "countergift" or "gratitude." By transmuting scarce resources into asymmetrical relations of durable dependence and leveraging the principle of reciprocity to invoke homeless men's (feigned) gratitude (and its correlative feeling of shame), missionaries intend to engender and convert recurring relationships with recipients into the latter's passionate piety by steering them into Life Recovery.

RITI staff also converts life-sustaining resources into a system of organized dependence, but does so with the intent of pulling the homeless into the affective bonds of a hospitable community that mediates God's hope-inducing grace. Rather than using the principle of reciprocity as a tool to establish moral dominance over the homeless by converting "gratitude" into a debt that can only be repaid through spiritual conversion, RITI staff creates a spiritual gift exchange in which both they and their clients honor this reciprocal principle by virtue of their recurrent interaction. Because the guest mediates the very deity staff seeks to serve with their caring practices, they only expects a guests' "countergift" in the form of his participation in the ongoing construction of a Eucharistic community.

Moral-Economic Relations

Caretakers' moral-economic practices also generate distinct relations between staff and clients as well as distinctive associations between client groups that, in turn, produce agency-specific client identities that have social and spatial relevance beyond each agency's interior. Missionaries cultivate a milieu of moral interdiction by repeatedly declaring a discrepancy between homeless men's moral deservedness and the charitable "gifts" they receive as they circulate through the intake ritual each evening. By mediating missionaries' Manichaean schema of the universe, the intake ritual works on and through the general homeless population by propagating their contaminated spiritual status. Each encounter with missionaries communicates to these unhoused men that their sinful lifestyle is responsible for their failure to live up to the motivational schemes of society, and that the way out of their predicament lay in bringing their lives into accordance with the statutory prescriptions taught in Life Recovery.

Because God is found in the community rather than in one's individual relationship with Him, RITI staff focuses on "building relationships" on the foundation of "acceptance." Each staff and volunteer interaction with the homeless is intended to weave a "tapestry of love," which staff sees as paramount to both doing God's work and cultivating a guest's experience of "something divine in their life" which, in staff's view, is synonymous with hope-inducing hospitality. However, the bed ticket queue and the conduit of care to which it grants access have the sequential effect of: mystifying the church-allocation process, manufacturing guests' collective misrecognition, and creating a perceived group of "favorite" guests that disproportionately gains access to "good" churches. The misrecognition that "snitches" receive the "best" churches creates a low-

grade siege mentality wherein fear of being relegated to the perceived non-favorite group for "guilt by association" leads guests to estrange themselves from each other. Ironically, self-imposed isolation and/or circumspect interaction becomes a survival imperative in the context of an agency designed to promote guests' communion with God, staff, volunteers and one another.

The relations between the Mission's client groups are also characterized by estrangement. Whereas client divisions in RITI express an organizational contradiction, missionaries intentionally build divisions into their moral-economic practices by way of dual-track ministries. In stark contrast to RITI's Eucharistic schema, missionaries' Manichaean schema proscribes communion among clients because clear boundaries must be maintained between the realms of "light" (salvation) and "darkness" (sin) ("And what communion have light with darkness?"). The terms and conditions of goods distribution reveal the idea that recipients evoke in the imagination of the giver whose "gift" amounts to a social looking glass. In the Mission environment, the separate floors, dual-time tables, interactive prohibitions, and definitional segregation that divide the Life Recovery program from the Transient Ministry bifurcate the undeserving poor into a low- and high-status group, positioning Life Recovery members on top of a social and symbolic hierarchy. The Manichaean schema that guides missionaries' moral-economic practices works on and through both groups by creating a *moral reservoir* that grounds their collective conceptions of self-worth and guides their interactions with and discursive constructions of each other.

Residents accomplish this task of collective self-production by employing internecine strategies of symbolic hierarchization – extracting from the local moral

repertoire (of comparison and hierarchy) – to create comparative selves and secure a dignified place within the Mission's spiritual order. Life Recovery members invoke a symbolic hierarchy of moral worth based on the criteria of God-centered living, interpersonal and subjective restraint, and nascent self-sufficiency, constructing a *pious self* in the process. "Transients" also pull from the local reservoir of morality to place themselves on a symbolic hierarchy of moral worth based on the criteria of unmediated faith and autonomy. In doing so, they construct a *sovereign self*.

Given that transients construct this sovereign self in response to their status as tropes imbued with images of contamination, identifying acts, and life conduct Life Recovery is designed to break, it is understandable that the social relations and collective identities that emerge in this organizational environment play a salient role in creating the district's inter-organizational "physiology" (internal dynamics).

<center>The Physiology of the Organizational Ghetto</center>

"Under conditions of transience and heterogeneity," wrote Herbert Gans (1995), "people interact only in terms of the segmental roles necessary for obtaining social services" (176). Implicit in Gans' formulation, is that social relationships in "transient areas" of the center city are of a secondary nature and display "anonymity, impersonality, and superficiality" (176). Our analysis of Lafayette life suggests that the social relations in this transient milieu are not *secondary* associations cohered by an impersonal social service nexus, but are *quasi-primary* relations cohered by an intimate moral economy of care. Caretakers, as we have seen, take homeless men's very souls as the object of their

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ameliorative-cum-spiritual interventions. In doing so, staff cast homeless men in distinct segmental roles consisting of different reactions to and expectations for their daily performance. On stepping into a Lafayette service agency a man becomes what he is through his relations with caretakers who assign him a position in the spiritual order and expect him to behave in accordance with his supernatural status – in short, he becomes either a "transient" or a "guest."

Segmental Role Identities

The collective identities men derive from these two segmental roles shape their practical negotiation of caretakers' respective moral-economies, forging a de facto inter-organizational bond in the process. RITI staff consistently makes reference to "guests" not only as members of a religious community, but as bearers of rights who are worthy of dignity and respect. Much of guests' valorization of RITI's goods and services vis-à-vis the Mission's understandably focuses on the way in which the organizational status they occupy enhances rather than attacks their sense of self. From a guest's perspective a RITI bed ticket increases his control over his life, and provides distance from the Mission's spiritual and material denigration as well as from the concentrated suffering and loneliness endemic in street life. A RITI bed ticket's value is thus relational; men's intensified volition and continuous striving for this boundary object is heavily driven by the default prospect of playing the role of anathematic trope in the Mission's moral-economy. Put differently, the Mission's moral-economic "output" becomes RITI's moral-economic "input."

Horizontal Interdependence

Despite their de facto symbiotic relationship, these two caretakers are actually embroiled in a low-grade competition to extract the same "resources" from the neighborhood – homeless "congregants." "There was a conflict between the two agencies from the very beginning [in 1985]," remembers Charles Strobel. "Carl Resener, who was the director of the Mission, saw us as competitors. He would remind people that when we close down [in April] all of those people who went to Room in the Inn had to come back to the Mission. He said, 'Now you know who really loves you.'" Jim Holliman's commentary reveals that he and his staff have maintained this competitive mindset:

> For the most part they [RITI] cherry pick. They take the problem-free homeless population that aren't going to cause problems at a church setting. We're all in it together in the sense that God's at the center of it. What differs is how we get there. We have a Life Recovery program that all our efforts go into. Their's is not about Life Recovery. Their's is obviously about God, but about God being seen through providing services. They have a "feel good" kind of mission [said with sarcasm]. But we're here 24-7, 365 days a year. We could take care of the problem if, instead of being a hindrance, they would get on board with our mission. They need us, but we don't need them.

Even though homeless men prefer RITI, the Mission maintains its dominance in the district through its control over comparatively vaster resources, including its large volume of space as well as the economic and human resources required to operate year-round. In the summer, it is the only game in town. In the winter, it still shelters over three times the number of clients as RITI, which turns away guests every night. Consequently, its moral-economy of care is the central organizing principle of the district – the terms and conditions of its resource distribution play a disproportionate role in structuring the social relations of unhoused men into patterned social practices that make up Lafayette's social system. Nonetheless, the Mission's moral-economic practices render it an intermediate input into RITI's moral-economy which, for those who are invested in

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maintaining their place in "the loop," creates an interlocking auxiliary structure that plays its own role in driving the district's dual morphology of morning dispersion and evening concentration.

Social life in Lafayette, as we have seen, does not continue at the same level throughout the day; it goes through regular, successive phases of decreased and increased density, of repose and activity. The district's temporal and spatial rhythms are driven by the exigencies of caretakers' moral-economic practices; residents' segmental roles imply their segmental performance in the drama of caretaker life and their daily rounds follow the daily cycle of shelter life. Except on extremely cold evenings, caretakers operate roughly 13.5 hours a day (4:30 p.m. – 6 a.m.) with a two-hour intake windows (4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.). For this reason, residents disperse to nearby sites for nearly 12 hours a day and surplus time is carefully budgeted so they can reconvene in the district by the 6:30 p.m. curfew.

(Perverse) Symbiotic Interdependence and Fiscal Alchemy

Predatory economic enterprises have proven remarkably adept at insinuating themselves into Lafayette's organizational ecology, in part by exploiting this dual morphology and its corresponding internal dynamics. Indeed, day labor dispatchers act as perverse Robin Hoods for the contingent labor market by stealing the surplus time of the poor and giving it to the rich (cf. Purser 2006). The corporate executives for whom these petty street demagogues work have designed a political-economic apparatus designed to funnel the excess time and dammed-up labor power of Lafayette residents in part by synchronizing agency time-tables with caretakers; it is no coincidence that every single hiring hall opens its doors at 5:30 a.m. and shuts down by 4:30 p.m. The result is a

temporal division of labor in the district, where both predatory and ameliorative

organizations participate in one and the same temporal order, but differ in their impact on

the district's internal dynamics.

Day labor dispatchers, as we have seen, are presented with a recurring problem:

They must ensure that they are in a position to fill work orders if and when they increase.

Much as caretakers work as moral alchemists, dispatchers must act as *fiscal alchemists*

who create a "reliably contingent" reserve army out of a residual pool of lumpen

proletarians who, by reason of their structurally imposed position in the economic order,

lack any productive reason for existence. Dispatchers' alchemic feat is particularly

difficult given the absence of bureaucratic mechanisms to instill loyalty and maintain

control over the workforce (e.g., promotion up the job ladder); the work allocation system

(job queue) is the organizational mechanism that fills this void and achieves this alchemic

accomplishment.

The job queue mediates the practical and social relations homeless "employees"

enter into with each other as well as with management, and structures the situation of

these otherwise unemployable men into a routinized employment practice that creates

provisional order out of ostensible chaos vis-à-vis the transmutation of transience into

reliable contingency. We have seen that the co-existence of two contradictory principles

(cf. Purser 2006) – workers' default assumption that job-allocation operates on a first

come, first serve basis and dispatchers' selective reward of "good" workers with "good"

jobs" – engenders a structural misrecognition that creates workers' loyalty to one

particular agency by turning them against each other (reliable contingency).

Reliably contingent "employees" are the day labor industry's primary "raw material" (its major cost) as well as its key asset and basic product (Peck and Theodore 2001). In the context of these contingent relations of production, the homeless employee produces the basis of his de facto and de jure employers' profit (surplus labor), but does not produce his own means of existence (necessary labor) – in short, he does not make enough to reproduce *himself* even as he reproduces capitalist relations of production (the overarching "regime of precarious employment"). Given its evasion of the cost of labor reproduction, the entire industry's viability is predicated on entities that offset the resulting disequilibrium through the provision of a "social wage" – i.e., goods and services that supplement a worker's income – which, in the first instance, create the conditions of possibility for a worker's loyalty to a given day labor agency.

In Lafayette, caretakers are the source of day labor agencies' necessary "inputs," and this functional interdependence creates a perverse symbiosis – they complement each other by rendering counterpoised yet contradictory services that create an indigent agglomeration economy which translates into homeless men's treadmill-like pattern of subsistence.

The Organizational Ghetto and the Urban Structuration of Homelessness

The Urban Studies literature in general and the poverty studies literature in particular have been particularly inattentive to urban structuration processes and have tended to treat urban organizations – the loci of such processes – as schematic caricatures rather than leading actors in the drama of urban life. Whereas proponents of the

revanchist and carceral city characterize the homeless as existing in a state of social entropy (i.e., lacking a social system that sustains and orders their lives) and treat caretaker organizations as derivative of class conflict and/or restructuring processes (Davis 1990; Sites 2003; Smith 1996; Stoner 2000; Vitale 2008; MacLeod 2002; Mitchell 2003), urban ethnographers who study the neighborhoods in which the homeless carve out survival treat organizations as the "backdrops" of lives mainly structured by the street (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009; Duneier 1999; Venkatesh 2006).

My findings regarding the intricate practical operations of Lafayette's intra-organizational dynamics and its inter-organizational relations reveal that urban organizations indeed play an integral role in the spatial and temporal structuration of inner city homeless men's lives; homelessness is neither socially entropic nor is it structured primarily by structures of co-dependence – i.e., a moral economy of sharing (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009), symbiotic hustler-community relations (Venkatesh 2006), or a sidewalk moral order (Duneier 1999) – forged in the shadow of caretaker agencies. Ethnographers' emphasis on these small-scale, relatively autonomous homeless "communities" is significant in that it leads them to focus on the periphery of the homeless population rather than its center. By overlooking the constitution of poverty organizations, they overlook the social formations most integral to the lives of the largest number of homeless individuals. In doing so, they neglect homeless habitats wherein power and (moral) authority resides in the organizations on which the homeless depend for their survival rather than within a relatively autonomous homeless group's repeated exchange of resources, friendship, and/or "mentoring" with one another. These group structures indeed exist, but they are nested within larger organizational structures.

Against the presumption that poverty organizations are peripheral to homeless life, I argue that their internal dynamics are the central – indeed foundational – building blocks of a spatial structure that shapes and bounds the routine aspects of homeless individuals' survival. The Lafayette district is not pace Duneier (1999) a peer community cohered by a "moral order" nested in a "sustaining habitat," nor is it à la Bourgois and Schonberg (2009) a "community of addicted bodies" held together by a "moral economy of sharing." Neither is it a contact point between the underground economy and the larger community (Venkatesh 2006). Rather, Lafayette is a *community of spiritual intercession* cohered by a *moral economy of care* that is the medium and outcome of the staff and client interaction which (re)produces an *organizational ghetto* from within.

The key street-level difference between the Lafayette case and the cases of Maquis Park (Venkatesh), Greenwich Village (Duneier), and Edgewater (Bourgois and Schonberg) is the spring postulated for homeless individuals' recurrent action. Whereas Bourgois and Schonberg argue that Edgewater life springs from and revolves around heroin addiction, Duneier suggests that homeless men's primary problem in living revolves around their "struggle to live in accordance with standards of moral worth" (2002: 1555) and that the written matter economy springs from this struggle and creates a relatively effective solution. Duneier's claim seems to derive from his implicit Durkheimian model of moral order in which a group's economic activity manufactures makeshift solidarity and generates moral norms that regulate members' egoistic impulses. Bourgois and Schonberg's substantially more plausible action-spring can be attributed to their Janus-faced moral-economic model wherein "gifts often go hand in hand with rip-offs" (6).

In conceptualizing the street-level spring for Lafayette's activity and in making sense of the bonds of (provisional) solidarity forged inside its borders, I found the notion of a "moral economy" more compelling than a "moral order" because the latter elides power dynamics central to any social system charged with the allocation of resources while the former places such dynamics at the forefront. But Lafayette's moral-economic relations are of a different sort than those theorized by Bourgois and Schonberg. As we have seen, they spring from faith-based caretakers' distinctive religious logics regarding their obligations to the poor. Moreover, these moral economies of care do more than envelop givers and receivers in bonds of reciprocal exchange; they also forge conduits of spiritual intercession and convert otherwise chaotic lives into structured daily routines, establishing in part the boundaries of the district. As Marcel Mauss (1990) observed: "[S]ervices rendered of all kinds are caught up in a circle, following around this circle a regular movement in time and space" (22).

The Spatial Routinization of Homelessness

Lafayette's dual morphology is etched between the distributive practices of the caretakers who operate the revolving door and the daily rounds of homeless residents which, in the aggregate, create the daily rhythm of morning dispersion and evening concentration. We have already considered how this rhythm translates into the district's physiology but, because Lafayette is not a hermetic social universe, our discussion is incomplete without considering how the moral economies of care which drive these rhythms extend in time and space. Residents' use of time is regulated by caretakers' scheduling of meals, clothing giveaways, and bed-ticket allocation, as well as by physical features such as the availability or absence of a dormitory bed. Because residents are

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dependent on these goods and services, and because they take up time as they move through urban space, the trajectories of their daily movements are, in turn, enabled and constrained by the routinized circulation of these resources.

The district's temporal order did not spring out of thin air. Rather, we learned that its locus can be found in missionaries' Manichaean schema; because missionaries have an ethical obligation to save homeless men's souls, and because they believe that introducing structure into men's lives is a necessary condition for achieving this goal, they attempt to regulate residents "lifestyle" in part by husbanding their time through the strict scheduling of goods and service distribution (i.e., the introduction of "exact regularity"). Inculcating homeless men's "time-thrift" is therefore based on fundamental moral considerations and assumptions. By interlocking its time-table with the Mission's, RITI staff has created a temporal bond with their spiritual "competitor."

In doing so, they also inadvertently reinforce the Manichaean prohibition of the "slothful" spending of morning in bed. In conjunction with missionaries' control over considerably vaster resources, this dynamic renders the Mission's moral economy of care the district's central organizing principle. Just as RITI locks into the Mission's organizational framework, day labor agencies lock into caretakers' interlocking temporal frameworks. The result is a meta-temporal framework that structures residents' spatial practices which embody "a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routine and networks which link up places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure) (Lefebvre 1991: 33).

The daily routines which link up Lafayette residents' places of work, "leisure" and "private" life are organized around four "palliative measures" (Freud 1961) –

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"deflections," "substitutive satisfactions," "intoxicating substances," and extrication –

which map onto a finite number of structurally overdetermined settings, most of which

are located beyond Lafayette's borders. Even though residents' spatial practices are

overdetermined by locality, they are not purely a set of mechanistic adjustments. Rather,

they reflexively monitor their situations by taking the role of urban authorities in their

subdivision of prime commercial space into gradations of "acceptable" usability.

Likewise, they learn the different values housed residents attach to different regions as

well as any temporal variation in the assignment of such values. In the process, they form

attitudes about which types of places and which times of day or night are usable and

employ these categories to negotiate the nets of discipline, and adopt strategies to make

use of the constraining order of place.

Routines and Cognitive-Spatial Boundaries

In the course of their daily rounds and negotiations, unhoused men undergo

experiences, interactions, and encounter symbolically laden objects, ideas, and

information that create the basis of their perceptions, beliefs, and expectations regarding

the sites in and around Nashville's downtown they use to advance their material and

psychological survival (cf. Gotham and Brumley 2002). Urban authorities' two-pronged

informational and interdictory "quality of life" campaign as well as the stringent

surveillance of library security guards sends salient spatial signals regarding their identity

and its corresponding legal and civic status. They quickly learn that they exist in a legally

and civically precarious state and that their survivalist use of public space exists uneasily

alongside domiciled citizens' leisured use of the same locations. Repeated encounters of

this sort as well as the resulting (symbolically) interdictory activity motivate unhoused men to avoid locations in which the presence of urban authorities is the greatest.

Recurrent exposure to these boundary-maintenance efforts translates into a practical knowledge-base that heavily factors into how men organize their daily lives. They assign meaning to public spaces based on past interactions and experiences with law enforcement officials, BID emissaries, security personnel, merchants, and passersby which, in the aggregate, inculcate cognitive boundaries that translate into spatial boundaries. Because they take up time as they move through space, they also take into account the time-space constraints imposed by caretakers' moral economies of care. These time-space "walls" interlock with the cognitive "walls" created by urban authorities' boundary-maintenance efforts, in turn producing either Lafayette residents' "voluntary" internment in the district or their routinized daily dispersions to select sites; in the latter case, these interlocking walls result in residents' re-concentration in the district at roughly the same time each evening.

Redux: The Internal (Re)production of the Organizational Ghetto

In essence, homeless men's otherwise chaotic social situation becomes converted into structured social and spatial practices inasmuch as their social relations within Lafayette organizations as well as their daily rounds which take place in the larger urban environment presuppose and reproduce the district's local regime of power. As William Sewell notes: "Structures are not the patterned social practices that make up the social system, but the *principles* that pattern these practices" (2005: 129, emphasis added). My

central argument in this dissertation is that caretakers' respective *moral economies of care* produce client-staff (giver-receiver) relations that structure both Lafayette and contiguous locales and that the principles that pattern these relations are caretakers' particular religious schemas. Said another way, the religious schemas which shape caretakers' respective moral economies of care are the principles that pattern the social and spatial relations and practices that create and maintain the district's internal spatial structure.

Access to life-sustaining goods and services allows caretakers to instantiate their spiritual blueprints in the lives of the homeless poor vis-à-vis their routine distribution. Because homeless men are, for the most part, unable to live without these resources and because they have a difficult time obtaining them elsewhere, they are heavily dependent on caretakers for their survival. Caretakers' (moral) authority over unhoused men thus resides in their control over these goods and services. Therefore the *community of spiritual intercession* established and cohered by service providers' *moral economies of care* is a *system of organized dependency* that is the medium and outcome of *distinctive religious schemas* which differentially empower givers and receivers.

Even though homeless recipients are endowed with the capacity to reinterpret and mobilize these resources in terms of schemas other than those employed by caretakers (we have, in fact, seen that they do), their subservient status in the organizational order all but ensures that moral-economic relations are reproduced; the same is true for political-economic relations of the hiring hall. Inside each of Lafayette's organizations, men's schemas collide with those of caretakers or dispatchers – whether through structural misrecognitions or, in the case of the Mission, a schematically mediated moral reservoir

that grounds collective conceptions of self-worth – to create internecine rifts that stymie collective action. In short, it is by participating in terms of the district's moral economies of care that moral economies of care are reproduced; in turn, the reproduction of caretakers' moral economies facilitates the reproduction of day labor agencies' political economies.

Place and Poverty Management: The External (Re)production of the Organizational Ghetto

Making the argument for the organizational ghetto as a key feature of the contemporary landscape of poverty management requires sensitivity to the emebeddedness of place in the context of welfare state restructure wherein vertical relations of managerial power and authority have been reworked through processes of spatial and bureaucratic decentralization, devolution, and "partnership." Even with the dissolution of skid rows and the increased circulation of the poor across an array of poverty management settings, we have learned that the center city is still a principal site for the management of homelessness. Nashville's poverty management system, even when connecting spatially diffuse populations, is made up of organizational nodes, such as Lafayette's caretaker agencies, that we can locate in time and space. For, the complex poorhouses of 21st century must be located *somewhere* and, given each city's limited amount of low-resistance space, they are bound to be located in close proximity to each other.

The organizational ghetto – which belongs to a broader class of institutions for the management of marginal populations, including reservations and the "hyperghetto" – is a

strategic location in this larger institutional complex. As we have seen, city government's piecemeal revitalization activity dramatically reshaped the terms and conditions of homeless life by decimating Dodge City's once diverse organizational ecology. In particular, the demolition of the district's SROs created a dearth of affordable housing that has become further exacerbated by trends in Music City's private real estate market and public housing provision. Recall that housing values in Nashville/Davidson County have risen by 25 percent in the last decade[118], but real wages have fallen by 10 percent in the same time period, coinciding with a 40 percent increase in cost-burdened households since 1990. Meanwhile, *structural constraints* including a Section 8 backlog of over 2,000 applicants favoring the elderly, disabled, and women with children over able-bodied men; a bureaucratically and geographically decentralized system of welfare provision; punitive eligibility requirements barring many ex-felons; and *conjunctural constraints* produced by a paucity of caseworkers and consequent uneven information passed along the street "grapevine" conspire to create a *policy ceiling* that relegates poor men to the ranks of homelessness. Lafayette provides the primary shelter alternative for men who cannot afford fair-market rents and who, for one reason or another, cannot obtain state-subsidized public housing.

Lafayette is thus an urban district with an *internal order* continually reinforced from without by *extra-local*, asymmetrical power relations that translate into the personal distress of its marginalized residents: a form of "structural violence" (Farmer 2005) instantiated in space. Residents' biographical trajectories express the structural forces embodied in labor market decline, the criminalization of (urban) poverty, the crack

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[118] The field and statistical data on which this claim is based was collected or produced prior to the bursting of the housing bubble in the fall of 2008.

cocaine epidemic, as well as the crisis in (mental) health care and/or the erosion of family support systems. In this broader state and market context, the organizational ghetto performs the function of accommodating and managing the spillover costs associated with restructured built environments, reconfigured labor markets, and retrenched welfare provision, as well as those associated with mass incarceration. In essence, Lafayette siphons off the human "excess" wrought by these structural transformations. It is, in this sense, the *safety net below the safety net*.

Like the "hyperghetto" (Massey and Denton 2003; Wacquant 2008), the organizational ghetto is a social and physical space that expresses exclusionary processes – it is, in other words, a component part of "a system of spatially based…segregation and subjugation that defines" its reason for existence and "circumscribes the visions, interactions, and life possibilities of its residents" (Pattillo 2003: 1049). It too is an exclusionary device leveraged by urban authorities to isolate a surplus population from more privileged sectors of urban society. However, the organizational ghetto differs with respect to several facets of the ghettoization process.

Perhaps the most important difference is that it is not, per se, the product of intentional "design" – i.e., economic discrimination (realtors, bank redlining, state lending agencies), public housing polices, segregation-bolstering suburbanization and physical violence (Wacquant 2000) – but is rather the unintended outcome of: entrepreneurial redevelopment campaigns that pitted city government and historic preservationists against businesses, caretaker organizations, and individuals that benefited from the district's old order; the ensuing, piecemeal dissolution of skid row; the selective re-agglomeration of caretakers in an adjacent, unevenly developed district (with day labor

agencies eventually insinuating themselves in the organizational ecology); and the above-cited elements of the policy ceiling which stymie homeless men's reintegration into conventional society and relegate them to life in the emergency service sector of the poverty management system.

Whereas the hyperghetto is a racially/ethnically homogenous space that embodies ethnoracial domination (Wacquant 2008), the organizational ghetto embodies the moral dimensions of 21st century America's relations of rule. Neoliberal nostrums of free market fundamentalism as well as ideologies of moral bootstrapping and moral re-engineering have played an essential role in advancing and legitimating the "rollback" of Keynesian policies that once spread the risk of social insecurity through redistribution networks. The resulting "roll out" of market-based models of social service provision has wrought mass human casualties vis-à-vis (punitive) eligibility restrictions, benefit time caps, work requirements and tightfisted block grants (Fairbanks 2009; Peck 2001), while simultaneously restoring voluntary agencies to their pre-WWII eminence in regards to poverty management. Given this context, rather than serving as a spatial mechanism that encloses a *racial/ethnic group*, the organizational ghetto catches and (provisionally) conceals a distinctive *class group* whose members share a common status as society's moral outcasts.

Despite common misconceptions, hyperghettos are not hermetic social universes that completely encase urban outcasts. Phillipe Bourgois' (2003) ethnography of crack dealers in Spanish Harlem, for instance, recognizes that marginalized urban populations move about in a wide range of urban spaces. El Barrio's boundaries, however, are maintained by an Apartheid-like system characterized by intensive police patrols that

rigorously enforce the color line. Far less dramatic tactical iterations, we have seen, go into the police department's boundary maintenance with respect to the organizational ghetto. Moreover, the organizational ghetto's boundaries are most saliently drawn by caretakers' moral economies of care which extend and contract in time and space, dispersing and re-concentrating its resident population in the process; its boundaries are deeply etched by the character and distribution of the life-sustaining resources controlled by caretakers. This central (re)productive role played by its spatially encased caretaking organizations vis-à-vis the daily organization of life is hence another salient difference between the organizational ghetto and the hyperghetto, which, adding insult to the injury created by the disintegrative effects of welfare state retrenchment, is characterized by either the relative absence (Massey and Denton 2003) or indifference (McRoberts 2003) of civic institutions.

In the socially disintegrative vacuum created by the government's devolution of authority to local networks of "experts," Lafayette caretakers' "gifts" (goods and services) are key threads of social integration and the organizational ghetto is a primary means of achieving the peace previously kept by the Keynesian social contract. For, moral economies of care impose the social aim of cultivating integrative bonds of spiritual community on the biological needs of a surplus population with few other devices at its disposal to maintain body and soul; by ministering to homeless men's souls, caretakers mobilize men's bodies into routinized socio-spatial practices that reinforce their moral authority. Because it does little more than hold men in abeyance while they attempt to locate and crawl through an escape hatch, the organizational ghetto is reinforced from without by the post-welfare state.

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In short, federal, state, and local governments' devolutionary logics buttress the "extraordinary inertia" resulting from the "the inscription of social structures" in the organizational ghetto's daily operation as well as in the visions, interactions, and life chances of its residents (the phrases are Bourdieu's 2000). The future all too often collapses into the present, and the contemporary city's moral outcasts are left to struggle along as they can, for as long as they can:

Darnell: It's like falling into a deep black hole and you're trying to crawl up a ladder. Sometimes you might get three steps, sometimes you fall back and start all over. Because you're waiting on tomorrow, hopefully you'll get work so you can get housing. That's where the slippage comes in. If you don't [get work], it takes a long time to crawl up out of that pit…Six months man, and your candle's burned out. You're just a zombie walking around through the system. You're not even lookin for a way out anymore. This little system – the Mission, Clinic, Room in the Inn, and day labors – is enough to fill your whole day. It's a crazy trap.

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APPENDIX

Caretaker	Logic	Doctrine	Ethic	Obligation to the Poor	Construction of Homelessness	Managerial Prescriptions	Ameliorative Practices
RITI	Eucharistic; "original grace" of hospitality; (hopeful) God manifests in the community	Catechism; charity is the "greatest social commandment" and mediates God's love	Catholic Caritas; fault forgiveness and legitimation of dependence	Stem Sinful (Social) Inequalities	"Sacred Image of an Invisible God"; victims of sinful social order	Communion with Poor; infuse with divine hope and inspiration	Goods and Services are a means to commune to God and infuse the homeless with divine hope/inspiration
Mission	Manichaean; "fall from grace"; (vengeful) God manifests in personal relationships	Gospel of Reconciliation; charity is purely a means to the end of saving souls	Statutory Ethic; poverty is the outcome of immorality which results from the loss of Bible's normative authority	Deliver from Satan's Grip; reach and win their souls for the Lord	"Sinful" Souls whose Poverty Flows from an Improper Relationship with God; victims of self-inflicted problems	Conversion; inculcate Biblical (statutory) prescriptions	Goods and Services are a means to reconnect with God; a means to facilitate conversion of the homeless

Figure 12.1: Key distinctions between caretakers' moral economies of care.