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Public Spaces, Homelessness, and Neo-Liberal Urbanism:
A Study of 'Anti-Homeless' Strategies on Redeveloped Public Spaces

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Historically, public spaces have functioned as settings of public gathering, political demonstration, commercial exchange, socialization, and recreation. In the context of neo-liberalism, however, public spaces assume an additional role. As cities compete with each other toward economic growth, public spaces become important amenities. Safe, clean, and lively public spaces serve as catalysts for investment. Thus, cities, often in partnership with private corporations, have engaged in redeveloping public spaces in order to create desirable locations that may attract and retain residents and businesses that could be established virtually anywhere. However, the narrative of public spaces as tools for economic growth clashes with the reality of many individuals whose basic needs must be fulfilled in public spaces. Design, land use, management, and surveillance strategies adopted in redeveloped public spaces may hinder the homeless' ability to utilize public spaces for survival.

This research utilizes data collected through participant observation to describe and analyze anti-homeless strategies employed at Fountain Square, in Cincinnati, Ohio, since its renovation in 2006. These strategies have intended or unintended consequences that disproportionally affect the homeless. But, more importantly, they reflect the changing role of public and private agencies and may negatively affect the role of public spaces as democratic places. I suggest that the use of strategies to ensure public spaces succeed in attracting investments are only viable and desirable insofar as no individual depends on public spaces for survival.
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I. Introduction

The spatial configuration and demographics of cities around the world have been constantly transformed by economic, political, and cultural changes. Over the past decades, new forms of urban governance, have created cities that reflect and reproduce a neoliberal economic regime. High rates of urbanization and consequent suburbanization in the United States, metropolitan explosion in Asia, overurbanization in Latin America, and increasing segregation among regions and within cities are some of the effects of neoliberal policies.

Historically, public spaces have functioned as settings of public gathering, political demonstration, commercial exchange, socialization, and recreation. In the context of neo-liberalism, however, public spaces assume an additional role. As cities compete with each other toward economic growth, public spaces become important amenities. Safe, clean, and lively public spaces serve as catalysts for investment by attracting tourists, businesses, and residents.

Creating vibrant public spaces as part of strategic plans to attract investment is particularly necessary in American cities affected by suburbanization and deindustrialization. After the Second World War, a combination of factors including expansion of the highway system, economic prosperity, population growth, and Federal subsidies for home ownership, enabled middle- and upper-class citizens to escape from noisy, dirty, and dense cities and settle in low-density suburban developments. As a result, inner neighborhoods were left to the lower-income population (Jackson 1985).

Around the 1970s, increasing market liberalization across the world led to a shift in the location of production centers. Looking for more profitable conditions (e.g. cheaper labor and less
regulation), American companies relocated manufacturing plants to developing countries (Dicken 2011). The loss of industrial jobs in American cities increased unemployment rates and exacerbated poverty and crime in inner cities, stimulating even more suburbanization. New jobs, particularly in the service sector, emerged in the suburbs.

In an attempt to recapture revenue lost to suburbs, central cities have created strategic plans to attract residents and businesses back. However, limited public resources hinder a city's ability to provide the infrastructure, service, and amenities needed to compete with suburbs. Thus, public agencies have partnered with private investors, developers, and corporations in order to revitalize central cities. While public officials have a duty to serve people and strive for equality and social justice, private stakeholders who engage in urban revitalization projects seek a return on their investment. For them, revitalization is a business and profit is the main goal (Logan and Molotch 2007).

Public and private partnerships across the United States have been able to revive central cities by bringing people and investment to dilapidated areas. Modern office buildings, lofts, condos, and trendy shops and restaurants replaced old buildings, low-income housing, and convenience stores. The targeted desirable users of revitalized urban centers are sometimes clearly stated:

"Young Professionals: YPs seek an authentic urban experience in hip, edgy districts. Entry-level Professionals: Seek value in the proximity to employment cores/amenities. Empty Nesters/Never Nesters: Seek luxury upscale units close to culture and events (GO Cincinnati 2008, p. 14)."

Revitalization projects that aim at attracting particular groups of the population to central cities often disregard low-income individuals that currently reside or shop in these areas. These people have suffered from disinvestment in their neighborhoods and high unemployment, poverty, and crime rates. Re-investment in these areas should entail increasing job opportunities, better environmental quality, and lower crime rates benefitting all. However, with the influx of upscale housing, shops, and offices, the low-income residents are displaced. Relocation occurs when
residential and commercial tenants are removed to give way to rehabilitation projects or when rental prices in revitalized areas become unaffordable.

Likewise, the revitalization of public spaces may negatively affect some users. Low-income residents and the homeless, in particular, are the main users of public spaces in deteriorated urban areas. They often reside in low-income housing or single-occupancy rooms nearby and, with limited mobility due to poverty or disability, they tend to spend most of their time in public spaces. However, particularly for the homeless living on the streets, public spaces are essential to the fulfillment of their basic needs, including sleeping, resting, eating, urinating, scavenging, and panhandling (Snow and Mulcahy 2001, Mitchell 2003).

Low-income and homeless individuals are 'removed' from public spaces during and after revitalization projects. During reconstruction, these areas become inaccessible and those who depend on it for survival must find other places to go. After reconstruction, it is possible that low-income residents no longer live nearby (they were either removed or are unable to pay increasing rental prices). Sometimes, the homeless may not return to the revitalized public space because it has become intimidating. Not only has the area been redesigned, but also it is surveilled by the police, private managers, or surveillance cameras. It is also possible that the new public spaces do not offer amenities that are important to the homeless, such as public restrooms and benches. Those who do return to use revitalized public spaces must conform with strictly enforced rules and regulations, which may prohibit panhandling, sleeping, and scavenging.

This research identifies strategies used in a revitalized public space that may, intentionally or unintentionally, inhibit the homeless from using it. I call these 'anti-homeless' strategies because, even though they are not explicitly directed at one particular sub-set of the population, they affect the homeless more than 'homed' individuals. Thus, I conducted participant observation at a recently redeveloped public space in downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, in order to identify and analyze design,
management, and regulatory tools that may hinder the homeless' ability to use the space for survival purposes.

The use of public spaces by the homeless is an important topic to be addressed by designers and policy makers. It is also a controversial and complex topic. The definition of public spaces and the role they play in contemporary cities is ambiguous. Likewise, academics and policy makers disagree on the definition and causes of homelessness. Hence, one's opinion about 'anti-homeless' strategies depends on one's understanding of public spaces and homelessness.

In the following chapter, I discuss the characteristics, functions, and importance of public spaces. In Chapter III, I address the issue of homelessness and present some divergent views on 'anti-homeless' laws. Then, in Chapter IV, I turn to a broader discussion concerning the transformation of urban spaces by the adoption of urban policies based on neo-liberal ideology. I discuss my methodology and the selected case study in Chapter V. My findings are presented in Chapter VI. And, finally, I conclude with a discussion on the implication of these findings.
II. On Public Spaces

In our everyday lives, one is able to identify the public spaces of the city by enumerating the streets, sidewalks, squares, and parks. However, the distinction becomes unclear when one considers shopping malls, coffee shops, and corporate plazas. While some will argue that certain parks and squares are not truly public spaces, others will consider shopping malls as the public space of modern society. In this context the question of what characterizes a public space becomes fundamental.

Ownership, accessibility, and function

Often, distinct definitions of public space orbit around three main components: ownership, accessibility, and function. While public spaces are generally understood to be publicly owned spaces (Banerjee 2001, Kohn 2004), accessible to everyone (Carr 1992, Kohn 2004), where multifunctional activities take place (Carr 1992, Cunningham 2009), other variations are possible. Parkinson (2009), for example, argues that the ownership component might be misleading. The plea for public ownership is commonly associated with the idea that ownership and accessibility are interdependent. In this way, it is understood that “ownership defines whether a place is open or not” (p. 74, emphasis in the original). However, this is not always the case. Comparing the British national parks which sit on privately owned land with the publicly owned national parks, military bases, and government offices, Parkinson (2009) concludes that while in the former, people may move freely with few restrictions, the latter imposes limited rights of entry.

As with the case of ownership, the desirable level of accessibility is arguable. Some consider that public spaces are public “because anyone is entitled to be physically present in them” (Mandanipur 1999, p. 881). Others argue that successful public spaces must strike a balance
between accessibility and security (Németh and Schmidt 2007, Cunningham 2009). Using Marxist principles, Cunningham argues that public spaces can potentially promote a culture of trusteeship (as opposed to a culture of private property and consumerism). However, for trusteeship – understood as sense of responsibility and care – to be encouraged, public spaces must foster certain conditions. While they must cultivate a degree of anonymity and openness (which, according to Cunningham, are not offered in common areas of gated communities and condominiums), they must also embrace a group of “regulars” who will “form the nucleus for collective care of the space” (Cunningham 2009, p. 95). The idea that public spaces may develop a sense of trusteeship by encouraging “regulars” does not, in and of itself, promote exclusion. However, Cunningham concludes that “[p]eople cannot enjoy a space if it is populated not just by a variety of different people but by some whom they find threatening or frightening” (Cunningham 2009 p. 95, emphasis added).

Cunningham’s perception of public space is particularly interesting since it unveils the complexities of its definition. Cunningham states that public spaces are “non-exclusive and demographically open” (2009, p. 86). However, concurring with Parkinson (2009), he notes that publicly owned spaces might have their own informal means of exclusion while informal conventions in privately owned spaces may lead to non-exclusive practices (Cunningham 2009, 87). In order to illustrate the controversy, Cunningham describes the case of a shopping mall in Toronto, in which a group of Chinese seniors are allowed to congregate each morning. The problem with his argument, however, is that, as he further details, the owners and managers of the mall were initially concerned that the occupation of tables and benches by a group of non-customers would disrupt business. Still, the management of the mall did not take any action, fearing that forced eviction would result in bad public relations. Later, the mall realized that, in fact, the group was not threatening to business since they left the mall before lunch time. Indeed, the mall recognized that the group of Chinese seniors...
“lent an aura to the mall (...) that many others found attractive, thus increasing business” (2009, p. 95).

Although the case of the mall in Toronto is used by Cunningham (2009) as an example of non-exclusive practice in privately owned spaces, I argue that, in reality, it points in the opposite direction. The mall did not exclude the group of Chinese seniors because 1) it feared bad relations and 2) the group did not disrupt business and was, indeed, an asset to the mall. Nevertheless, these two conclusions were formulated after management had considered forced eviction of the group because they were non-consumers and a potential threat to business. What is clear from this episode is that the managers of the mall did have the legal power to exclude certain groups of people they find threatening to business. Note that the group of seniors was not a threat to the safety and wellbeing of other customers, but they were occupying spaces that should be occupied by paying customers. Because of the power that private owners and managers exercise over shopping malls, which can potentially exclude people based on subjective notions of ‘threat,’ I argue that shopping malls are not public spaces.

Episodes of exclusion in shopping malls are numerous. Margaret Kohn opens her book Brave New Neighborhoods narrating the arrest, in 2003, of a lawyer for trespassing at a mall in a small town near Albany, New York. The arrest was made after the lawyer refused to either take-off his T-shirt or leave the premises. The polemic T-shirt, purchased in the mall, displayed the slogan “Give Peace a Chance.” As Kohn puts it, “[o]n the eve of the war with Iraq, the message was too political for the mall” (2004, p. 01). This case, as many other legal decisions, raises the question of whether the freedom of speech as protected by the First Amendment applies to private property and, for that matter, shopping malls. In several cases the Supreme Court has considered that the freedom of speech applies only to public spaces, however, the Supreme Court has also recognized that shopping malls “issue an invitation to the general public and therefore opens itself up to certain kinds of regulations. This means that political speech in publicly accessible but privately owned
places, although not protected by the United States Constitution, could be protected by state statues” (Kohn 2004, p. 02).

Margaret Crawford (1992) on her essay "The World in a Shopping Mall," states that many shopping malls incorporate so many activities and functions that are traditionally offered in the city, that the distinction between private and public is blurred. In order to clarify their public role (and therefore legitimize their control and exclusionary practices) malls are posting signs that say: “Areas in this mall used by the public are not public ways, but are for the use of the tenants and the public transacting business with them. Permission to use said areas may be revoked at any time” (quoted as in Crawford 1992, p. 23). In this way, malls reserve the right to exclude certain activities by excluding certain people. The excluded may vary from someone wearing a T-shirt with a message that is too political (as Kohn has shown) to political activists, petitioners, and panhandlers.

The exclusionary practices in shopping malls as demonstrated by the cases above are not justified by concerns with wellbeing and safety. The motivation of shopping owners and managers is to guarantee that nothing will “interfere with the shopper’s freedom to not be bothered and have fun” (quote from the manager of Greengate Mall in Pennsylvania, in Crawford 2004, p. 23). Note that the shopping manager refers to users of the mall as shoppers and not citizens - an accurate reference to the main function of the mall as a retail center. Paradoxically, although more and more shopping malls are designed to offer shoppers more than retail services by adding recreational activities and pleasant spaces to hang out, consumption is still the main activity in these places. This almost single-functional characteristic of malls is an additional reason why they are not public spaces.

Besides ownership and access, the functions performed on a place indicate their public character. According to Kohn, “ownership and accessibility alone (...) cannot fully explain the distinctive character of public spaces” (2004, p. 13). For her, public spaces must foster intersujectivity, which she defines as interactions with strangers as well as chances of meeting
friends and acquaintances. For Kohn, spaces in which individuals play a passive role and which do not encourage interaction between people, such as stadiums and theaters, are different than playing fields, plazas, and meeting rooms, in which individuals are “co-creators of a shared world” (Kohn 2004, p. 13). Concurrently, Cunningham (2009) also recognized that a certain level of anonymity and openness is necessary (even though he did not stress interaction between people and suggested that fully anonymity and openness are not desirable).

The promotion of encounters between strangers is an important and, in fact, an inherent characteristic of public spaces. When ownership and accessibility (physical, psychological, or legal) do not impose control or restrictions over public spaces, the presence of strangers is inevitable. This is because of the nature of urban life or, as Mitchell puts it, “[t]he city is where the difference lives” (2003, p. 18). Different to a rural setting, cities are places of heterogeneity. In Louis Wirth’s definition, a city is “a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals” (Wirth 1938, p. 08). In this context, public spaces in the city are by nature places where strangers meet. I would further argue that, if not restricted by ownership and access, users of public spaces should inevitably reflect the demographic mix of the city itself.

In addition to heterogeneity, other ‘externalities,’ as noted by Patrick Turmel (2009), are inherent to the urban experience and are, therefore, reflected on public spaces. Turmel argues that the city as a whole is a public space because, in urban settings, people are continuously affected by other people’s actions and behavior. According to Turmel’s argument:

“A city is full of externalities, noises and smells, congestion and pollution, loitering and littering, fear and excitement, the everyday encounters with strangers and strange behaviors, the shared use of public spaces and the clash of activities – all produce or result in various forms of uncompensated costs individuals impose upon one another (p. 151).”

Turmel also notes that people’s actions may produce negative or positive externalities (e.g. when people drive cars they produce pollution – a negative externality; when people ride bikes they contribute to cleaner air – a positive externality). Turmel’s discussion of this issue is extremely
interesting, but beyond the scope of this work. It suffices to say that although some externalities are considered negative, actions that aim to eliminate or internalize them endanger the very nature of the city. Instead, Turmel suggests that urban institutions (and to that I add all professionals related to urban planning and the built environment) should “secure or even encourage the production of some urban externalities, while minimizing their negative effects (or what can be perceived as such)” (2009, p. 156 emphasis in the original).

**Different views of public space**

The activities one expects to take place in public spaces vary according to the way one understands and interprets those spaces. The different interpretations of public spaces, as suggested by Anthony M. Orum and Zachary P. Neal (2010) in their book *Common Ground?,* can be organized into three groups. The first group is formed by those who consider that public spaces are essential to the social vitality of cities because they foster social interactions. Included in this group are Jane Jacobs, William Whyte, Ray Oldenburg, M. P. Baumgartner, and Elijah Anderson. The research and writing topics of the aforementioned authors focus on the way people interact with each other and the way they use public spaces (Orum and Neil 2010).

The second group, including Don Mitchell, Mike Davis, Sharon Zukin, Gregory Smithsimon, and Lisa Law, presents a more pessimistic point of view. For them, public spaces are places of struggle among private interests, public authorities, residents, and minority groups. Differently than the first group, these authors believe that the understanding of people’s activities and relationships in public space does not fully reveal the nature of such places. Instead, this group is interested in unveiling the power struggles that simultaneously take place on and shape public spaces (Orum and Neil 2010). In other words, while authors of the first group describe interactions between people and the use of public space, this group reflects on issues of privatization, control, and democracy.

Finally, the third possible interpretation of public spaces is as places for artistic performance and cultural expressions. The writers in this group are concerned with how cultural representations
of public spaces may help create and sustain collective identity. Through performances, residents may tell outsiders who they are which, in turn, results in self-reflection of one's own identity. While this view of the public space considers the residents and citizens primarily responsible for the performances, it recognizes the role of local authorities. In fact, city organized and/or sponsored cultural events (such as ethnic parades) are being used as a tool for economic development by attracting paying visitors (Orum and Neil 2010).

Virtual spaces

The variety of meanings that different people may attribute to public spaces, as expressed by the three different groups aforementioned, makes it fairly difficult to formulate an ultimate definition of public spaces. On top of that, the recent development of technology and the popularization of the internet raises a critical question. Rather than asking what public spaces are, which places can be considered public, and which activities occur in these places, one might question whether public spaces must be physical places at all. Clearly, the assumption behind this question is that virtual spaces such as online forums, chat rooms, and social networking websites may be considered public spaces.

Indeed, most virtual spaces seem to fulfill the requirements commonly ascribed to public spaces. In terms of ownership, although websites are created and maintained by individuals or corporations, anyone is eligible to host a website. Also, most websites which are designed to encourage participation, such as blogs, social networks, and public forums, often do not regulate content (except for offensive, pornographic, or copyrighted content). In other words, practically anyone can host a website, or create a virtual profile (e.g. on facebook, myspace) and upload almost any content.

In terms of accessibility, virtual spaces are considered open to everyone, provided that one has access to the internet. While in the United States internet users represent more than 75% of the country’s population, worldwide only 26% of the population use internet (despite the almost 400%
growth in user’s rate between 2000 and 2009).\footnote{Miniwatts Marketing Group. \textit{Internet World Stats}. Available at \url{http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm}, accessed on April 14, 2010.} Besides the restrict access to internet faced by the majority of the world’s population, access to certain internet content is also an issue. Ron Deibert explains that public authorities in numerous countries around the world have engaged in content filtering. Using the pretext of protecting “public values” or “national security,” this practice blocks users’ access to websites whose content may vary from political opposition and human rights information to news and media streaming (2009, p. 141).

The third component of public spaces that might be comparable to virtual spaces is the multi-functional character of both. As discussed earlier, public spaces differ from restaurants and shopping malls because they encourage a multitude of activities to be performed by a variety of individuals. Also, Margaret Kohn’s (1992) argues that public spaces differs from social spaces (such as theaters and stadiums) because the first fosters intersubjectivity while in the second individuals are merely spectators. In this context, it seems reasonable to say that virtual spaces are similar to public spaces because it allows users to perform a variety of activities such as shopping, researching, reading, learning, watching videos, socializing, and chatting.

While ownership, accessibility and function do not necessarily eliminate the public character of virtual spaces (even though I have argued that they are not as open and accessible as one might consider) one last, but important, issue must be discussed. While some might consider that virtual spaces are public, most people would also agree that any interaction or activity that takes place in virtual spaces are virtual and not real. Therefore, the last question we must ask is: Does the virtual character of virtual spaces compromise its ability to be defined as a public space? In order to answer that question we must first discuss why public spaces are important to cities, to society, and democracy. Some of the reasons why they are important (many of which were described by Ali
Madanipour in *Why are the design and development of public spaces significant for cities?* reveal that physical place (rather than virtual) is indispensable.

**Why are public spaces important to cities?**

First, if we consider cities to be organized into private and public spaces, the importance of the latter for accessibility and mobility becomes evident. Since access to private spaces is limited to those with permission, public spaces are the only places which everyone is able to enter, stay, or cross through in order to have access to private spaces that make up the bulk of the city (Madanipour 1999, 886).

In fact, amongst the private spaces of the city, public spaces assume an importance that goes beyond access and mobility. As Madanipour explains, in western societies since the mid-1960s, with the decline of the welfare state, state intervention (particularly in economic and social affairs) has greatly decreased. At the same time, the private sector has assumed a more prominent role in the development and management of cities. In this context, “[t]he new additions to urban space are often developed and managed by private investors, as the public authorities find themselves unable or unwilling to bear the costs of developing and maintaining public spaces. A combination of the need for safe investment returns and safe public environments has led to the demand for total management of space, thus undermining its public dimension” (Madanipour 1999, p. 888). Therefore, truly public spaces are necessary as a way to ensure that cities contain areas that are publicly owned and managed and, therefore, open and free to all.

Also, in fragmented and segregated modern cities, public spaces are responsible for the promotion of social cohesion and togetherness which, in turn, contributes to increasing tolerance between different social groups. As Madanipour puts it, “[b]y creating areas in which people intermingle, it is hoped that different people can be brought together and a degree of tolerance be promoted. This is especially crucial at a time when the welfare state has come under threat of restructuring, and social fragmentation has intensified” (1999, p. 885).
While criticizing the concentration of the homeless in certain areas of the city through the creation of homeless-free zones (proposed in several American cities), Margaret Kohn (2004) points in a similar direction. She argues that spaces where individuals from different social classes are brought together and face each other contribute to raising awareness about social problems (particularly poverty and homelessness). For Kohn, watching firsthand the suffering caused by extreme poverty or homelessness causes a different feeling and reaction than learning about it from a newspaper article (2004, p. 180). As she points out, “the exposure to others may help offset the mutual fear and suspicion fostered by segregation” (Kohn 2004, 8). Therefore, the existence of a physical place where such encounters might happen is essential for society developing tolerance and to grasp the full extent of certain social problems.

For some authors, public spaces are also important as political arenas where democracy can be sustained. Don Mitchell (2003) clearly makes this point when arguing that in an increasingly privatized world, public spaces are essential to make political representation possible. For him, public spaces are truly public when they allow for “the cry and demand for the right to the city [to be] seen and heard” (Mitchell 2003, p. 35) by letting individuals take public spaces and transform them into spaces for representation. For him, this is only possible in physical (rather than virtual) spaces.

The idea that public spaces are essential for the development of public debates is also defended by Margaret Kohn. She believes that “the privatization of public spaces undermines the opportunities for free speech” (Kohn 2004, p. 3). Furthermore, public spaces allow the communication of ideas between allies and adversaries “through techniques such as street speaking, demonstrations, picketing, leafleting, and petitioning” (Kohn 2004, p. 6). Because the face to face experience allows for more direct interaction by means of questions and answers, physical places play a role that cannot be substituted by virtual means (Kohn 2004).

In addition to providing mobility between public and private spaces, balance privatization, promote tolerance and social awareness, and sustain democracy; public spaces have also been
considered a tool for economic development. The advancement of globalization has resulted, at least ideologically, in the decreased importance of place. Through the development of technology, a company may choose to locate anywhere and still conduct business with anyone in the world. In this way, capital may be seen as “a global, translocal force, able to behave (...) like a plague of locusts circling the globe, touching down hither and yon, devouring whole places as it seeks ever better comparative advantage” (Mitchell 2003, p. 165). In reality, however, the mobile character of capital results on increased importance of place. Because, “for capital to be free, it must also be fixed in place,” (Mitchell 2003, p. 165) localities around the world are competing to retain existing and attract new investments. This is because while companies may conduct business globally, their physical location results in tax revenue (e.g. through income, sales, and property taxes) for the locality they choose to be established at.

An important strategy to attract investment to cities is to offer, in addition to fiscal benefits, an appealing urban life through a variety of recreational and cultural amenities. The intensification of investments in downtown revitalization, amusement districts, new cultural facilities, convention centers, and so on is a result of the competition for investments in the global arena where businesses operate. Although this process may result in investment for revitalization, maintenance, and provision of public spaces, it has been very harmful to certain groups that do not fit into the notion that public space is a tool to attract investment. Referring specifically to the anti-homeless laws, which prevent the homeless from using public spaces for their daily needs, Don Mitchell says: “In city after city concerned with ‘quality of life’ – with, in other words, making urban areas attractive to both footloose capital and the footloose middle and upper classes – politicians and managers of the new economy have turned to what could be called ‘the annihilation of space by law’ – the space to live, sit, and take care of oneself if there is no house or home in which to do so” (2003, p. 167). The public space analyzed on Chapter VI, Fountain Square, has been recently revitalized with the intent to attract investment to the City of Cincinnati. The extent to which the design, control, and
management of the revitalized square has harmed homeless access to it, as well as, their ability to use it for their daily needs is the object of study of this research.

The future of public spaces

With so many different interpretations of what public spaces are and what their significance might be, it is not surprising that perspectives about the present and future condition of public spaces may greatly diverge. Essentially, the following views illustrate the debate. Often characterizing the Industrial Revolution as the breaking point, advocates of the cynical view argue that public spaces have steadily declined since then (Sennett 1974, Herzog 2006, and Greenberg 2009). If in the pre-industrial city public spaces were places where strangers were brought together to represent themselves and be recognized by others based on their visual appearance, in the industrial city the recognition of individuals was attached to a space. Social classes were recognized by the spaces they were allowed to travel in. As a result, the homeless were not allowed to stay in certain areas. Therefore, as Herzog (2006) puts it: “public spaces [became] places of tension in the modern era, a world where urban strangers find it increasingly difficult to cope with one another” (p. 8).

In this context, not only public space but, primarily, public life was threatened. The profound economic changes brought by the Industrial Revolution were reflected in the social sphere as the erosion of public order. Richard Sennett explains that, as a means of protection, life became more and more privatized. While family life, together with privacy and stability, assumed more importance, public life became morally inferior (Sennett 1974, p. 20).

The massive migration from rural to urban areas, the poor sanitary conditions of overpopulated industrial cities, and the poverty of the worker population on the one hand, and the popularity of machines such as the automobile on the other hand, urged the creation of new city design and regulation standards. In order to erase the maladies of the industrial city, a group of
modernist architects proposed the creation of a “Functional City” - whose standards were proclaimed in the manifesto known as the Athens Charter produced during the 1933 Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM). In the proposed city, activities are spatially separated but connected through wide and rapid streets. Open space was designed to provide light, air, and health. Public space which did not have a precise function was erased. Also eradicated were the historic “public streets,” which, more than simply connectors, were spaces for socialization (Greenberg 2009, p. 30).

Despite criticisms from architects and other professionals, the principles laid out at the Athens Charter exerted (and still do) significant influence on urban planning and design. From the design of the capital of Brazil built in 1955 under the principles of the Athens Charter to the basis of prescriptive zoning and ordinances, the modernist movement has contributed to the decline of public spaces. For instance, the separation of pedestrian and automobile (which favored the latter), the segregation of land uses which resulted in single-function environments (e.g. residential subdivision, office park, shopping mall), and the migration to the suburbs, all played a role in the decline of the vitality and importance of public spaces (Greenberg 2009).

Nonetheless, despite the pessimism of the narratives above, many still believe that the present era is experiencing a revival of public spaces (Herzog 2006, Greenberg 2009). The rebirth of public spaces is a result of a paradigm shift in urban planning practices caused by social, economic, and environmental forces; specifically “personal and social need for shared life in public spaces serving complex heterogeneous populations; [...] the need for competitiveness in a knowledge-based or creative economy based on quality of place; [and the] need to find alternatives to deal with the dramatic increases in the cost of unsustainable lifestyles” (Greenberg 2009, 36).

However, the revival of public spaces can only be appreciated if one considers a stretch in the definition of public spaces. The new public spaces that aim to fulfill the social, economic, and environmental needs listed above might not be considered truly public spaces by a more rigid definition. Indeed, the rebirth of public spaces is associated with the idea that public spaces evolve
over time and the public spaces of our post-modern age include the corporate plaza, the shopping mall, the theme parks, the virtual spaces, and so on. In an attempt to legitimize the condition of these contradictory places, George Baird (2009) builds upon the definitions of ‘public’ articulated by Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas.

For Arendt (1958), the term ‘public’ is not necessarily associated to a physical. It is, instead, the realm in which everything can be seen and heard by everybody and, thus, constituted as reality. 'Public' also refers to the 'man made' world that both separates and bring people together. In other words, it is the human artifacts that "gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other" (Arendt 1958, p. 52). Thus, the 'public' is created by action and speech. It is the space of appearance that allows people to be in contact with others and to look at oneself from another perspective (Kohn 2004, p. 203). Therefore, public space is a phenomenological, and not physical, creation.

In his essay "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article", Habermas argues that the concept of ‘public’ is connected to the development of political discourse. What he calls the “public sphere,” is precisely what provides individuals opportunities to engage in political participation through discussion, forming opinion, and building consensus (Habermas et al. 1974). Access to the 'public sphere' is guaranteed to all citizens. Participants form a 'public body' that is free to assemble, associate, express, and publish opinions. Thus, the 'public sphere' defined by Habermas did not depend on the availability of a specific kind of physical places.

Analyzing the definitions proposed by Arendt and Habermas, Baird argues that the publicness of a space is both phenomenologically and historically created. In this way, he advocates for shopping malls as places in which both activities described by Arendt (representation) and Habermas (political discourse) may take place (Baird 2009, p. 58). Although it has already been discussed, it is important to remember that exclusionary practices that might prevent an individual or group’s representation as well as political discourse have often been employed in shopping malls.
In this way, while I disagree with the optimistic view that our society is experiencing a rebirth of public spaces, I agree that new spaces for social interaction (both real and virtual) have emerged. However, without diminishing their value, these new spaces for social interaction do not substitute ‘truly’ public spaces of the city. By ‘truly’ I mean physical and publicly owned (and managed) spaces accessible (physically and psychologically) to all, where interaction among strangers, representation, and political discourse are fostered. Therefore, I believe the term ‘social spaces’ employed by Kohn (2004) more accurately defines what some authors might consider ‘new forms of public spaces.’ But after all, why is it really necessary to define public space?

Kohn (2004) explains that the distinction between public and private is more than an academic question. The classification of a space as private or public has important legal consequences since accessibility, freedom of speech, and other civil rights are not equally regulated. In addition to Kohn’s concerns with civil rights I would like to mention two extra reasons. Through the selected literature previously examined, I have articulated some of the importance of ‘truly’ public spaces for cities (to provide mobility between public and private spaces, to balance privatization, to promote tolerance and social awareness, to sustain democracy, and to promote economic development). In order to advocate for such spaces, we must have a clear definition (to the extent that it is possible) of what it is that we are advocating for. To stretch the definition of public spaces to include shopping malls, theme parks, and virtual spaces, for example, puts in danger the survival of sidewalks, plazas, and parks. While it is unrealistic to deny the importance of private and hybrid social spaces in our contemporary society; it is naïve and dangerous to assume they fulfill the same functions as public spaces.

Finally, I must add that for at least one group of people – the homeless – the definition of public spaces and their existence are a matter of survival. Because this subject will be discussed in more depth in Chapters III, suffice to say, for the homeless, public spaces are the only places where they are (or should be) allowed to be. Banished from all private properties, homeless rely on public
spaces for their basic needs. Despite all the other aforementioned functions of public spaces, for the homeless, public spaces are simply their ‘home.’
III. On Homelessness

Definition of homeless and homelessness

As with the notions of private and public, the line between ‘homed’ and ‘homeless’ is vague. The fuzziness of the terms is a result of the complex combination of different factors involved in such definitions. Homelessness does not simply refer to one not having their own place to sleep. Homelessness involves issues of privacy, independency, safety, affordability, comfort, and so on. While it is fairly easy to identify the homed and homeless when under extreme circumstances (when one owns a safe and comfortable house, or when one lives permanently on the streets) the situations in between are hard to classify. Common questions may include: are shelter residents homeless? And what about those living in single-room occupancy hotels? Are adults sleeping in the living-room of a friend’s or family’s house a homeless? And what if he/she occasionally sleeps on the streets?

In light of the uncertainty of the terms, some authors have argued that ‘homeless’ is not a proper (and may even be a harmful) term. The first problem with the term homeless, is that in order to understand what ‘home-less’ means, one must first understand the meaning of an equally vague term: ‘home’ (Jencks 1994, Moore 2007). Analyzing an extensive literature on home, Moore explains that “home signifies not only a physical place but also represents a center of activities, source of identity, belonging from the past, a goal for personal and social development, an abstract state of being, and a legal concept” (2007, p. 145). Concurrently, homelessness is not necessarily the absence of a physical place; it is, in fact, the absence of one or more elements that constitutes home. A research of homeless women found that their notion of the ideal home included “decent material conditions, emotional and physical wellbeing, loving and caring social relations, control and privacy, and a sleeping/living place” (Watson and Austerberry 1986, in Moore 2007).
If we include in the definition of home and homeless psychological and emotional notions, as suggested by Moore (2007), then it is possible to assert that one can be 'homeless' at home while one can be 'home' in the public shelters or streets. The 'homeless homed' is illustrated by the feeling of being ‘out of place’ even when at home, or the constant feeling of threat when living with abusive parents or husbands. On the other hand, the homeless who feel at 'home' are illustrated by those who claim “the street is my home.”

According to Moore (2007), this broader understanding of home and homelessness is fundamental to the advancement of the condition of the homeless people. She argues that “what is valued by homeless people is often ignored, diminished, and set aside in favor of a set of steps back to the stereotypical home” (p. 152). By not considering the full extent of the notion of homelessness, policies that aim to provide shelters may temporarily solve the problem of ‘rooflessness,’ but it does not address issues of stability and insecurity (Moore 2007).

The other problem with the term 'homeless' is that it implies a contradiction with the term ‘homed.’ In this way, those with a home and those without a home are classified in opposition. As Kyle (2005) explains, “etymologically speaking, there can be no homeless without the prior existence of ‘homed.’ In this way, the homeless are a derivative of those with home. Thus, the ‘homed’ and the homeless are presented as real, substantive beings whose independent existence is a given” (p. 25).

The implicit idea that homed and homeless simply exist and have always existed fails to consider that alternative scenarios are possible. Kyle (2005) argues that in countries where housing is considered a human right, different patterns of housing distribution are developed. Considering the social, political, and economic contexts of the United States, he asks: “in an economic system where full employment permits around five percent of the total eligible, able-bodied workforce to be out of work, why should housing be tied to one’s ability to find work? Similarly, [...] in a country as culturally diverse as the United States, why should housing be tied to behaving in accordance with middle-class values and social mores?” (p. 25-26).
Building upon the work of postmodern critical theorists, Kyle (2005) also argues that the dichotomous thinking, as illustrated by the opposition between homed and homeless, denies difference and particularity, which, in turn, leads to abstract conceptualization (or labeling) that allows and/or sustain oppression. For instance, those who do not exhibit signs of social wealth and success are labeled as ‘weak.’ The sub-group of ‘weak’ who do not have permanent housing are labeled homeless. This simplistic labeling process that associates the homeless with weakness, dependency, and incapacity, obscures the “social, cultural, and economic relations that shape and define individuals who experience homelessness. [...] This has important consequences for those without homes that go beyond living with a negative label or being stereotyped” (Kyle 2005, p. 27-28).

Finally, some argue that homeless is a term imposed from above by those who manage shelters, offer social services, create policies, and engage in people counting. As the ethnographic study conducted by Anthony Marcus (2006) has shown, most of those labeled homeless do not think of themselves as homeless. As a social worker has put it “words are important because they appear on budgets [however, in the light of unemployment, health problem, and loneliness, for example] only an idiot can convince himself that being homeless is anybody’s number one problem” (quoted in Marcus 2006, p. 17).

Despite all the arguments against the abstract simplification of the term that aims to classify a group of diverse people experiencing diverse conditions for diverse reasons, a rigid and somewhat clear definition of homelessness is necessary if one wants to determine the number of people who are homeless, who is eligible for social services and welfare, and who is the target of certain policies. For that matter, the most commonly used definition of homelessness was expressed in the 1987 McKinney Homeless Assistance Act: “an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence or an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodation; b) a public or private
place that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; c) a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings” (quoted in Kohn 2004, p. 185). This definition guides current research, programs, and policies conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Still, studies of different aspects of homelessness require other definitions and, therefore, virtually all authors include their working definition. For instance, Christopher Jencks, on The Homeless (1994), studied what he called the “visible homeless - people whose presence on the streets upsets the most prosperous classes” (p. 7). Therefore, he studied “everyone who slept in a public place or shelter [including welfare hotels] during a given week” and he ignored “people who are in jails, detoxification centers, mental hospitals, or other institutions throughout the week” (p. 7). Thus, the definition of homelessness greatly influences the counting process which might yield a higher or lower number depending on who is included.

Historically, other terms have been used to describe what we presently call the homeless. Terms such as beggar, vagabond, vagrant, pauper, sturdy beggar, rogue, and tramp were all in use long before 1615 – year to which the Oxford English Dictionary attributes the first usage of the term homeless (Kyle 2005). Since these terms express a negative image of the homeless, its replacement by the current term suggests a different view towards the homeless and homelessness. The following section will discuss the different ideologies that have constructed distinct discourses over time.

Different views on homelessness

Generally, public laws and policies reflect the ideologies of a society. The way in which a society deals with a problem is, therefore, associated to how it understands the problem. In the case of homelessness, different views have emerged in particular historical contexts. Studying public policies and laws in England and the United States, Kyle (2005) classifies those views into three
groups: the reformers, the conservatives, and the liberals. However, he explains that “not all of these views have coexisted and affected public policies at all times as they do today” (p. 64).

The analysis of English vagrancy laws leads to the conclusion that, in the pre-modern era, the homeless and poor were predominantly considered responsible for their own conditions. In this view, individual sins, God’s will, or fate were considered causes of poverty and homelessness. Therefore, viewed as “deviants,” the poor and the homeless should be punished for violating social norms and laws (Kyle 2005).

In the nineteenth century, the institutionalization of alms-house reflected a rather distinct view towards homelessness. This perspective still holds the poor and homeless responsible for their conditions; however, their inappropriate or even criminal behavior is attributed to their lack of education. Rather than punishment, the government should offer help and rehabilitation to the “misguided” poor and homeless (Kyle 2005).

Finally, another distinct view of homelessness became explicit with the passage of President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal in the beginning of the twentieth century. According to this stance, the poor and homeless are victims of the economic, social, and institutional systems. Therefore, the government is held responsible for providing assistance to the poor and homeless (Kyle 2005).

**Structural versus individual causes**

The views of conservatives, reformers, and liberals summarized in the previous section present variations on the possible causes of and solutions to homelessness. Other authors have also discussed these views, however, using different terms. Generally, the debate over the causes of homelessness can be divided into two groups: individual and structural. Individual causes of homelessness results from a person’s choice or personal characteristics, including alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, and unconformity to social norms and moral values. The structural causes of homelessness, on the other hand, involve situations that are beyond an individual’s control,
including high unemployment rates, low wages, lack of affordable housing, and deinstitutionalization of psychiatric services. The structural view is supported by advocates of the homeless who argue for the need of State assistance and intervention\(^2\).

While studies have shown that many homeless suffer of substance addiction or mental illness, it is not clear whether these are the causes of their condition. In fact, it seems reasonable to argue that if housing was constitutionally guaranteed to everyone, for example, even the drug addicts and unemployed would have their own place. At the same time, if mental hospitals had not discharged the mentally ill, they would also have a place to stay out of the streets. In these examples, deinstitutionalization and lack of affordable housing - not drug addiction and mental illness per se - seem to have caused homelessness.

If we argue that homelessness is a result of structural (not individual) issues, how can we justify the high rates of substance users and mentally ill among the homeless? Snow and Anderson (1993) suggest that drug and alcohol use are, in fact, results and not causes of homelessness. Another explanation is given by Jencks (1994). He claims that while individual characteristics and/or choices do not cause homelessness, they contribute to make individuals more vulnerable to homelessness. When the economic, political, or social contexts make owning a house or paying rent more difficult, the most vulnerable are the first to become homeless. Also, although some individual causes of homelessness (such as substance abuse) might be understood as ‘choices,’ others are beyond individual control. Jencks explains that the homeless typically had all the disadvantages, sometimes starting with dysfunctional families and being placed in foster care.

**Counting the homeless**

Because of the difficulties in defining homelessness, it is natural to conclude that counting the number of homeless in a city, region, or country is a complicated task. Nevertheless, in order to

\(^2\) Advocates of the homeless include, for example, the national and local coalitions for the homeless (such as the National Coalition for the Homeless, The National Alliance to End Homelessness, and the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless).
evaluate and improve existing services offered to this sub-set of the population as well as to understand their needs, an assessment of the number and profile of the homeless is necessary. Thus, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other institutions have conducted a series of studies since the early 1980s. The most extensive and comprehensive study of the number and characteristics of the homeless was conducted by HUD and presented to the Congress in February 2007 through the HUD's first Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR).

Addressing the difficulties of such a study, the AHAR established clear definitions of who to count and how to count them. Therefore, the study includes counts of the “literally homeless” (as defined by the 1987 McKinney Homeless Assistance Act) and excludes counts on the “precariously housed” (those at imminent risk of becoming homeless, doubling up with friends and relatives, or paying extremely high proportions of their income for rent). The “literally homeless” can be further divided into two groups: the sheltered and the unsheltered homeless. The first group comprises those who live in emergency shelters or transitional housing; the second group refers to those who sleep in places not meant for human habitation, such as streets, parks, abandoned buildings, and subway tunnels (HUD 2007).

Two sources of data were utilized in order to count both sheltered and unsheltered homeless: the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and the 2005 Continuum of Care (CoC) Applications. According to the AHAR, the HMIS is an electronic database that “provides estimates of the number and characteristics of sheltered homeless people based on de-duplicated records of more than 100,000 people who used emergency shelters or transitional housing at any time during the three-month period from February 1 through April 30, 2005” (HUD 2007, p. 11). The data contained in the 2005 CoC Applications, on the other hand, provides an estimate of the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night through a local point-in-time count conducted during the last week of January 2005.
Despite the numerous limitations of both the definition and the source of data adopted\(^3\), the AHAR provides a general assessment of the homeless population in the United States. The 2005 CoC point-in-time estimate reported 338,781 unsheltered homeless and 415,366 sheltered homeless on a single day during January. According to the HMIS, there were approximately 704,000 shelter users from February 1 and April 30, 2005. The tables below provide more information about the sheltered homeless based on the HMIS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sheltered Persons</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Percent of Sheltered Homeless Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals and Persons in Households w/ No Children</td>
<td>704,146(^b)</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons in Households with Children</td>
<td>462,381(^c)</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sheltered Households with Children</td>
<td>241,765(^c)</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Sheltered Households with Children</td>
<td>72,754</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) These estimated totals reflect the number of homeless persons in the 50 states and District of Columbia who used emergency shelters or transitional housing programs during the covered time period: February 1, 2005 through April 30, 2005. The estimated total includes an extrapolation adjustment to account for people who use emergency shelters and transitional housing programs that do not yet participate in their local HMIS. However, a homeless person who does not use an emergency shelter or transitional housing during the covered time period is not accounted for in this estimate. The total number of people who experienced homelessness during the covered time period is larger than the number who used emergency shelters or transitional housing.

\(^b\) This count includes unaccompanied individuals and persons in households. The 95% confidence interval for the estimated number of sheltered homeless persons in the population is 399,244 persons to 1,009,048 persons. A 95% confidence interval means that we are 95 percent confident that the true value (the exact number of homeless residential homeless service users in the three-month period) is within this interval. The reported estimate is from the sample of communities (weighted to represent the nation) who provided the data analyzed in this report. As more communities provide useable data for future reports, the width of the confidence interval is expected to decrease.

\(^c\) Note that approximately 0.4 percent of homeless persons were served both as an unaccompanied individual and as part of a household with children during the covered period. For these reported numbers, the person is only counted once. The first household he or she was in during the covered time period determines the person’s household type. For example, if a mother spends a week in an emergency shelter with her child and then later enters another emergency shelter by herself, the mother is categorized as being part of a household with children. That is, even though she was later in an unaccompanied adult female household, she is not included in that household type category.

Source: HUD 2007, p. 28

\(^3\) The HMIS database includes only individuals who used emergency shelters or transitional housing at any time during the three-month period. The CoC data includes only those who could be seen during the observation on a single night. Thus, both databases excludes the homeless that reside in single-occupancy rooms, double up with family members or friends, or were out of the streets during the night of observations.
### Demographic Characteristics of Sheltered Homeless Persons in February 1 to April 30, 2005 Period Compared to the U.S. and Poverty Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>% of Sheltered Homeless Pop.</th>
<th>% U.S. Poverty Pop.</th>
<th>% of U.S. Pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender of Adults</strong>&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender of Children</strong>&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong>&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic/non-Latino</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong>&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic/non-Latino</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Hispanic/Latino&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African-American</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race (alone)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple races</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong>&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 1</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 12</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 to 17</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 30</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 50</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 61</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 and older</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons by Household Size</strong>&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 people</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 people</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more people</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veteran (adults)</strong>&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disabled (adults)</strong>&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Age is calculated based on a person's first time in shelter during the covered time period. A child is defined as a person age 17 or under, and an adult is defined as a person age 18 or older.

<sup>b</sup> A substantial number of records were missing ethnicity information (30 percent).

<sup>c</sup> It is not possible to identify other race-Hispanic/Latino categories (e.g., Black, Hispanic/Latino) because the aggregate race data provided by communities are not broken out by these categories. Non-white Hispanic/Latinos are included within the other race categories. This means that approximately three-fourths of Hispanic/Latino persons who used homeless residential services (16.4 percent out of the 22.1 percent of the homeless residential users that are Hispanic/Latino) are in non-White race categories compared with approximately half of Hispanic/Latino persons in the U.S. population (6.5 percent out of 12.5 percent of the Hispanic/Latino U.S. population) that are in non-White race categories.

<sup>d</sup> If a person is part of more than one household over the study period, the household size reflects the size of the first household in which the person presented during the covered time period. If household size changed during the program episode (i.e., a household member left the program early or joined later), household size for each person reflects household size on the day that person entered the program.

<sup>e</sup> Veteran status and whether a person had a disabling condition are recorded only for adults in HIMS. The percentage calculations shown indicate the percent of homeless adults with this characteristic. A substantial number of records were missing information on disability status (55 percent) and veteran status (35 percent). The percentage calculations include only persons whose disability and veteran status were recorded.

<sup>Source</sup>: Most of the information about the poverty population and the U.S. total population is based on the U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Summary Files 1 and 3. Information about age, veteran status, disability status, and persons by household size among the poverty population is based on the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) data from U.S. Census 2000 PUMS 5% sample.

Source: HUD 2007, p. 31
Based on the figures illustrated on the tables above, the AHAR concludes that most of the 704,146 homeless who were sheltered between February 01 and April 30, 2005 were adult males, and that African American were the most represented racial group. Although this portrait is an important step toward understanding the homeless, policies that address the most predominant gender, age group, or race may disregard equally important individuals such as the over 240,000 females, over 290,000 White non-Hispanic, and almost 110,000 children who were homeless at some point between February 01 and April 30, 2005.

Besides the number and characteristics of the homeless population, the AHAR also presents data on the nation’s capacity for housing the homeless. That section of the study includes the total number of programs and beds available at emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals. The following table summarizes some of the findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in the Nation’s Capacity to House Homeless Persons, 1996-2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Bed Capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent Housing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

b  2005 Housing Inventory Charts from CoC applications.
c  The change in the nation’s capacity to house homeless persons is affected in part by how programs define themselves over time. It is likely that some emergency shelters, for example, were redefined as transitional housing programs during the 1996 to 2005 time period.
d  Includes 5,700 emergency shelters and 3,900 voucher programs for emergency accommodation.
Source: HUD 2007, p. 38

From the table above, AHAR concludes that there was an overall increase in the provision of both programs and beds for the homeless. The findings also reflect a change in policy approach:
while there has been a decrease in emergency shelter beds and programs, there has been a drastic increase in programs and beds at transitional and permanent supportive housing.

The AHAR contains numerous additional information, beyond the scope of this work, which adds to the current understanding of homelessness. For the purposes of this research the understanding that the homeless population is comprised of individuals of different gender, age, and race and, therefore, that each group has different needs suffices. One aspect common to all homeless, however, is that regardless of their particular individual characteristic they all lack their own private space to perform daily activities thus relying deeply on the use of public spaces.

The anti-homeless laws

Due to the increasing number of homeless individuals since the 1980s, particularly the "visible homeless" who occupy public spaces, some argue that public spaces have been taken over by the homeless. This view assumes that places the homeless use for their basic needs (e.g. sleeping, eating, socializing) are less desirable to the rest of the population. Hence, the use of public spaces by the homeless prevents other users from enjoying it. The solution, then, is for cities to regulate the use of public spaces in order to guarantee they are safe, clean, and pleasing to all.

Ant-homeless laws do not explicitly target homeless individuals; instead, they address public behavior. However, in their many forms, these regulations disproportionately affect the homeless. For instance, prohibiting sitting on the sidewalks, sleeping on benches, panhandling, or camping on parks do not affect 'homed' individuals who have no need of engaging in these practices. Conversely, the prohibitions affect the homeless' ability to fulfill daily basic needs.

The case of the "sidewalk obstruction ordinance" adopted in Portland in 2007 illustrates the controversy. On January of 2007, a Street Access for Everyone (SAFE) oversight committee was established to make sure the mayor's SAFE workgroup provided the necessary services for the homeless before enacting a new sidewalk obstruction law. The Portland Business Alliance (PBA) volunteered to give city council $150,000 in order to make it illegal to sit or lie on downtown's
sidewalks (Davis 2007a). On May 2007, the city council approved the sidewalk obstruction ordinance, which became known as the sit/lie ordinance. Its official goal was to ensure street access to everyone, thus, individuals were not allowed to sit or lie on sidewalks between 7am and 9pm (Street Roots 2007). Police officers were authorized to issue first a warning and then fine transgressors.

The council had approved the ordinance because it assumed that other recommendations from the Mayor's Street Access for Everyone (SAFE) committee would be implemented. These recommendations included adequate day-access facilities, benches, and greater availability of public restroom facilities for displaced persons. However, on August 2007, enforcement of the ordinance begun after the SAFE oversight committee opened a 24-hour restroom adjacent to the City Hall, nowhere near where the homeless congregate in their largest numbers (Davis 2007b).

During the first 20 days of November, the police issued 42 warnings and 6 citations to people sitting on sidewalks, 34 of those (or 80%) were given to homeless individuals, some of them were sleeping at the time. Business owners who had placed signs obstructing passage on the sidewalks were not cited (Street Roots 2008). It became clear that the homeless were the target of the new sit/lie ordinance and that it favored shoppers, tourists, and business owners. The ethical issues raised in this case included not only uneven enforcement, but also the power of the Business Alliance, and the location of the 24-hour restroom. The excerpts below, from comments on newspaper articles about the case, present divergent views on these issues. Those who supported the ordinance believed it benefited everyone since the homeless were a problem:

“the sit/lie ordinance will directly ensure the success of the new Brooks Brothers store opening in the Galleria, on SW Morrison” (a downtown jeweler quoted in Davis 2007b).

“I see what we're doing today as part of the ten year plan to end homelessness” (city council member commenting on the new restrooms, quoted in Davis 2007b).

“Too many people think the homeless deserve charity services even though many of them actively chose to live the way they are. They are straight out lazy. I'm tired of smelling their piss, empty beer bottles, cigarettes and weed. Sit/Lie is a good
start but the property owners need to boot out their bleeding heart tenants who run these boo-hoo services for the 'needy” (comment from reader on Davis 2007b).

"City Hall is seen as [...] a symbolic place — a huge message of support for the homeless people” (city council member on the location of public restroom, quoted in Davis 2007b).

“The enforcement [of signage] stopped in some areas because we didn't want to make anybody go out of business” (city's non-electrical sign specialist quoted in Davis 2008).

For those who opposed the ordinance, the prohibitions were unfair and unnecessary:

“So what about the people who are carrying around multiple bags of Seersuckers they bought at Brooks Brothers? If they sit down to rest in between shopping destinations will they be told to move along, or does this law only apply to those that look like they don't take daily showers?” (comment from reader on Davis 2007b).

“The homeless are not a safety problem. Nobody sitting or lying on a sidewalk is a safety problem. At worst, they're a cosmetic problem for commercial interests. And I don’t think people with badges and guns should be empowered to enforce cosmetic standards for Brooks Brothers” (comment from reader on Davis 2007b).

"This law is just about moving people along” (member of an activist group quoted in Davis 2007b).

"[...] I wasn't looking for symbolism when somebody wanted to relieve themselves. [...] Why would a person oftentimes mentally ill walk 15 blocks to use this restroom?” (city council member, quoted in Davis 2007b).

"there's a perception of unfairness that if someone leaves their belongings out on the street we're threatening them with a $400 fine, but we're only fining people $35 for obstructing the sidewalk with a sign for their business” (member of homeless nonprofit organization quoted in Davis 2008).

These views address issues of fairness and civil rights related to the case of the sit/lie ordinance in Portland. But, they also summarize the lager debate over anti-homeless laws. For the past two decades, numerous cities across the United States, including San Francisco, Baltimore, Seattle, West Hollywood, and Cincinnati have adopted regulations targeting behavior mostly associated with the homeless. Groups that support and oppose these regulations diverge over the larger role of society, law, and public spaces, as well as over the issue of homelessness.
Robert Teir, general counsel to the American Alliance of Rights and Responsibilities in Washington, D.C., is a well known advocate of laws that aim at regulating the use of public spaces by the homeless. His views have been published both in academic journals and popular newspapers, they illustrate arguments that in favor anti-homeless laws. The problem, today, is that "homeless people have taken over some parks, depriving everyone else of once-beautiful spaces. Few people want to eat their lunch where many benches are used as beds, and where one has to step over human waste, trash, needles and used condoms" (Teir and Burke 1996). Thus, the anti-homeless laws are considered as urban programs that are part of urban revitalization efforts to improve the quality of life in downtown areas.

Teir claims that these urban programs will benefit everyone because, on the one hand, residents, business, shoppers, tourists and others will have a safe, civil, and welcome downtown and, on the other hand, the homeless will receive the help they need and will not have to live on the streets, freeze, or die. Similarly, everyone will be affected if downtown areas are not revitalized. On the one hand, if these urban programs do not take place, “compassionate treatment” to help the homeless will be discontinued because cities will continue to lose residents, jobs, shoppers, business, and tourists. The loss of tax base harms the city's ability to provide services for the homeless (Teir 1994).

Teir also rejects the criticisms that anti-homeless laws are cruel because, as he says, "tolerance for diversity must not mean a rejection of all standards of public conduct" (Teir and Burke 1996). To support his argument, Teir explains that ordinances regulating behavior are routine and range from closing times of parks and public buildings to zoning regulations that prohibit residential uses in industrial areas. Moreover, these ordinances do not target the homeless and affect everyone equally.

The problem with Teir's (and those who support anti-homeless laws) arguments is twofold. First, he does not consider the possibility that the homeless do not aim at destroying public life but, instead, occupy public spaces, sleep on benches, camp on parks, and panhandle in order to survive.
Second, he claims that whatever the homeless do in public spaces is detrimental to the quality of that space, thus, other users will refrain from using public spaces. These ideas are clear in the following statement:

"The challengers to these urban programs focused myopically on the wishes of those living on the street, dubbing the desire to eat, sleep, and go to the bathroom where one pleases "rights." Doing so leads to the extreme assertion that there is a right to beg aggressively as one pleases, a right to use the streets as one's toilet, a right to colonize a park built for the general welfare and a right to loiter for any purpose. What it all adds up to is a right to die, without help, and a right to cripple civic interaction" (Teir 1994).

Snow and Anderson (1993) explain that begging and panhandling is part of the homeless' strategies of survival. In addition to working, selling goods and services, selling plasma, scavenging, and receiving aid from family or government, begging and panhandling is a way for homeless individuals to fulfill their material needs (including food and transportation). It is, in fact, an important means of acquiring money for those who are disabled or mentally ill and, thus, unable to work.

Sleeping on benches or camping in parks are also part of the homeless survival repertoire. As the AHAR survey showed, there are not enough beds to shelter all homeless and many must find other places to sleep. Also, some homeless individuals avoid shelters because they have restricted hours of operation and exclude certain groups. For example, couples are not allowed to sleep together since shelters are separated by gender. Drug use is not permitted in the facilities, hence, drug addicts must find another place to spend the night. Many shelters do not accept individuals who have been convicted of sexual harassment crimes. And, those who sleep in the shelters must leave early in the morning. So, during the day, the homeless have nowhere else to go.

While sleeping or simply spending time on public spaces might be justifiable, Teir argues that they also use drugs, have sex, urinate, and loiter in public spaces. These actions are not tolerated even if practiced by 'homed' individuals so why should they be tolerated when practiced by the
homeless? The problem is that the homeless do not have a private place to practice them. Jeremy Waldron, a critic of anti-homeless laws, explain the dilemma:

"Legislators voted for by people who own private places in which they can do these things are increasingly deciding to make public places available only for activities other than these primal human tasks. The streets and subways, they say, are for commuting from home to office. They are not for sleeping; sleeping is what one does at home. [...] Parks are not for cooking or urinating; again these are things one does at home. Since the public and private are complementary, the activities performed in public are the complement of those performed in private. This complementarity works fine for those who have the benefit for both sorts of places. However it is disastrous for those who must lives their whole lives on common land (Waldron 1991 quoted as in Mitchell 2003 p. 171)."

Thus, the anti-homeless laws 'criminalize' actions that the homeless must do in public in order to survive. Because of that, Mitchell (2003) suggests that these laws annihilate the homeless: "we are creating a world in which a whole class of people cannot be - simply because they have no place to be" (p. 171). It is clear that these laws do not aim at reducing homelessness, rather, their goal is to render the homeless invisible, i.e. out of sight.

Teir may rightly argue that what the homeless do in public spaces goes beyond what is necessary for their survival. An example he might use to support his argument is littering. But, any person may litter and regulations like the sit/lie ordinance adopted in Portland do little to prevent that. Likewise, not every homeless person litters. So, following Turmel's (2009) notion of externalities, i.e. eliminating negative externalities from public spaces endangers the very nature of the city, eliminating the homeless as a group will eliminate both those who litter and those who are 'well behaved.'

Finally, the second problem with Teir's argument is that the fact that the homeless population is using public spaces may not be the reason why middle- and upper-class citizens are not using it. Richard Sennett (1974) explains that private life has increasingly gained more importance since the Industrial Revolution and recreational activities at home replaced activities traditionally performed on public spaces. Particularly, downtown squares and parks (which are the focus of Teir's "urban reforms") have been abandoned by wealthier residents as they flew to the
suburbs (Jackson 1985). This renewed interest in central city is recent and fueled by economic interests rather than the improvement of civic life. The next chapter discusses the origins of downtown revitalization projects and their effects on the homeless population.
IV. On Neo-Liberal Urbanism

Across the globe, people of different cultures, from different economic levels and with divergent political views have perceived that there is something 'new' about the world. The ways in which we communicate with each other, the settings we inhabit, the products we buy and how we buy them, and our daily routines seem to have been transformed so radically and so fast over the span of one generation that we are convinced we live in a new era.

The term 'globalization' is commonly used to explain a series of events that have ultimately led the world to become increasingly interconnected. Implicit in the popular image of a 'globalized' world is the notion that technological development has brought distant places and people closer. Through the use of media and technology, we became familiarized with different cultures and accustomed to imported products. Thus, the constant flows of information, money, people, and commodities among countries have created a highly integrated world.

However, beyond the recognizable effects of globalization on our daily lives, lies a complex set of structural changes affecting economic, political, and cultural organizations. Transformations in these three arenas are interrelated and include changes in forms of production, international trade, role of local government and international organizations, and behavior of consumers across the globe. It is plausible to suppose, then, that along with - and probably because of - these structural changes, the spatial configurations of our cities have been transformed.

The transformations leading to an interconnected world was made possible through the worldwide spread of neo-liberal ideology. Following the Second World War, the world was reorganized with the United Stated as the new hegemonic power and neo-liberalism as the new economic order. Developed countries and neo-liberal economists argued that participation in the world economy through the adoption of free markets was the only path towards economic growth (McMichael 2007).
Hence, countries were advised to reduce protectionist measures, open up their markets, and minimize state intervention and regulation (Chang 2008). The neo-liberal ideology advocates for the self-regulation of the market claiming that free-markets, rather than governments, are more efficient in meeting the needs of the population and generating wealth and well being.

Today, after decades of increasing globalization, we recognize significant outcomes. Participation in the world market has produced uneven development across the world. The gap between developed and undeveloped countries has increased and, indeed, only a small portion of the world population has benefited from economic growth and technological development. Besides increasing inequality, a series of recent financial crises and the recognition of rapid environmental decline indicate that, ultimately, liberalization did not promote overall prosperity (McMichael 2007).

The mismatch between the expected benefits proposed by the neo-liberal ideology and the negative effects of neo-liberal policies derive from the fact that the ideology assumes a utopian vision of market rule while policies are executed through everyday political operations that have real societal effects (Harvey 2005). "While the ideology of neoliberalism rests on a deference to a singular, ahistorical and uniquely efficient market, the infinitely more murky reality is that actually existing programs of neoliberalization are always contextually embedded and politically mediated, for all their generic features, family resemblances, and structural interconnections" (Peck et al. 2009, p. 51).

The actualization of neo-liberal policies 'on the ground' is illustrated by the adoption of urban policies that express the impulses of capitalist production rather than social reproduction (Smith 2002). Cities have been at the forefront of neo-liberal programs that aim at promoting economic growth through deregulation, privatization, liberalization, and fiscal austerity (Peck et al. 2009). Thus, urban policies have turned urban areas into settings of elite consumption practices while "securing order and control amongst marginalized populations" (Peck et al. 2009, p. 58).

Across developed and developing countries, neo-liberalism gave rise to strategies of urban governance in which cities must compete against each other. Decentralized political and taxation
systems require cities to rely on local revenues as funding sources for infrastructure and services. "Rather than having the national government raise and disperse funds to where they are most needed [...], localities must become fiscally self-reliant and compete for private investment" (Logan and Molotch 2007, p.xv). Hence, decisions regarding land use and zoning regulations, taxation, exactions, subsidies, and infrastructure provision aim, primarily, at creating a favorable environment for investment.

As cities engage in bidding wars to attract private investment, the criteria for regulating and approving developments becomes focused, mainly, on economic impact. Large developments with potential to generate high tax revenue (from property, income, or sales), create jobs, and attract more investment, tourists, or upper-class residents are favored and have leverage to negotiate better deals. Since economic return is the major criteria in approving projects, issues of social justice and environmental impact are often secondary (Logan and Molotch 2007).

The goal of city officials, developers, investors, and others who benefit from city growth is to assure the 'highest and best use' of land. Hence, uses that are less profitable or that bring property values down, such as social housing, small retail stores, and services targeting low-income population, must give way to more profitable and desirable uses, such as museums, sports complex, universities, large retailers, offices, and high-income housing (Logan and Molotch 2007). Thus, over the past four decades cities across the globe have engaged in urban renewal, beautification, gentrification, and slum clearance projects that relocate millions of low-income residents (Smith 2002, Davis 2006).

But, the value of land or built structures in the city is not the same to everyone. Logan and Molotch (2007) use Marx's concept of use and exchange value to explain the difference:

"Any given piece of real estate has both a use value and an exchange value. An apartment building, for example, provides a “home” for residents (use value) while at the same time generating rent for the owners (exchange value). Individuals and groups differ on which aspect (use or exchange) is most crucial to their own lives. For

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4 'Highest and best use' is a term used in real estate appraisal that refers to the feasible and legal use of land that would produce the highest property value.
some, places represent residence or production site; for others, places represent a commodity for buying, selling, or renting to somebody else. The sharpest contrast [...] is between residents, who use place to satisfy essential needs of life, and entrepreneurs, who strive for financial return” (p. 1-2).

Not only does the same place have different values for different individuals, but also different places within the city are valued differently. While studying survival strategies of the homeless, Snow and Mulcahy (2001) identified three types of spaces: prime spaces, marginal spaces, and transitional spaces. Prime spaces are those "used by domiciled citizens for residential, recreational, or navigational purposes; by entrepreneurs for commercial, financial reasons; and/or by politicians and their agents for political and symbolic purposes" (p. 10). Marginal spaces have little or no current value to residents, entrepreneurs, or political agents and are, therefore, abandoned by these groups and left to marginal groups such as the homeless. Spaces that have ambiguous uses, e.g. used by domiciled citizens and the homeless or low-income but domiciled residents, or are located between marginal and prime areas, are considered transitional.

Spaces are continuously transformed from prime to marginal and vice-versa. For instance, the suburban explosion of American cities in the post-World War II period converted prime land in central cities into marginal areas. Conversely, recent downtown revitalization projects that aim at attracting suburbanizers back to the city are transforming marginal areas into prime space. As the logic of the growth machine suggests, public officers, developers, entrepreneurs, and elite groups have an interest in increasing the amount of prime land while eliminating marginal land. This process has important negative consequences to marginalized groups that are turned into nomads (Davis 2006).

Public spaces that have been abandoned to marginalized groups must, in order to promote economic growth, be turned into prime spaces where people feel safe and welcome. On and around these spaces, citizens contribute to the economy by shopping, working, living, and playing. Those who do not contribute to the economy, and may allegedly harm it, must be removed. However, as discussed in Chapter III, the homeless population depends on the use of prime spaces in order to
fulfill their material needs. Snow and Mulcahy (2001) explain that marginal spaces are less risky for the homeless because they are less likely to be hassled by the police or other users. Yet, the homeless must use prime spaces for material subsistence since "it is in these spaces that amply filled dumpsters or garbage receptacles can be found; that work, even if it is day labor that pays minimum wage, is more likely to be secured; and that an abundant supply of potential targets for panhandling, begging, and theft are coursing through their daily routines" (Snow and Mulcahy 2001, p. 159).

The prime spaces the homeless depend on are often heavily controlled by the police, private security guards, and surveillance cameras in order to assure that citizens conducting businesses, working, living, or playing in these areas are safe and undisturbed. Thus, reducing the amount of marginalized space while making it harder for the homeless to use prime spaces impairs the homeless' ability to make a living. Mitchell (2003) made a similar argument when referring to anti-homeless laws: "]... by in effect annihilating the spaces in which the homeless people must live, these laws seek simply to annihilate homeless people themselves, all in the name of re-creating the city as a playground for a seemingly global capital that is ever forced to engage in its own annihilation of space" (p. 167).
V. Observing Anti-Homeless Strategies on Public Spaces

Research Context

Existing literature on public spaces is extensive and varied. Studies by architects, designers, sociologists, urban planners, journalists, and city officials investigate a multiplicity of aspects related to public spaces, such as best design and management practices, the relevance of such spaces to city life and democracy, and people’s behavior and use of public spaces. A revision of selected literature on public spaces was presented in Chapter II. Likewise, the extensive literature on homelessness encompasses themes varying from analyses of the homeless in terms of demographics and personal history and conditions, to analyses of the phenomenon in terms of causes and remedies. A revision of selected literature on the homeless and homelessness was presented in Chapter III. But, the relationship between public spaces and the homeless seems to have received less attention. The debate over anti-homeless laws, presented in Chapter III, and the neo-liberal urban policies which tend to reduce the spaces where the homeless are allowed to be, reflect the importance of understanding how the design, management, and regulation of public spaces affect the homeless.

This research focuses on anti-homeless strategies adopted in recently redeveloped public spaces. I define anti-homeless strategies as any design, management, or legal tool used to prevent or limit: a) the use of public spaces by the homeless population, or b) the performance of basic activities the homeless population does not have a private place to do (such as sleeping, resting, sitting, eating, meeting friends, and so on). Even though these strategies do not explicitly target the homeless, they do affect them more than any other group of citizens. Thus, although it is ethically problematically and unconstitutional to target one specific group of people, the content and
enforcement patterns of certain laws, policies, designs, and management practices have a clear outcome: to eliminate behavior and activities performed by the homeless in public spaces.

Despite the numerous potential implications of anti-homeless strategies to the homeless population, to the design and management of our cities, to the general population, and to fairness, democracy, equality, and social justice these practices have received little attention by scholars. While the debate over anti-homeless laws have been covered by the media, there has not been an extensive empirical study on how anti-homeless strategies, in general, affect the homeless population, how they might change the general perception of homelessness, how effective they are, and to what extent they might threaten the concepts of fairness, democracy, equality, and social justice.

This research is simply an initial step toward an understanding of anti-homeless strategies. My main goal is to identify and classify actual strategies being implemented on a recently redeveloped public space. Aware of the geographic and temporal limitations of this study, I can only hope that it will incentivize the discussion of different research methods and approaches addressing the implications of anti-homeless strategies; ultimately leading to the elaboration of policies and design that ensure a fair, democratic, equal, and just society.

**Methods**

In order to identify and classify anti-homeless strategies adopted in a redeveloped public space, I chose to conduct a participant observation at Fountain Square, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Participant observation is a qualitative research method that allows the researcher to participate in the everyday life of subjects in order to observe them in their natural environment. In this case, observation of square users and their interactions with each other and with the environment occurred in the public space rather than in a lab, their houses, work place or classroom. This is extremely important in this research which has man-environment interaction as the focus.
My role as a participant (in opposition to an outsider researcher) was fundamental to the analysis of the interaction between subjects and their environment. As a participant, I was seen by others as a user of the public space. My activity involved mostly people watching (as did many others on the square). I was always alone and did not explicitly demonstrate I was doing research. In this way, I was susceptible to being approached by strangers, to have conversations with them, to feel uncomfortable, to be asked for information, to receive a smile, and to be observed by others. Throughout the observation period, I took some photographs (as many visitors of the square did), I took notes, and I engaged in informal conversations (though never initiated them).

As I observed people in the square, I paid special attention to users that I have defined as ‘homeless.’ Observations do not allow me to infer the housing condition of subjects. Thus, the individuals I refer to as homeless are those who exhibited signs of homelessness. These individuals often carried their belonging with them in plastic bags, backpacks, and/or small shopping carts. They had an unkempt appearance with overgrown hair and beard. They might wear old, dirty, and torn clothes. These characteristics, when combined, were considered indicators of homelessness. Informal conversation with individuals on the square confirmed that individuals who exhibited the traits above were in fact homeless (as defined in the 1987 McKinney Homeless Assistance Act). As stated in Chapter III, the homeless form a very heterogeneous group that vary in age, gender, and race. Thus, these characteristics were not considered relevant. Yet, the observation fails to account for homeless individuals who do not exhibit the indicators of homelessness described above.

Data gathered from the observations were updated, completed, or triangulated with additional secondary data collected on websites of agencies involved in the revitalization project. From June 2006 to December 2009, I interned at 3CDC, the corporation in charge of redeveloping and managing Fountain Square. I did not, however, utilize any data I might have received during that period. This research was initiated after the internship ended and only publicly available information and observation notes were used as data sources.
In order to conduct participant observation, I followed steps usually adopted in inductive qualitative research (Charmaz 2006, Emerson et al. 1995, Lofland et al. 2006, Spradley 1979):

1) Select public space for observation;
2) Select dates and times for observation;
3) Make a first assessment of the space;
4) Be on the square at dates and times of observation, take photographs and notes;
5) Write fieldnotes after each observation day and write analytical and theoretical memos as needed;
6) After the observation period ended, start coding and categorizing process.

Fieldnotes were, firstly, coded line by line, then, codes were grouped and categorized. A second round of coding adjusted the categories. This process was repeated back and forth until all codes were categorized.

7) Draw analytical diagrams attempting to relate different categories, go back to coding and categorizing as necessary.

Steps 1, 2 and 3 are further explained below:

1) Select public space for observation:

The geographic location selected for this study, the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, was chosen for two main reasons, the first being convenience. Participant observation requires the researcher to spend considerable time in the research setting. Therefore, Cincinnati is the city I had the easiest access during both weekends and week days. Cincinnati was also a convenient setting for the study because of my familiarity with the city and, particularly, with the revitalizations projects under implementation in the central areas. The second reason for choosing Cincinnati was because its main central public space, Fountain Square, has recently undergone substantial re-construction as part of a broader plan to promote economic development.
Located on the corner of Vine and Fifth streets, Fountain Square sits at the center of the Cincinnati’s Central Business District (CBD). The Square is named after the Tyler Davison Fountain which was donated to the city of Cincinnati in 1871 by businessman Henry Probasco. The fountain was first located on a wide esplanade in the middle of Fifth street. In 1970, the fountain was moved to the south of the plaza and was visible both from Vine and Fifth streets (My Fountain Square website).

With the overall decline of downtown areas, due to disinvestment and massive suburbanization, Fountain Square was considered a large lifeless void. Its design, which had won an award in the 1970s, was considered out dated (Spittael 2006). (Though not everyone concurred with such a view.) In 1980, William H. Whyte, who had been hired by the city of New York to make recommendations for designing successful public spaces, stated the following about Fountain Square:

"it's probably the best public square in the country. It has a close relationship to the street, it's well enclosed by the surrounding buildings, the designers have provided all kinds of choices, different kinds of sitting space, different kinds of places to eat, it's well programmed with activity. But, most important of all, they put the space in the very center of town, not five or six blocks away, but at the 100% location. This is why it is such a unifying place. Cincinnati comes together here."

However, the decline of the downtown area continued through the 1980s and 1990s. The surrounding businesses and office buildings that provided the critical mass to Fountain Square were being closed. The riots in 2001 and increasing crime rates intensified the abandonment and marginalization of downtown. Around the year 2000, the need for revitalization was widely advocated by the business community, public officials, and many residents.

Thus, over the past 10 years, the city has promoted a series of strategies to revamp the dilapidated central areas, particularly the Central Business District (where Fountain Square sits), Over-the-Rhine (a low-income neighborhood north of the CBD which comprises a large collection of Italianate architecture), and the Banks (an area covered by parking lots between the Baseball and
Football stadia along the Ohio river). One of the strategies implemented towards revitalization was the creation, in 2003, of the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation, or simply 3CDC.

3CDC is a private non-profit corporation mostly funded by corporate contributions. Its board of directors include members of several local and national corporations such as the Western & Southern Financial Group, US Bank, The Kroger Company, Macy's, The Procter & Gamble Company, GE Aviation, The Cincinnati Enquirer, and Duke Energy. 3CDC acts as developer, planner, asset manager, and lender/fund manager. The latter refers to 3CDC's operating responsibilities for two private development funds, the Cincinnati New Markets Fund (CNMF) and the Cincinnati Equity Fund (CEF). These loan funds are geared toward downtown redevelopment and spurring economic development in distressed and struggling neighborhoods (3CDC website).

Among other projects, 3CDC was in charge of the revitalization of the CBD aiming to attract new businesses, investments, employers, residents, and visitors. Its first large project was the redesign of Fountain Square, concluded in 2006. According to 3CDC, the total cost of renovation was $48.9 million, and funding sources included $13 million from the Cincinnati New Market Fund, 7.8 million from Cincinnati Equity Fund, $4 million from the Ohio Department of Development, $15 million from a bank loan, and a $4 million grant from the City of Cincinnati (3CDC website).

The revitalization of Fountain Square included a complete redesign project, new urban furniture, new lighting, landscaping, and the relocation of the fountain. A water wall was built on the east side of the square, a LED Board was installed on top of the Macy's building on Vine Street, a music stage featuring lighting and sound systems was installed on the southwest area, new restroom facilities and a restaurant were built on the square, and the underground garage was renovated (My Fountain Square website).
Besides the design changes, the renovation also affected the land uses around the square. According to 3CDC, the revitalization of the square has attracted new residents, retailers, and restaurants, for a total of nearly $125 million in investments around the square (3CDC website). These uses and the almost daily events on the square are responsible for increasing numbers of people living, visiting, shopping, and working in downtown Cincinnati.

Since its renovation, Fountain Square has been managed by the Fountain Square Management Group (FMSG), a subsidiary of 3CDC. The FMSG is responsible for programming and managing events on the square, approving and scheduling third parties' events, issuing licenses for
vendors, and providing the content for the LED board. They are also responsible for managing the underground garage and receiving revenues from the garage, beverage sales during events on the square, rental fees, and sponsorship.

2) Select day and time for observation:

The observations of Fountain Square occurred between April 01 and May 15, 2010. A total of 20 hours was spent at the square, including initial assessment and observation days. In order to guarantee more variety in the data, observations were conducted for, at least one and a half hours during week and weekend days, morning, afternoons, and evenings.

3) Make a first assessment of the space:

The first observation of Fountain Square was intended to provide information about flows, visibility, and sitting areas. This information was relevant to the decision of how and where I should position myself in order to observe the users of the square. I noticed that in order to see as much as possible, I should spend time at two areas: the sitting area closest to the southeast corner of the square and the sitting area at the northeast corner (see map below). I decided to be seated because it facilitated note taking and did not draw attention from other users. During this initial assessment, I also noted that some users take photographs, read, or simply watch other people. So, I could be part of the setting even when I was jotting notes and taking photographs.
Source: Adapted from My Fountain Square website
VI. 'Anti-Homeless' Strategies

In this chapter, I describe and analyze strategies adopted at Fountain Square in Cincinnati, Ohio, that may hinder the homeless' ability to use the space for survival. As discussed in chapter III, individuals who do not have access to private spaces must perform activities in public spaces that one would normally do at home. Thus, the homeless (particularly, but not exclusively, the ones living on the streets) must eat, sleep, socialize, rest, and find means to fulfill material needs at public spaces. But, as the city attempts to attract investment to the downtown area, design, management, land use, and surveillance strategies are employed at Fountain Square to create a safe, clean, and vibrant public space that may promote economic growth. In this context, the poor and the homeless who have 'taken over' public spaces abandoned by investors, politicians, and residents in the past decades become undesirable users.

I refer to the strategies employed in revitalized public spaces as 'anti-homeless' strategies because they disproportionally affect the homeless. The data gathered for this study, mostly from observation, does not allow me to infer whether the effects of these strategies on the homeless are intended or unintended consequences. Thus, I do not claim that removing the homeless is the goal of these strategies. Instead, I explain how design, management, land use, and surveillance practices may hinder the homeless' ability to use the square for survival.

**Design Strategies**

**Redesign**

On October 2006, after a year of reconstruction, Fountain Square was reopened to the public. The renovation project included a complete redesign of the square. The Tyler Davidson
Fountain was moved to the center of the square, the concrete stage was demolished, a new building was erected, and all the urban furniture, landscaping, and paving were replaced. For those who supported the renovation project, the redesign of the square was essential to its rebirth as a more vibrant space that would attract users and stimulate investment in the downtown area.

The previous design, from the early 1970s, was considered an impediment to the full use of the space. According to 3CDC, the benches along Vine and Fifth streets as well as the higher elevation of the square were visual and physical barriers separating the square from the streets. The location of the fountain, too close to the streets, did not allow people to gather around it. The concrete stage occupied too much space and the ice rink was too small (3CDC website). Thus, city officials, designers, and developers involved in the renovation project agreed that the square needed to be completely redesigned. Additional trees, benches, umbrellas, and programmed events were not enough to revive the underutilized space. A $48 million redesign project was necessary.

Bird's eye view before the redesign
Source: 3CDC website

Aerial view after the redesign
Source: Google Maps
But, in 1980, William H. Whyte, who had been hired by the City of New York to investigate what makes some public places successful, observed that Fountain Square had all the features necessary to attract users. He believed the design provided a close relationship with the street, a variety of sitting options, shade, and a major focal point: the fountain. He also observed that it was located at the heart of the city and it was heavily used. Thus, Whyte suggested Fountain Square was the best public space in America. How is it possible that, 20 years after Whyte's observations, the same design features were responsible for the underutilization of the square?

The redesign project, which ultimately attracted people and investment back to the downtown area, did not necessarily provide a better design. Nevertheless, it created a 'new' Fountain Square. Thus, it contributed to changing people's image of the public space that had been abandoned during the 1980s and 1990s. Redesigning the space was a strategy to convince residents and investors that the square was a new place and the city, developers, and corporations who funded the renovation were strongly committed to revive it.
Another accomplishment of the redesign project is that it forced the homeless to relocate to other public spaces during the construction period. For one year, Fountain Square had been under construction, thus, the homeless who spent time at the square were forced to use other public spaces to fulfill their needs. Once the square was reopened, it was a 'new' place. For the homeless, the redesigned square had features that hindered their use of the space. These features are described in the next sections.

Management Strategies

Private management

Since its renovation, Fountain Square has been managed by Fountain Square Management Group (FSMG), which is a subsidiary of the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC), a private and non-profit corporation created in 2003. Thus, while still owned by the City of Cincinnati, the square is privately managed. Besides being responsible for the security and maintenance of the square, FSMG produces events, issues permits for third party events and vendors, manages content for the LED board, and raises sponsorship funds.

3CDC also manages the underground garage. In 2005, the City leased the garage to 3CDC for an up-front fee of $7.5 million. 3CDC was then able to renovate the garage and generate revenue from parking fees. The revenue is used for maintenance and to pay back the loan used to renovate Fountain Square. 3CDC will be the manager of the garage until 2045 or until the loans are paid back, whichever comes first (3CDC website).

Private management of public spaces has become an increasingly common practice adopted by cities around the world. Budget constraints have forced public agencies, which are unable to manage, maintain, clean, and secure public spaces, to privatize the provision of services. However, this practice transfers control of public assets to private parties. As a result, the use of public spaces is bureaucratized. Spontaneous events and uses of the square, including political demonstration,
street performances, and street vendors, are subjected to an approval process. Likewise, private managers have the right to create rules and to choose programmed events.

FSMG's events application form states that

"Fountain Square Management Group LLC (FSMG) respects and honors the City of Cincinnati’s obligation to maintain Fountain Square as a public forum that is open to the public pursuant to the constitutions of the United States and the State of Ohio. Approval, denial or inclusion of restrictions and/or special conditions of the event permit is based solely on Municipal Code Chapter 713, the City Manager's Rules, and Park Rules for Fountain Square."

However, the form is lengthy and detailed. It requires the applicant provide an estimated number of attendants and a copy of flyers or other marketing material one month prior to the event. Permit approval also requires the event organizer to be insured and to pay rental fees. Rent for events open to the public range from $100 to $500 (plus fees for using sound, lighting, and utilities). Individuals may also reserve areas within the square for private events with rental fees varying from $1000 to $5000.

Thus, the approval process gives a private party the right to review and deny permits for events on the square. It also discourages spontaneous street performances and demonstrations on the square. For the homeless, street performances might constitute a means of earning money. The homeless are not likely to apply for a permit, to be insured, and to pay for the rental fees. Therefore, it would be a violation of the rules to initiate a performance that draws a crowd.

During the observation period, no spontaneous activities took place on the square. This is an indication that individuals are aware of the private management and the need for permits. They might also be aware of the high level of surveillance on the square which allows rules to be enforced. These issues are discussed later in this chapter.
Corporate sponsorship

Events and features on the square are available for sponsorship and the LED Board may be used for advertising. Sponsorship revenue is raised and managed by FSMG and is directed toward events and maintenance of the square. According to Fountain Square's website, over 25 corporations have sponsored events and features on the square. Some examples include the U.S. Bank Ice Rink, Strauss and Troy umbrellas, P&G Music Stage, and the PNC Music Festival.

Sponsors' brands are prominently displayed on the square both temporarily during events and permanently on square features. For example, all umbrellas include Strauss and Troy's logo, the stage roof displays a large P&G logo on top and the phrase "P&G Music Stage" above the front scene, sponsors' logos are displayed under the LED Board, and the Ice Rink is surrounded by advertising panels.

Thus, it is fair to say that the square displays a strong corporate presence. Logos are large, prominently placed, and visible from virtually anywhere on the square. The implicit message communicated through extensive use of sponsors' logos is that the square is not truly public. Although it is still publicly owned, it is privately managed and funded. And, it is reasonable to expect that those who pay for events and features have some degree of ownership and control over them.
Moreover, the corporate presence on the square may be intimidating to the homeless. Despite being open and free to all, the square does not feel like a collective space - i.e. owned by all. The homeless at the square protect themselves from the sun under Strauss and Troy's umbrellas while watching a game on Macy's LED Board, or the PNC concert on P&G's stage. The corporate ownership of features and events does not encourage one to appropriate the space and enjoy it as one of its 'owners.' Rather, it reinforces that the square is not entirely public as it is controlled by private parties.

*Programmed events*

Events on the square are planned by FSMG and third parties who receive a permit from FSMG. They may occur at any time of the day and any day of the week. They vary in nature and targeted audience. Some events are addressed to downtown office workers and occur mostly during lunch and happy hours. Other events are meant to attract families on the weekends. And, others target sports and music fans. Attendance varies from a couple of dozens to over 5,000.

During observations, I noticed that the number of homeless individuals on the square decreased as the number of people attending an event increased. For example, in days with no events, there were between 11 and 12 homeless on the square. During events that attracted over 200 people, there were between 7 and 9 homeless individuals on the square. A 3CDC employee confirmed that the number of homeless on the square decreases during large events (personal communication, April 5th, 2010). It is possible that the homeless feel intimidated by the large crowd. Moreover, the level of surveillance on the square increases during events. More police officers, ambassadors, and 3CDC employees are present during large events.

*Restroom closure*

Public restrooms on the square are open only during events and lunch hours (11:00 AM to 2:00 PM). Limited availability of restroom facilities has driven the homeless away from the square.
According to a 3CDC employee, when the new square was first opened, several homeless individuals spent time at the sitting area at the West Grove watching the LED board and a few others hung out near the Water Wall. However, since the FSMG decided to keep restrooms closed for most of the day, the number of homeless on the square has greatly decreased (personal communication, April 5th, 2010).

**Hours of operation**

Fountain Square is open mostly all day, indeed; some retailers on the square open as early as 6:30 AM and some close as late as 2:30 AM. However, the square is closed from 3:00 AM to 6:00 AM, "except for the purpose of entering and exiting the garage or adjacent buildings" (3CDC website). This rule does not affect business owners, office workers, or 'homed' individuals, but, it does affect the homeless living on the streets. Since they are unable to stay on the square, they must relocate to another public space during the night.

**Square rules**

A sign attached to a light pole on the southeast corner of the square and a portable sign near the elevators display the square rules. The sign attached to the pole reads:

"Fountain Square is open for the enjoyment of all. To ensure public safety and to preserve the Square, the following are prohibited except as authorized by a permit or otherwise authorized by law:

- Bicycle riding, rollerblading, or skateboarding
- Stealing, damaging, or defacing property
- Amplified sound or commercial activity
- Weapons or firearms
- Feeding the pigeons
- Alcohol use
- Animals

All City Codes are enforced, including the following prohibited activities:
- Entering or placing items in the Tyler Davidson Fountain
- Interfering with a permitted event
- Drug use or other illegal activity
- Glass container
- Littering (including cigarette butts)"
As the sign indicates, exceptions to these rules may be granted upon permission. FSMG has the decision making power over the permitting process and has frequently granted exceptions to these rules during programmed events. Amplified sound, commercial activity, and alcohol use on the square, for example, occur during most events. Thus, playing a guitar, selling art, or drinking a beer are prohibited activities, excepted if performed by FSMG or if previously approved by FSMG. As discussed earlier, the exceptions granted to FSMG and those who are receive a permit allows FSMG to control when these activities take place and who performs them.

Moreover, not all rules are equally enforced. During the observation period, I witnessed a couple of people feeding pigeons with their lunches. They were not reproached by the ambassador or square manager who were both onsite. However, on one occasion, a homeless man was asked to put his alcoholic drink away. Thus, although both feeding the pigeons and drinking alcohol are prohibited activities on the square, they are not equally enforced.

**Land Use Strategies**

*Private and semi-private spaces*

Fountain Square is surrounded on two sides by public spaces: Vine and Fifth streets. To the north and to the east, the square is enclosed by private spaces. Eateries occupy the ground level of a garage and an office building, both owned by Fifth Third Bank. These commercial uses provide a critical mass to the square and assure its use during and after business hours. Mynt Martini, a bar and nightclub on the northeast portion of the square, is open Monday to Sunday until 2:30 AM. The other restaurants on the square are open until 11:00 PM. Graeter's Ice Cream Parlor and Potbelly Sandwich Shop open as early as 6:30 AM and 7:00 AM respectively.

The redesign of Fountain Square was responsible for attracting these retailers. Except for Rock Bottom, all other restaurants were inaugurated after the renovation project. Graeter's and Potbelly opened in 2007, Chipotle came to square at the end of 2008, and Mynt Martini was
inaugurated in 2009. The building of Via Vite Restaurant was added to the square during renovations and it occupies part of the public area (see map below). The other restaurants occupy existing private space, however, particularly Rock Bottom and Mynt Martini - which offer outdoor seating - expands into the public space. These areas become private and accessible to customers only. The other restaurants do not offer outdoor seating, but, their façades function as semi-private spaces since the retailers may surveil these areas (private security guards were at Chipotle and Mynt Martin during some observation periods).

Source: My Fountain Square website, adapted by author
These eateries, while drawing people to the square, do not represent a diverse mix of uses. Although they do offer a variety of food choices, they target particular sub-sets of the population. Prices and food styles attract downtown white collar workers for lunch and happy hour, young professionals and college students in the evenings, and middle- and upper-class families during weekends. The homeless individuals on the square seem to get food and coffee from nearby convenience stores such as Fountain News, on the corner of Fifth and Walnut streets and soup kitchens.

Another type of private space on the square includes the food trucks and stands that are temporarily set up for vendors during events. Their most frequent location is on the south, along Fifth street and to the east of the central sitting area. Although they provide inexpensive food and goods, they reduce the ‘truly’ public areas on the square. Vendors must apply for a permit and pay the applicable fees to FSMG.

Finally, the permanent stage built to the west of the central sitting area is another access restricted area, even when not in use. Differently than traditional bandstands and the square’s old concrete stage, the stage on the square may be used only by authorized people. During my observations, I noticed the ambassadors politely prevent individuals from climbing up the stage.

Thus, by taking up public space and by drawing a particular sub-set of the population to the square, the private spaces occupied mostly by eateries may limit spaces the homeless are allowed to be at the square. During my observations, homeless individuals alone or in small groups tend to remain in the two seating areas (to the south and north of the fountain). Other users also utilize the sitting areas, but, some of them choose the outdoor sittings of Rock Bottom, Mynt Martini, and the second floor balcony of Via Vite. These private areas, despite being on public spaces, are inaccessible to the homeless.
Gentrification around the square

The revitalization of Fountain Square served as a catalyst of new investment in the surrounding areas. New restaurants, shops, and condos have been inaugurated during and after the renovation of the square. The larger availability of commercial and residential opportunities downtown contribute to the vibrancy of the area while providing increasing revenue to the city. However, these establishments, including upscale condo and expensive restaurants, target individuals with high purchasing power.

The low-income population, which for the past decades have occupied the inner city neighborhoods, are being displaced either because their apartment buildings are being renovated or because they can no longer afford increasing rents. These individuals tend to live and shop downtown because they must have access to public transportation and social services. Currently, the public transportation hub is located across from Fountain Square and social services are provided by churches, shelters, and soup kitchens located in and around the downtown area.

Most homeless people I met at the square resided at single-occupancy rooms (SORs) in the Metropole building on Walnut Street, a block north of the square. At the time of my observations, the building had been purchased by 3CDC and the residents were being relocated. Over 200 residents were living in the building when it was purchased, around 70% were men and 30% were women. They were all low-income individuals and 29% were 55 years of age or older. 3CDC paid $6.25 million for the building and planned a $48 million renovation to convert it into a hotel (3CDC FAQ 2009). The renovation, whose estimated cost has risen to $56 million, has been underway since May 2011 and the new hotel is scheduled to open in Fall 2012 (3CDC website).

An elderly man who was at the square during most observation periods, told me he had been living at Metropole for 20 years. He was glad to be relocated because of the poor living conditions at the Metropole. His room was too small and infested by bedbugs, so, he spent most of his day on the square. However, a video made by the Cincinnati Greater Coalition for the Homeless indicates that
some individuals did not agree with the relocation process. Residents of the Metropole expressed their discontentment with 3CDC's plans by stating that the Metropole was their home, some individuals were disabled, some were going through rehabilitation programs, and most depended on the services, infrastructure, and jobs offered around the building. They also believed some residents would become homeless and that the areas 3CDC had offered them for relocation were drug infested and had high crime rates (GCCH 2009).

As low-income housing and services targeting the homeless are removed from areas in and around downtown Cincinnati, so do their users. Downtown areas and Fountain Square become physically and economically inaccessible to the homeless who are relocated to other parts of the city. Thus, they are unable to enjoy the revitalized space, the LED Board, and the programmed events on the square.

**Surveillance Strategies**

*Police presence*

On foot, bike, or horseback, patrols are common on Fountain Square at any time of the day. At least two officers were seen patrolling the square during any given observation period. During programmed events and lunch hours the number of police officers on the square increases. The more users on the square, the more police officers are present. Often times, officers walk around the square and congregate around the fountain. If on horses, officers allow the animals to drink at the fountain and become an attraction to the children. During events, officers are seen interacting with food vendors, the square manager, and some users (often providing information and directions). I did not witness any interaction between police officers and homeless individuals on the square. Nonetheless, police presence indicates that the square is under surveillance and that square rules are enforced.
**Ambassadors**

The Downtown Cincinnati Inc. (DCI), a non-profit business organization funded by the Downtown Cincinnati Improvement District, is responsible for hiring Ambassadors for downtown Cincinnati. According to DCI's website, "more than 20 Ambassadors, trained in public safety, enhanced cleanliness and customer service, patrol downtown Cincinnati seven days a week. Clad in bright orange shirts and blue jackets, Ambassadors serve as the eyes and ears of downtown and Fountain Square." Accordingly, Ambassadors' tasks include: "look out for disorderly conduct, help Cincinnati Police reduce crime and panhandling, remove litter and graffiti, connect social services programs to those in need, and provide maps, guides and helpful directions" (DCI website).

Ambassadors were present on the square during all observation periods. During events, two or three ambassadors were working at a time. Their activities included cleaning the restrooms, emptying trash receptacles, removing litter, wiping tables, arranging tables and chairs, and opening, closing and storing umbrellas. They were seen everywhere on the square and were often interacting with users. They were the only ones who I saw interacting with the homeless on the square. Ambassadors and homeless individuals seemed to have a friendly and respectful relationship. I witnessed the homeless helping the ambassador organize the chairs and close and move the umbrellas. On one occasion, a homeless man who was selling cigarettes and chocolate from his backpack approached the ambassador and sold him a chocolate bar. They seemed to know each other and to have done business before.

On another occasion, the ambassador requested a drunk and shirtless homeless man to put his shirt back on, to stop drinking on the square, and to put a brown bag he had left behind in a trash receptacle. Although the man did not initially obey the ambassador, he did change his behavior the second time he was approached by the ambassador. Another homeless person on the square seemed to express his support to the ambassador's actions by nodding his head positively while looking at him.
**Fountain Square manager**

The Fountain Square Management Group has appointed an onsite manager who, according to 3CDC's website "provides leadership to Fountain Square’s operating partners on the plaza and in the garage, overseeing repairs and maintenance on a daily basis. The Onsite Manager also oversees and services the production of events from load-in through load-out and manages the Square’s food and beverage operations." As stated by 3CDC, the role of the manager is not, explicitly, to enforce rules or surveil users. However, the onsite manager is ultimately responsible for maintaining order on the square, thus, he/she may appeal to the ambassadors or the police as necessary.

During my observations, the onsite manager was not seen on the square after business hours, except during events. She mainly interacted with professionals involved in organizing events as well as vendors. Occasionally, the onsite manager interacted with police officers and other users on the square. The manager was usually around the stage area, central sitting area, and to and from the elevators that connect the square to the underground garage.

**3CDC employees and partners**

During events, lunch time, and happy hour, 3CDC employees, members of its board of directors, and employees of partnering companies are seen on the square. While using the space, they are part of the general public and not necessarily affiliated with their employers. However, they do have more at stake than the general public either because, at least partially, their jobs are related to the maintenance of the square and development of the surrounding areas, because they work in the buildings adjacent to the square, or because they are sponsors of the square or its events. Thus, they are likely to strive for the maintenance of order on the square and to ensure that it is welcoming to the targeted population (i.e. those who are likely to contribute to the business on and around the square).
During the observation period, 3CDC employees and partners interacted with the ambassadors, police officers, vendors, and retailers on the square. The general public, on the other hand, interacted mostly with vendors and retailers and had very limited interaction with ambassadors and officers. This suggests that despite being part of the general public, 3CDC employees and partners take a more active role to ensure order, safety, and cleanliness on the square.
VII. Conclusion

The redevelopment of Fountain Square in Cincinnati, Ohio, illustrates ideologies and practices that have become commonplace in contemporary cities across the globe. Under neoliberalism, cities must compete against each other to attract mobile capital. Local assets become important tools in attracting and retaining businesses and residents who could be established virtually anywhere. Additionally, as governments are decentralized, cities become increasingly dependent on revenues generated through sales, services, income, and property taxes as funding sources for local infrastructure and service provision.

Thus, economic growth has become the main goal of city officials and, as the neo-liberal ideology predicts, it should lead to prosperity and well being for all. However, the actualization of neo-liberal ideologies 'on the ground' has intensified social inequalities and environmental decline. The neo-liberal urbanism, i.e. strategies of urban governance aiming at economic growth, has continuously excluded the poor and benefitted the already advantaged population.

The redevelopment of Fountain Square illustrates the dynamics of neo-liberal urbanism. Politicians, developers, and investors created a narrative in which the public space should be used as a tool for economic growth. Through redevelopment, the square would be able to attract businesses, residents, and visitors to the downtown area. Revenue generated from increasing economic activity would trickle down and eventually benefit all.

However, the local government was considered incapable of redeveloping and maintaining the public space. Thus, private corporations formed a non-profit redevelopment agency which became responsible for redeveloping and managing the square. The City transferred to the private party the rights to redesign, program, and regulate the square. In return, the City was released from
the responsibility and costs of maintaining the square while benefiting from new investments in and around the square.

The private corporation in charge of Fountain Square runs it like a business. It has formalized a permitting process for events; established rental fees for public and private events; hired private services for cleaning, maintaining, and securing the square; chose a retailer to occupy public space; raised corporate sponsorship funding, and produced events on the square. Investors and sponsors are stakeholders who have, to some extent, ownership and control over features and events on the square. As in any other business, unpredictability is undesirable and may be avoided through centralized management.

Some of the practices adopted during and after the revitalization project may hinder the homeless' ability to utilize the public space for survival. These are intended or unintended consequences which result from the divergent functions that homeless and 'homed' individuals expect public spaces to perform. Nevertheless, some of these practices, which I have called 'anti-homeless' strategies, disproportionately affect the homeless as they do not have access to adequate private spaces. Thus, under neo-liberal urbanism, the spaces the homeless are allowed to engage in activities necessary to the fulfillment of their basic needs are shrinking.

Residents, businesses, tourists, politicians, and investors acknowledge the benefits of the revitalization project. The 'new' Fountain Square, one may argue, is cleaner, safer, more vibrant, and more attractive to investment. Although appealing, these are short-term benefits. Whether the revenue generated by increasing economic activity will trickle down to the poor and homeless is unknown. It is also not clear what the long-term implications of the revitalization project are for civility, democracy, social justice, and the role of government and corporations.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the $48 million spent on the revitalization project has not ended homelessness. Yet, the poor and the homeless have become increasingly out of sight and may also
become increasingly out of mind. The users of the 'new' square are no longer confronted by the poverty that still strikes many residents of inner city neighborhoods. Thus, addressing homelessness may become an even less important issue for residents, politicians, and investors who now enjoy a revitalized public space.

My goal is not to underestimate the advantages of clean, safe, and vibrant spaces. Rather, I suggest that these spaces are viable and desirable insofar as no individual depends on public spaces for survival. The following quote by Waldron brightly summarizes the issue:

"Now one question we face as a society - a broad question of justice and social policy - is whether we are willing to tolerate an economic system in which large numbers of people are homeless. Since the answer is evidently 'Yes,' the question that remains is whether we are willing to allow those who are in this predicament to act as free agents, looking after their own needs, in public places - the only space available to them. It is a deeply frightening fact about the modern United States that those who have homes and jobs are willing to answer "yes" to the first question and 'no' to the second" (Waldron 1991 quoted in Mitchell 2003, p. 181).

This study identified and analyzed 'anti-homeless' strategies in a single redeveloped public space over a short period of time. The generalizability and long-term implications of the findings presented here require additional empirical research. Data gathered through participant observation and secondary data sources provided insights into how practices adopted at public spaces might affect the homeless. However, interviews with users, designers, developers, investors, and city officials would potentially offer a better understanding of the mechanisms through which these practices are developed and the intended and unintended implications of their adoption. Additionally, comparative studies could explore alternative outcomes of revitalization projects.

Still, despite the limitations of this study, it provides an empirical analysis of the relationship between public spaces and homelessness in the context of neo-liberal urbanism. It highlights the importance of public spaces for the survival of those who do not have access to private spaces. The narrative of public spaces as tools for economic growth clashes with the reality of many individuals whose basic needs must be fulfilled in public spaces. In addition to the economic costs and benefits
of privatizing and controlling public spaces, we must add the social costs to the most disadvantaged members of our society.


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