'Swept Off the Streets': The Substantive Criminalisation of Homelessness in Melbourne

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Abstract

Poverty, nomadism and itinerancy have always posed problems for settled societies, problems that only intensified with the upheavals to social organisation wrought by global industrialisation. The modern manifestation of these qualities is homelessness. Strategies for the successful minimisation of rates of homelessness and mitigation of the harms (both individual and social) that arise from it are well established, yet these remain politically untenable in capitalist (and increasingly neoliberal) societies, and so their effectiveness is limited. However, state abandonment of the homeless is similarly untenable, and this results in strategies of governance that are limited in their capacity to address the challenges that it poses. This longstanding political impasse gives rise to the prevalent social belief that systemic homelessness is inevitable and those who experience it are at best feckless and idle, and at worst criminally deviant.

This thesis maps out various facets of the socio-legal regulation of homelessness and the people who experience it. In short, it identifies the associative bonds that link homelessness to criminality. To achieve this, the thesis examines four key facets of the production of the homeless subject as ‘criminal’ and the regulatory responses that flow from this.

First, the discursive production of homelessness as an individualised phenomenon determined by internal moral forces is addressed. The carceral and exclusionary histories of the regulation of poverty (namely, the legacy of Britain’s Poor Laws) are established before considering contemporary manifestations of the excluded homeless subject. Second, the issue of representation is addressed. I demonstrate that homelessness suffers from both over- and under-representation as a small yet highly visible minority (the ‘visibly homeless’) determine social attitudes, prevalent stereotypes and thus the shape and tenor of regulatory regimes. Obscured by the spectacle of the rough-sleeper is the large, shifting and inchoate population of the invisibly homeless and precariously housed. The visibility of the condition of the larger population is, I argue, managed (at least partly) to maintain
the conspicuousness of more visible manifestations and thus the hegemony of the stereotypes that attend them. Third, the spatial dynamics of homelessness are examined. How urban spaces are constructed for the benefit of the domiciled consumer-citizen and, more controversially, to the detriment of those without stable housing are revealed. The emplacement of social borders concerned with the propriety of certain types of mobility is analysed as is the policing of these borders. Lastly, the political isolation of the homeless subject is revealed through an analysis of various policies and political structures that, directly and indirectly, isolate, marginalise and penalise the homeless subject. This occurs through various methods such as laws criminalising begging, as well as through the legal sanctioning of certain lived modalities and ways of being and the corollary stigmatisation and regulation of others outside of this constructed hierarchy of value.

This thesis thus identifies the hidden and dispersed means through which homeless people are subjected to coercive regulatory regimes. The severe alterity of the ‘homeless Other’ is not easily captured in a singular site of penalty like laws banning begging. Instead, a more comprehensive account of the treatment of homelessness as a crimino-legal subject is required to explain the severe marginalisation, disenfranchisement and exclusion experienced by this diverse population.
Declaration of Authorship

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices as approved by the Research Higher Degrees Committee.

James William McRae Petty
Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis coincides with two other significant milestones. A few months prior to submitting this thesis, I turned 30 years old and also became an uncle. In this sense, the thesis is tied to these events and is similarly marked with themes of transition, growing up and adulthood. Looking at the thesis, it is difficult to connect the finished product with its points of origin (of which there are many). Composing acknowledgements involves attempting to name and make clear myriad influences, processes and relationships that have contributed to and, in a sense, culminate in this document.

To begin I would like to acknowledge the privilege of being able to partake of the opportunities of education at this level. I mean this doubly: it has indeed been an honour. But it is also the privileged conditions of my life that have enabled me to undertake this difficult task. Privilege, as I understand it, is linked to and contingent upon its opposite: disadvantage and the lack of opportunity this entails. The reason I have been able to conduct doctoral research at a world-renowned university in a stable and wealthy first-world nation is that most people do not have the same opportunity. So my first acknowledgement is of the highly contingent and unequally distributed conditions that have allowed me to complete this project.

My second acknowledgement links to the first. It is to the population of people who form the object of my research: the homeless, the displaced, the precarious and the destitute. I hope that this thesis does not add to the already substantial stigmatisation or contribute to the considerable forces of social exclusion that you are routinely subjected to. There is something perverse in the act of research, where someone like me sits in an office thinking of novel ways to conceptualise of another’s marginality. It may seem superfluous to say, but this research could not have been occurred without your unsettled presence.

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The Baudelairian stranger, at once mysterious and extraordinary, inhabits a world that from the perspective of his bourgeois interlocutor is one of lack. For the stranger is a being who lives in deprivation, who has either refused or been refused the conventional realities of social order: home, family, community, society itself. The stranger, a creature of loss, lives in a continual state of exteriority and absence. Continually on the move, contained by no frontiers or boundaries, the stranger has for 'home' only the changing landscapes of his wandering, for 'companions' only the echoes of his own footsteps, for 'possessions' only the absence of possessions. The stranger is a nomad, a pariah, an exile, a man or woman on and of the Outside, to whom all communal acts, all common activities, the most simple human verbs — to have, to belong, to speak — are foreign.

Chapter One:

Encountering Homelessness

I see what the others on the train see, a body folded impossibly small, a body marked by its position and its effects as a homeless body. (Kawash 1999: 319)

In 2010, the internationally esteemed actor Sir Ian McKellen, while between rehearsals for a stage production, found himself mistaken for a homeless man on the streets of the Australian city of Melbourne. McKellen was in Melbourne for a reproduction of Samuel Beckett’s iconic play, Waiting for Godot. During a short recess between rehearsals, during which he spent time in the open air traversing the pavement around the exterior of the theatre, McKellen was mistakenly identified as a homeless man by a passer-by. This misrecognised identification was not the subject of abject criticism or rejection that can often characterise, demean and even render criminal the experience and status of those who may be homeless or identifiably poor within highly concentrated areas of commerce and industry. To the contrary, his appearance and location within this space elicited the subject of sympathy, generosity and charitability. It was through these interacting frames that the subject on a street (in this case, an internationally esteemed actor dressed in costume), came to resemble the contemporary and popularised discourse of homelessness. Further, at the same time this event conveyed and reinforced particular signifying practices of the collective imaginations and preoccupations relating to the image of homelessness. His apparent status as a homeless man was premised upon two coinciding appearances: the appearance of his physical self, manifested in the form of the garments that clothed this body, and his bodily positionality on a street. These serve the

1 McKellen’s character ‘Estragon’ or ‘Gogo’ in the play is homeless and is dressed in the stereotypical attire of a ‘tramp’ or ‘hobo’ (see Figure 1). The play uses the theme of homelessness in part as a metaphor to explore existential themes such as the meaning of life in a godless world (see Mount 2008).
function of semiotic indicators of homelessness, notwithstanding how misplaced their interpretation may be. On one level, this renders acute the highly visible prominence that is afforded to homelessness: the sense that we know it when we see it, without regard to any particular criterion when it comes to homely shelter. And yet, at the same time, appearances may be misled, not just in a desire to disrupt our own imagination or cultural stock, but in a more manifest sense, in that they can reveal to us the façade of our own imaginative frame for understanding such a phenomenon. In short, ‘our’ collective relation (or distance) to this encounter is underscored through a reliance upon rudimentary and superficial signs that we take for granted as homelessness.

Following this event, McKellen turned to social media to recount the experience, culminating in the episode becoming widely reported across various media platforms. The Daily Mail reported it as a light-hearted case of mistaken identity (or, as I will argue, mistaken anonymity) in which McKellen was ‘mistaken for a genuine tramp’ (Daily Mail Reporter 2010: no pagination). But the newspaper did not simply report the event. Instead, it went so far as to recreate it, which entailed McKellen re-enacting the interaction, again in costume, and adopting various poses and miens to affect the stereotypical construction of the modern tramp (see Figures 2 and 3).

On one level, this anecdote may be read as a curious and perhaps humorous antecedent to the much more pronounced problems that accompany homelessness. However, this narrow interpretation belies the much more abject and arguably sinister dynamic operating here. Homelessness — a routinely stigmatised and censured condition usually involving extreme poverty, social isolation and destitution — is here not only highlighted but re-enacted for the purposes of amusement and novelty. The distinction between a ‘real tramp’ and Sir Ian McKellen is both galvanised as well as acknowledged as nebulous and inchoate. The passer-by is forgiven for assuming McKellen was homeless because the assumption is plausible in this particular context. Homelessness is not only a common feature of urban landscapes but the archetypical image of
homelessness is that of an older man in threadbare clothing inhabiting the street. Yet it is the incorrectness of the charitable passer-by’s assumption that gives the story its animating force. Sir Ian McKellen is not only not homeless; he is one of the least likely to suffer this condition. The mistake is simultaneously plausible and resoundingly incorrect.

The apparent simplicity and novelty of this interaction belies the complex interplay of social, cultural and political forces here. It is not the event itself that is of interest, but rather the various structures and social forces that are revealed in this seemingly trivial encounter. First, the primacy of the visual to society’s engagement with and understanding of homelessness is revealed in this interaction. The homeless body is registered, but is not scrutinised closely. The power of the visual signifiers of homelessness is revealed here as they work to obscure other markers of identity (Kawash 1998: 324). This means that the primacy of visual and aesthetic identification is unreliable and susceptible to error. Second, this interaction alludes to the graphic nature of the homeless body and how it is read and inscribed with meaning (Kawash 1998). Various visual signifiers are coded and organised to produce meanings regarding bodies and the way they are arranged or encountered. As this thesis demonstrates, such meanings have a role in determining social, legal and institutional responses, and so bodies that are marked as homeless are also marked as requiring regulation. Part of the project of this thesis is to decipher these acts of codification and processes of inscription. Third, McKellen’s posturing re-enactment of the interaction demonstrates the performative nature of homelessness as a social role (see Cloke et al 2008; 2010). Homeless people (and non-homeless people, for that matter) engage in performances, modes of display and forms of public address (see Iveson 2007) that Gerrard and Farrugia refer to as the ‘dramaturgy of everyday poverty’ (2015: 2222). As this thesis will show, the social politics of homelessness, and the responses animated when homelessness is perceived and encountered (or not), are determined by the performance of homelessness rather than the material realities of the condition.
Finally, the alternating strangeness and familiarity of the homeless subject in the social sphere is evinced in this interaction. The nomadism of the homeless body (its ambiguity, its yet-to-be-determined loyalty) is a site of uncertainty in the broader social polity (Zedner 2013). Bodies demonstrating nomadic tendencies or characteristics are the site, often simultaneously, of fascination and desire as well as of opprobrium and censure (Sibley 1995). For example, the media coverage of the above incident focused on the purported insult contained in the woman’s gesture. Not only did she assume that one of the world’s most well-known actors was homeless (and thus anonymous), but she offered charity to someone who was least in need of it. Parsell notes that ‘the giving and receiving of charity underlines the social position of both parties’ (2011: 450). When incorrect, such gestures are transformed into a powerful accusation containing a capacity to insult or offend. The potential insult attached to homelessness evidences the extent to which the condition is stigmatised. In this case, the insult is neutralised by context — McKellen did indeed resemble the stereotypical construction of a homeless person — and by the actor’s good-natured response to it. However, the passer-by’s charitable gesture remains improper — only appropriate for someone poor and in desperate need. For someone neither requiring nor wanting charitable assistance, the gesture is pregnant with insult and libel, though the newspaper article neutralises the impropriety of the interaction as novel and amusing.

Here the homeless body is simultaneously welcome and unwelcome. McKellen’s body is welcome, so long as its apparent homelessness is a masquerade: he was not a ‘genuine tramp’ (Daily Mail Reporter 2010: no pagination). If McKellen had been a ‘genuine tramp’, he would have been one of the approximately 250 who regularly sleep rough in the City of Melbourne (City of Melbourne 2016). He would also join the 22,000 Victorians and 105,000 Australians estimated to be homeless on any given night (Homelessness Australia 2016). Yet in a sense, McKellen is nomadic. He was visiting Melbourne and so his presence in the city is temporary. However, the form of nomadism or
transience exhibited by McKellen is socially sanctioned as tourism or work-related travel as well as legitimated by reference to non-sanctioned forms: the ‘real’ homeless bodies that inhabit the street.

While this encounter may appear trivial, it nonetheless demonstrates the powerful and at times contradictory social and symbolic valency of homeless bodies within urban social landscapes. Encounters with homelessness are usually unwanted, but as this example demonstrates, may occasionally be welcome. However, the inconsistency of the nomad’s welcoming in social space extends beyond representation, imagery and encounters with (potentially) homeless bodies. The inconsistency of social attitudes towards the nomad and her movements and practices is also identifiable in other institutional structures and social practices, such as the law and consumer behaviour. For example, in the municipality of the City of Melbourne, the Activities Local Law 2009 prohibits camping in any public place, with similar legislation existing in the nearby municipalities of Yarra, Port Phillip and Moreland. These regulations are utilised against homeless people as well as other transient or ambiguous bodies, such as travellers and backpackers who might camp in parks or sleep in vehicles to save on accommodation costs (see Lallo 2012). The City of Melbourne’s anti-camping ordinance has a long history of use, most recently against a homeless protest camp held in a plaza in Melbourne’s Central Business District (CBD) (see Mannix et al 2016; Dow 2016a), as well as in 2012 against those participating in the Occupy Melbourne political protest (see Holroyd 2012). In all these instances, the non-sanctioned and adaptive occupation of urban space by nomadic or transient bodies animated practices of regulation and socio-spatial ordering.

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2 See Moreland City Council General Local Law 2007; Port Phillip Council Local Law No. 1 (Community Amenity) 2013 and Yarra City Council Environment Local Law No. 3 (2012).

3 Of course, the use of anti-camping ordinances and similar legislation to regulate social problems like homelessness as well as other social phenomena like protests and political occupations is not unique to Melbourne, as the examples of the Occupy! examples should indicate. The case study offered in this thesis should not be read as unique, but rather occurring in the context of broader patterns of neoliberal governance operating throughout the developed world.
However, while unauthorised camping in the city is disallowed, other, highly similar forms of inhabitation and emplacement are not only sanctioned but celebrated. For example, the *CEO Sleep-out* is an annual event held in several Australian cities in which local CEOs sleep rough for one night in winter to raise money for homelessness charities (see St Vincent de Paul 2016). In another example, Melbourne’s St Jerome’s Hotel offers ‘urban glamping’ (a portmanteau of ‘glamorous’ and ‘camping’) as the quintessential Melbourne experience. The ‘rooms’ at this hotel consist of large heated tents set on the rooftop of a building in Melbourne’s CBD containing queen-size beds and various comforts such as air-conditioning and film streaming. The hotel’s website offers this description:

Step into a world where luxury accommodation meets the elemental outdoors and embark on the most unique urban adventure yet. Vanish without leaving and at once be found in an urban experience like no other. Escape and you’ll arrive at St Jerome’s The Hotel. Breaking new ground for luxury camping.

In this way, the characteristic movements and spaces of the nomad — disappearance, embarkation, escape, vanish and the ‘elemental outdoors’ — are conjoined to stability and the sedentary indoors: arrival, accommodation, being found and luxury. Evinced here is the contradictory relationship of nomadism to the social body: known and unknown, welcome and unwelcome, desired and dangerous, and, above all, ambiguous. The pleasures offered here are similar to those gained from spectating crime: the vicarious thrill of experiencing the outside from the safety of the inside (see Young 2010b). In this instance, then, an experience akin to that of being homeless — to remain ‘outside’ in the city at night — is commodified, packaged and sold. Of course, this is not what is experienced but it is gestured at: one approaches the margin separating the interior from the

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4 The 2016 *CEO SleepOut* in Adelaide was disrupted by homeless protestors who claimed that the area they often used for shelter had been cordoned off for the CEOs participating in the charity event, essentially reserving it for them. Reportedly, heated marquees were also set up in the area for the participants of the charity event (see ABC News 2016a).

exterior while remaining enclosed and protected. There are countless other ways that nomadism and its movements are commodified as ‘experiences’ to be bought and sold, and what is clear is that, while the ambiguity of nomadism can challenge, frighten or threaten, there is also something desirable and fascinating about the uncertainty of the nomad as well (Sibley 1995). This paradox speaks to the central themes of this thesis: how homelessness and its contradictory associations — desperation, freedom, poverty, independence, hardship, ‘a life apart’ — are understood and reconciled in the social, cultural and political spaces of the contemporary city (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2229). That is, how homelessness (as a social issue, a character, a body, a population and an aesthetic) is framed, encoded, encountered and responded to in visual, spatial and political fields.

Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to examine the ways in which we think about, speak about, perceive and encounter the homeless body, as well as the ways in which we do not do these things. Like crime, homelessness exists in a discursive and symbolic space that simultaneously incites acknowledgment as well as avoidance.

Homelessness is not a traditional object of criminological investigation (although I contend it should be). When I have described my research to people, they have generally responded with confusion at the idea of a criminological investigation into homelessness. After their initial puzzlement, people have assumed that I am researching crime committed by homeless people. The popular imagination of crime, like that of some criminological research, tends toward spectacular (and usually violent) criminal acts. In contrast, homelessness as a criminological object inhabits something of a lesser position: closer to minor offences or technical illegalities than to actions and behaviours that rupture the social order, such as murder or burglary. The criminal or deviant value attributed to homelessness is imagined as passive: more an unsanctioned state of being than an explicit transgression of the law.
Yet this low-level association with crime is exceeded by the nomadic body’s amorphousness: its capacity to change, conceal itself and emerge suddenly. For example, a French politician recently described the vulnerability of the Paris Metro network to terrorism, because terrorists are likely to disguise themselves as the homeless in order to carry out an attack (Sparks 2016). Another local example is of a bank in Melbourne’s west, which closed the alcove housing its ATMs because a homeless person had been sleeping there, and then described this individual as ‘inconsiderate’. While the bank apologised for its remark, many people said they would not use the ATMs with a homeless person present due to safety concerns (see Leader Local News 2016). Ironically, the anonymity ascribed to homelessness — the label’s occlusion of legitimate markers of identity — becomes the very thing that is threatening about the homeless: their externality to familiar and normative systems of recognition. Hutchings writes that ‘[t]he criminal is, thus, not some shadowy counterpart of the law-abiding citizen but as spectre the very form of law and the shape it seeks to control’ (2001:2). This thesis demonstrates how, in being bound to the criminal, homelessness exhibits a similar spectral quality that consistently troubles dominant structures of thinking about and responding to it.

Garland has identified ambivalent patterns in criminological thinking that produce a split, resulting in a ‘criminology of the self’ and a ‘criminology of the other’ (1996: 446). The latter gives rise to harsh and punitive responses to crime, what he terms ‘punitive display’, whereas the former involves the often-hidden acknowledgement that crime is a familiar and routine part of the social fabric. He writes: ‘crime forms part of our daily environment, as constant and unremitting as time itself’ (1996: 446). For Garland, this predicament gives shape to a dualism at the heart of contemporary crime control and the related policy framework. This is characterised by contradictory understandings of crime as simultaneously familiar yet aberrant, which in turn are reflected in responses that flow from this. It is clear that understandings of homelessness and attendant strategies of governance are subject to similar predicaments: homelessness is understood as abnormal, unwelcome and
potentially threatening, and yet it is simultaneously a familiar and staid feature of urban life. Responses that are animated by homelessness are structured by the tension between competing desires: to criminalise and exclude; and to include, accommodate, receive and welcome.

Given the societal ambivalence towards the issue, the relevance of homelessness to criminological inquiry requires explication. Criminological research into homelessness can combine two historically integral sites of interest for the discipline: poverty and mobility. The poor and those who move differently or who transgress the norms of space and place have long been objects of regulation, control and punishment (Sibley 1995; Cresswell 2006; Goodrich 2005). Homelessness is undoubtedly a mundane object of interest for law and criminology. Yet, as both a political issue and a population, homeless bodies have persistently evaded containment or capture by the state and its regulatory apparatus (Kawash 1998). The impoverished and the ephemeral routinely feature at the heart of ongoing debates about belonging, community membership and the social boundaries and borders that mark off the Other from the Self.6 The homeless body is an untraceable foreigner with no passport or point of entry, an alien who ignores borders and emerges in the interior, lacking an identifiable point of ingress (Zedner 2013). The archetypical figure of homelessness, the homeless Other, is thus invested with considerable uncertainty and anxiety within social and political spaces that rely on the predictability of bodies for their social coherence.

In a study of regulatory strategies used against migrant populations, Zedner has identified 'a developing convergence between criminology, migration, and refugee studies [that] refocuses attention away from the study of domestic crime to borders and beyond, to examine the ways in which unlawful immigrants are policed...' (2013: 40). While Zedner’s concern is with migration and the borders referred to are national, migrants and the homeless nonetheless share several common

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6 For example, poverty and erratic or unpredictable movement are central to contemporary debates in Australia regarding the (il)legitimacy of migrants and refugees (see Pugliese 2002; Pickering and Weber 2006; Weber 2014).
features. Each evoke similar social anxieties regarding the ambiguity of particular bodies and often prompt similar regulatory responses (exclusion, punishment and the disavowal of responsibility). Arnold writes: ‘citizenship in the modern nation-state is not only externally exclusive, creating the foreign Other, but also (more covertly) internally exclusive, creating domestic others’ (2004: 9). Here the homeless can be understood as the domestic isomers of foreign objects of antipathy: migrants, refugees and the Third World poor.7 The domestic/foreign distinction runs coterminous to other similar sites of demarcation: inside/outside, self/other, political being/bare life and public/private. The latter distinction most explicitly articulates and renders tangible various boundaries that suffuse this thesis. While there is a significant amount of public and political attention paid to the borders of citizenship in relation to refugees, immigrants and stateless peoples (that is, external sites of crisis), comparatively less is said about the limitations and margins found internally: those that divide space, access and entitlement within national borders. This is not to say that internal others are not publicly addressed but that these distinctions are addressed in subtle ways that are dispersed throughout various discursive sites: welfare, crime, employment and so on.

Zedner concludes that ‘[w]e need to address the question of borders... from the inside out’ (2013: 40). In this thesis, I apply her insight to internal borders: those that divide the internal social polity and form hierarchies of belonging and civil legitimacy within the bounds of the nation state. Certain forms of homelessness often constitute civil and legal states of non-belonging and prompt governmental demarcation of responsibility. Just as state responsibility for migrants is regularly disavowed, political constructions of the homeless frame their condition as volitional and thus falling outside of increasingly narrow conceptions of governmental responsibility (Arnold 2004: 54). Recently, criminology’s scope of analysis has expanded to a global scale, with issues such as migration being granted greater critical attention. While this is an important and positive

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7 Mentioned earlier, the French politician’s fear regarding a potential junction of terrorism and homelessness represents the convergence of social anxieties regarding both domestic and foreign otherness, culminating in a fusion of indisputable alterity.
development, it should not occur to the neglect of correlative (albeit less conspicuous) issues occurring at national or local scales. In a world where the norms of capitalism are so quickly and readily internalised at a social level, criminology must remain cognisant of a tendency to neglect mundane issues in favour of more explicit or spectacular forms of harm. Analysing the explosive riots that occasionally puncture the dominant social order in England, Jock Young called attention to the ‘slow riots’ that continue to play out at local levels, where the violence and harms of poverty, state neglect and widespread social indignity are normalised and thus become invisible (1999: 21). In this vein, the purpose of this research is to examine a condition and population whose familiarity and banality has lent itself to neglect by the discipline of criminology.

In exploring homelessness as an issue of criminological interest, this thesis employs a range of disciplinary perspectives and critical approaches. Criminology is inherently interdisciplinary (by dint of its object of analysis being determined by a socio-legal label) and this is reflected in the analytical approach this thesis employs. In conducting this research, I attempt, conceptually, to mirror the movements of my object. In doing so, this thesis forgoes a traditional structure or methodology, and transgresses several disciplinary boundaries. The literature utilised includes social and cultural theory, criminology, critical geography, structuralist and post-structuralist bodies of knowledge, as well as literature from cognate areas such as psychology and social work, and the ‘grey’ literature from the homelessness and community sectors. The data used in my research is similarly broad, including media content, political debate, statistical research, and approximately 20 interviews conducted with representatives from various organisations working with homeless people or engaging with homelessness. These include homelessness, domestic violence and drug and alcohol services, organisations providing legal assistance for at-risk or disadvantaged populations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples), city and municipal councils, Victoria’s social services peak body (VCOSS), and community engagement/social inclusion programs (such as a creative writing magazine that publishes the work of room house residents).
I have chosen not to interview homeless people themselves for several reasons. Firstly, to name a population as an object of research involves committing a kind of violence against that population (the consequence of which is stigma). As I will demonstrate, the stigma produced by identifying and responding to homelessness entrenches the alterity of those identified. In a sense, conducting this research ethically counter-intuitively involved excluding those from the population in question from participation. The other main reason for not interviewing people experiencing homelessness is that it would initiate a textual focus on individuals. This thesis identifies an engagement with homelessness on an individual level as not only problematic, but a significant barrier to the political changes necessary to mitigate the social exclusion and isolation experienced by the homeless population. In this research, I contend that engaging with homelessness as an individual issue in any way contributes to a situation in which a focus on the individual works to obscure the systemic, structural and normative factors not only contributing to homelessness but rendering its the existence inevitable within current socio-political and economic arrangements.  

This wide-range of sources utilised in this research is reflective of the false unity implied by the term ‘homeless’. The ostensible coherence of the issue or population is quickly revealed as a constructed hindrance that belies a troubling and at times overwhelming complexity of the people, practices, identities, behaviours and conditions that this unwieldy term attempts in vain to describe. The challenge of this thesis has been to reconcile the disjuncture that exists between a morally loaded and reductionist term charged with social censure against a diverse array of people, conditions, issues and structures. Any attempt to describe homelessness in totality is doomed to failure and so it is this disjuncture — the contradiction between the term and the phenomena — that becomes the focus of the thesis.

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8 While there has been a tendency in ethnographic research conducted on homeless populations for the utilization of problematic methodologies and/or stigmatising analytical frames (see, for example, Rossi 1989), there are exceptions to this. For examples of ethnographic research that maintain an ethic of respect and engage with people experiencing homelessness in ways that construct them as more than simply ‘data’, see Snow and Anderson (1993); Snow and Mulcahy (2001), Amster (2008); Cloke, May and Johnsen (2010).
Structurally, the thesis proceeds by first outlining the overriding conceptual framework that shapes and informs the research that follows. Chapter Two sketches out a range of theoretical perspectives and ties these to the concept of homelessness and the forces that produce it (the State, capitalism, mobility, the city and the commodification of social relations). This provides a means for engaging with homelessness within the socio-political and economic context that it occurs. That is, as an issue subject to powerful forces that produce the social, economic and political conditions in which particular bodies and populations can be determined as not belonging (despite their being found within the social body). The chapter identifies and elaborates the key conceptual frames that inform the analyses that the thesis subsequently contains. Following this, the thesis examines four ‘spaces’ or fields in which homelessness is encountered, coded, (re)presented and responded to. These are biography, visibility, geography and responsibility.

Chapter Three attends to the construction of homelessness as a category that exceeds and obscures identity (following Kawash 1998). I examine how various discourses relating to homelessness construct a condition that extends beyond the material (not having stable accommodation) to include various social and moral attributes which legitimate the homeless as objects of censure and regulation. Here, homelessness is discursively linked with the figure of the criminal, and the condition is constructed as indicating a volitional foregoing of both the responsibilities and benefits that attend legitimate citizenship. The media is identified as a key agent complicit in the construction of the figure of the ‘homeless Other’: an archetype that obscures the heterogeneity of those who experience homelessness while organising various conditions into an objectified and simplified scapegoat for the discharging of social anxiety and opprobrium.

Identifying the primacy of vision and visibility to the process of representing homelessness, Chapter Four identifies a contested politics of visibility in which homeless bodies are situated. As the chapter demonstrates, highly visible homeless bodies — those sleeping rough — are falsely understood as
representative of the homeless population broadly. The chapter thus examines the visual elements of the archetypical ‘urban rough sleeper’ and the social and regulatory desires and anxieties attending this figure. In particular, I examine processes of aesthetic re-construction that reframe vulnerability as dangerousness. Through this, I demonstrate how certain forms of visibility are emphasised while others are obscured or hidden, reinforcing these simplified renderings. This chapter also identifies how the alternating visibility of homelessness contains an element of unfathomable threat and danger. To do this, I utilise two case studies involving people experiencing homelessness. In one, the homeless Other emerges as a killer: someone who may murder at random. In the other, the homeless Other is revealed as a victim and the social difficulties conceiving of the homeless subject as victim are analysed. Both case studies occurred in Melbourne in 2014 and prompted a re-examination of the city’s identity as a safe, secure and liveable city.

Following this line of thought, Chapter Five examines homelessness as a feature of the City. Specifically, how the presence of homeless bodies within city spaces emerges as a persistent tension for urban governmental authority. Here, the imagination of Melbourne — the city’s ‘self-conception’ — is revealed as requiring constant scrutiny and maintenance. The nexus of the city and the law (the ‘lawscape’) is challenged by the persistent presence of homeless bodies, giving rise to a series of contradictory strategies and policies directed at (or around) the homeless population (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007). Contests between these strategies and their objects of control institutes a contested geographic politics in which homeless bodies are continuously shifted around by regulatory forces working in concert and conflict with one another.

Chapter Six, the final substantive chapter, brings together the preceding analyses to conceptualise the contradictory political space in which homelessness is situated. The chapter identifies various responses to homelessness that range from the punitive to the ostensibly therapeutic, revealing a broad and disjointed apparatus of registration. This apparatus, I argue, is born of the state’s desire
to explicitly criminalise homelessness (a desire that is constrained). This produces a range of alternative routes through which homelessness is regulated, penalised and galvanised as a legitimate (read: criminal) object of state intervention and exclusion. Interspersed between the chapters is a series of *intermezzos* containing notes from observational fieldwork conducted throughout the course of this research. Given the conceptual focus of this thesis, these are intended to situate the research geographically (in Melbourne), to link the research to the material reality of its object, and to contextualise for the reader this research in the everyday (and thus seemingly benign) politics of space, place and identity.

Each chapter examines a social space in which the processes that construct the homeless subject as categorically other are detectable. Importantly, these processes are not simply discursive but are graphic, spatial, political and aesthetic as well. To produce the homeless subject as socially intelligible (that is, organised and positioned in relation to ourselves) requires innumerable acts of inscription and framing. This is not limited to ascribing particular bodies, representations and practices specific meanings associated with homelessness. Our own bodies and socio-spatial practices are similarly encoded with symbols of home and belonging. The law and the criminal justice system are prime sites for these practices of differentiation. These institutions have long histories of conflict with transient bodies and those who do not belong. Such bodies are marked out and subject to processes of demarcation: good from bad, licit from illicit, safe from dangerous, inside from outside. However, there are other, more subtle sites of marking that seek to detect and identify the nomadic body. These include government policies on issues as diverse as education, employment, health, construction, the community sector, the media, and corporations who have a vested interest in constructing images of spatial and civil (il)legitimacy. These also participate in processes of inscription that construct the ontological category of homelessness by marking out borders and boundaries and organising various signs, gestures, practices, images, behaviours and mobilities under a singular stigmatised label. The identification and stigmatisation of homelessness is
thus also a sanctification of the Self. This dynamic has troubled me throughout the course of this research, prompting me to reflect on my own experiences of home, housing and spatial and political legitimacy.

Prior to undertaking my PhD I spent two years tutoring at the University of Melbourne, while also working as a furniture removalist. Both jobs, in their own way, have determined the trajectory of my doctoral research. The subject I tutored was ‘Crime and Public Policy’ and one of the topics discussed was civil disobedience. Earlier that year, riots had spread across various cities in the UK sparked by the shooting death of Mark Duggan by police in north London. The initially peaceful protest developed into rioting and looting: shops were broken into, cars and buildings set alight, and several people were killed over several nights of unrest.⁹ Discussing the riots in the tutorial, the response of my students was severe and bloodless. The rioters should be imprisoned: there was no excuse for such behaviour. After an intense debate, a few of my students — who were mostly white and middle class and were enrolled at a prestigious university — had softened their stance but not by much. They could not comprehend such behaviour in a setting like London, a city most of them had visited as tourists. They understood London as fundamentally democratic: a ‘free’ space in which all have equal opportunity and where the troubles that plague other parts of the world — poverty, violence, exploitation and suffering — do not exist (at least not as the product of structural or systemic inequality). In London, such problems only exist due to people failing to take advantage of the opportunities available to them through hard work and personal ambition. Therefore, the rioters were lazy and opportunistic; unwilling to do the hard work required to succeed but willing to exploit a moment’s disruption in the social fabric for their own self-interest.

At the time, Occupy Wall Street protesters still inhabited Manhattan’s Zuccotti Park. Several students identified this as the model for civil disobedience: disruptive but polite, disobedient but

⁹ See Treadwell, Briggs, Winlow and Hall for an analysis of the riots in the socio-political context of late-modern, individualised consumer capitalism and its social and phenomenological consequences (2013).
eloquent, and above all, peaceful. I asked my students if the riots could not be considered a form of protest. Was it possible that the rioters had legitimate grievances but lacked ‘legitimate’ avenues of expression? The consensus was no: the behaviour of the rioters was anything but political.

I wondered at the practices of differentiation undertaken by my students in order to distance themselves from the young people involved in the riots. Could they not see commonalities between themselves and the rioters? I realised later that indeed they could see commonalities and, in fact, this was the source of their antipathy. What my students struggled to recognise was difference. To my students, the rioters were equals — in opportunity, education and social mobility. My students saw the social world of the globalised West as a flat plane with no centre or margins: all points level and equidistant from one another with resources and opportunities distributed equally across this field. What distinguished them from the rioters was a personal ethic of responsible behaviour, nothing more. While not directly related to homelessness, this experience prompted me to consider the practices of differentiation people use to obscure the structural determinants in the lives of others. Such practices, I now realise, are generally undertaken in order to galvanise one’s own socio-political legitimacy. This did not galvanise my research interest in homelessness, though it served to contextualise for me the ways that certain groups are blamed for the material realities in which they exist.

My other job was as a furniture removalist and during this time I encountered the gamut of Melbourne housing. High-tech, multiple-storey mansions with elevators in the wealthy inner-south, shoe-box apartments fifty floors up in the inner city marketed to international students and decrepit hovels in the outer suburbs brimming with hoarded rubbish. In this job I was given a broader sense of what housing — and particularly its disruption — can do to people. Furniture removalists meet people at a very stressful time and so often become whipping boys for the various frustrations and anxieties that attend the process of moving house. In some ways, moving house involves becoming
homeless, albeit temporarily: one deconstructs one’s current home in order to reconstruct it elsewhere.

I remember one particular customer. She lived in a poor suburb in Melbourne’s outer-west. When we arrived 10 in the morning, her under-age son and his friends were smoking and drinking alcohol on a threadbare couch in front of the house. The house was in a state of severe disrepair and had not been cleaned in years: it smelled of urine and cigarette smoke. The refrigerator had sunk into the rotten flooring beneath it, the curtains were visibly mouldy, surfaces were marked and sticky and the air was stale and febrile. The woman, who smelled of alcohol, had sold her house and needed to be out the following day. She told us that we were to take everything and provided the address of her new house before departing in a taxi with her three dogs in carrier baskets. The delivery address was in one of Melbourne’s wealthy seaside suburbs in the south-east. I thought this odd at the time but did not question it. Several hours later we were on our way to the address with all of her furniture when our manager called and told us to go back. Upon arriving at the house she thought she had purchased, the woman found it already occupied by a young family. She had been scammed. There was no house for her and having sold hers, she had nowhere to go. That day she had spent over $1000 in taxi-fares, was forced to hire a large storage unit in which to store all of her belongings and our fee was well over $1500. We left her crying in the foyer of a closing storage-hire facility with her three dogs. She was unsure of how she was going to get to her former neighbour’s house where she was staying the night. We’d already spent ten minutes comforting her and were running late getting back to the depot (which was in the opposite direction). Our manager said it was not our problem.

While I do not claim to understand what it is like to experience homelessness, these vicarious experiences of disruption remain instructive for my research. They have prompted within me an enduring interest in the importance of home, what it is like when the comforts and routines enabled
by stable housing are removed or disrupted, and how access to housing is facilitated for some while inhibited for others.

Homelessness is not simply a lack of stable accommodation; it also carries with it a tremendous capacity to disrupt the congruence of our lives with the dominant system of political ordering. Becoming homeless renders someone suddenly incongruous in the organisational structure of society and thus suddenly unable to fulfil the obligations that civil society demands of its citizens. The principle of the social contract is that we are rewarded and benefitted for our adherence to the laws and norms of society. We forgo certain freedoms and accept certain constraints in exchange for particular assurances and protections (Young 1996: 10). Foucault identifies the shift from sovereign arrangements of state power that governed through the threat of death, to disciplinary arrangements which govern through the administration and facilitation of life, what Foucault terms ‘biopolitics’ (1977; 1997). The persistent existence of homelessness, however, challenges this normative construction of the law and the state as biopolitical forces sustaining life. Indeed, homelessness calls into question the purported distinctions between ‘the state of nature and the state of civil society’ and thus troubles the premise of the social contract (Young 1996: 4). If the homeless are of the community, then how can they be destitute, placeless and marginalised? There are two possible answers, neither of which provide any assurances. Either they are not of the community, which prompts further questions regarding their presence. Or, more troublingly, they are of the community, in which case the purported ubiquity of the benefits of liberal citizenship is false. In their troubling proximity and familiarity, the homeless trace out the conditionality of citizenship and its limitations. They highlight the troubling closeness of society’s borders and the possibility that we might one day find ourselves beyond these. As we will see, the normative origins of homelessness are generally disavowed through the deflection of responsibility back onto the homeless themselves. This serves to recomplete the circuits of logic that sustain the dominant
systems of social ordering. It is with an interest in what the encounter with homelessness prompts us to confront that this thesis proceeds.
Intermezzo:

The Tram

It’s early morning; I stayed at my boyfriend’s house last night. I left his place in West Brunswick, where gentrification is still in its early stages. The shopping centre hasn’t been renovated like the one in Brunswick proper, and so has a dilapidated air about it. The people around here are less likely to be young professionals than a few blocks east: there are rooming houses around here, which I’ve only learnt to recognise through my research. I walk ten minutes down to the tram that will take me to university. I board and don’t bother to ‘touch on’ my MYKI card: I’m a regular fare-evader, it’s cheaper. Normally I would ride my bike but it’s being serviced at the moment. I only catch the tram once a fortnight or so. I keep my wallet in my hand and an eye out for tram inspectors, checking for the tell-tale bum-bags and lanyards.

This morning I am tired, and having not been caught fare-evading in over two years, complacent. The inspector who catches me isn’t even disguised in plain-clothes; she’s just suddenly standing in front of me. I have my ear-phones in and pretend not to notice that she’s talking to me, but I can’t keep that up for long. She looks friendly and her earnest smile forces me to acknowledge her. Last time I was caught was in the city on a Saturday night. Then, the woman who did the talking was flanked by two burly men whose intimidating presence ensured my compliance. Not this time, at least not for me. I hear raised voices and look to see two large men standing over a man who looks homeless. He’s distressed; shouting something about his rights and the Nazi’s who were ‘just doing their job too’. He’s panicking. The rest of the passengers ignore the confrontation going on two feet away. The woman asks me if I’m aware of my options, I tell her that I am. She says she is required by law to inform me of my rights and options so I listen patiently, regularly glancing over at the drama unfolding a few metres away. She recites this part more loudly than she had been speaking, and I am
aware of other commuters watching this play out, watching me. Despite myself, I feel colour rising in my cheeks, embarrassed. I nod my head and pay the $75 fine; assuring her that I am aware that choosing this option means that I’m waiving my right to challenge the fine. She takes out an EFTPOS machine and asks if PayPass is okay, as though this was a shop and I’d just bought a bottle of water. She waves my card over the reader and it spits out a receipt; she hands this to me. It’s a notice of penalty and so reads different to other receipts. She tells me that this is now my ticket which will get me to my stop, but if I get back on a tram later today I will need to pay the fare. I bristle at this: $75 and it doesn’t even cover a full day? She moves on to assist her colleagues. The man has started swearing: he can’t pay the fine and doesn’t have ID to verify the address he’s provided.

The tram arrives at a stop and I rush off. I am still a few blocks from uni but I’m feeling flustered: I am upset about being subject to regulatory scrutiny; having my legitimacy challenged; being publicly shamed. I feel doubly ashamed because I received the polite version which is all smiles and manners. Where I was coerced through social etiquette, the other man on the tram was strong-armed and threatened to ensure his compliance. To what end? Such tactics make sense for me: the disciplinisation of someone who is able to pay the fare but chooses not to. But what purpose is served by subjecting that man to them? What is the material benefit? To me, it seems like policing for policing sake; a way to remind the man of his vulnerability to power. I walk the rest of the way to uni, unsuccessfully trying to gain some perspective. The consequences for me are purely symbolic: I can easily afford the $75. However, I cannot let it go: I hate feeling coerced, or socially pressured to conform to something I don’t agree with. Nevertheless, I touch on later that day when I board the tram home, purchasing my right to be in that space.
Chapter Two:

Conceptual Framework

An imaginative criminology moves beyond the taken-for-granted label of ‘criminal’ and explores this label as a social censure alongside other forms of ineligibility that have the effect of stigmatising ‘the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance’. (Coleman 2007: 50)

*It [the home] forms an inside, an identity against or to which must be compared the corresponding zone of exclusion, of alienity, foreignness or otherness.* (Goodrich 1994: 119)

Introduction

To research homelessness is to encounter multiplicity. The array of images, stereotypes and myths that attend this topic can be overwhelming for the researcher. Homelessness has a long and complex history both as a tangible social phenomenon as well as a symbol of poverty, inequity and social marginalisation. For example, it is widely held that Siddhartha’s first encounter with the poverty and suffering of those living on the streets outside his father’s palace — the grounds of which he did not leave until the age of 29 — was formative for him in founding the principles of Buddhism. Similarly, Christian lore has a plethora of peripatetic mendicants and impoverished holy fools. These individuals would employ unacceptable or shocking behaviour — feigning insanity, begging and going naked in public spaces — to challenge dominant social norms and demonstrate their piety.10 Basil the Blessed, a 16th century Russian saint, is said to have spurned housing and clothing in winter, weighed himself down with chains and stolen food to give to the poor in order to shame the rich and miserly.11

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10 Mythologised religious representations of poverty and homelessness retain considerable influence in shaping responses to these issues, particularly within the charity sector. For example, ‘Holy Fools’ is a Christian homelessness charity and service provider in the Yarra Ranges in Melbourne’s outer-east.

11 Foucault terms such actions ‘performance criticism’ (1985: 54). The performative aspects of homelessness, and in particular begging, will be examined later in the thesis.
Chaplin’s tragicomic depictions of poverty exemplified by his character of ‘The Little Tramp’ (see Figure 3). These evocative images and their powerful social themes are salient features in the cultural landscapes of sedentarily organised societies. Bodies that spurn norms of behaviour and place remain objects social fascination today, evoking both the dangers and seductions of a life outside of community and its obligations.

Themes of transience, placelessness and exile recur in popular texts of music, literature and film. These themes are often made manifest through particular figures: the wandering outlaw, the wild nomad, the transient gypsy and the itinerant hobo. Indeed, romanticising the homeless itinerant (or ‘hobo’ in their parlance) is a longstanding American cultural and literary tradition (see Anderson 1923). Underlying this romantic fascination is the culturally revered ‘rags-to-riches’ narrative in which plucky young men with little money make it big in ‘the land of opportunity’ (Wyllie 1966). This is usually achieved through a mix of ambition, ingenuity and ‘rugged individualism’ (Barak and Bohm 1989: 279). From a critical perspective, such narratives sanctify the systemic poverty and the unequal distribution of resources inherent to capitalist economies. By framing poverty as a productive condition in which valorised traits like individual autonomy, initiative and responsible self-governance are forged, critique is neutralised (Wyllie 1966). However, the optimistic framing of systemic poverty and the modes of living it produces is not ubiquitous. American music genres like folk and the blues routinely offer grim accounts of the social harms and personal suffering experienced under the conditions of capital (see Ryan 2011).

12 Rather than simply being interchangeable, terms like ‘hobo’ and ‘bum’ have particular and often contested meanings. In the 2012 film Mud, a young boy calls the eponymous protagonist a bum to which Mud replies: ‘I’m no bum. I got money. You can call me a hobo ’cause a hobo’ll work for his living and you can call me homeless ’cause that’s true for now, but if you call me a bum again I’ll have to teach you somethin’ ‘bout respect your daddy never did’ (2012).

13 The folk song ‘Big Rock Candy Mountain’ written by Harry McClintock in 1928, for instance, imagines a hobo’s utopia. In this imaginary place, cigarettes grow on trees, there are lakes of stew and whisky, open barns full of hay, police with rubber legs and jails made of tin. The protagonist does not yearn for a normative sedentary life, but rather a place where transient living does not result in severe social exclusion and hardship. The veneration of itinerancy runs specifically contra to Puritan or Protestant ideals of hard work, utility and the foregoing of vices that were a powerful social force in America at the time (see Sutton 2000; Cohen 2000).
Other cultures have analogous myths and corresponding archetypes which are similarly subject to both cultural valorisation and derision. Equivalents figures in British culture are free-spirited tramps, ramblers, and the highly stigmatised ‘gypsies’, whereas Australia has cultural mythologies of ‘walkabout’, the jolly swagman and the folk heroes William Buckley (Hill 1993) and Ned Kelly (Simmons 2014). These seductive historical figures still enjoy widespread popularity and, in the case of Kelly, have arguably shaped national identity in Australia. These myths and archetypes, as well as less sympathetic representations of transient bodies — the homeless, drifters, vagabonds and roving outlaws — proliferate in both history and culture, popular and otherwise.

However, the rose tint colouring many representations of itinerancy and nomadism is not all-encompassing. Those who do not or cannot adhere to the dominant behavioural norms of space, place and citizenship are routinely subject to severe stigmatisation and social exclusion (Arnold 2004). Homelessness is the quintessential condition of contemporary placelessness in the popular imagination and those who experience it are commonly denounced as lazy, idle, incorrigible and parasitic. For example, in 2016 the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, claimed that people who beg in Melbourne are neither homeless nor poor and use social media to boast about the amount of money they swindle from generous Melburnians (Masanauskas 2016a). Hostile narratives such as this generally involve the ascription of personal responsibility to an individual or group for social marginalisation and the material conditions of their lives. According to such perspectives, the homeless (and the poor more generally) leech off responsible tax-paying citizens either through begging or by benefitting from generous welfare programs without contributing themselves. The song constituted a direct challenge to the capitalist work ethic: ‘Where they hung the jerk who invented work, at the Big Rock Candy Mountain’ (McClintock 1928; see also Rammel 1990).

14 Interestingly, the cultural valorisation of Kelly, a bushranger (outlaw) whose gang killed three police officers in a shoot-out in 1878, remains a divisive issue in Australia today. Victoria Police have long opposed the cultural adoration of Kelly, including the holding and display of Kelly artefacts (most famously, his self-constructed suit of metal armour) in State institutions such as the State Library of Victoria and the National Museum. (See Hurley 2013; FitzSimons 2013).

15 Such narratives are common in Australian political discourse, with the Federal Treasurer Scott Morrison recently stating that there is a growing population of ‘taxed-nots’: that greedy and incorrigible population who
impoverished and placeless are frequently portrayed in media and public discourse as a dead weight on an otherwise healthy and robust system that rewards fiduciary prudence, autonomy and individual responsibility (Arnold 2004: 25). The neoliberal logic structuring such narratives is that ‘[i]f you maintain the system, the system will maintain you’ (Kramer and Lee 1999: 147). This leads to understandings of homelessness and its attendant conditions (poverty, precarity, social isolation etc.) in purely volitional terms. That is, poverty and marginalisation are framed as products of individual failures and pathologies rather than broader patterns of social and economic marginalisation. This thesis examines the persistence of these myths and demonstrates how they work to occlude from critical scrutiny the role of structural and systemic factors in producing these conditions. Further, this thesis will highlight that, in addition to being subject to degrading stereotypes, the homeless and those at risk of homelessness experience severe systemic disenfranchisement.

Sibley claims that mobility can offer a crucial lens for understanding the stigmatisation and marginalisation of social groups, particularly those that are perceived as transient or ‘out of place’ (1995). Contests between settled and itinerant social groups have long and diverse histories across the globe (see Cresswell 2006). For example, cultural conflicts in the Middle East between nomadic and settled groups have not only shaped the borders between countries in the region, but also particular cultural practices and taboos that persist today (Sherrat 1995). Thinking of these conflicts only in historical terms would be remiss. There are many contemporary examples of groups are content to spend their lives living off generous government welfare payments with no intention of ever contributing themselves (Gittins (2016). Similarly, Sydney-based tabloid newspaper The Daily Telegraph recently published a story on the new generation of ‘bludgers’ (an Australian pejorative appellation for long-term welfare dependants) (Bita and Houghton 2016).

16 Sibley offers an historical account of stigmatised or unsanctioned mobilities and the responses that encounters with these groups have elicited. For an account of how contemporary illicit mobilities — those displayed by trash scroungers, ‘gutterpunks’, graffiti artists and rail riders — are framed, understood and responded to see Jeff Ferrell (1998; 2001a; 2001b; 2005)

17 As Manderson demonstrates, historical cultural conflicts between settled and nomadic groups have played a significant role in determining contemporary socio-cultural practices and attitudes toward alcohol and hashish consumption in various cultural settings in the Middle East today (Manderson 1992, 1999).
whose marginality is, to varying degrees, contingent upon the alternative mobilities that they display and the complex social meanings that are ascribed to this. Examples include groups such as the Romani in Europe (Sigona 2011), the Traveller people in Ireland (Kelleher et al 2012), and the stark differences in quality of life between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Carson 2007). This thesis will demonstrate that conflicts between settled and nomadic groups — particularly around issues of space, movement, access and entry — persist today. In doing so, I show how such conflicts play out across various social, political and institutional fields in a dispersed rather than centralised manner. It will be my argument that this evidences Foucault’s claim regarding the shift from centralised sovereign arrangements of power to diffuse disciplinary forms (1977). Rather than strategies of control being centralised and homogenised within particular governmental institutions, they instead became dispersed throughout the social sphere (1977, 2008). Conflicts over social norms of place, space, identity and being are thus not restricted to coercive state apparatuses such as the law and the criminal justice system. Instead they are produced and proliferated across multiple sites and through varying socio-political processes. The broad analytical ambit of this thesis, then, is reflective of the decentralised origins of discursive constructions and social understandings of homelessness. As such, it extends its scope beyond singular institutions and into histories, myths and pervasive cultural narratives.

These myths and cultural narratives are not just described for simple historical contextualisation. Rather, as Staniforth claims, myth and history are powerful and influential undercurrents in contemporary patterns of social organisation, governance and conceptions of order and legitimacy (2015: 31). The persistent contestation of transience, poverty and homelessness indicates that these phenomena are constituted by more than material circumstance. Instead, they are powerful social and cultural signifiers redolent with symbolism and meaning. The heterogeneous social phenomena reductively labelled ‘homelessness’ capture the attention of not just those involved in the governance and regulation of space but of a broader social imaginary as well. Indeed, the cultural
meanings attributed to the homeless, the transient, wanderers and nomads continue to resonate and shift today. One purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate these figures influence the way that contemporary society is organised and determine the shape and arrangement of many of the systems that govern social life.

This conceptual framework proceeds with the widespread valency of nomadism in mind and responds to the limitations of current conceptual and aetiological understandings of homelessness and its relation to the State. In this chapter, I offer key conceptual perspectives for examining contemporary manifestations of and responses to homelessness and itinerancy. To this end, I examine the complex relationship that exists between the sedentary state and itinerant bodies. This reveals the specific nature of the challenges posed to the state by the persistent presence of homeless bodies inside state boundaries. The chapter then moves to an examination of the city and spectacle, offering a Debordian analysis of the aesthetic and cosmetic dynamics of capitalism. The role that these late-modern capitalist dynamics play in structuring urban space and dynamics of spatial governance is also considered. I then use Foucauldian critiques of power, discipline and social control to establish how legal, political and socio-cultural borders are arranged in social space and how transient bodies are subsequently organised in relation to these.

This chapter provides a critical response to current conceptualisations of homelessness. However, the goal of this project is not to offer a new or updated definition of homelessness: rather, we must take care to avoid making the object(s) of research fit pre-constructed categories of classification. In short, we must recognise that any pre-defined category is the result of ‘the successive partitioning of an initial category that is itself pre-defined’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 229). As a concept, population and social label, homelessness is fluid and nebulous and a concrete definition thus remains an ‘illusive task’ (Stronge 1992: 7). As Hopper and Baumohl state, homelessness is ‘at best an odd-job word, pressed into service to impose order on a hodgepodge of social dislocation,
extreme poverty, seasonal or itinerant work, and unconventional ways of life’ (1996: 3). The difficulties involved in defining homelessness are significant, as the specific terms and limits chosen will determine who is counted as homeless, how research is conducted and the nature and arrangement of services attending this population (Burt, Aron and Valente 2001: 6). While the issue of definition will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, for now it is sufficient to say that the definition employed by this thesis remains loose and shifting in order to accommodate the bodies, identities and practices that wander through this research.

In this way, homelessness shares some commonalities with the issue of crime, which is subject to similar definitional difficulties. Phenomena labelled crime often share no commonalities beyond the criminal label, with conduct as diverse as the killing of an individual and the forging of artworks sharing the same generic label. Given the indeterminacy of such labels, this thesis utilises a critical criminological framework that understands crime and deviance as a category shaped by social, cultural and political forces (see Ferrell 1999; Hayward and Presdee 2010). Just as definitions of homelessness depend upon a variety of unstable social meanings, interpretations of crime are similarly socially constructed (and transformed). But in this thesis I demonstrate how ‘crime’ and ‘homelessness’ share more than just contingent social meanings. They are related categories with shared origins and are produced by similar social forces of ordering and governance. Most importantly, they are subject to similar efforts of detection, classification and containment. They are, in this sense, bound together.  

The associative linking of homelessness and crime forms a central site of analysis for this thesis. Specifically, I examine multiple sites or ‘spaces’ in which this association is situated and (re)produced. This chapter offers a conceptual lens with which to analyse these spaces and the various processes that contribute to the socio-cultural linking of homelessness with crime. The first

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18 See Chambliss’ essential work on the changing linkages between homelessness and crime (1964).
task is to establish a historically contextualised conception of alternative (and unwanted) mobilities and the socio-cultural meanings these signify. In doing so, I use the concept of ‘nomadism’ to examine the longstanding social suspicion of alternative forms of mobility and movement. Following this, I move to establish other key conceptual frames that foreground the following chapters. Together these provide a critical and robust means of understanding the socio-cultural linking of homelessness to crime and the processes through which these meanings are encountered and (re)produced.

**Alternative Mobilities: Nomadism, Placelessness and Homelessness**

As indicated, the symbolic Other-ness of homelessness is neither natural nor inevitable. Instead, this thesis argues that the stigma and marginal status attached to homelessness and bodies appearing homeless are embedded within socio-political constructions of personhood, civilisation, citizenship, and space. Historically, deliberately chosen homelessness and poverty have been considered sacred, and addressing the basic human needs of the impoverished regarded as a fundamental aspect of the community’s ambit of responsibility (see Dietz 2005; Kahl 2005). This is not to suggest that religious understandings of poverty are unproblematic nor that poverty was free of social stigma prior to modernity. Rather, my point is that the discursive linking of homelessness and poverty to danger, crime and moral failure are neither universal nor timeless. Rather, it is contingent upon current arrangements of society and distributions of political power. As articulated in the introductory chapter, the overarching concern of this thesis is to examine why and how homelessness has become so closely associated with crime, deviance and danger. However, prior to this undertaking, it

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19 While nomadism is here used as means to critically analyse social categories of homelessness, Deleuze and Guattari do distinguish between nomadic mobilities and other non-normative mobilities such as vagabondage and drifting (1980: 416). Nomadism exhibits particular patterns (that may not be obvious to sedentary onlookers) shaped by various forces such as seasonal change, food availability, changing local topographies and routes or sites that are culturally significant. While the relation between nomadism and the state is applicable to a study of homelessness, the analogy is an imperfect one.
is important to consider histories of non-belonging and being ‘out of place’ (see Wright 1997). This involves prising out certain salient characteristics from the stigmatised *gestalt* of the ‘Homeless Other’. Specifically, it is the alternative mobilities displayed by nomadic bodies that precipitate the Other-ness of the homeless body.

Goodrich writes that ‘fear of the strange and outlandish... repeats itself historically through different institutional forms that range across Jew, barbarian, intellectual, witch, coloured, unclean, heretic, poor, ill, communist, hedonist, homeless, woman and nomad’ (2005: 129, my emphasis). Following Goodrich, my intention here is to demonstrate how contemporary attitudes toward the homeless are informed by several ‘figures’ that have been regarded historically as out of place. Place, mobility and proximity are key sites of contestation for the figures mentioned by Goodrich. These figures, particularly the nomad, are defined and understood by their relation to boundaries and their capacity to trouble or transgress them (Wilson 1992). While boundaries function to separate and cut off, they also serve a relational function by indicating or determining one’s inclusion within or marginalisation from social norms and institutions. Boundaries are thus essential to practices of government as they distinguish those who belong from those who do not. Thus, the structural marginalisation of certain figures and groups can be understood as intentional and governmentally useful — participating in the arrangement of the state according to various (national, institutional, legal and social) boundaries. Marginalisation is not the same as total exclusion. The latter involves explicit expulsion from space and polity (see Johansen 2013). Marginalisation instead locates certain identities at the borders of society: the liminal space between the domestic interior and the dangerous or unknown exterior (Sibley 1995: 93).

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20 This is evidenced in various histories of these figures: the spatial and social boundaries imposed upon women, the ghettoization of Jewish people and the poor, the physical and spatial divisions used to segregate coloured people, and so on.
Crucial for this thesis is this *relational* nature of interactions between the inside and outside delineated by symbolically powerful (albeit nebulous and contestable) borders (Bowling 2013: 293). Young has argued that the maintenance of such borders is integral to community coherence (1996). She writes: ‘the designation of some individuals as ‘criminals’ enables them to be viewed as outside the community’ (1996: 9). Here the label ‘criminal’ functions as an identifier of externality, of being outside the bounds of community. The label ‘homeless’ similarly functions to signify externality: being without ‘home’, that place in which belonging is assumed and unquestioned. The label ‘homeless’ and ‘criminal’ thus share similar social valencies. Young claims that all communities are founded upon victimisation (1996: 9). That is, the requisite criterion of community membership is (potential) victimisation: a ‘victimisable’ body. The bounds of community thus run coterminous to distinctions between victim and victimiser: a process of identifying outsiders. Those who appear strange, fail to adhere to communal norms, or worse, bring with them the conditions of the outside threaten to victimise the communal body and are thus un-victimisable themselves. The homeless can thus be favoured scapegoats for community censure and violence; ‘outlaws’ in Young’s terms (1996).

Young has also noted that the bounds of a community can be represented spatially, for example, as a city (1996: 9). Space and the boundaries that order it are crucial to (communal) identity. The potential for victimisation can be equally rendered in spatial terms: physical boundaries to be approached, transgressed and violated. The spatial delineation of the inside necessarily involves the demarcation and acknowledgement of an outside.\(^\text{21}\) The symbolic ‘outside’ is spatial, though it is not limited to spatial representations. Externality or outside-ness may manifest in identities, groups, aesthetics, residues or even counter-communities. If the community is imagined in spatial terms, the outside must be a space of (at least potential) violence. The outside and those who appear to

\[\text{21 Zedner also identifies this dynamic: ‘...even to speak of community is, of necessity, to acknowledge its boundaries’ (2010: 379).}\]
emerge from it present the risk of victimisation against which the community has drawn boundaries around itself.

While threatening, this outside can also be alluring; an object or space of ‘fascination’ (Young 2010a: 83). This, I argue, is the source of the myths around homelessness and transience mentioned earlier. The fantasy of ‘a life apart’ unburdened by the expectations and etiquettes of the status quo is highly appealing (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2229). Thus, figures of social anxiety and opprobrium are also romanticised in various archetypical figures: the wandering outlaw, the noble savage, the kindly hob, and so on. Sibley claims that the ‘simultaneous feelings of repulsion and desire which attach to stereotyped others’ are mediated through space, place and proximity (1995: 101). That is, the disorder and threat associated with certain groups can represent ‘a romantic disorder, a desired freedom’ when mediated through spatial distance (1995: 102). However, the changes to society wrought by mass industrialisation fundamentally altered the socio-spatial arrangements of society. The lower classes, who had previously been dispersed throughout rural areas, came to reside in urban centres in unprecedented concentrations (Donald 1992: 438). The contractions of time and space brought by technological innovations meant that awareness of and encounters with those who were unfamiliar became (and remains) a common feature of urban social life (Hayward 2004).

One feature of the massive changes to social life wrought by industrialisation and modernity is the expansion of Western modes of social organisation across the globe (Sloterdijk 2014: 30). This

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22 Young uses the term ‘fascination’ to describe the double relation of disapprobation for crime combined with an intense interest in its forms and processes (Young 2010a, 2010b).
23 Gerrard and Farrugia note that ‘[a]t different times, and in different social contexts, the tramp, the hobo, the swagman, have all conjured popular (gendered and raced) imaginings of a “different” life’ (2015: 2229).
24 Sibley uses the 19th century *chiffoniers* or ‘ragpickers’ of Paris to illustrate his point. He claims that they were objects of fascination for the gentry when outside the city walls, yet prompted severe anxiety and moral opprobrium when encountered within (1995: 102).
25 This is not to say that nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyles no longer exist, but that dominant arrangements of state power are premised upon society being organised according to sedentary logics. In this sense, power,
prioritised and normalised sedentary values and principles such as property ownership, the
delineation of borders and the structuring of space according to organisational logics. While the
advent of this near-ubiquitous sedentarism inhibited and constrained transience by linking the
benefits of emerging economies and technologies to settled inhabitation, it also precipitated the
development of new forms and technologies of mobility and offered new opportunities for
movement and travel (Sloterdijk 2014). However, matching these were new forms of regulation
designed to corral these technologically expanded mobilities into productive economies and
predictable patterns. Indeed, technologies of globalisation have been matched by the development
of new forms constraint, tracking and restriction such as fortified national borders, passports,
biometric screenings at airports, and so on (Aas 2013).

Evidently, while mobility has expanded into new forms, the potential for alternative mobilities to be
troublesome remains. Cresswell argues that the forms of mobility perceived as dangerous are
those that reveal the artificial and porous nature of the borders (legal, institutional, national) that
structure and bound society (2006: 18). Beyond this, certain mobile bodies also contradict more
nebulous socio-cultural boundaries: norms of public behaviour, public space and public being. In
doing so, these bodies highlight the artificiality of these restrictive borders as well as our own willing
subjection to them. Thus, the contingency and artificiality of the systems that govern the social
world, such as law, government and the nation state, are revealed by those who move between,
beyond and extrinsic to these.

resources and normative modes of meaning production are monopolised by sedentary institutions, and
nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples or lifestyles only exist via the will of the sedentary states that declare them
‘protected’. In this sense, nomadism no longer exists in any meaningful way, as non-sedentary spaces have to
be marked out, closed off and protected: spatially constrained.

See Simmel on the birth of the stranger: a liminal figure who combines elements of both the unknown and
familiar (1971).

A salient example of this is the global movement of refugees and migrants who are increasingly subjected to
punitive regulatory techniques. See Johansen 2013; Kallius, Monterescu and Rajaram 2016.
In the contemporary era, the troubling characteristics of nomadism manifest in the uncertain figure of ‘the alien’ (Johansen 2013). Johansen describes the alien as a figure who is yet to prove her trustworthiness, although has not yet transgressed formal rules nor defiled sacred values (2013: 258). She remains uncertain so long as her loyalty to the dominant polity remains unestablished. The alien is a liminal figure; an amalgam of both interior and exterior, an outsider who is encountered inside. Thus, while the alien is encountered within the community, she is yet to confirm that she is of the community. The stereotypical figure of homelessness — the urban rough sleeper — demonstrates these characteristics, carrying with him all the uncertainties that attend the ‘out-of-place’ liminal body (Wright 1997: 51). Johansen notes that a core feature of the alien’s uncertainty is the possibility that she will commit a crime and reveal herself as criminal: one who attacks the community. This proto-criminality is a key feature of transient bodies generally, though the association is particularly pointed in relation to the homeless body. The loyalty of the homeless body to the dominant polity is uncertain due to their perceived lack of embeddedness within normative biopolitical sites of discipline: the home, work and family (Arnold 2004: 38). As such, the homeless subject cannot be trusted not to commit crime because, it is assumed, they have nothing to lose. In contrast, the responsible and sedentary citizen demonstrates his loyalty through willing participation in relations of subjection and reward: work, debt and consumption (Bauman 2005; Deleuze 1992). It is the perceived isolation of the homeless from these social norms that renders them potentially criminal. Theirs is a desperate opportunism linked to a perceived lack of fixity within normative socio-cultural and institutional webs.

The associative binding of alternative mobilities with crime carries with it a considerable social force. The resulting normative discourses overwhelm distinction and elide complexity, leaving space for only simplistic and non-reflexive representations of what is a complex set of social phenomena. Despite a long history of state efforts to organise transient bodies into a governable population, they persist as intractable antagonisms for the state and its regulatory remit. This is particularly true for
homeless bodies, though these are neither the only bodies that challenge the state’s authority, nor the only examples of contemporary nomadism. Nonetheless, homeless bodies constitute a site of continuing conflicts between settled or sedentary ontologies and those nomadic bodies that transgress borders, skip boundaries, emerge from nowhere, and remain untraceable and uncontainable by conventional governmental methods.

Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise nomadic mobility in relation to State structures, and understand nomadism as ‘rhizomatic’ (1980: 409). The rhizome — ‘a metaphorical subterranean stem that connects any point to any other point’ — is contrasted against tree-like or ‘arboreal’ arrangements (Hayward: 2012: 456). Where the rhizome is connected at all points, the arboreal is organised around central organs of power. For Deleuze and Guattari, the ‘arboreal’ tree analogises social organisation under a traditional state structure. The branches, twigs and leaves (individuals, businesses, NGOs, divisions of government, transport systems etc.) are connected to and organised in relation to the trunk — the central governing body (1980: 358). In contrast, nomadism is not situated in relation to these centralised organs and thus does not follow arboreal patterns of relacionality (always linking back to a powerful centralised structure) (1980: 358). Travelling within an arboreal arrangement, one must begin at the roots and move through the trunk into branches, to twigs and finally to leaves. The reverse movement — from leaf to trunk — also requires adherence to this ordered system of relation. In contrast, a nomad does not follow arboreal arrangements because she is rhizomatic: devoid of hierarchy, ordered arrangement and centrally distributed mobility. By being rhizomatic, the nomad is distinct from these centralised organs of power and able to move beyond them. On the other hand, being positioned within an arboreal structure necessarily inserts a body into a relation with those centralised organs.

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28 Hallsworth (2013) extends the concept of the rhizome and proposes a ‘rhizomatic method’ that draws upon what he refers to as ‘fuzzy thought’. In this way, Hallsworth seeks to transcend the limitations of sedentary epistemologies. See also Ferrell’s (2012) work on drift in which he supports the cultural criminological notion that we should ‘kill method’.
The home can also be seen as an arboreal structure: a site of connection to centralised organs of power (the State and its institutions). With the surplus of bureaucracy, debt and government that accompany the administration of housing, the home (along with work) becomes a primary site of connection to those organs. As will be seen, being homeless is understood as being unmoored, detached and worst of all, disordered (though one could also say ‘alternatively ordered’) (Scott 1998). Pratt writes in relation to the modern state: ‘[i]t was increasingly the case in the development of modern society that no one would be allowed to ... remain unknowable to the state’ (2000: 39). Thus, the threat posed by the homeless is fundamentally nomadic: constituting an unknowable body of mysterious origin that moves in ways outside of the connective tissues and sanctioned processes of the State.\textsuperscript{29}

That the homeless Other poses such a challenge to the State’s mandate of governance highlights that a disruptive or unruly condition does not have to be rooted in criminal conduct. Unlike the criminal, a homeless individual has not transgressed the law and revealed themselves as an offender. But nor have they demonstrated their commitment to the values of the state by adopting, internalising and reproducing socio-legal and political norms of being. We must think of the homeless individual as a liminal being in relation to the law and the State. The homeless subject neither transgresses nor affirms the State and its laws existing instead, in spite of these structures. Such liminality would prove to be, as Pratt suggests above, untenable.

**Homelessness and the State**

The liminality of these indeterminate bodies, neither civil nor criminal, not included yet unable to be expelled, demands further consideration. Goodrich writes that ‘[t]he extent of legislative drive against the stranger, the foreigner, nomad... or vagabond suggests an extreme fear, not simply of

\textsuperscript{29} See Scott’s *Seeing like a state* for a detailed account of state criminalisation of nomadic lifestyles (1998).
external danger but of internal decay’ (2005: 129). Following Goodrich’s observation, my contention is that the homeless body and the broader ‘problem’ of homelessness prompt fear within the State. Such a fear manifesting as anxiety, characterises the relationship between the State and the homeless body and proves difficult to discharge, perhaps because the homeless subject has a spectral quality, being both nebulous and residual, difficult to capture or contain yet leaving traces of its presence (Sibley 1995: 101).30 The (in)tangibility of the homeless subject contrasts against its capacity to be present even when absent (in traces, residues, aesthetics, atmospheres). In a society whose systems of ordering rely on the determinacy and predictability of bodies, this lends the homeless body a capacity to disrupt.

The homeless body is often characterised in terms of defilement, corruption and pollution (Havemann 2005: 59) and Seidman claims that ‘defiled bodies...remind us of the thin line separating order and disorder, artifice and flux, the living and the dead’ (2013: 9). However, defilement is not a condition contained within the body. The defiled body affects the environment around it through corruption or corrosion.31 Hence, anxieties about homelessness are organised around fear of pollution and misuse (see Douglas 1966). For example, in July 2016 the manager of a bank in Melbourne’s inner-west sparked public outrage by posting a sign at the bank’s entrance describing the person who had been sleeping in the entrance as ‘inconsiderate’ (Butt 2016b: no pagination). The public discourse that followed centred on questions of utility, safety and the ‘proper’ use of the bank’s facilities, reflecting social anxieties regarding propriety and functionality. The consequent management strategies generally involve processes of segregation, cleaning and disposal. In this

30 Armstrong (2010) develops the notion of ‘spectra; ethnography’ as a means of engaging with populations whose defining characteristics are fluid or whose movements and manifestations are exhibit a spectral quality that is difficult to capture in traditional methods and the epistemologies that attend these.

31 See Douglas (1966: 2002) for an account of rituals of expulsion and banishment that seek to separate the pure from the unclean. Douglas claims, however, that purity and corruption are two sides of the same coin: rituals of banishment aimed at that which is symbolically unclean or contaminated mirror rituals that seek to set apart that which is considered holy and sacrosanct. This has significant implications for how we understand the symbolic values ascribed to homelessness and visible poverty, which historically have been considered sacred.
case, the alcove housing the bank’s automatic teller machines (ATMs) was closed at night to prevent any homeless individual from gaining access. Such practices of segregation and cleansing are social rituals reserved for ‘waste’ (Douglas 1966). Thus, we can see how the homeless body is not simply perceived as being outside of normative structures of social order; its presence also carries an erosive quality. Here we find the fear of internal decay identified by Goodrich. The homeless body is understood as waste—that which is disavowed—but further, its continued presence poses an ongoing threat (Bauman 2005; Corrigan 1997: 147). As this thesis demonstrates, the specific nature of the threat posed by homeless bodies is revealed in the kinds of regulatory responses they animate.

In responding to those whom it perceives as disruption or threat, the State also creates an image of itself. How should we think about the state as an actor in the relation between sedentary authority and the transient? Deleuze and Guattari write:

Not only is there no universal state, but the outside of States cannot be reduced to ‘foreign policy’, that is, a set of relations among states. The outside appears simultaneously in two directions: huge worldwide machines branched out over the entire ecumenon at a given moment... but also the local mechanisms of bands, margins, minorities, which continue to affirm the rights of segmentary societies in opposition to the organs of State power (1980: 360).

32 In another example, in 2015 a state government department in Western Australia came under fire for installing an automatically sprinkler system that periodically soaked an alcove where homeless people were known to spend time (Liveris 2015). The department initially claimed that the system was installed for cleaning purposes.

33 For example, media coverage of the recent clearing of a homeless camp in Melbourne’s CBD made frequent references to ‘rubbish’, ‘clearing’, ‘cleaning’, ‘waste’ and ‘blight’ (see Hurley 2016; Dow 2016a, 2016c).

34 Parsell identifies the inability of the homeless to consume privately (which means they must dispose of consumption related waste publicly) as a key site of punitive intervention into the lives of the homeless (2011: 456). This is true not only in relation to consumption goods, but also the waste produced by their bodies.
Here, Deleuze and Guattari identify the internally encountered outside. In other words, the ‘outside’ does not only exist beyond the formal boundaries of a state, it is also encountered within state boundaries. The ‘outside’ is the point at which the State encounters its limit. The encounter with the external outside does not challenge the internal logic of state authority. Indeed, this encounter reinforces the structure of the State: the identification of this boundary demarcates and defines the parameters of state authority and the community that resides within it. Exemplifying this are national borders, which exist only in abstract terms yet also define political authority, shape State action and undergird national identity (Zedner 2010).

In contrast, the State’s encounter with the internal outside is far more disruptive as state authority relies on a level of internal coherence (Garland 1996). Limits of state authority encountered internally carry severe implications and thus often prompt punitive responses (expulsion, imprisonment, the death sentence). In regards to the liberal State, its authority rests on a conceptualisation of ‘freedom’ that is both facilitated and constrained by the State apparatus (McNay 2009). Freedom is not total, yet there are forms of freedom that would be unattainable without the conditions of stability the state provides. This is the tension inherent to the liberal social contract. The State’s expectation is that citizens forgo certain proscribed freedoms (that which is outlawed) in exchange for protection and newly available freedoms (those coinciding with State conceptions of order) (Shearing and Stenning 1984: 340).

When the criteria of the social contract are broken, mechanisms of regulation and expulsion (the law and the criminal justice system) are activated to reconcile the disruption and re-establish order (Garland 1985: 235). By assuming responsibility for its citizens, the State also positions itself within an economy of crimino-legal harm. Criminal acts do not produce one victim but two: the individual and by proxy, the State. While the persistence of crime certainly troubles the social contract, the State’s authority is nonetheless reinforced by the rituals of punishment and expulsion activated.
when the contract is broken (Young 1996: 4; Garland 1996: 450). Homelessness troubles the distinction between civil and criminal that emerges from this apparatus. Being homeless is not criminal, yet it nonetheless disrupts and undermines the social contract and the State’s governmental authority.

For O’Malley, the obligations of the liberal social contract assume ‘a subject possessed of... [a] kind of rationality — one that was calculative about the future... Liberalism’s core principles of individual responsibility thus assumed an individual who has a moral duty to take account of foreseeable events (2000: 20). In exchange for exhibiting industriousness, productivity and self-regulation, the citizen is rewarded for her loyalty with consumer freedoms: ‘a new economy of bodily pleasures’ (Pratt 1997: 140). In being characterised as idle, lazy, incorrigible and irresponsible, the homeless symbolise a breakdown of the social contract: not actively breaching its terms (through criminal behaviour) yet not meeting their contractual obligations either (Arnold 2004: 37).

The homeless subject is thus troublesome and elusive; its exact nature remains unclear and perhaps unfathomable. If the nature of the homeless subject’s deviance was understood by the State, this would surely be reflected in the social contract as it is with the criminal. But the homeless body refuses these pre-constructed categories of deviance and so ignores the social, legal and physical boundaries that construct the liberal society and its conditions of inclusion and exclusion. The State-endorsed narrative of individual responsibility in exchange for protection, fiduciary benefit and sanctioned freedoms is undermined by the persistent presence of homelessness. In being neither

35 Young writes that ‘Crime frustrates the social contract, since the prevalence of crime means that there exists no perceptible difference between the state of nature and the state of civil society (under the social contract)’ (1996: 4). Here, she identifies the tension involved in community and state membership: desiring to be free of crime (safety) contrasted against the desire to reinforce the boundaries of the community through rituals of expulsion.

36 Political theorist Michael Walzer has described liberalism as a ‘world of walls’ and that ‘each one [wall] creates a new liberty’ (1984: 315). Walzer’s argument is that while liberalism is commonly conceived of as deconstruction of the social boundaries of pre-liberal society, the values and freedoms of liberal social organisations actually rely on the construction and maintenance of social boundaries.
internal nor external, civil nor criminal and in symbolising waste yet remaining unamenable to technologies of disposal, homelessness confounds the State’s dual arms of social control. The normalising and disciplinary biopolitical measures of the social realm appear ineffective while corrective and segregative methods favoured by the penal realm are deemed inappropriate (Garland 1985).

This has not always been the case. The juridical and carceral histories of both Australia and Britain have a plethora of laws and technologies that have sought to identify, describe and contain transient and unpredictable populations (Garton 2003). Britain’s ‘Poor Laws’ are the basis for contemporary Western penal-welfare responses to troublesome populations (Newman 2013). Originating in the 17th century, these sought to distinguish between the genuinely needy from those who were lazy, idle and incorrigible (Lees 1998). The former were entitled to support (or at least entitled to be free from intervention) while the latter were subject to coercive mechanisms designed either to correct or punish their moral failings (Filtness 2014).37 The colonial precursors to the Australian State imported this enthusiasm for juridical intervention upon the lives of the vulnerable and placeless (Colebourne and MacKinnon 2003). In Victoria, the formal criminalisation of transience can be traced back to the mid-19th century when the colony was declared independent from New South Wales. The Vagrancy Act (Vic) 1852 criminalised being unfixed to property in addition to what were understood as unproductive or morally corrupt lifestyles:

Any person not being an Aboriginal Native or the child of any Aboriginal Native who being found lodging or wandering in company with any of the Aboriginal natives... shall be liable to imprisonment in any Goal or House of Correction... for any time not exceeding twelve months... hard labour.38

37 The ‘Poor Laws’ were only formally repealed in the mid-20th century, giving way to what became the characteristic arrangements of the modern welfare state (Lees 1998).
38 s. 2 Vagrancy Act (Vic) 1852. Interesting here is the distinction made between ‘native’ (Aboriginal) and non-native transience. Demonstrably, native transience is not condoned but is expected and assumed ‘natural’ due
Here we see early attempts of classification and correction of alternative mobilities through juridical mechanisms. Evidently, the problems that unfixed mobilities posed for conceptions of social order were significant. The moral character of the transgression is demonstrated in this case by the nature of punishment. Not only is imprisonment (the spatial constraint of the body) appropriate but the prescription of hard labour is used as a corrective. Together, constraint and hard labour are intended to reform the soul of the transient individual through control of the body.

Though contemporary institutional responses to transient bodies have evolved, they arguably remain embedded in these institutional histories (Garton 2003; Hawk 2011). Contemporary institutional responses to homelessness, for example, emphasise work, training and stable housing as means to reform the individual. While individuals are likely to benefit from these strategies though their purpose is to render these populations more amenable to governance. This is because transient and unpredictable bodies pose significant problems for the State's institutional systems of order maintenance and control (the law, the criminal justice system, welfare etc.). For example, in September 2015 a news outlet reported the story of a South Australian woman who had sold her car to a woman who had no fixed address (Williamson 2015). While the certificate of sale was completed, the new owner did not provide an address (because she did not have one). Later, the original owner received several hundred dollars’ worth of speeding fines dated to after the sale had taken place. She appealed against the fines on the basis that she was no longer the owner and applied to have them transferred to the new owner for which she supplied the certificate of sale as evidence. The South Australian police rejected her appeal: because no address for the new owner was provided, legal responsibility for the fines was borne by the original owner. This example demonstrates the problems posed by bodies that are unfixed to sites of governmental registration to their racial/biological difference (from a positivist perspective). For non-natives, however, transience is considered unnatural and a departure from (and thus, a corruption of) the behavioural and ontological norms set for non-indigenous Australians. Thus, itinerancy for the non-indigenous was punishable as a guilty act. Juridical interventions were not the sole mechanisms for controlling troublesome mobile or idle bodies: psychiatric and medical responses were also widely employed (see Colebourne and MacKinnon 2003).
and bureaucratic capture, such as a fixed residential address. The capacity of the law, the criminal justice system and the State to enforce behavioural norms relies upon the home and the sedentary modes of life attached to it. Transience and nomadism thus baffle the administrative activities of the State. However, what is most astonishing in this example is that the law eschews its inability to respond effectively by displacing responsibility onto the previous owner of the car. This example demonstrates the limits of the State’s regulatory and disciplinary structures, limits that are underscored by homeless, transient or unpredictable bodies.

The troubling liminal and transient nature of the homeless body for the State has a long history. However, this is neither new nor novel. But what has changed over the last century is the understanding of crime and poverty as social phenomena. In the early 20th century, poverty and crime were understood as intrinsically linked. One goal of the modern welfare state was the elimination crime through the elimination of poverty (Young 1999: 2). Wretched conditions such as visible homelessness, begging and rough-sleeping were recognised as indicative of the current socio-economic conditions of society. It was the State’s responsibility to ameliorate the causes of poverty through ‘universal provision’ (Worpole 1991: 145). In Australia, this was pursued through the twin goals of full employment and home ownership (Mendes 2008: 22).

The emergence of neoliberalism in the late 20th century has shifted understandings of homelessness and poverty and deflected critical attention away from their structural determinants (Amster 2008). This is achieved by focusing on the individual as the locus of moral responsibility for their condition (Thorns, 1989; Casino Jr and Jocoy 2008). As Kawash writes, now problems of poverty and homelessness are understood in far more individualised terms: ‘the “homeless problem” is no longer seen as a problem attributable to the economy or society that produces homelessness, but rather, the problem that the homeless create for the economies and societies in which they live’ (1998: 320). On the surface this reorientation can be difficult to perceive. At the height of the modern
welfare state, homelessness was viewed as wretched and subjected to intense stigmatisation and control (see Davison et al 1985). However, where the goals of the State were once inclusion and absorption of problematic bodies (even by coercive means), they are now broadly oriented towards incapacitation and exclusion (Young 1999). So, while contemporary responses to homelessness may appear more progressive than earlier strategies, the ideological positions that motivate the newer arrangements are often highly regressive. These shifts are perhaps more visible in responses and attitudes toward crime and criminals, reflected in increasingly punitive policies and the widespread adoption of ‘law and order’ rhetoric by governing bodies (Garland 2001; O’Malley 1992). However, other members of the underclass such as the homeless and visibly poor are also significantly affected by these shifts most noticeable in changes in social attitudes from pity to antipathy (Kawash 1998). In what follows, I link contemporary urban geography and arrangements of city life to conceptions of homelessness as an intrinsically urban phenomenon.

**Spectacle and the City**

In an experimental work of descriptive fiction, American novelist and science fiction writer Ursula Le Guin describes a perfect city: Omelas (1975). While she dares the reader to believe in the existence of such a place, she acknowledges that this may be difficult. The city she describes is idyllic: shining, colourful, historic, ringed by snow-capped mountains and sitting alongside a glittering bay. It is a city untouched by poverty and war. The citizens of Omelas are spiritual though lack a clergy, enjoy technology but not that aimed at suffering or death, are diverse though lack division, are prosperous though have no money, celebrate sex without its various shames and enjoy drugs and hallucinogens without the need to use them destructively. In short, the city lacks social division, conflict, inequality and degradation. The diversity of the population is bound by an overarching sense of community, fraternity and pride. This social unity is exemplified by a festival in which the entire population participates in rituals of community, gaiety and togetherness. There is no spatial regulation, no
subtle corralling of bodies, or underlying tension between rulers and inhabitants that could, given the right conditions, ignite into violence and riot. Instead, the city, its rulers and inhabitants are bound together in harmonious and amicable relations. Le Guin is careful not to define this communal spirit in relation to external others. There is no mention of other cities, nations or cultures against whom the citizens of Omelas define themselves. She deftly avoids nationalistic myths such as the American or Australian ‘dream’ because those, she claims, are trivial, ill-spirited and based in division and fear. ‘Can you conceive of such a place?’ Le Guin dares her reader.

The story then describes a basement under one of the city’s public buildings. It is a small, damp, dirt-floored broom-closet in which a small child lives. The child is cold and neglected; sick from light deficiency and living in its own excrement, feeble-minded from a lack of mental and emotional stimulation and nourished only enough to keep it aware of its own misery. Precisely where the child came from, its identity and even its gender are unimportant. What matters is that the child exists and that it suffers. The citizens of Omelas all know of this child and understand that their peaceful and harmonious society depend entirely upon its continued suffering. A single gesture of kindness would shatter the precariously balanced paradise that they inhabit. ‘Now’, Le Guin asks, ‘do you believe in them?’

Le Guin’s story is a critical reading of the contemporary capitalist city. She identifies the inherently superficial measures used to evaluate cities: cosmopolitanism, diversity, organised celebration, art and culture and a benign social permissiveness. She also emphasises the beauty and aesthetics of the city: shining temples, colourful roofs and elegant architecture, beneath all of which exists the child in the basement. Le Guin is critical of what she sees as the inherent superficiality of the

40 In characterising the city as containing at its core something dark and disturbing, Le Guin joins various other writers. For example, Charles Dickens used the image of a ‘Megalosaurus’ waddling through the streets of London and Charles Baudelaire described the city as ‘swarming with innocent monsters’ (see Donald 1992: 419; Baudelaire 1985). In these renderings the city may be considered the seat of civilisation and the heart of culture, however, there are also glimpses of something monstrous: ‘a barely controlled nature that always threatens to shatter the veneer of civilisation that holds it in check’ (Donald 1992: 419).
capitalist city and the performative acts of representation — what Debord terms ‘spectacle’ — that stand in for genuine ethical evaluation.

In *The Society of the Spectacle*, Debord describes modern society as a space in which an authentic social life has been replaced by its representation (1967). That is, where artifice and pretence displace genuine activity and interaction within the social world. Debord’s Marxist critique emphasises the colonisation of social life by commodity, a process he describes as ‘the decline of being into having, and having into merely appearing’ (1967: 17). Le Guin’s story endorses this critique, framing the city and the life it sustains as both representational and performative in nature. Omelas is not simply a physical structure but a political construction continually projecting an idealised image of itself from which the child is excised. This, in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos’s terms, is the city’s ‘self-conception’ (2007: 10). This image is not only directed externally (towards external evaluators) but also internally to the citizens themselves. The city is as much as project of self-deception and disavowal as it is an externally directed projection of peace and harmony. Thus, the social life of Omelas and the lives of its citizens are mediated by its own representation: social relations are replaced by image-relations (Debord 1967).

Le Guin’s story describes an inherently deceitful social life that on the surface appears harmonious, but underneath is hollowed out and marred by exploitation and violence (Donald 1992: 439). Both Le Guin and Debord are critical of the kind of community and social ecology that not only rely on suffering, but that reproduce these conditions continuously through economies of exploitation. The hidden suffering of the child is the essential condition for the social harmony and gaiety of city life and the two are thus intrinsically bound together. In Debord’s words the spectacle is ‘no more than an image of harmony set amidst desolation and dread, at the still centre of misfortune’ (1967: 41).

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41 The child in Le Guin’s parable could alternately be read as an originary act of violence that gives birth to law, the horror in whose wake peace follows. See Cover 1986.
The surface of Omelas is this harmonious image and the basement is the still centre: the heart of society.

Although Le Guin’s story is a work of speculative dystopian fiction, it provides a useful analytic lens for examining homelessness in the late-modern capitalist city. Similar themes emerge in works by Davis (1992; 1998) Lefebvre (1991), Blomley (2004) and Valverde (2012) which focus on capitalism’s influence on the production and governance of urban space and the social relations this (re)produces. These works emphasise the primacy of surface over substance and the important role that representation plays in the maintenance of urban social order. The suffering of the child produces no resource or material good and yet is integral to maintaining social order. The child is the internal Other against which Omelas and its citizens define themselves and are constituted, though this relation remains hidden and disavowed. This evokes various critical conceptualisations of contemporary citizenship. In particular, Giorgio Agamben’s positing of *homo sacer* as the requisite criterion for political being (1998). Agamben conceives of *homo sacer*, a non-political body, as the constitutive condition of political citizenship. It is the creation of this figure (which is simultaneously constituted by law and excluded from it) that produces the possibility of political being. Similarly, Engin Isin claims that citizenship is constituted in relation to non-political immanent Others (Isin 2002). He argues that in Ancient Greece, the important point is less that women and slaves were excluded from the political order but that their internal exclusion actually created the conditions for citizenship (2002: 4). From these perspectives, the child is the non-political, internally excluded Other that creates and constitutes the conditions of inclusion, political citizenship and legitimate civil being.

The figure of the child is a useful if provocative analogy for conceptualising the position that the homeless subject inhabits. Reading the stigmatisation of the homeless body as integral to the dominant political order casts governmental responses to homelessness in a troubling light. Is it
possible that homelessness constitutes and makes possible its opposite condition: being homed? This question underpins much of the analysis conducted in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, particularly Chapter Six which examines political framings of and responses to homelessness. However, the child is not the only important figure in Le Guin’s story, the city itself constitutes an important feature and setting. Given that homelessness is generally imagined, encountered and responded to as a quintessentially urban phenomenon, the regulatory dynamics of cities and urban space figure as an important site of analysis. Keeping the image-mediated character of urban life in mind, this chapter moves to consider processes of social ordering that operate in urban spaces.

The spatial construction of cities is fundamentally a practice of regulation. The homeless body is a persistent disruption to the careful planning and design efforts poured into city spaces. De Certeau describes the spatial and architectural design of cities as ‘strategies’: means through which the movement of inhabitants is corralled and controlled (1984). The walker — the object of strategies — utilises ‘tactics’: behaviours, modes and mobilities that subvert and transgress strategic governance (de Certeau 1984: 111). Identified here is a fundamental tension between the intentions that shape the construction of urban spaces and how those spaces are used by inhabitants and visitors. From this perspective, urban space is always a site of conflict between authorities and users. It is important to state that when speaking of urban governance, I refer to any action, process or body that exerts control over urban space or the bodies that inhabit it. Rather than simply describing the local governing municipality, governance of the city is engaged in by various actors such as corporations, shopping centres, cafes, restaurants and public transport systems among others. Even citizens who internalise and reproduce the dominant conceptions of order become individualised nodes of regulatory authority (Garland 2001; 2004). Governance of city spaces is thus diffuse and multimodal rather than centralised or monopolised.

42 For an general overview of the challenges that homeless bodies pose to urban economies, see Markusen and Schrock (2009) as well as Ferrell’s (2001b) speculative description of what challenges ruling urban orders looks like.
The city has become a key piece of infrastructure in late-modern consumer capitalism (Duff 2009; Amin 2006). In his detailed analysis of crime, consumerism and the urban experience, Hayward identifies a level of duplicity in the capitalist city’s character (2004). He states that while consumer capitalism emphasises freedom, choice, variety and hedonism ‘[a]t the same time, for consumer capitalism to operate effectively, it must employ... a pervasive set of regulatory practices such as security, auto-surveillance and other rational (and increasingly actuarial) logics’ (2004: 7). Here, Hayward identifies a contradiction in the governance of contemporary urban spaces where the ‘organised freedoms’ proffered by consumer capitalism are bounded by increasingly narrow definitions of social and urban order. In turn, this is complimented by regulatory techniques that are simultaneously more interventionist and more diffuse (Bottomley and Moore 2007). Inclusion in the participative democracy of urban consumerism increasingly mandates adherence to capitalist behavioural norms. Garland claims that this shift from traditional laws to norms involves ‘extending and revising the operations of judicial power’ (1985: 235). Similarly, Lea and Hallsworth argue such shifts are ‘aimed at making city centres “safe for business” by keeping out the “social litter” and all who will not behave as rational consumers or take responsibility for themselves in the way that neoliberalism requires’ (2012: 28). The failure to adhere to these norms is increasingly legitimated as a site of juridical intervention as particular bodies and identities ‘which might interfere with capital... are... redefined as threats to security (Lea and Hallsworth 2013: 24).

The irony here is that such exertions increasingly position visible poverty and homelessness as being external and even antithetical to capitalism, consumerism and the performative, image-based identities they produce (Bauman 2005: 82). However, according to Havemann, while the city is ‘compulsively designed for economic growth and for the building and keeping of order, [it also] generates waste: both the physical detritus of industrialisation... and those human beings who impede the level of growth and degree of order required’ (2009: 59). While waste (human or otherwise) is disavowed, it is actually an integral component of consumer capitalism. As Bauman
writes: ‘Consumerism is for this reason an economics of deception, excess and waste do not signal its malfunctioning but are a warrant of its health and the sole regimes under which a society of consumers may be assured of survival’ (2005: 82). Returning to the child of Omelas, we see how that which is disavowed (defiled or ‘wasted’ bodies) can be better understood as integral to the continued operation of the dominant socio-political order (Seidman 2013). Rather than being antithetical to them, the homeless and visibly poor are in fact native inhabitants of consumer-capitalism and its spaces.

Following this contradiction, it is the symbolic values attached to ‘waste’ that prompt its disavowal: expulsion and disposal. The city, as various theorists have demonstrated, is a place of encounter, and space is the field that lends social relations their materiality. How these encounters occur is influenced by socio-culturally constructed understandings of space and the embedding of identity and values within these. As Gerrard and Farrugia state ‘[T]he visual, spatial and bodily presence of homelessness is a stalwart element of city life’ (2015: 2220). On one hand, this affirms my earlier point that cities (as centres of consumer capitalism) are spaces where encounters with the byproducts of capitalism (waste and excess) are familiar and expected. Yet as this thesis demonstrates, the homeless body is framed as antithetical to the consumer city and the ‘endless possibilities for creating ourselves in the image of capital and commodity through endless aesthetic representation’ it provides (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2220). This produces an apparent aporia, where homeless bodies demonstrably belong to the city and capitalism, yet are framed at best as troubling outsiders and at worst as threatening invaders.

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43 See Douglas’s seminal ‘Purity and Danger’ for a detailed analysis of how ritualistic responses to ‘waste’ and ‘pollution’ serve a boundary maintenance function (1966). Instead of being the opposite of the pure or sacred, ‘waste’ and the rituals of disposal or cleansing that accompany it actually mirror the setting apart of the sacred and holy.

44 Recent news stories in several of Melbourne’s newspapers have claimed that the majority of Melbourne’s beggars are actually foreign tourists trying to top up their travel money. These same stories often cite increases in so-called ‘aggressive begging’ and told unverified stories of people being attacked by beggars for not giving enough money (see Kimmorley 2015, Masanauskas 2016a; 2016c, O’Brien 2016).
As stated earlier, Sibley identifies the importance of place in the constructions of stereotypes and understandings of groups deemed ‘Other’. He writes ‘[s]tereotypes... often include elements of place so that discrepancy or acceptance depend on the degree to which a group stereotype matches the place in which it is located’ (1995: 100). So while homelessness might be understood as an urban phenomenon, the stereotypes that attend it locate it outside of spaces dedicated to consumerism. Homelessness is relegated elsewhere, ‘parafunctional spaces’ in Hayward’s terms (2012). Parafunctional spaces ‘exist between — perhaps they’ve been abandoned or ruined, perhaps they are a set or constellation of surfaces, perhaps they are named waste, perhaps they are condemned’ (Hayward 2012: 452). These spaces are not defined in solely geographic terms: prime space may become parafunctional depending on certain conditions, such as the time of day, or who inhabits it. Homelessness is not only relegated to parafunctional spaces, but may actually render a space parafunctional by virtue of its (visible) presence. This thesis examines several examples in which homeless bodies disrupt the intended meanings of various urban spaces in Melbourne.

Reading the city as a battleground, Isin describes contests over urban space as a means ‘through which groups define their identities, stake their claim, wage their battles, and articulate citizenship rights and obligations’ (2002: 50). With this in mind, this thesis demonstrates how the battle lines between city authorities and homeless bodies have become increasingly volatile in Melbourne. The intersection of space, place, stereotype and identity and the borders that define and delineate the proper order of things have undergone significant disruption. Evidencing this is the number of protests involving homeless groups that have become frequent occurrences in recent years.

As this thesis demonstrates, these protests are generally resolved via punitive and interventionist state responses. This, I argue, highlights the disruption of the city’s self-conception by the visible presence of homeless individuals who are unable to participate in the construction of identity ‘through the display and celebration of consumer products’ (Hayward 2004: 7). With the onslaught
of neoliberalism and its emphasis on economic and actuarial calculations, visible poverty and vulnerability become reframed as risks (Duff 2009: 205). This leads to new discursive constructions of the urban landscape prompting new forms of spatial regulation to emerge (Coleman et al 2005). In reference to the city, Donald claims that any utopian scheme seeking to banish social ills from the city can be seen as a form of repression (1992: 432). A broad field of state action therefore seeks to destabilise the terrain of the city as a solid and secure space for homeless and transient bodies (Coleman 2007: 43). This re-orientation of urban space as antithetical to homeless bodies is conducted via the restructuring of socio-spatial relations. This is not undertaken as a single project, but rather through a multitude of processes and mechanisms designed to redefine the urban environment and the conditions of legitimate entry and inhabitation. Complimenting these are neoliberal reconstructions of the transient/homeless body as aetiologically cut off from the political and economic contexts in which it exists and are produced by: late-modern neoliberal capitalism.

Returning to Omelas, the end result of the two processes of redefinition can thus be observed. The city is recast as an untroubled space while the agonistic or troubling aspects of urban social life are distilled into a single body, which is then buried beneath the city’s surface. Yet this is where the analogy diverges: homelessness is not hidden but is instead rendered increasingly visible and stigmatised. Omelas was written in the 1970s and so at the time Le Guin would have been unaware of the extent to which the capitalist city would suffuse itself with representation in the early 21st century. The surface is now so encompassing and ideologically reinforced that disruptions of it are recast in the stigmatised guide of threat. Perhaps this is the logical next step for Omelas: the existence of the child is acknowledged yet responsibility is displaced onto the child itself who is then labelled dangerous: a threat to social order. In this respect, homelessness in the context of late-modern capitalism may be conceived as akin to the child of Omelas: the condition of exclusion that

45 As Feeley and Simon demonstrate, neoliberal crime control rationalities (and, for my purposes, control of groups understood as linked with or akin to criminality, such as the homeless) no longer seek the inclusion, reform or normalisation of deviants. Instead, neoliberalism rationalities emphasise managerial goals, such as regulating and minimising risks (1992; Stuart 2014).
renders inclusion possible. In line with Debord, the city becomes the site and scene of an image-based consumer-capitalism to which vulnerability and lack become antithetical. As later chapters will demonstrate, this not only prompts a regulatory apparatus dedicated to controlling and corralling homelessness but also initiates a regime of image maintenance that (re)produces and proliferates representations of social order. It is to these representations and their role in maintaining order and discipline that this thesis now turns.

**Representation and/as Regulation**

Representation and regulation are intimately bound up with one another, and, as such, are particularly relevant to the criminological framework that underpins this thesis (Campbell 2012). Practices of regulation rely on practices of representation: the identification and description of objects, behaviours and identities to be controlled (Biber 2007). Campbell notes that representational practices are highly limited and this is precisely the reason that it is necessary to engage critically with them (2012). She notes: ‘so long as the silenced, marginalised, excluded and disempowered can be misrepresented, poorly represented, or over-represented in matters of social and legal justice, there will be a need to engage with representational politics’ (2012: 7). The law and the criminal justice system as institutions of ‘justice’ are inherently representational. They rely on practices of description, depiction, categorisation and inscription to conduct themselves. According to Foucault, the law and the right to punish operate through the production of knowledge: the rendering of certain acts and identities as meaningful in particular ways (2003: 83). This involves the separation and codification of that which is deemed illicit, rendering certain acts and behaviours knowable and thus punishable. As Bauman writes, law is the ‘borderline proposed to divide the proper (the unpunishable) from the improper (the punishable)’ (2002: 52). In dividing and ascribing meaning to certain phenomena, the law necessarily represents them in oppositional ways: licit/illicit,
and citizen/criminal. As Campbell informs us, that which is deemed illegitimate or criminal can be understood in terms of ‘aesthetic disturbance’:

> those events and practices, representations and statements, images and symbols, materialities and affects which unsettle our sensibilities and destabilise the established categories and definitions of ‘justice’ with which we... have become (all too) accustomed. (2012: 9)

Such disturbances are produced through the codification of certain forms — of being, mobility, inhabitation and access — as legitimate and others as illegitimate or criminal. For example, practices such as begging or squatting, while often necessary for an individual’s survival, are deemed illegitimate due to propensity to disrupt social norms. On the other hand, owning residential properties and keeping them empty during a housing crisis is overlooked, sanctioned as economically prudent and legally protected. This is despite the fact that such practices directly contribute to rates of homelessness by ensuring large swaths of housing remain out of reach to those on low incomes. Thus, representation and the particular forms of knowledge and truth produced through representational practices are integral to understanding the social and symbolic illegitimacy of the condition of homelessness and, by extension, those who experience it.

Since Foucault’s writings on social institutions, we know that knowledge and power imply one another, and that representation produces knowledge (1972: 117). In short, representation is also a discursive practice and thus contributes to arrangements and distributions of power. For Foucault, discourse is a challenge to traditional notions of ‘epistemology’. Thus, an examination of discourse entails an examination of the contingency of meaning. Developed from Saussurian linguistics, discourse refers to a system of meaning production that construct various knowledge systems and what is knowable (and indeed, possible) within them (Saussure 2013; Foucault 1981). Any claim to truth or knowledge is reliant upon the discursive construction of the context in which it occurs.
Representations of homelessness (as well as those of transience and poverty) are thus unknowable outside of the discursive systems in which they are produced as meaningful. The discourses that contribute to the production of homelessness as a knowable object are varied: criminological, psychiatric, legal, the public and private and the discursive construction of the home all contribute to the production of homelessness and the homeless subject as knowable, intelligible objects. Importantly, discourse does not simply provide a vocabulary with which to articulate an extant condition, rather, discourse produces the condition described (Foucault 1972: 114). The interests of this thesis lie not simply in how homelessness is described, but also in how it is produced exactly through such descriptions and their descriptions of existence.

Returning to representation, it can be understood as a set of discursive practices through which meaning is continually produced and inscribed: on bodies, spaces, institutions and so on (Brighenti 2010: 4). For the homeless, these practices of representation and inscription are largely negative (at best paternal and disempowering, at worst openly hostile). Discursive constructions of homelessness corral a range of conditions, such as poverty, placelessness, itinerancy and alternative mobilities beneath a morally charged category. This conflates and distorts these conditions through association with other forms of ‘deviance’: idleness, indigence, crime, drug use and a lack of investment in normative sites of meaning (work, family, consumption). The concept and label of homelessness thus functions as an organising principle, intended to capture and annex various undesirable or anxiety-provoking conditions within a moral figure of censure and disapprobation. This amalgamation of various conditions, behaviours and identities positions them in contrast to legitimate aesthetic arrangements, modalities of being, images and materialities. It is no coincidence then that sanctioned modes—sedentary lifestyles, regular employment, bounded and predictable

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46 Idleness, placelessness, indigence and poverty have historically been objects of psychiatric study and examinations. See Colebourne and MacKinnon 2003.

47 Wright claims that ‘those identified by others as homeless act as stand-ins for ‘the poor’, categories of people defined by their appearance and behaviour rather than by their income or class.’ (1997: 1). Thus the homeless subject and its identification is set up as a ‘straw man’ for the moral evaluation and rejection of a range of anxiety provoking social phenomena.
movement, financial independence—lend themselves to rendering bodies civil, docile and predictable (Foucault 1977: 62). Thus, negative and stigmatising representations of homelessness contain a disciplinary edge that indirectly reinforces the normative practices of the biopolitical enclosures of home, employment, property and debt.

Homelessness is therefore highly politicised. As a stigmatised social condition it is inscribed with various meanings that are meanings intended to reinforce the status quo and the distributions of power that sustain this. On the surface it is a condition defined simply by a material lack of housing, homelessness is in fact codified with deeper, more troubling social meanings. Arnold explains that:

[T]he politicisation of home and homelessness signals a political splitting between normal/abnormal, rational/irrational, economically independent/dependent... that is radically signified in the perception of home as the repository for positive attributes and homelessness, that of negative characteristics (2004: 3).

Here the discursive construction of the ‘home’ signifies privacy, autonomy, independence, legitimate ownership, security, responsibility, and other attributes avowed in late-modern constructions of citizenship and political being. On the other hand, homelessness (and any condition associated with it) is stigmatised through representational and discursive practices that cast it in counter terms: unsettled, unpredictable, dangerous, outside and Other. The relational dynamic of representation is revealed here: where positive representations indirectly signify and describe an opposite or antithetical Other (Braidotti 2010: 409). Positive representations of home and homed-ness (balanced consumption and production, fiduciary prudence and autonomy) indirectly produce a negative. This corollary figure — the homeless Other — is framed in oppositional terms to the homed citizenship and thus as a legitimate object of state intervention. As Goodrich writes:

Examples of these representations will be examined later in the thesis.
[P]raise of the identical, the similar, the like or proportionate is accompanied by denunciation of the strange, the unlike, the disproportionate or heteroclite in the same historical and political sense that orthodoxy creates heterodoxy and that doctrine defines heresy as its necessary and complimentary form (2005: 110).

Following Goodrich, my contention here is that representations of civility, contemporary citizenship and legitimate modes of being (organised around particular forms of spatial emplacement) are accompanied by corollary representations of spatial and civil deviance. These latter which include homelessness and associated behaviours, reinforce the ‘orthodox’ by providing the ‘heterodox’ in Goodrich’s terms. The subjection of this unsanctioned Other to governmental intervention reinforces the norms of the home and citizenship that it threatens to transgress. Thus, regulation is also a form of representation which sees particular bodies, identities and groups defined by their subjection to regulatory mechanisms. Here, regulation also reinforces representation.

Reading the relation between representation and regulation in cyclical terms, the regulation of homelessness relies on the deployment of various representational tropes, and vice versa. Being subjected to the legitimate force of the State (through law or the criminal justice system) frames the object of that force in counter terms: illegitimate, deviant and criminal. Such actions produce representations of crime and illegality — ‘crime images’ in Young’s terms — and among these sits homelessness (2010b: 5).49 According to Young, ‘our ambivalence about crime manifests itself in the images we produce of it’ (2010b: 5). That is, crime is an object of both censure and desire and so the images produced of it contain elements of both. While homelessness is not formally criminal, homeless bodies are nonetheless subject to forms of socio-moral censure and legal intervention similar to those directed at criminal bodies. However, in contrast to crime, the encounter with

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49 It is important to note that practices of regulation and criminalisation are not the only way crime images are produced, as there are broader imaginations of crime that operate outside of legal classification. However, the legal or institutional coding of certain behaviours and identities as criminal is nonetheless important to how crime images and the desires these express are produced (see Young 1996, 2010a).
homelessness is experienced less as an attack on community than as an accusation against it. As Chapters Three and Four demonstrate, representations of homelessness oscillate between censure and empathy, revealing this ambivalence and attempting to discharge and dissolve the uncertainty it signifies. These efforts take various forms: increasingly vituperative representations of homelessness, the use of alternative and pejorative terms such as ‘beggar’ or ‘tramp’ and even attempts to question whether homelessness exists at all. As later chapters demonstrate, attempts by conservative media publications to redefine the ‘reality’ of homelessness by altering the terms of its discursive reproduction are ongoing.

It follows that, rather than regarding homelessness as a condition determined by a material reality it is instead produced via political contests over identity and legitimacy. Bell notes that ‘representation practices are... inherently bound up in the process of... identity formation’ (2003: 69). That is, representational practices are implicated in the (re)production of certain subjectivities and the unequal distributions of socio-political power that constitute and distinguish them. Representation is thus able to produce both a stigmatised Other and a sanctified Self (Arnold 2004). As Arnold notes, for the homed, ‘there is no sense of belonging to a particular group... the group itself always remains outside the frame of reference’ (2004: 4). Meanwhile, those within the frame of reference and scrutiny demand regulation through their association with crime, deviance and disorder. Here, the production of homelessness as a stigmatised condition ‘that traverses and occludes identity’ is revealed as essential to the unity and coherence of a hegemonic community identity (Kawash 1998: 324). Yet, as Arnold reveals, the sanctification of home and homed-ness is dispersed so thoroughly through the socio-political sphere that it disappears.

Examining the ubiquity of representations of the homed/homeless binary, Kawash provides an example in her analysis of a padlocked gate:

50 In *The Madness of the Day* Charles Baudelaire writes: 'What is irritating about poverty is that it is visible, and anyone who sees it thinks: You see, I’m being accused; who is attacking me?’ (cited in Arnold 2004: 51).
But the work of this padlocked gate, like other technologies of exclusion, is not simply to secure a pre-existing division. Homeless and public are produced by such technologies of separation...

such technologies are simultaneously representational and material (Kawash 1998: 323).^{51}

Regulatory practices (and the representations they produce) are not limited to state intervention or arrests made by police but are threaded throughout socio-physical space. Similarly, Iveson states ‘the strategic circulation of public representations implies distinctive forms of visibility and confrontation’ (2007: 38). Here the padlocked gate is revealed as anything but neutral. Rather, it is a representational technology whose purpose goes well beyond the material: the gate signifies the meanings — of property, authority, division, legitimacy, belonging — that it is inscribed with. The padlocked gate thus describes the bodies of those it keeps out as well as the value and legal sanctity of what is contained within (Kawash 1998: 323). The mundaneness of this example demonstrates the ubiquity of representations that construct homelessness as an identifiably deviant Other.

However, despite this ubiquity, the problem with representations is that while they are prevalent they are also inevitably partial. Castree and MacMillan write:

[R]epresentations never in actuality relay the ‘essential’ or sum total of qualities possessed by those things represented... [representation] is always exceeded by the world it seeks to capture...

[R]epresentation is intensely political... at once dangerous and useful, incomplete and material, inclusive and exclusive (2004: 476, original emphasis).

While we should be wary of any reference to ‘essential qualities’ (particularly in relation to crime or homelessness), the limits of representations are worth keeping in mind. Representational practices are socially and symbolically powerful, yet, as noted above, are also always partial and incomplete.

^{51} While I am examining the binary distinction between home/homeless, Kawash is examining how the homeless are figured in relation to the public. While these conversations are not the same, the example is apt for both discussions.
This highlights an apparent contradiction: representation is partial and inadequate, yet, as Debord claims, ours is a world suffused by representational practices (1967).

As a constitutive dynamic within the social world, representation is also neither neutral nor apolitical, functioning as a key means of the marginalisation and oppression of minorities and those perceived as different (Sampson and Raudenbush 2004: 331). While homelessness is often considered a mundane topic, as Chapters Three and Four demonstrate, significant effort is spent on it as an abnormal and exceptional condition. As an exception, it is awarded distinctive conditions, mobilities, identities and communities (the visibly poor, the unemployed, the mentally ill, the displaced, the substance-using) which are then symbolically aligned within a discursive construction of crime, danger and immorality. The associative binding of homelessness with crime produces the homeless subject as troubling, pathological in nature and above all, unpredictable. Representations of homelessness thus function to signal a broad range of social identities and phenomena perceived as antithetical to state-sanctioned subjectivities. These latter reflect neoliberal constructions of the individual, which McNay describes as ‘the reorganisation of social relations around a notion of enterprise...[where] individuals... view their lives and identities... as a relation to the self based ultimately on a notion of incontestable economic interest’ (2009: 56). However, the construction and galvanisation of these hegemonic ideals inadvertently produces a counter-figure, one that is imbued with various transgressive and threatening attributes and capacities (Kawash 1998: 321). In framing a variety of practices, identities and mobilities within a simplified, essentialised and stigmatised pathology, a troubling epitomic figure is produced: the ‘homeless Other’.

52 While representations are not limited to the visual realm, Carrabine (2015) and Jay (1993) have described the favouring of the visual over other sensory experiences and a world saturated in imagery as ‘ocularcentrism’. In regard to homelessness, not all representations of homelessness are visual, though, as Chapter Three will demonstrate, visual representations of homelessness are dominant and carry a powerful socio-symbolic currency.
The homeless Other manifests in several forms, of which the most common is the troubling yet familiar urban rough-sleeper. However, occasionally this figure emerges in more alarming manifestations: the ‘aggressive beggar’, the swindling foreigner and, worst of all, the ‘killer hobo’ (Argoon and Hosking 2014: no pagination; Gillet 2015: no pagination). These figures, and the narratives that attend them, are all constructed representations, proliferated in the media to prompt certain public reactions. For example, there is no evidence supporting the aetiological linking of violence with homelessness exemplified in the ‘killer hobo’ narrative; yet as we will see in Chapter Four, the association of homelessness and violence is powerful and easily activated.

However, one does not need to look hard to find stories of homelessness that challenge and rupture the stereotypical narratives of causality. For example, in 2015 The Guardian published the story of Mark Reay — a Hollywood actor and model — who spent six years homeless sleeping underneath a tarp on top of a New York City apartment building, all while continuing to work as a fashion model (Ferrier 2015). While obviously not representative of the average experience of long-term homelessness, it nonetheless demonstrates the diversity of experiences of homelessness and thus the limits of stereotypical representations. Ironically, it is this disrespect for definitional borders that lends the homeless subject its troublesome qualities and thus animates attempts to (re)categorise it in new and revised terms. As I will demonstrate, these revised definitional boundaries are inevitably transgressed as new bodies, subjects and forms of transience appear. The homeless subject is revealed here as amorphous and slippery: not only transgressing extant boundaries set by the State, but resistant to the construction of new boundaries as well. The transgression of constructed borders and the responses elicited — from the State, the media, the public — frame the socio-political and semiotic field in which homelessness is rendered meaningful. As a criminological project, this thesis is interested in representations of homelessness that link homelessness with crime or cast the condition itself as criminal.
The discipline of criminology has a vested interest in the themes of this research: in borders, in the relationship between representation and regulation, and in the designation of certain bodies as deviant and (potentially) criminal. However, criminology is itself a representational practice that produces its own imagery and narratives of crime and criminality, deviance, guilt, innocence and justice. The origins of criminology can to some extent be traced to anxieties about borders and those who were perceived to threaten or transgress them, for example when the police were first instituted to protect the property of the ruling classes in England (see Rawlings 2002; Rafter 2009). While dynamics of policing and governance have changed considerably since then, agonistic encounters between the criminal justice system and impoverished and unsettled bodies continue to be a common feature of the maintenance of social order. This thesis not only attends to the narratives that the law and criminology produce of homelessness but also to the functions that these narratives serve.

**Conclusion**

The difficulty of researching homelessness is that there is no single point of origin, pure form or exemplary act of homelessness to examine. Homelessness, as stated earlier, is not an object that exists outside of discourse or the peculiar arrangements of social order. Instead, it is a condition produced and defined by various forces (the state, capitalism, property, the law, and so on). This requires the researcher to engage with homelessness not as an object, but as a contingency that exists across multiple fields, spaces and socio-historical contexts. The benefit of approaching homelessness from a criminological perspective is that criminology’s object is and has always been shifting, contested and socially determined. It is only the artificial label of ‘crime’ that lends phenomena as diverse as murder, drug trafficking, waste dumping, tax fraud and art forgery their propinquity. Beyond this, they share no inherent value or character. What renders them legitimate objects of criminological inquiry is an act of labelling and the beliefs and attitudes that result from this (Ferrell: 1999: 397).
The meaning of homelessness is also culturally produced and no single example (itinerancy, placelessness, sleeping rough, begging) contains within it an essential character or value. Instead, these diverse phenomena are organised and codified beneath a signifier, the purpose of which is to produce a governable object: the homeless Other. This label positions homelessness within a field of meanings and relations — political, economic, cultural, moral and symbolic — that are continually reproduced. Intervening on this process is difficult, but the conceptual lens outlined above provides an instructive frame for doing so.

Before moving onto the next chapter I would like to examine more closely the label that is the object of my research. The term ‘homelessness’ involves deploying a binary — home/homeless — in order to ascribe a false unity to a diverse array of social phenomena. According to this binary distinction, homelessness is defined by lack and this in turn defines the counter-state. The former of this couplet is the normative half: expected, unquestioned and socially endorsed. Being homed is a valorised and normative condition, whereas homelessness animates scrutiny, censure and regulatory and reparative mechanisms. This dynamic reinforces and normalises the attributes and subjectivities associated with the sanctified home, while stigmatising that which does not adhere (Guillaumin 1995: 50). As this chapter demonstrates, this constitutive dynamic relies on the identification of an Other; the counter figure against which the Self can be known (see Young 1996). To this end, an examination of homelessness is also an examination of the ‘home’. In investigating homelessness, this thesis also examines what is implied, described, referenced and hidden by this term and what discursive histories it contributes to.

To conduct this investigation, the thesis engages with transient and homeless bodies in multiple ways. That is, both as resistant subjects that trouble and perplex both society and the law but also as regulated, controlled and incapacitated objects subjected to serious intervention by state and institutional authorities. The homeless are tracked, registered and intervened upon in a multitude of
ways: regulation, policing, welfare, surveillance, policy, media representation, service provision and so on. This continuous network of registration of homeless bodies is indicative of their social position: undesirable, problematised and targeted with reparative mechanisms. While homelessness is not itself criminal, this thesis identifies a desire on the part of society, and the criminal justice system within it, to criminalise or otherwise penalise homelessness.

Undergirding what follows is a claim that any notion of a singular or discrete history or genealogical study of homelessness and its animating archetypes (the nomad, mendicant, beggar or rough-sleeper) ought to be avoided. Instead, these figures must be understood as wandering across and, importantly, transgressing a field of institutional spaces and epistemological positions. Asserting the relevance and importance of homelessness to the discipline of criminology is not an attempt to claim of ownership over the issue. Rather, I aim to assist in re-establishing an active and critical criminological engagement with homelessness and the various phenomena that are collected underneath this inadequate and stigmatised label.

It is perhaps the apparent impossibility of accurately describing the thing(s) we label ‘homelessness’ that gives rise to the at best ineffective and at worst regressive approaches that attempt to control it. As this thesis will go on to elaborate, this is not only evident in the policies that specifically address homelessness as a ‘problem’, but also in seemingly unrelated aspects of governance. Housing policy, for example, institutes private housing and the attributes and forms of citizenship that attend it as normative and unquestioned, and can thus be complicit in the (re)production of homelessness as a systemically produced feature of society. Housing policy creates, on the one hand, an apparatus designed to prevent control and remove homelessness, while, on the other, institutes strategies that actively push entire populations into situations where homelessness is not only possible but inevitable. This reveals a schizophrenic mode of governance that features multiple voices seeking to simultaneously embrace, condemn, placate, upbraid and hide both the
phenomenon of homelessness and the people experiencing it. Claiming that governmental policies are ineffective would involve taking their individual stated, and sometimes contradictory, aims at face-value. However, if one views various responses to homelessness, whatever their ostensible aims, as part of a broader connected apparatus, another perspective emerges. The purpose of this thesis is to offer this alternative perspective.

The conceptual frames outlined here demonstrate the constructedness and contingency of the label of homelessness. Importantly, the frames are varied and dynamic and do not constitute a methodology belonging to or characteristic of any particular discipline. Instead, in order to engage with the object of this research on just and genuine terms, the resulting framework seeks to mirror the nomadism and transience of its object. By seeking to avoid a sedentary epistemology that is fixed and views its object from a particular site of emplacement, instead, this framework has sought be mobile, fluid, emerging and untethered. As homelessness ‘flicker[s] across a field of institutional spaces’, this thesis aims to conduct itself similarly (Tagg 1988: 118). Not limited to spaces and fields traditional to criminological inquiry — the courts, police, corrections — rather, it travels to sites that the homeless seek out, and from which they make meaning.

Before concluding this chapter, I want to make a brief point about the ethical difficulties in conducting research on a stigmatised and vulnerable population. Žižek’s concept of ‘symbolic violence’ — which forms one third of his tripartite theory of violence — describes the violence inherent in language, in the act of naming (2008: 9). By naming something in language we separate that thing out from its context, fix its meanings and render it discrete: an object for judgement. In describing a demonstrably complex set of phenomena (alternative lifestyles, identities, mobilities, practices of habitation and uses of space) as ‘homelessness’, these things become set apart, classified and compartmentalised. This is part of the difficulty of this research: by participating in this
violence of naming I contribute to this marking of people as ‘other’ and in doing so contribute to their continued exclusion and stigmatisation.

A partial remedy to this ethical impasse can be found in the literature of Gestalt therapy, specifically the work of Frank Staemmler. Staemmler promotes the idea of ‘cultivated uncertainty’ in therapeutic practice. That is, rather than seeking to take comfort in the rigid power relations that exist between therapist and client (or in this case between researcher and object):

[O]ne can become curious to find out in what way each person he meets is different from every other person he has met before. Of course this is only possible given that one is prepared to look for the uniqueness of that person instead of searching for just another incarnation of a given diagnostic category. (1997: 45, original emphasis)

While the relationship he is describing is different, the power dynamics of professional therapeutic relationships share some common features with the relationship between researcher and object. The same principle may be useful in informing the researcher/researched relation: to be curious and to set aside the aspiration to know in any totalising way. Staemmler’s solution is to ‘refuse the pre-shaped categories in order to practice what Buber (1958) called “inclusion”’ (Staemmler 1997; 45, original emphasis). Homelessness is one such pre-shaped category: limiting, exclusionary and reductive. Its application as a signifier must, to some extent, occlude and obscure the humanity of those it is used to describe and identify. It is from such a position of cultivated uncertainty that this research proceeds.
Intermezzo:

Barkly Square

I live in Brunswick in Melbourne’s inner-north. Historically a neighbourhood of the working class, migrants, vagrants and the poor, Brunswick is now increasingly gentrified. I remember riding my bike to a party in Brunswick when I was an undergraduate and thinking how far away it was, how unfamiliar it seemed and hoping that I wouldn’t get lost. I now consider it home. However, Brunswick is constantly changing and I wonder what has changed since my first foray into the suburb. What has been supplanted by the new apartment blocks, what businesses have been replaced by cafes and boutiques, who used to live here but now doesn’t? I have only lived here on-and-off for four years and even I can sense the suburb’s gradual homogenisation by the forces of capital and growth. A housemate’s band used to play gigs in venues around Brunswick. Most of those are closed now, or have at least changed hands and been re-developed. Ironically, the live music scene is constantly touted by local government and real estate agents as part of Brunswick’s ‘cultural vibrancy’: a commodity to be bought into. Several years ago, after a long and public battle, one of Brunswick’s oldest music venues closed due to continued noise complaints from the residents of the apartment buildings that had been built on top and around it. In response to the public outcry at its closure, a new suite of policies was introduced by the State government in 2014. These protect live music venues by placing the legal onus for noise attenuation on developers.53 Yet, it is a common enough contradiction of the process of development and gentrification, that the cultural features of an area that initially attract new residents are the very things that are pushed out by the influx of new capital.

There are countless other examples in Brunswick alone of these processes and the contests that are fought between new and old inhabitants. The main shopping centre, Barkly Square, has recently undergone extensive renovations and refurbishment. Originally built in 1983, it housed two supermarkets, a green grocer and shops selling cheap novelties. The centre underwent a significant redevelopment in 2013. At the time, Barkly Square was visibly aged and neglected, its atmosphere that of poor and degraded suburbia. There were always a few people asking for money out the front, members of the local Aboriginal community sitting and chatting and, I remember, a relatively young man who would walk up and down the centre’s length deep in conversation with himself. Walking by him one time I could’ve sworn I heard him say ‘Foucault’.

Now Barkly Square is shiny and bustling, housing a delicatessen, barber, massage parlour, a store selling expensive kitchenware and a branch of Australia’s largest music and electronics chain. Those people who used to occasionally greet you upon entry asking for spare change have been replaced by representatives from various businesses — gyms, florists, paint-ball companies, auto-repair shops and travel agents — offering sign-up sheets and discounts (for products and memberships that cost several hundred dollars). Gone are the old inhabitants of these spaces, muttering to themselves, arguing with one another or sitting against a wall savouring a take-away coffee. Where have these people gone? Does anyone notice their absence? Or, is their absence occluded by the ever-swelling spectacle of capital? When I see the sign at Barkly Square that proclaims the shopping centre is “Supporting the locals we love”, I wonder what happened to the locals that they didn’t love.
Chapter Three:

Biography

The stereotyping of one group of people by another is an act of power and control. Stereotyping occurs when a group, for their own purposes, tries to define other people and in so doing, sets boundaries and limitations for them. (Doxtater 1992 cited in Staemmler 1997: 40)

Introduction

While there is a long history of distrust of and hostility toward nomadic groups and transient bodies, as discussed in the previous chapter this takes on particular forms in the context of late-modern consumer capitalism. The emphasis that neoliberal social regimes place on the individual as a unit for governance and scrutiny becomes a site for the (re)production of the powerful stigma attending homelessness as a social category. Distinguishing between the social category of homelessness and the lived reality of the condition is paramount, since certain behaviours and mobilities unrelated to access to housing, like begging, can easily be codified as homelessness. The construction and ascription of homelessness as a symbolic cultural label is fraught, yet the pliancy of this label goes largely unexamined. This chapter will examine contemporary discursive constructions of the homeless individual as well as the corollary construction of the autonomous, responsible and housed citizen. A counter-discourse is identified, in which the alternative modes of life and unsanctioned states of non-fixity are identified in a relation of fascination, ‘oscillating between censure and desire’ (Young2010a: 83). This oscillation, or double relation, distorts our understandings of individuals experiencing homelessness.

‘Biography’ translates to ‘life-writing’, and, as such, this chapter’s interests lie in the textual nature of bodies and ascribed subjectivities. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to examine and
investigate how the lives and bodies of homelessness are written, often in contradictory ways. Revealed here is a complex and multilayered construction of an archetype — the ‘homeless Other’ — who references and resonates with various social conceptualisations of being, belonging and identity. This figure is inscribed with multiple meanings that contrast against various normative social and socio-legal structures: being, personhood, autonomy, identity, citizenship and civility. On the other hand, there exist counter-discourses that inscribe homeless bodies with meanings of empathy, victimisation and inclusion.

In the associative conjoining of homelessness with crime, a key component is the construction of the figure of the outlaw. As Young writes, ‘[a] subject from within the community is... selected and then portrayed as coming from the outside... [T]he designation of some individuals as ‘criminals’ enables them to be viewed as outside the community, and thus outside the law’ (1996: 9). The (visibly) homeless are a prime target for such designation as their marginality is readily verifiable. Failing to conform to behavioural and aesthetic norms and thus failing to reflect community membership, they are marked with the ‘outside’. Visible poverty, indigence and vulnerability are, in the post-industrial West, coded as external conditions: happening elsewhere and to others. This reaffirms the primacy of here and the self.54 The visibly homeless disrupt this delineation between here/there and self/other and thus destabilise the internal coherence of community.

Crime serves a similarly disruptive social function. Young notes that crime is nomadic — its emergence and location cannot be reliably predicted — and this prompts the law to resemble its enemy (1996: 12). That is, the law must match crime’s movements and become nomadic. When the criminal outlaw is captured by law she is expelled from community. Yet with the homeless Other, the criteria for expulsion have not (yet) been met (Zedner 2013). As we will see, the proto-criminal character of homelessness operates two ways. The homeless are understood as both emerging from

54 This coding occurs predominantly through media representations of ‘third-world’ poverty: the abject plight of those who exist well beyond our borders. See Carrabine 2015; Campbell 2012.
and producing crime: the product of criminogenic conditions that in turn institute further
criminogenesis. The encounter with homelessness is thus an encounter with the boundaries of
community. The mechanisms and strategies that this encounter animates are an attempt to
reconcile the emerging tensions. That is, responses to homelessness attempt to either expel or
assimilate the condition. Yet because the homeless body is liminal, it is amenable to neither.
Homelessness wanders the border between inside and outside; Self and Other; civility and chaos;
citizenship and criminality.

According to Isin, citizenship is founded upon the differentiation of those who belong from those
who do not (2002: 4). This process simultaneously constructs an identity and an alterity that exist in
a relationship of mutual constitution. Rather than existing outside of citizenship, the existence of the
non-political Other is a pre-requisite for citizenship’s institution. Homelessness, then, is an
‘immanent otherness’: a stigmatised condition that, counterintuitively, is politically essential to the
coherence and maintenance of community (Isin 2002: 4). The figure produced by these processes —
the homeless Other — is not distant from or outside of the community and its collective identity.
Rather, the homeless Other is a relational category against which a normative or ‘homed’
subjectivity is defined. Homelessness is thus not wholly expelled from community. Instead, the
Otherness of the homeless is in this sense normative: an alterity that maintains the ‘homed’
identity.\(^{55}\)

With this relation of co-constitution and proximate otherness in mind, it becomes important to
examine the criteria for inclusion and the constructions of legitimate identity these criteria produce.
In line with this, Arnold states that ‘what needs to be explored [is]... the self-Other relationship’,
otherwise homed-ness and the home remain outside of the frame of reference (2004: 4). In short,

\(^{55}\) Kramer and Lee use the analogy ‘host’ and ‘parasite’ to describe the mutually constitutive dynamic relation
of home/homeless: ‘the host owes its very existence to the parasite, who by the very act of taking... from the
host, makes him or her a moral being’ (1999: 143).
the Self (and its constituent elements) must be included in the ambit of critical analysis. Isin’s identification of a simultaneously constituted identity and alterity allows for this broader frame of scrutiny, and also speaks to the primary concerns of this chapter. That is, how homelessness is socially constructed as a biographical marker of identity or, rather, a foreclosure upon the possibility of identity (Kawash 1998). Building from this insight, the present chapter examines the occlusion of symbolic markers of identity by the concept of homelessness, and then moves to examine problems of definition in relation to homelessness. Of particular concern is the way such efforts feed into state desires to control certain problematic populations through the production of knowledge. Finally, it will explore the complexity of the homeless population — who is homeless or likely to experience homelessness in Melbourne — in order to demonstrate the futility of attempts to categorise this diverse and heterogeneous population.

**Class, Identity and Homelessness**

There is a wealth of academic literature on the relationship between identity and alterity (see for example hooks 1981; Warner 1999; Butler 1999). However, identity and its political consequences have traditionally been configured around particular salient sites of power differentiation like race, gender and cultural identity. While discriminatory and exclusionary social structures that turn on these categories persist, they are broadly recognised politically and embedded within legal and political institutions. Class has also been the subject of sustained critical attention, yet the political effectivity of class is significantly different to those other categories (Arnold 2004: 20). Class is a contested subject in Australia that remains somewhat politically taboo (see Mendes 2008; Winton no date). Discussing class structures involves acknowledging structural and systemic determinants of social and economic outcomes for individuals. Doing so risks undermining the neoliberal discourses that dominate the socio-political milieu of the late-modern capitalist West. These discursive structures frame the individual as the sole determinant in these outcomes: a responsible and
entrepreneurial subject whose prudent navigation of the capitalist socio-economic system is rewarded (McNay 2009: 56). Further, acknowledging systemic and structural determinants risks workers viewing other workers as fellow victims of an exploitative system rather than competitors for limited resources (Donzelot 2008: 130). This risks encouraging individuals to participate in class-based political activity and would thus undermine individualism as the dominant framework for self-conception and socio-political engagement (see Treadwell et al 2013). A class-less and highly individualised conception of society (in which socio-economic status is solely indicative of the individual’s character) ensures the willing participation of citizens in exploitative economic and political structures premised upon competition between individuals as opposed to solidarity with others (McNay 2009: 58; Donzelot 2008).

Class-based identities have increasingly been eclipsed by the individualistic notion of ‘lifestyle’: a term that occludes structural barriers and forms of disadvantage and exclusion (Hancock and Mooney 2013: 117; Fitzpatrick, Bramley and Johnson 2013: 162). An important distinction between class and lifestyle to note is the performative character of the latter. This is not to say that class is not performative, however, the performative aspects of lifestyle are more explicitly perceivable whereas class is generally understood in broader, structural terms. ‘Lifestyle’ is an individualised notion in which display and performance of ‘consumptive markers’ becomes the primary basis for subjectification and the enactment of identity (Bauman 2005: 83). Related to this, Klinenberg claims that increasingly bodies are understood as readable surfaces ontologically linked to a solid core of identity (2002: 122). From this perspective, how the surface of a body is understood as indicative of the individual’s identity and socio-moral worth. In a socio-political context that values the

56 Clarke writes that lifestyle is ‘seemingly benign and meaningless term that turns consumerism into a way or mode of life’ (2003: 5). The consequences of this for social relations are significant, as consumerism becomes increasingly salient as the primary mode of community and political participation. Clarke quotes a headline from an American newspaper in the aftermath of 9/11 which proclaimed ‘Shopping: your patriotic duty’. Similarly in Australia, in the wake of the 2007/08 global financial crisis Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced an economic stimulus package and urged Australians to ‘buy Australian’ (Sydney Morning Herald 2009).
performance of sanctioned consumption, a body perceived as unable or unwilling to participate appears anonymous, unknowable and troublesome.

Parsell claims that constructions of identity and legitimate personhood arise from both ascribed (that which is perceived externally) and enacted (that which is produced internally) dimensions (2011: 443). For the homeless, the discrepancy between enacted and ascribed attributes is more extreme, as a significant amount of qualitative research has shown (Berry et al 2001; Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobold 2007; Marks 2009; Liebow 1993). As stated in this chapter’s epigraph, the stereotyping of one group by another is an act of power and control that sets boundaries and limitations upon the stereotyped group. The nature and location of these boundaries and limitations form the focus of this chapter. It is crucial to ask how stereotypes are selectively activated against sections of the homeless population for the purposes of governance and order maintenance. Of central interest are the strategies of governance that operate ‘through particular images and discourses of crime and deviance’ and the inclusion of images of homelessness among these (Coleman et al 2005: 2511, original emphasis).

The inclusion of images of homelessness within a broader category of criminal deviance functions to operationalise them. That is, public images of poverty, vulnerability and destitution become charged with a crimino-legal meaning and thus become actionable objects of state intervention. Returning to Debord, he claims that, in the society of the spectacle, social relations are replaced with commoditised image relations (1967). If the appearance of having becomes the primary means of socio-political legitimacy, what of those who appear to have nothing? As civil legitimacy and citizenship are increasingly reduced to consumer behaviour, this leaves fewer avenues of legitimacy for non-consumption-based identities and practices. Dominant constructions of the visibly poor,

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57 The diversity of consumer choices actually obscures the reduced and narrowed possibilities for the practice of political citizenship and civil legitimacy. The options appear vast, yet in reality they are all variations of the same act: consumption.
indigent and homeless are thus produced in opposition to the subjectifying practice of consumerism. This positions the visibly homeless as politically illegitimate and ‘out of place’ within a social milieu mediated by commodity and consumption practices (Wright 1997).

Arnold likens the stereotyping of homelessness to that of other salient identity categories. She writes that ‘the homeless are subject to ideological constructs of their identity that make them other in ways both similar to and different from race and gender (not to mention the intersection of race, gender, and class)’ (2004: 3). Like other so-called minority categories, homelessness is inscribed with meanings that resonate with notions of identity. However, the socio-cultural and symbolic meanings of homelessness appear to have been colonised by neoliberal economic constructions of personhood and citizenship (Casino and Jocoy 2008). These constructions are primarily economic, but are also shot through with moral and political meanings (Bauman 2001; Treadwell et al 2013). The poverty of an individual or population of individuals is not understood as reflecting a structural economic reality, but rather a nexus of both moral and economic worth. Thus, homelessness and poverty are subject to deeply inscribed structural and systemic discrimination that operate with, within and throughout broader social and institutional structures.

According to Young, certain political and criminological perspectives understand crime and deviance as lifestyle choices: ‘masks adopted, costumes donned and poses held by knowing subjects’ (2008: 21-2). For Young, these perspectives lend themselves to neoliberal constructions of the individual: criminal behaviour is judged as a series of choices and volitional predispositions. For the homeless, differences in income, quality of life, social mobility, behaviour and social inclusion are included within this moral economy of judgement, occluding capitalism and its reliance on structural exploitation from scrutiny (Coleman et al 2005; White 2008). According to this perspective, the poor, homeless or criminal have simply made wrong choices within an equalised field of opportunity. The corollary of this is that wealth and the successful navigation of competitive economic relations are
also understood as originating from the individual: the product of good choices, financial instinct and the responsible navigation of risk (Pratt 2000: 42).

While the condition of homelessness differs from other politically salient minority categories like race, sex and gender, it shares with them the effects of the systemic exclusion and structural discrimination that has not disappeared in the late-modern era, despite the socio-political salience of discourses of inclusion and equality, such as human rights (Moyn 2014). Like these other groupings, the exclusion of the homeless from the benefits of citizenship and structural discrimination persists in alternate forms and in new political arrangements of inclusion and legitimacy. Where once systemic discrimination operated openly, explicit structures (such as the legal exclusion of minorities from the full benefits of citizenship) have been displaced by other subtler means which are dispersed throughout the social and economic fields (see Wacquant 2009). The operation of systemic and structural discrimination, as will be discussed, has shifted from explicit legal or political arrangements to implicit socio-cultural and economic ones. As Arnold writes, the ‘deep structure of expulsion and exclusion (often of minorities and always of the poor) is still very much there’ (2004: 20). Thus, structural discrimination persists, yet the sources of its effects become increasingly less obvious or identifiable. One consequence is an increasing tendency for aetiological discourses to focus on individuals rather than structures. For example, in Australia homelessness is widely acknowledged in political and governmental debate to be an economically produced condition, yet this contrasts starkly with the widespread and arguably magnified stigmatisation of homelessness as a condition, entrenched political neglect of homelessness as a social issue, and the chronic underfunding of the homelessness sector.

If the condition of homelessness occludes and traverses identity, then specific socio-political meanings ascribed to the homeless become an important site of analysis (Kawash 1998: 324). Erni claims that scholars have traditionally centred their understandings in essentialist notions of fixity
and permanence, despite the established inadequacy of immutable categories (2008: 195, see also Butler 1999). Such a conceptual inadequacy often leads to a finding of fault with bodies and identities that fail to conform to these epistemological structures, rather than a questioning of the adequacy of the structures themselves. While theorists such as Butler have moved beyond this conceptual barrier by documenting the unreliability of fixed categories of identity, such limited conceptualisations of it persist (1999). While homelessness is not an identity category in the traditional sense, it nonetheless bleeds across categorical and definition boundaries of identity, in turn prompting efforts to either affirm categorical boundaries or re-organise them (Dalton 2006: 88). The meanings ascribed to homelessness are highly contested, though for the most part participants in these definitional contests are not themselves homeless. For example, as will be seen, the tabloid media regularly frame Melbourne’s homeless population in highly reductionist and pejorative terms while homelessness advocacy groups seek to subvert these renderings by offering alternative images and narratives. Operating here is a highly contested identity politics, one that is not only demonstrably inadequate but in which the voices of the population in question are either absent or highly mediated (Parsell 2011).

‘The centrality of the rallying frame of “identity politics”’ according to Erni, ‘obscures the particularities of oppressions based on gender, race, and sexuality in ways that are not manifestly gender-specific, race-specific, or sex-specific.’ (2008: 195, original emphasis). Homelessness, as an ersatz identity category, thus becomes subject to forms of discrimination and oppression that are not housing-specific. Erni identifies structures such as global capital, the modern nation state, technology, constructions of citizenship, and other civil formations as structures that apprehend gender, race and sex in complex ways. Smith offers another version of this complex dynamic of interaction:
Capitalist formations shape and are shaped in turn by non-class based forms of oppression. We are never actually confronted with nothing but capitalism; similarly, sexism, racism and homophobia never appear in an isolated form. We experience, instead, contextually-specific hybrid formations that emerge out of a combination of these forces. (Smith 1998: 26)

Such structures — capital, the nation state, citizenship — become foundations for the indirect stereotyping and derision of the homeless as an already stigmatised population. For example, when delivering the 2014 Australian Federal Budget, the then Treasurer, Joe Hockey, stated that the nation could be divided into ‘lifters and leaners’ (a phrase he borrowed from Mitt Romney’s 2012 campaign for the Republican Presidential nomination in the United States) (Martin 2015: no pagination; Shepperd and Biddle 2015). More recently, in 2016, the new Federal Treasurer spoke of the ‘taxed and taxed-nots’ (Gittins 2016). Such rhetoric is used to justify political measures that favour ‘lifters’ — the wealthy, investors and large corporations — while marginalising and excluding ‘leaners’: the un- or under-employed, students, long-term welfare recipients, the homeless, Indigenous Australians, migrants and refugees. While homelessness was not mentioned in the 2014 Federal Budget, these signals frame groups like the homeless as lazy, feckless and reprobate; fundamentally illegitimate within a social system dominated by economic concerns. Despite not making reference to homelessness, the 2014 budget cut as $240 million from homeless services and public housing (Aston 2014).

These speeches demonstrate how governmental policy operates along the terrains of structural barriers while simultaneously denying their existence. It is far more politically expedient to discursively deny structural notions like ‘class’ in favour of more individualised and morally inflected

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58 See the Sydney Morning Herald (2014) for the full text of Hockey’s speech.
59 Among the measures proposed in the 2014 Australian Federal Budget were: the introduction of a $7 co-payment for visiting a General Practitioner; requiring young unemployed people to work in order to access welfare benefits; increasing the age of access for the pension; raising eligibility thresholds for accessing the Family Tax Benefit; freezing eligibility for unemployment benefits, uncapping university fees and cutting half a billion dollars from Indigenous assistance programs. See The Treasury 2014; ABC News 2014.
categories like ‘leaners’, ‘bludgers’ and the ‘taxed-nots’ (Gittins 2016: no pagination). The stigmatisation of homelessness is demonstrably not limited to the socio-politics of housing. Instead, homelessness is ascribed with a broader array of symbolic attributes and meanings from a range of socio-cultural and political spaces, such as crime, citizenship, government, national identity, economic management and law.

While homelessness is not conceived as an identity, it is understood as indicating particular arrangements of identity. The label is used to signify the presence of certain stigmatised characteristics and the absence of valorised ones. As a social condition, homelessness acts to codify the identities of certain bodies and populations and organise these within simplified moral categories which renders closer inspection unnecessary. This occludes the identities of people experiencing homelessness and in turn reinforces their moral corollaries: legitimate identities that mirror and reproduce capitalist constructions of legitimacy and personhood (Kawash 1998). The consequence of this is that the homeless become known as an anonymous population marked by various failures, dangers, forms of lack and non-agential behaviours. The anonymity of the homeless population is not purely social, it is also governmental: the homeless often exist outside of or away from various biopolitical enclosures of governance, such as the home and employment. The state thus employs practices of definition in order to render this anonymous population knowable, not as people but as objects in need of governance. It is to these practices of definition which seek to differentiate and categorise homeless bodies for the purposes of discipline and control that this chapter now turns.

**Definition and Control**

So far, this chapter has established the instability of fixed categories of identity and the role these play in (re)producing stigmatised stereotypes of homelessness. Here lies a central concern for this
chapter: that homelessness is both a material condition as well as a stigmatised category related to identity. Yet as I demonstrate, the diversity of the homeless population challenges both the material and identarian aspects of homelessness. Jahiel summarises people experiencing homelessness as:

[H]eterogeneous with respect to duration of homelessness, marital history, ethnicity, education, previous occupation, socioeconomic status, welfare experience, geographic mobility, current means of subsistence, health status, alcohol or drug use, mental disorder, and history of criminal actions or victimisation. About the only common feature is extreme poverty (1992:12).

Despite this diversity, attempts to capture and categorise the homeless in definitional terms are still made. Chamberlain and MacKenzie’s (1992) ‘cultural’ definition of homelessness uses culturally-specific standards of housing to define homelessness and is the most commonly accepted definition in Australian academic literature and in the community sector.\(^60\) According to this definition, one is homeless if their living conditions do not meet the minimum cultural standards of housing in Australia.\(^61\) Chamberlain and MacKenzie also differentiate three main types of homelessness: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary homelessness involves living or sleeping on the street or otherwise having nowhere else to go. Secondary homelessness is characterised by highly unsettled housing: frequently moving between various housing arrangements such as emergency accommodation, boarding houses and staying with friends or family. Tertiary refers to stable housing arrangements that fall below cultural standards of adequacy: long-term stays on a friend’s couch or in a boarding house.\(^62\) Tertiary and secondary homelessness are by far the most common forms of

\(^{60}\) Chamberlain and MacKenzie’s definition is regularly updated which has hindered its reliability in tracking homelessness statistically over the long term (1992). Consequently, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) no longer utilises the cultural definition and has developed its own definition for use in data collection and statistical analysis (see ABS 2011; 2012).

\(^{61}\) Chamberlain and MacKenzie also identify some exceptions to this. For example, while prison certainly falls below the dominant cultural standard of adequate housing, prisoners are excluded for the purposes of statistical accuracy (1992).

\(^{62}\) Definitions of what constitutes adequate shelter require it be stable (tenured), have adequate facilities (toilet/bathroom, kitchen, bed etc.), not be likely to harm the person’s health or wellbeing (nor threaten to), provide adequate access to services, amenities and social connection. See Berry et al 2001.
Homelessness in Australia, with those experiencing primary homelessness a minority (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1992: 277). In other words, most homeless people in Australia have some access to shelter, though it is unstable or inadequate.

The diversity of the homeless population combined with the diversity of conditions that constitute homelessness undermines the integrity of the term. If, as Jahiel claims, the only common feature is extreme poverty, then any unity or coherence implied by the term ‘homelessness’, beyond a designation of poverty, appears false (see also Shlay and Rossie 1992). When we talk of homelessness or of homeless people, we are really talking about the very poor and the range of inadequate, degraded and untenable material conditions that characterise their lives. Research conducted by the City of Melbourne in 2013 stated in relation to the three tiers that: ‘there is no clear demarcation between the lived experience of primary, secondary or tertiary homelessness (Living Rough in Melbourne 2013: 9). This finding undermines the definitional utility of the material dimensions of homelessness. If the three sub-categories of homelessness are phenomenologically indistinguishable, of what use are the categories? The answer is that this definition serves a governmental purpose: the differences between primary, secondary and tertiary homelessness are relevant to projects of order maintenance, not to the people themselves. Evidencing this is that many long-term rooming house residents resent the label ‘homeless’ and do not experience their living conditions in those terms (Kliger 2004; Kilic 2007).

The narrow definitional boundaries ascribed to ‘homelessness’ as a concept — which are constructed and reinforced through representation — are inadequate to describe or contain the diversity of the people who make up the homeless population. Inevitably, there emerges a sense of the homeless subject that simultaneously adheres to the stereotypes of homelessness while upending them, and troubles the definitional boundaries constructed for this population. That poverty is the only common feature of homelessness affirms Wright’s claim that ‘[v]isible homeless
bodies, their comportment and appearance, have replaced invisible, abstract notions of ‘poverty’ as a key social concern’ (1997: 1). Here, the visibly homeless eclipse the broader category of ‘the poor’ as a less abstract and more tangible target for social and moral censure. However, while definitions and social understandings of homelessness are routinely inadequate it remains important to engage with them as they inform interpretations of and responses to homelessness.

As Chapter Two demonstrated, homelessness is troubling because it evokes an internal externality: being in but not of the normative social sphere. Projects of definition and categorisation then are technologies of governance that seek to control, mediate and manage through the inclusion of external or disruptive bodies within systems of knowledge and categorisation. That which resists stable classification challenges the central premise of modern Western governance. As Norval writes, indeterminacy ‘undermines the very logic of identity upon which the order-chaos polarity is found’ (1994: 132-3). In being indeterminate and unpredictable, homelessness challenges the premise of Western governmental authority. Efforts to define homelessness, particularly those that seek increasingly specific categorisations, produce knowledge about these subjects in order to render them predictable and thus governable (Foucault 2003: 118). However, the knowledge produced is, as this chapter will discuss, always partial.

The homeless are a population that live and move between normative delineations of space, behaviour and modes of life. The central tension of defining homelessness is that the term attempts to describe something that is always shifting and in flux. Most experiencing homelessness do not do so chronically, even those that do often cycle through various living and sleeping arrangements (Weller and Van Hulten 2012). What is more, there are multiple forms and manifestations of homelessness that people move through: staying with friends, in a rooming house, in crisis accommodation, in a car and sleeping rough. This itinerancy necessitates moving between various geographic areas as well as alternating states of perceptibility which trouble governmental
expectations of spatial emplacement and predictability. The homeless subject can thus challenge regulatory institutions that depend upon stable categorisation of living arrangements, contact details, employment and other sites of fixity for their governmental viability.

A further challenge to projects of categorisation is that while the label ‘homeless’ identifies a material condition, it is usually characterised by other immaterial dimensions. Definitions of homelessness based on material differences are unable to capture the experience of homelessness. Johnson and Jacobs have found that, rather than being contingent upon physical structures, homelessness is instead characterised by social conditions and emotions such as isolation, loneliness and inadequate networks of support (2014: 43). Any definition that relies too heavily on material or technical features such as housing structures or tenure struggles to account for the phenomenological, existential and psycho-emotional dimensions of homelessness and housing stress (Chamberlain et al 2007). Solving an individual’s homelessness by installing them within social accommodation will address the material elements, yet may do little to address their vulnerability, social isolation and trauma. Peter Wearne from Melbourne’s Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment service recounted a former client of his. When working at a different service, Wearne had a client who had been both homeless and a daily heroin user for twenty years. The service had recently assisted him to cease his heroin use and transition into public housing. In one of their regular support meetings, the man confided how miserable and lonely he was since ceasing his substance use and gaining stable housing. His friends were all still using heroin, he had a limited income due to the new cost of rent and he had no prospects for meaningful employment. He had been happier as a homeless heroin user but was reluctant to go back to his old way of life because he was afraid he would die.

This account demonstrates how responses to homelessness are often rooted in quantifiable measures defined by means of governmental criteria. While loneliness, isolation and disconnection
are recognised as both features and drivers of homelessness, they are considered largely irrelevant for the purposes of governance (Robinson 2005; Rowley and Ong 2012). So long as an individual transitions into stable accommodation, the strategy employed is considered successful. However, if we lack the capacity to recognise the definitional role that these immaterial dimensions play in terms of an individual’s experience of homelessness, we remain unable to understand or respond to important facets of homelessness in both research and management strategies. There is a need for definitions that account for social criteria and wellbeing in order to address the issue of homelessness more broadly.

The number of people experiencing primary homelessness (that is, rough-sleepers) is dwarfed by those experiencing unstable housing arrangements (Chamberlain et al 2014). However, they are for the most part able to conduct private behaviours (such as sleeping, eating, defecation, and so on) in private, which means that the visibility of this population is diminished.63 This less visible population thus poses less of a challenge to the social order by virtue of its enclosure within the private sphere. However, despite having reduced visibility, the lives of people living in precarious housing are often characterised by hardship and poverty (Vinson 2015).64 If such issues become suddenly apparent, rupturing the boundary between private and public, they are responded to as instances of localised disorder, disaggregated from broader issues of poverty and inadequate housing (Sharpe 2012: 26). In contrast, visible forms of poverty and hardship that disrupt the carefully constructed imagery of the public realm such as rough-sleepers and beggars are framed as issues of serious social concern (Westmore 2013). These pre-constructed categories of disorder frame bodies and subjectivities as

63 Of course, there are occasions when the housed marginalised and poor do breach the veil of visibility that shrouds the private realm, such as when the media do exposés on people with extreme hoarding habits, or, for example, in 2014 when a five-year-old boy died in Melbourne’s north-western suburbs after cutting his foot on rubbish in his parents’ squalid house (see Cooper 2014).

64 The recent Dropping Off the Edge report by Catholic Social Services shows the longstanding entrenchment of poverty in specific geographic areas in each state around Australia (Vinson et al 2015). In Victoria, most of the areas that were identified as having high levels of social disadvantage by the 1999 study remained in the most disadvantaged category in 2015, indicating the persistence of geographic patterns of disadvantage (2015: 59).
illegitimate and thus as sites requiring both direct intervention (by police) as well as more
generalised ‘management’ as a population (White 2008: 38).

The preconstruction of homelessness as a troublesome category is evidenced in the distribution of
dedicated state funding. The majority of homelessness funding is concentrated at the acute
response end with comparatively little going to prevention programs or investment in projects
aimed at reducing housing stress, precariousness and poverty (Council to Homeless Persons 2013a:
4; Homelessness Australia 2015: no pagination; HomeGround Services 2009: 4-5). Neoliberal
strategies of ‘government-at-a-distance’ obscure the broader structural issues that contribute to
homelessness, by intervening in relation to a few highly visible groups. Bourdieu and Wacquant warn
against reliance on pre-constructed categories that identify certain groups as ‘problems of social
order and domestication defined... more or less arbitrarily’ (1993: 229). Such a strategy of
categorisation indicates a failure of the institution to understand its own existence and instruments
of thinking (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1993: 236). In line with this, tactics for the governance of the
homeless often attempt to make the object fit the definition, rather than constructing a definition
that suits the object (see Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2014). The intransigence or recalcitrance of
homelessness to dominant methods of governance is considered the problem, rather than the
methods themselves (Johnson and Jacobs 2014).

My aim here has not been to advocate for the discarding of definitions but rather to examine their
purpose and the responses they precipitate, justify or as we will see, conceal. Such definitions and
the statistical information they yield are useful in terms of further understanding populations that
can be intractable, intangible and difficult to see. They also facilitate the allocation of resources and
inform methods for the service delivery, albeit usually in accordance with the goals of the state. Yet
a tension exists here between what is good for an individual or population and what is good for
social order and the status quo. Furthermore, definitions are not neutral categorisations but involve
judgement. This chapter now turns to the tension between those dimensions of homelessness that are emphasised and those that disappear into the background.

Backgrounds and Foregrounds

The urban rough-sleeper is the most visible manifestation of homelessness, and is the most commonly imagined archetype of homelessness. However, this visibility is produced and constructed through the coding of a range of characteristics and sensory signifiers that identify the rough-sleeper and demarcate the homeless body as marginal and Other. In contrast, the ‘invisibly homeless’ — those who do not signify the condition visually — are largely excluded from the imagination of homelessness.65 This occurs because homelessness is connoted by a series of pre-constructed signs, the majority of which are visual and ‘violate[e] the aesthetics of authority’ (Ferrell 1999: 403). In the case of the urban rough-sleeper, the authority that is violated is civil, urban and regulatory. In contrast, those homeless who do not display these visual markers generally fail to signal such violations and so remain socially invisible (see Ropers 1988). The contradiction between a minority of highly visible bodies and a majority of invisible ones will be explored further in the next chapter. For now, it is sufficient to draw attention to a hierarchy of biographical characteristics read predominantly through visual signifiers. When reading homelessness on a body, certain characteristics become prominent and emphasised whereas others remain hidden or are obscured. Alternatively, if certain characteristics of homelessness are absent, a homeless body may not be read as homeless at all and will ‘pass’ as homed.

65 For example, domestic violence has a long history as a primary cause of homelessness in Australia though has only recently come to the attention of policy-makers, politicians and the public. This is because domestic violence has traditionally been thought about as a separate issue, and women and children fleeing violence did not fit in with stereotypical constructions of homeless bodies. See Theobold 2009; McLaren 2013; Chugani 2015.
While the visibly homeless are undoubtedly stigmatised, they are also granted a certain level of social legitimacy. The visibly homeless play a role, similar to how Durkheim understood crime and the criminal as playing an important social role in the maintenance of community (1964). In breaking the rules of a community, a criminal reinforces and unifies those who abide by the law (Young 1006: 11). Similarly, the visibly homeless are expected and familiar in their strangeness and so reinforce pre-existing social divisions and the distributions of power that attend them. While such bodies are undoubtedly Other, Sibley states that: ‘[i]t is convenient to have an alien other hovering on the margins’ (1995: 110). In contrast, there are people experiencing homelessness but who challenge stereotypical constructions of homelessness. Homeless children, victims of domestic violence and those spectacularly failed by the State are either absent from discourse on homelessness or captured within alternative narratives. For example, in 2015 a Melbourne newspaper featured a series of articles about a young Melbourne woman, ‘Alicia’, who was living under a bridge with her boyfriend while trying to complete her schooling (Dow 2015a; 2015b; 2015c). The young woman did not fit stereotypical construction of the dissolute homeless Other and so alternative discourses were animated. These emphasised a violent family, an unstable home life and an inefficient and bureaucratic state welfare system. In turn, Alicia was framed as ambitious, aspirational and inspiring. For example, the media coverage highlighted her desire to engage in tertiary study, the austerity of her daily life and her diligent morning routine and study habits (Down 2015b). The articles contrasted Alicia against other negative stereotypes of homeless people by emphasising her decision not to stay in homeless shelters due to the drugs, violence and general disorder claimed to be characteristic of the rest of the homeless population (Dow 2015a). In this way, Alicia is symbolically differentiated from the broader homeless community through these moral discourses.

66 The original article featured the headline ‘Without a home but not without hope’ (Dow 2015a). Notably, the administration of welfare was criticised as inefficient and overly bureaucratic because youth who are at risk of homelessness can apply for special funding to prevent this eventuating. Because this young woman was already homeless, these funds were unavailable to her. However, the newspaper article fails to mention the existence of other funding options designed specifically for youth currently experiencing homelessness.
In these stories about Alicia, homelessness is being framed as an aberrant condition signalling various failures for which she holds little or no responsibility. Her homelessness is both irregular and socially intolerable, and thus demands explanation so that fault may be apportioned. In this case, blame narratives are redirected toward her parents and the State (Dow 2015c). This is a deviation from media narratives that generally portray homeless individuals as opportunistic and undeserving (Jefferson 2015), morally bankrupt (O’Brien 2016) or exploitative (White 2016). These latter include frequent references to mental illness, drug use, violence and most egregiously, the exploitation of pets for the purposes of begging (see White 2016). In contrast to Alicia’s narrative, drugs, violence and poor behaviour are logical and expected manifestations of the moral pathologies attributed to the homeless Other.

Revealed in these alternating constructions of the homeless subject is a level of social ambivalence towards homelessness. Evidently, the causative narratives and individualised moral pathologies discursively attached to homelessness do not always dominate (Pennay, Manton and Savic 2014). Clearly, homelessness is also recognised to some extent as the product of factors outside of the control of the individual. Returning to Garland’s distinction between criminologies of the Self and Other, it appears that understandings of homelessness diverge along similar lines and produce similarly oppositional yet complimentary discourses (1996). On one hand, there is the homeless Other — an immoral and potentially criminal vagrant whose condition is the direct product of his own irresponsibility and moral disorder. On the other, appears the victim of circumstance who is hard-working, honest, uncomplaining and — importantly — grateful for any assistance received. These dual constructions enact a differentiation between the deserving and undeserving poor, a

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67 O’Brien denounces ‘aggressive’ or ‘manipulative’ beggars for bothering people by asking for money directly, and then complains of those lazy beggars who ‘merely offer a cap and a handwritten cardboard sign to passers-by’ (2016: no pagination).

68 The media coverage of ‘Alicia’s’ story raised over $30,000 for her in under a week and in turn covered the young woman’s response to the donations (Dow 2015c). Compare this with widespread (though by no means all encompassing) antipathy and ambivalence towards begging and the homeless more generally in Melbourne. See O’Brien 2016; Panahi 2016; Jefferson and Paynter 2016.
familiar feature of social responses to poverty since Britain’s Poor Laws (Filtness 2014). These two archetypes of homelessness — the feckless, dissolute and potentially aggressive beggar contrasted against the helpless and unmoored victim of circumstance — are contemporary manifestations of the longstanding tradition of moral categorisations of poverty and vulnerability.

It is clear that these dual constructions emphasise certain features of an individual’s biography while occluding others. Issues like crime, substance use, unemployment and the personal demeanours generated by severe hardship lend themselves to narratives of social approbation (Rodger 2013), although also at times risking social censure. In contrast, generational poverty, inaccessible services, structural discrimination in job and housing markets, childhood disadvantage, and histories of social isolation are less isolatable and more difficult to quantify. The demeanours and dispositions of the chronically homeless — which Rodger calls defensively cultivated tools of survival for life on the periphery — can become imbued with causative force (2013: 96). Thus, foreground issues are presented in narrow terms of causation attached to personal pathologies and flawed moral characters. In such understandings, a person is poor (or addicted, unemployed, criminal, homeless) because of these personal failures, instead of these phenomena being products of poverty and social exclusion. Yet as Johnson and Chamberlain demonstrate, features routinely emphasised as having causative role in homelessness such as substance use and mental illness often develop after an individual becomes homeless (2008, see also Chamberlain et al 2007).

James Farrell from the Queensland Association for Independent Legal Services (QAILS) offered an alternative perspective to dominant social narratives of homelessness. He said that socially excluded and marginalised people including those experiencing homelessness often lack what he termed ‘socio-legal literacy’. Farrell describes this as ‘having the capacity... and knowing how to navigate the social contract successfully’. According to Farrell, a lack of such skills is difficult to perceive from the outside and is instead more likely to be perceived as poor behaviour, unwillingness to participate,
laziness, reticence or incorrigibility. Thus, an individual or group’s marginality is read as a refusal to participate in the norms of the social realm rather than the inability to do so. In other words, when perceived these incapacities are understood in purely volitional terms, rather than originating from various issues over which the individual has little control.

In contrast to the stereotypical homeless Other is the correlated construction of an idealised ‘homed’ Self. Incorporated into this latter figure are various idealised constructions of legitimacy, such as loyalty to the state, neoliberal constructions of the responsible individual and proper aesthetic and social comportments. The attributes and characteristics of this hegemonic figure resonate throughout the social realm and in specific institutional spaces, such as housing, employment and welfare. This in turn shapes these spaces and determines who can and cannot access them. Risk profiles are constructed on the basis of particular biographic markers, such as being Aboriginal, having histories of mental illness, homelessness or substance use. These markers preclude these groups from access compounding the structural marginalisation experienced they experience. This structural discrimination operates at low levels and is both reinforced (legitimated) and dispersed (rendered invisible) through economic rationalities such as risk-averse real estate agencies in highly competitive housing markets (Curry 2005; Dineen, Probyn and Rayner 2014; Gillet et al 2009; Short et al 2007). Thus, exhibiting certain characteristics not associated with hegemonic constructions of ideal citizenship can become a barrier to accessing housing and other institutional structures associated with homelessness.

Undergirding the association of certain characteristics with risk is poverty. That is, belonging to a group that experiences systemic discrimination generally only becomes a structural barrier if you are poor. Therefore, discrimination in housing and employment mainly affects people at the lower end of the economic spectrum and those in already marginalised groups. Discrimination thus plays out at the level of the individual, for example through tenancy rejections, employment discrimination and
over-policing (Oakley and Bletsas 2013; Russell and Russell 2012). Yet the ramifications of these practices accrete to the level of broad populations resulting in these groups being over-represented in homelessness statistics and under-represented in other areas like home ownership (The Road Home 2008; Vinson et al 2015).

Bryan Lippman is the founder and CEO of Wintringham – Australia’s first and largest housing association and homelessness service specialising in the aged population. He explained that the elderly often face housing discrimination, with younger couples being preferred by estate agents and landlords (see also Incerti 2011; Ong, Wood and Colic-Peisker 2015). Lippman also said that assisted living and aged-care facilities routinely refuse to take clients experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, instead preferring well-off clients who are no longer able to live independently. Consequently, elderly people who are homeless are more likely to be referred to homelessness services, which are generally not designed to accommodate the elderly (see Lippman 2006a; 2006b). The reason for this, Lippman explained, is that aged-care facilities and services ‘are designed for my mum — a 75 year old, white, middle-class female with a family. But our guys are male, 60 years-old, working class, no family and resistant to services.’ Here we see that housing discrimination is not contained solely within the competitive private housing market, but also operates in housing markets specifically designed for vulnerable groups.

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69 Lippman further explained that aged-care is primarily funded by resident donations: ‘They call it ‘accommodation bonds’, so if your mother goes into aged-care she might be asked to pay anywhere up to a million, two million dollars. Of course that depends on her assets: she might be asked to pay fifty or a hundred thousand. But a lot of houses these days sell for easily a million, so [the aged-care facility] gets the use of that money while they’re there and earn interest off it and then when they leave or die most of it is refunded. So it’s not hard for an organisation to accumulate fifty, a hundred, two hundred million [dollars] worth of assets. But we can’t do that because our guys don’t have any bonds because they’re poor. And similarly I can’t go to banks and borrow because I can’t service the debt because our guys are too poor.’ On the other side of this coin are the elderly who are ‘asset rich but income poor’. That is, who own and live in valuable property but have limited liquid assets resulting in impoverished living conditions (see Bradbury 2010; Warnes and Crane 2000).
This is not just true for the elderly: young people also face structural barriers to housing. Youth are highly dependent upon their parents for housing as well as general support and stability. If these relationships become strained or break down (for example, due to violence or the death of a parent) then a young person’s housing situation can deteriorate quickly. Sherri Bruinhout, Director of Homelessness and Justice at Melbourne City Mission, informed me:

Some of the issues are just around the very practical scale. So if you look at young people, if you happen to have the unfortunate position of being 17 and independent... where are you going to be? Who’s going to rent to you, even if you had the money and the social skills to be independent? Which real estate agent is going to give a tenancy to a 17 year old? Even if you had a couple of 17 year olds and you could all pay the rent? Who’s even going to give it to a 24 year old? So just by its very nature, if you are leaving home care at an early age even if they were getting all of the support they needed to be able to function as young adults, where the hell are they going to live? So there are some very practical reasons, market forces that mean we can’t keep relying on the private market to solve homelessness for this end of the marketplace. There is no product for them there.

Housing is not a problem for the aged and wealthy, particularly for those who own property, or for young people whose families are wealthy and stable. However, it becomes readily apparent that being aged and poor or young and independent creates several barriers to participation in housing, particularly in private markets. The issues highlighted by Bruinhout are not just relevant to housing, but operate in an often-vicious cycle of disadvantage, exclusion and reduced capacity for participation for youth (Kelly 2006; White 2008).

70 ‘Youth’ generally refers to people aged between 12 and 24 years, whereas those under 12 years are considered ‘children’. Most children who experience homelessness do so because their parent(s) are also homeless, and if not, are then likely to be living in state care through child protection services (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008).

71 Non-heterosexual and gender-diverse youth are also highly over-represented in homelessness statistics. Coming out sometimes precipitates sustained family conflict and the young person is forced to leave their family home. Once out, these young people often face discrimination from services (many of which are religious), discriminatory violence and over-policing. See Dwyer (2015) and Oakley and Bletsas (2013).
Cultural or ethnic background is another factor that may play a role in determining an individual’s homelessness though, again, only when paired with poverty. Several service providers interviewed for this research cited low-level or unconscious racism as barrier to housing for many groups. They also identified a lack of cultural awareness in the public housing sector as a barrier to successful service delivery and positive outcomes for clients from diverse backgrounds. For example, housing services often have service frameworks that fail to recognise non-Western kinship structures. In addition, the majority of public housing stock reflects normative Western nuclear family arrangements (Garwood 2012: 63). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have family and kinship structures that are distinct from Western norms (see Morphy 2007). Much of the housing available is therefore poorly suited for their needs. Bruinhout also pointed out that public housing often comes with strict obligations on issues like occupancy rates, so people with complex kinship structures may breach their tenancy conditions when family members come to stay (see also Morphy 2007).

For Indigenous people, housing issues are central within the broad suite of issues and patterns of disadvantage and marginalisation that they can experience (see Behrendt 2009). Meena Singh, Director of Legal and Strategy at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS), described how housing impacts on every aspect of their work with clients. Whether processing bail applications, assisting with welfare applications, mediating tenancy disputes, working with clients exiting prisons, dealing with complaints of police mistreatment or accusations of racial discrimination, housing is always present.

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72 However, cultural and ethnic background can also operate in unexpected ways. Several of my interviewees stated that non-English speaking groups and migrant communities are under-represented in their services. According to Bryan Lippman the majority of his clients are from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds, because other cultural groups have more close-knit extended family structures and cultural networks, as opposed to the traditional Western nuclear family structure where having elderly members living with the family unit is not the norm.

73 Ethnic and cultural background often ‘stack’ with other biographical markers such as gender, for example, women from CALD backgrounds face unique barriers in accessing mainstream housing services as well as other services relating to housing such as domestic violence and family support services (MacKenzie and Riethmuller 2010: 30-1).
Housing undercuts everything we do, it’s always an issue. Any client we represent, we ask about their housing, always at initial contact and again throughout. A whole range of issues for Aboriginal people come out of housing because it’s not a system built for us. (Emphasis added)

As Singh notes, the difficulties associated with housing for Aboriginal Victorians arises from the need to navigate tensions between the diverse cultural understandings of ‘housing’ and its cultural associations — family and kinship, safety, privacy, belonging, home — in the context of narrow Western bureaucratic constructions of these. Western understandings are institutionally positioned as ‘natural’, an established and timeless norm from which alternate formations deviate (Havemann 2005). The greater the distance that these alternate understandings and practices are from the bureaucratic norm, the lesser value assigned to them by systems of administration (Behrendt 2009). For Singh, this lack of cultural recognition within social and welfare institutions simultaneously necessitates and undermines specialist housing and legal services for Aboriginal people. Non-Aboriginal housing services fail to recognise the needs of Aboriginal clients while specialist Aboriginal housing services must operate within political, bureaucratic and funding systems that fail to recognise the value of their specialised modes of service delivery.

Revealed here are the strict limitations for access to housing that are embedded socio-culturally which play out through unregulated market structures and risk management strategies. As Bruinhout explained, even public housing associations are highly risk averse, often even more so than other government assets:

Housing associations are under the regulation of the Housing Registrar which requires their debt-to-asset ratio to be at a certain point which is very conservative compared to other businesses. So that conservative rate requires them to be risk-averse. What that means is that if you’re on Youth Allowance [a welfare payment] of any kind, you’re not eligible: you don’t meet the
financial modelling for the minimum income for a tenant, because they charge a percentage of income. Also, if you have a history of bad arrears, you’re ineligible.

Hegemonic ideals of the individual and responsible citizenship here translate to unequal access to housing markets for certain groups. This then increases the likelihood that these groups will experience homelessness and other forms of marginalisation, which galvanises barriers to access by affirming risk-averse practices within the housing industry. Demonstrably, this is not only true for the private housing market but for aged-care providers and public housing associations as well.

The issues outlined above (as well as a range of others including gambling, domestic violence, disability and chronic ill-health, traumatic childhoods and so on) are only conceptualised at an individual level. Thus, such issues are largely absented from political and media discourse on homelessness. The salience of these features across populations rarely enters the mainstream public and political discourses, despite being emphasised in research done by advocacy groups and the community sector. However, there are occasional exceptions to this. The 2015 Victorian Royal Commission into Domestic Violence (RCFV) increased the social profile of family violence and its role as the main cause of homelessness in Australia. On average, between one and two women are killed by intimate partner violence each week (Homelessness Australia 2016; Bryant and Cussen 2015). The Royal Commission has led to increased public awareness of domestic violence and other

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74 Vinson et al’s *Dropping Off The Edge* report commissioned by Jesuit Social Services tracks place-based disadvantage across the nation (2007; 2015). The report emphasises the entrenchment of social disadvantage in key areas and shows that markers of disadvantage are concentrated in specific areas. So issues like poverty, low education, low skills, un- and under-employment, chronic ill-health (physical and mental), harmful or addictive habits, entry into the criminal justice system, housing stress and precariousness, reliance on welfare and a range of other issues are not distributed evenly across the population, but instead stack in particular populations and geographic localities.

75 The killing of 11-year-old Luke Batty by his father in Tyabb in Melbourne’s outer-east was the primary catalyst for the RCFV. The Commission was chaired by Marcia Neave, a former judge of the Court of Appeal, and tabled its report in March 2016 (see Neave, Faulkner and Nicholson 2016). Since his death, Luke’s mother Rosie Batty has become a high-profile domestic violence campaigner and was named the Australian of the Year in 2015. The attention and recognition Batty received should not be taken uncritically, however; her status as an ‘ideal victim’ has granted her the capacity to have her victimisation recognised and legitimated in public and media discourse while others remain invisible (Christie 1986).
issues as systemic problems rather than issues confined to individuals (CEDA 2015: 27; Saunders 2011: 65-8).

The diversity of the social issues that contribute to homelessness highlight the inadequacy of the term itself, with individual causes of homelessness (personal events and circumstances undergirded by poverty) occurring across a fractured and geographically dispersed population. The causes of homelessness thus can appear un-locatable and source-less — hidden throughout the encompassing sphere of dispersed capitalist social dynamics and arrangements of power. Such sourcelessness means that the only coherent object in which the ‘essence’ of homelessness can be located is the individual. Yet framing homelessness as an individual issue demonstrably misses an important point. That is, that homelessness occurs en masse, albeit at localised pockets scattered across broad socio-geographic fields. While it is important to respond to homelessness as it occurs (that is, in a socially dispersed manner), the focus on the individual reinforces negative stereotypes while failing to highlight structural and systemic forces of causation.

This section is not intended as an encompassing analysis of housing discrimination. Rather, its purpose has been to highlight how particular biographical markers are coded in relation to housing. These play into constructions of an idealised occupant or tenant: a hegemonic construction of the housed individual which traces out the criteria for legitimate access to housing. The figure that emerges from this construction is a white, middle class, heterosexual, gainfully employed individual aged approximately 25-50. This figure is the invisible corollary of the homeless Other, a figure of exclusion, illegitimacy and potential danger. Both figures orient housing markets — public and private — as well as governance strategies such as welfare, towards certain groups and away from others. This obscures systemic barriers from scrutiny while exacerbating the stereotypes of risk that attend already marginalised groups. While governmental practices of differentiation do serve a purpose, by differentiating individuals into categories they also produce hierarchies of value that
determine the conditions of access for that person. Homelessness itself becomes a risk factor; indicative of an individual's reduced capacity for independent participation in private housing as well as a range of other sites of social inclusion and participation. Practices of risk-avoidance in housing markets and the administration of welfare become self-fulfilling prophecies by further cutting vulnerable groups off from support structures. Here we see again that the condition of homelessness acts as a stand-in for the individual: their features increasingly obscured as a risk profile is generated (O’Malley 2000).

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault claims that as authoritative focus shifts from the body to the soul of the criminal, there is a correlative shift of focus from the crime to the criminal (1977: 30). While a crime marks a point of rupture, through processes of investigation, differentiation and categorisation the crime recedes leaving the individual who now resembles his crime (Foucault 2003: 20). In this way, the figure of the ‘criminal’ emerges. Homelessness is subjected to similar discursive practices of knowledge production and undergoes similar reorganisation. The conditions that produce the material condition of homelessness for an individual are obscured and instead a body that resembles and typifies homelessness is produced (Kawash 1998: 322). Homelessness thus becomes more than a simple material condition or set of economic circumstances. Instead it functions as a character: a stigmatised non-identity that adapts to and encloses all other characteristics — race, cultural background, gender, class — and binds them within an image that requires no explanation or justification.

**Conclusion**

Against the complexity explored in this chapter stands the stereotypical figure of the homeless subject, a stigmatised figure marked by exteriority. Many of the services I that interviewed identified the stigma of this label as a significant barrier against people overcoming their homelessness. Such a
view is supported by research (Johnson, Gronda and Coutts 2008; Thomas, Gray and McGinty 2012; Barker and Barry 2013; Traino 2015; Cecins 2015): stigma and labelling generate negative perceptions that operate both externally and internally. The stigma of homelessness is readily internalised, as one individual makes clear: ‘I looked like a street person... I looked disgusting and everyone could see that I’d changed’ (Chamberlain et al 2007: 6). This statement by a Victorian man who had been sleeping rough locates the man both within and outside of the cultural boundaries of homelessness. The juxtaposition between self-conception and self-perception highlights the strength of homelessness as an objectifying force that forecloses upon legitimate identity: ‘I looked disgusting...everyone could see that I had changed’. The individual relies on the vision of others — external perceptions of his body — to measure the coherence of his own identity. This recalls Seidman’s earlier claim regarding ‘defiled bodies’ and how they highlight the tenuous boundary between ‘order and disorder, artifice and flux’ (2013: 9). In Agamben’s terms, the homeless body reminds us that beneath the spectacle of consumer-based political subjectivity there is only bare life: the biological facts of living (1998).

Lippman identified the semiotic force of the label as the primary reason for him setting up Wintringham:

There was a cohort of people that were not accessing aged-care... and I stumbled across this answer that the guys were being seen as ‘homeless-and-aged’ and not ‘aged-and-homeless’. What that really means is that if they were ‘homeless and aged’... the government and aged-care services saw it as appropriate that they were living in a homeless persons’ service. But by re-defining that and creating a new paradigm and say[ing] that they are ‘aged-and-homeless’ that’s the equivalent of saying they’re ‘aged and Greek’ or ‘aged and a war veteran’: they’re aged, so therefore they should be part of the aged-care system.
Lippman’s comments highlight how being perceived as homeless obscures other biographic markers and features of identity such as being old, Greek or a war veteran. Here Lippmann re-writes the biographies of his clients by positioning homelessness as an important material feature in their lives without obscuring other details. There are similar projects that aim to re-write or re-inscribe homelessness operating in Melbourne. For example, Roomers is a magazine published by the Elwood and St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre in Melbourne’s inner southeast, which features the writing of rooming-house residents. Rather than focus on housing, each edition has a broad theme that writers can engage with creatively, such as ‘footprints’, ‘alleyways and hallways’ and ‘food’. Another example is Homeless of Melbourne, an online project that displays photographs of people sleeping rough in Melbourne alongside a short biography and interview with the individual. Such projects attempt to emphasise what is beneath the stigmatised imagery of homelessness. As demonstrated, identity and biographical nuance are often lost behind perceptions of danger and unpredictability, associations with dirt and residues, and morally coded appraisals of worth, contribution and social value.

This loss of detail occurs because homelessness is connotative of risk, disorder and other forms of ‘deviance’: mental illness, drugs, itinerancy, unpredictability and violence. The term ‘homeless’ functions as a foreclosing system of categorisation which corrals various signs into rigid sets of meaning which precludes alternative systems of signification or understanding. Homelessness becomes bound to these things and unknowable as anything else (Žižek 2008). It matters little if a single stigmatised characteristic (for example, drug-use) is absent, the association is socially ingrained and other morbidities will fill the gap (Sutton 2000). The construction of homelessness as Other serves dual purposes. On one hand, it is rendered uncertain and frightening, a troubling presence. On the other, the complexity of homelessness is simplified and made familiar, serving to organise social responses and attitudes.
Arnold writes that:

The portrayal [of homelessness] and the various sites of power that have constructed it lead to 1) an inaccurate picture of who the homeless really are, thereby essentialising their identity; 2) an examination of only a small percentage of the actual homeless population; and 3) criminalisation of the homeless through rhetoric and policy, justified by their alleged pathologies. Thus, a constructed image of the homeless is always competing with a more complex reality. (2004: 89)

The unity of the constructed images of homelessness is false. The idea that the urban rough-sleeper is representative of the population belies the complexity of the multitude of behaviours, identities and material realities obscured by the term. This complexity is hidden perhaps because when encountered, visible homelessness and poverty do not invite one’s gaze. In fact, an encounter with homelessness often prompts the opposite: the aversion of one’s eyes. The person who is perceived as homeless (on whom stereotypes are inscribed) is simultaneously seen and unseen: glanced at, registered and either ignored or perhaps momentarily acknowledged with a few coins changing hands. This willingness to ‘unsee’ lends itself to maintaining the false unity of ‘homelessness’ discussed in this chapter. This visual categorisation relies on what Klinenberg terms ‘corporeal epistemology’: ‘...the notion that the body is the site and surface of essential but otherwise obscured social truths...containing a materiality that cannot be denied’ (2002: 121).

Ascription of meaning precipitates the construction of an institutional apparatus dedicated to the management and containment of homelessness as a ‘problem’, rather than a population with a legitimate identity and attendant political rights. As the following chapters demonstrate, the status of homelessness is thus ensured as marginal, unpredictable, excluded and risky. Yet the structures that contribute to homelessness have their roots in the normative social world. Exploitative capitalism and the uneven distribution of resources (Katz 2001); socially constructed stereotypes about mobility, age, race and culture (Russell and Russell 2012); culturally entrenched gender
inequality; and in neoliberal constructions of the ‘responsible individual’—all contribute to homelessness in imperceptible ways (see Arnold 2004: 25; Crawford 2003). The dominant discourse of homelessness overrides the troubling complexity that this chapter has outlined, severing the causative links that attach homelessness to the social world and its institutions. Thus, homelessness is forcefully simplified through a paradigmatic discourse shaped by a series of political, institutional and social responses premised upon the exclusion of homelessness in an effort to render it more amenable to categorisation and control.

Coleman writes that it is important for a criminological imagination to address how institutions not formally associated with criminal justice construct and circulate idealised constructions of ideal neoliberal subjects as well as of those who fail to live up to this self-governing ideals (2009: 51). The homeless Other is the epitomic figure of the latter construction, exemplifying the failure to correctly internalise neoliberal ideals of self-governance. In doing so, this figure also negatively outlines the figure of the successful disciplined subject: the entrepreneurial consumer-citizen.

Having considered how, through the constructions of stereotyped categories of homelessness, certain biographical features are underscored while others are obscured and rendered invisible, this thesis now moves to examine vision and visibility as principle features in the imagination of homelessness as both criminal and criminogenic. In the next chapter, I place the homeless body within a political field of visibility and representation that locates the homeless subject as proximate to crime and violence. It demonstrates how the responses flowing from this associative binding contain and isolate homeless bodies.
Images and Figures

Figure 1: Ian McKellen as Estragon or 'Gogo' in *Waiting for Godot* (Getty Images)

Figure 2: Ian McKellen re-enacts interaction with passer-by in Melbourne (Daily Mail General Trust)
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Figure 16: Police monitor a woman begging in Melbourne. This image accompanied reports that police were seizing the earnings of people begging under ‘proceeds of crime’ legislation (Joe Armao: Fairfax Media)
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Figure 18: Two cranes above a construction site on Lygon Street in Brunswick (photograph by author)
Figure 19: The homeless protest camp at City Square in Melbourne’s CBD (photograph by author)

Figure 20: The police and city officials dismantle the protest camp at City Square (Andie Noonan: Fairfax Media)
Intermezzo:

Prahan

I get off the train at South Yarra station on my way to water polo training, like every Sunday. The station is old. Features like billboards and seating are new, but the structure itself has a crumbling feel about it. The electronic ticketing barriers are new as well, though again the thoroughfare of the station feels dated: faded beige tiles and marked cream walls. Turning out of the station I see her, as always, sitting by the entrance of a 7/11 convenience store. It’s still winter so she’s wearing a beany and a jacket. Her legs are encased in an old but colourful sleeping bag the edges of which she’s tucked in probably to keep the wind out and to stop the edges being trod on by commuters: those with other places to be. Her dog lies next to her, unfazed and watching her knit, tail wagging every now and then. I find it odd that she is knitting, now the hobby de rigeur of ‘yarn-bombing’ hipsters. It seems too calm and comfortable an activity for someone in her situation. Of course I have no idea whether she is homeless or not, I am simply reading her as homeless which I understand is problematic but can’t stop myself from doing. She isn’t asking for anything, she has no sign, nor even an upturned hat for donations. I wonder if I should give her some money though perhaps she’d be offended at my presumption.

I walk past her and skirt around a slow moving group of young men and women all of whom are orange with fake tan and make-up, their hair cemented into coiffeurs. Across the road eateries are lined up in a row, and on this side a hipster barber offers insightful quotes on the chalkboard sign out the front. Today’s is from Alexis de Tocqueville: ‘History is a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies.’ I roll my eyes at the meaninglessness of this. I am running late, so to avoid the hubbub of Chapel Street I turn down Claremont. I had planned to arrive half an hour earlier to do some observational fieldwork at a more leisurely pace but didn’t manage it. The whole block on
one side of the street has been demolished, I don’t remember what used to be there, but soon it will be luxury apartments. ‘The most liveable street, in the most liveable suburb of the world’s most liveable city’ the advertisement boasts, referencing Melbourne’s coveted ranking. I enter the tunnel formed by the scaffolding and my boots sound hollow on the plywood flooring laid over the cords and other paraphernalia necessary to construction. I worked for two years as furniture removalist in Melbourne before commencing my PhD: I know what new apartments in Melbourne are like. Unless you’re moving into the top one that takes up half the floor, you’re getting ripped off in terms of space. The master bedroom will be the size of the laundry at my place in Brunswick, but people eat up the marketing that talks of luxury, sophistication and desirability. People will accept a room of any size so long as the apartments are new and in a desirable neighbourhood.

Melbourne High looms ahead of me; a large Victorian era building kept in very good condition. Several bronze statues of founders and illustrious alumni overlook the sports oval. Water polo training is here, the school has one of the few water polo pools in the city (it needs to be an equal depth the entire length; a shallow end would defeat the purpose). The sports facilities are newer and less grand. After training I decide to walk the other way back to the station, braving Chapel Street. All the buildings are apartment blocks with little shop frontages, clothing boutiques, fancy cafes and a frozen yoghurt shop. A man approaches me, staggering. I assume he’s on drugs (though I chide myself for being presumptive). He sees me and I smile nervously, trying not to recoil. ‘Wezza tram stop?’ he shouts at me. ‘Oh, back that way,’ I reply, ‘or that way, I’m not sure which one is closer. Where are you going?’ He eyes me suspiciously and continues on his way past me muttering something inaudible but obviously annoyed. I think I tried to be too helpful: a simple answer was what he needed. More people pass me with laden with shopping bags, and I make my way around the gaudy American-style diner now ensconced in the façade of a Victorian-era theatre, a tripartite clash of cultures which makes me feel nauseous. I round the corner and make my way back towards the station, getting stuck briefly behind some middle-aged African women in hijabs, talking loudly
and walking slowly, both with noticeable limps. I walk past the 7/11 and the woman from before is gone. I wonder if I ever notice this usually, and then I wonder where she has gone with her dog and her knitting. There is no trace of her left, and I am surprised: I assumed she would litter — cigarette butts or a disposable coffee cup or something. I board my train, feeling damp and sore from training, and troubled by my own privilege and mobility: the ease with which I can navigate the eight or so kilometres between Prahran and my house. I won’t be stopped, or checked, or scrutinised and even if I am, I know I will not be detained in any way. I never wonder about my right to board a tram, even when I fare evade, which is most of the time. I don’t worry about what people think of me, or if I do it is about what I am wearing. The train arrives at Parliament station and I get off, climb the stairs and wait for the number 96 to take me home.
Chapter Four: Visibility

The ‘street practices’ of homelessness — most particularly rough-sleeping and begging—are where poverty becomes visible, public, open to judgement and action: to be tolerated, avoided, ignored, tallied or intervened into. (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2220)

Introduction

The importance of vision to modernist understandings of the world has become an increasingly salient lens of critique in recent years, both in criminology and other disciplines (see Carrabine 2015; Brighenti 2010). This epistemological primacy relies on a conceptualisation of seeing as a rational ‘process that involves a deciphering of signs in which visual clues allow us to reconstruct the genuine order of the world’ (Brighenti 2010: 7). This assumption has been problematised in recent decades, so that vision has been decoupled from notions of a ‘genuine’ world or the possibility of a true or objective perception (see Jay 1993; Biber 2007), a theoretical turn that resembles similar shifts from structuralism to post-structuralism in linguistics and social theory. In structuralist linguistics, language and its meanings were understood as being determined by discrete and stable rules (see Saussure 1964). Post-structuralism subsequently decoupled meaning from this determinative structure, rendering it historically and contextually contingent (Young 1981). Vision and visibility have been subject to similar revaluations: critical examinations of their purported rationality, objectivity and fixity (see Jay 1993; Hayward and Presdee 2010). Despite theoretical developments that understand vision as limited, fallible, partisan, blind (sometimes wilfully), and highly susceptible to deception, the social world remains characterised by ‘oculocentrism’ (Carrabine 2015: 103; see also Young 2010a).
The term ‘oculocentric’ describes a saturation of the world by visual experiences and the privileging of these above non-visual alternatives (Jay 1993). As Brighenti argues, ‘it is necessary to understand the act of looking and the phenomenon of the gaze from the point of view of the social forces that are unleashed in these processes’ (2010: 7). In doing so, he echoes Young’s more focused critique of the ostensible passivity of looking (2010a). Both argue that vision and the act of looking are intrinsically bound up with expectations, desires and, importantly, power. Each identifies the way that vision acts upon bodies; both the looking body (in terms of its affective responses to visual stimuli) and the body that is perceived and captured in the gaze. Brighenti concludes that the act of looking ‘has a grip on objects and especially on bodies.’ (2010: 5). Following the idea of the capacity of vision to hold or capture bodies, this chapter is concerned with the act of looking, particularly how homeless bodies are apprehended by various gazes, representations, acts of looking and practices of seeing and unseeing.

For criminology, vision and visibility are central to the governance of crime and the regulation of behaviour (Hayward and Presdee 2010). Coleman terms this reliance the ‘hegemony of vision’, which he describes as an ‘increasingly shallow and selective preoccupation with the visibility of things, events and people... [which] prefigures and contextualises crime prevention practices’ (2007: 44). While Coleman is particularly concerned with vision in relation to crime prevention, I am concerned with a broader criminological ambit in which homelessness is subjected to particular symbolic and semiotic framings and the ‘territorial orders of social interaction’ emerging from these (Brighenti 2010: 5). While visibility has increasingly been ‘de-rationalised’ (see Clark 2007) and its purported objectivity diluted (at least in the realm of theory) this has not necessarily reduced the primacy of vision in determining our engagement with the social world. Keeping Debord in mind, this decoupling of vision from its purported rationality has arguably increased the saturation of social relations by (commoditised) visual representation (Debord 1967; Baudrillard 1981; 1998).

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76 Coleman is referring specifically to how vision structures urban governance and policing practices, which will be explored further in the next chapter.
Accompanying this ‘de-rationalisation’, there has been a correlative galvanising of the primacy of surfaces, aesthetics and appearance in society, and particularly in systems of governance and regulation (Coleman 2007). The visual encounter with homelessness and the regulatory practices that result from this encounter are no exception. As discussed, an individual’s suitability for the label ‘homeless’ is determined according to their visual/aesthetic gestalt — a collection of miniscule signals that, taken in concert, coalesce into powerful codes of meaning. Yet the primacy of vision also extends its influence to the ways in which homelessness is understood to pose for the state. Strategies for the governance and management of homelessness are increasingly determined by the aesthetic disruptions caused by or associated with visible homelessness and homeless bodies (Amster 2008: 40). In short, social understandings of homelessness are increasingly supplanted by visual epistemologies that reposition homelessness as a problem of aesthetics as opposed to a problem of imperfect economic systems or exclusionary social institutions (Young 1999).

The tendency to identify homelessness through visual signifiers and aesthetic epistemologies is unreliable. For example, as stated in Chapter Two, most homeless people do not sleep on the streets, engage in practices like begging, or resemble the stereotypical aesthetic constructions of homelessness. Much of the homeless population is in this sense invisible, at least in terms of whether their housing status is legible upon their body or in their interaction with the social world. There are other instances where a body may be incorrectly identified as homeless. While the fairly trivial example of Sir Ian McKellen being mistaken as a homeless person was discussed in the Introduction, there are other instances of commonplace misidentification. Aboriginal people are statistically more likely to experience homelessness but are also more likely to engage in cultural practices, such as gathering in public space and sleeping outside, that may be misread as homelessness (Berry et al 2001). Such examples demonstrate both the constructedness and fallibility of visual and aesthetic signifiers of homelessness but also their ubiquity and social power. Demonstrably, visual signifiers of homelessness do not reside exclusively within bodies that lack
stable accommodation and are instead inscribed upon bodies through acts of looking (see Sibley 1995). Aesthetic constructions of homelessness may even exist outside bodies, located in spaces, residues, performances, distributions of visibility and constructed or deceptive social relations (Kramer and Lee 1999). Running coterminous to these distributions of visibility — the ‘partitions of the perceptible’ — are networks of social and political power distributed through socio-visual relations (Rancière 1999: 25).

Both Foucault and Miller identify the operation of power through vision in their respective examinations of Bentham’s Panopticon (Foucault 1977; Miller 1987). The Panopticon is a prison that produces a totalising disciplinary power relation through ‘apportion[ing] the visible and the invisible’ (Miller 1987: 3). Here, Miller recognises the differentials of power that attend uneven distributions of vision and visibility. However, outside of the prison in the social world, distributions of visibility and power are not so neatly contiguous as they were in Bentham’s totalising disciplinary institution. As Foucault demonstrates, neither visibility nor invisibility is attended by an inherent organisation of power (1977: 202). Rather, social arrangements of power are found in a ‘certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up’ (1977: 202). Vision is a technology of power which is subject to manipulation, but is amenable to monopolisation. Summarising, Foucault writes that the Panopticon is ‘a machinery that ensures disequilibrium, dissymmetry, difference’ (Foucault 1977).

Conversely, some homeless bodies may remain unreadable by exhibiting visual contradictions that appear unresolvable in the gaze of the onlooker. Encountering an apparent contradiction in stereotypical constructions of homelessness may prompt queries such as ‘If she is homeless how can she afford such a nice coat?’, ‘How does he own a mobile phone?’ or similar objections to the rupturing of the expected visual gestalt that attends those who appear to be experiencing homelessness. See Brown 2014 and Brown and Carrabine 2017 for further discussions in visual criminology.

Several interviewees described how negative depictions of homelessness are often implicitly embedded in more general of representations of disorder. For example, Tony Keenan from Hanover told me that negative narratives on public housing, ‘crime-ridden’ neighbourhoods and ‘Neighbours from Hell’ popular with the tabloid media indirectly depict homelessness and poverty in negative and stigmatising terms. See Hancock and Mooney (2014) on representations of poverty and ‘poverty porn’.

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Thus, visibility can be distributed and arranged as a vehicle for the enactment of power in structures of domination yet also in strategies of resistance.

As a function of power, the gaze is both subjectifying and objectifying—to see or be seen- and the location from which the gaze is cast is experienced as a sanctified interior. On the other hand, that which is held in the gaze is objectified, rendered discrete and classified (Brighenti 2010: 11). The extension of disciplinary power beyond the penal realm and into the social identified by Foucault demonstrates that both discipline and its visual principles are generic and thus not contained within any specific institution or apparatus (1977). Following this, Shearing and Stenning note that because power ‘is part of the social fabric it is everywhere, and yet it is nowhere, because it does not have an identifiable locus’ (1984: 337). If power is part of the social fabric then the public realm is suffused with it. Thus, public interactions and encounters are fundamentally operations of power, and vision is a primary vehicle for these operations. Identifying the interplay between vision and power, Wright argues that to be homeless is to be ‘out of place’, which involves ‘risking inspection by others [and being] visible to passers-by, visible to the streets...open to the public’s gaze, to the gaze of authority’ (1997: 1). Thus, to be public is to be subjected to power and to be homeless involves involuntary publicity (Mitchell 1997: 321).

The main task of this thesis is to examine how homeless bodies are subjected to methods of regulation that are resemble or rely on the crimino-legal system, its technologies and logics. As Biber demonstrates, the crimino-legal system is heavily reliant on vision, visibility and visual technologies of evidence for its operation (Biber 2007). The use of visual representations as evidence (that is, depictions of legal ‘truths’) is embedded within understandings of vision as objective and scientific (see Carrabine 2015). Thus, practices of representing homelessness resonate with prominent juridical and carceral histories. While representations of homelessness are not always oriented
towards regulatory or punitive aims, it is important to note that such practices remain connected to histories of representation as a crimino-legal practice (Biber 2007).

These considerations bring into question the role of the researcher in a study of homelessness, for what else is a thesis but a representation of its object? The term ‘research’ implies looking, an act that Young demonstrates can never be neutral (2010: 91). Looking involves expectation, desire, judgement and the ostensibly objective researcher is no exception. The researcher must reflect on their use of image and representation as evidence of their claims, and the differences between seeing and knowing, representation and understanding (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1993). As a representation of homelessness, this thesis is angled, framed and focused in ways which involves acts of including and excluding, centring and excision (Minton 2009). While homelessness is a condition attended by trauma, exclusion and marginalisation, the framing of homeless bodies as outside the bounds of normality (in which this thesis must necessarily at times engage) inevitably sustains the marginal socio-political status of those experiencing it.

With the power of representation in mind, this chapter examines how socio-cultural representations of homelessness are (re)produced and how this determines socio-political responses. This chapter is not only focused on seeing but on not seeing or unseeing as well. That is, what is hidden, obscured, and ignored in a world mediated by imagery and spectacle is also included in this chapter’s ambit of analysis. This chapter now moves to the visual-framing of homelessness. It then considers how homelessness is linked to crime through practices of representation. The chapter promotes a ‘criminological aesthetics’ as a means of decoding the visual force of homelessness, and to conclude it highlights the link between vision and space (Young 2010a).
Framing Homelessness as Criminal

The relationship of homelessness to the normative social world is characterised by both remoteness and proximity. On one hand, the visibly homeless are perceived as being socially and symbolically distant from the norms and decorum of mainstream society; on the other, the presence and proximity of homeless bodies is registered visually. The tension that results from this symbolic distance yet sensory proximity collapses normative systems of relation, experienced as a rupture of the organisation of community: the encounter with internal outsiders or the ‘included-outs’ (Erni 2016). While unsettling, this rupture is also familiar: an expected feature of urban social life. This contradiction prompts various social responses toward homeless bodies, such as staring, glancing, looking away, avoiding, walking around, or giving money. Many people experiencing homelessness report feelings of social invisibility due to the visual-spatial illegitimacy that often characterises homelessness (Sabbadin 2010; Mallett et al 2010: 80; Chamberlain et al 2007: 30). Yet contrasted against this invisibility, some homeless bodies are highly visible and this prompts social anxieties, animates systems of categorisations and activates regulatory responses. This contested (in)visibility is the basis for the ‘estranged relationships between the viewing public’ and the homeless (Hodgetts et al 2005: 29). Homelessness thus suffers as much from under-representation as it does from overrepresentation. That is, certain forms or practices of homelessness are framed as being disruptive or socially menacing and are rendered highly visible, which in turn obscures other, less spectacular or obvious manifestations.

Any act of framing involves a calculus of value; the positioning certain features in the foreground while others are either relegated to background or are excised altogether (Minton 2009: 69). Framing is thus an act of power that draws attention, invites the examination of certain features while precluding scrutiny of others. Framing organises an image and its situation in the social world and in doing so, precludes alternative arrangements (Kleinig 2004: 370). Sibley demonstrates how certain groups and identities such as gypsies may be romanticised when perceived from afar in
bucolic aesthetic contexts, yet perceiving the same group up close in urban settings may provoke anxiety and reprobation (1995: 100). Framing thus situates certain bodies within socio-visual fields, marking out specific yet intangible social boundaries in which these bodies are appropriate and others in which they are not. As will be seen, homelessness is subject to multiple framings which results in the hemming in of homeless bodies within a variety of territorial and institutional contexts.

Brighenti writes that ‘[v]isibility is a social dimension in which thresholds between different social forces are introduced... a field of inscription of social action, a field which can be explored as a territory’ (2010: 4). The visual determination of homelessness (or not) is not determined by any material fact but rather the various symbolic and semiotic meanings. That is, whether a body is perceived as homeless depends upon multiple constructed sensory elements that when perceived together, in specific combinations or contexts are read as homelessness. For example, seeing someone emerge from a tent in a rural campground will have a very different political effectivity than a person emerging from a tent in an urban park (see Figure 4). Here, a regulatory function can be identified within processes of framing images of homelessness. Certain phenomena are ascribed the character of homelessness, the negative corollary to a culturally endorsed, invisible and (ostensibly) universal norm: housing and socio-visual legitimacy that accompanies it (as discussed in Chapter Three).

In cities with highly visible homeless populations, regulators and authorities may enact various strategies to reduce or contain their visibility. Images of poverty sit contra to carefully constructed images that the ruling authorities of cities promote (Amin 2006: 1011). For example, in 2006 the Victorian Government spent $40,000 renting low-cost beds to house rough-sleepers and people who engage in begging for the duration of the Melbourne Commonwealth Games amid calls from politicians for beggars to be ‘swept off the street’ (Ker 2005: no pagination). Here, homeless bodies are removed from the city’s landscape: a literal and symbolic excision of aesthetically disruptive
bodies. By rendering these bodies invisible, the question of their legitimacy is passed over and questions raised by the encounter with homeless bodies are avoided.

Image management has always been a feature of the governance of poverty, though aesthetic concerns have begun to take precedence others such as the alleviation of poverty (Sibley 1995; Hawk 2011). The popularity of zero-tolerance or ‘broken windows’ in recent decades policing has given rise to policing campaigns targeting ‘quality of life’ offences in urban environments (Stuart 2014). Broken windows theory contends that failing to manage low level forms of disorder — broken windows, graffiti, rubbish, loitering — signals a lacklustre approach to social order and invites more serious forms of crime and deviance (Wilson and Kelling 1982). Regulatory strategies informed by broken windows frame poor and unkempt bodies (among other things) as legitimate objects of intervention. This, as Coleman et al aptly point out, functions to ‘reinforc[e] the [regulatory] gaze down the social and political hierarchy’ (2005: 2512). Images of aesthetic disorder are thus instilled with a heightened symbolic currency indicating a kind of governmental ‘ataxia’: a deeper, more fundamental loss of State control. In turn, this re-emphasises the other-ness of groups like the homeless and re-affirms the ostensible ‘need’ for crackdowns and regulatory strategies aimed at the visibly disorderly. The visibly homeless often bear the brunt of these kinds of regulatory logics (Amster 2008: 17).

As demonstrated, representations of homelessness are contested or, more accurately, they are ambivalent. The imagery of homelessness and the meanings produced are pulled in multiple directions. As the introduction to this thesis demonstrated, there is a plethora of romantic images of homelessness that conceive of itinerancy as an idealised ‘life apart’ (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2229). Such images are usually embedded within romantic notions of stoic determination, rugged individualism and freedom, contrasted against a thoroughly homogenising status quo (Sibley 1995: 93; Barak and Bohm 1989). Attending these are corollary images of open roads, frontiers, a bucolic
natural world, irregular yet honest labour and one’s existence being unconstrained by the burdens of family, the obligations of modern civilisation or the yoke of the state (Pinder 2011: 22). However, attending these romantic images is their opposite: stigmatised representations of poverty and indigence. In contrast, the proliferated imagery of on-the-street homelessness, rough-sleeping, drug use and begging become ‘a visible shorthand for poverty’ (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2222).

Unflinching or gritty depictions of poverty and homelessness are common and historically were a much-celebrated subject of early photo journalism (see Carrabine 2015). Visual artist Andres Serrano has produced many exhibitions featuring homeless people or in which homelessness and poverty are explored.79 One series of photographs of homeless people by Serrano titled Residents of New York was displayed in a subway station in New York City in 2014 (see Figure 5). The exhibition enacted a simultaneous placement and counter-placement of homeless bodies. Subway stations are ‘non-places’ reserved solely for moving through, yet they are also a common space to encounter homelessness (Augé 1995).80 On display in a subway station, these images are simultaneously familiar and strange: both in and out of place (Wright 1997). The coding of these images as ‘art’ reorganises the spectator’s visual relation to homelessness and visible poverty. The spectator both views and is viewed by the images: appreciating or appraising them for their artistic merit as the subject of the image, the homeless person, gazes back at them troubling their presence in the space.

79 A 1990 photography exhibition titled Nomads featured portraits homeless people in New York City. These were produced as large 60x49.5 inch glossy prints and were shot in Serrano’s studio. While Serrano gave no specific direction to his subjects, many are posed formally in elegant or heroic stances. In 2013, Serrano bought approximately 200 begging signs from homeless people and photographed them against a black background. This series was titled Sign of the Times. More recently in 2016, he has photographed the homeless population of Brussels. For an article written by Serrano for The Guardian about his Sign of the Times exhibition, see Serrano 2013.

80 Sloterdijk describes various *place*[s] without a self*: spaces with which we cultivate no relationship. He writes: ‘Such places may have their own atmospheres—but these do not depend on a populace or collective self that would be at home in them. By definition, they do not hold on to those who pass through them. They are alternately overrun or empty no man’s lands; the transit deserts that proliferate the enucleated centres and hybrid peripheries of contemporary “societies”’ (Sloterdijk 2014: 151). His analysis is both accurate and narrow: some people (homeless people) likely do cultivate relations to these spaces and most certainly contribute to the atmosphere of these spaces (often in a troubling manner, such as adding to perceptions of danger). Yet the spatial dynamics he describes are accurate in terms of the intended functions of these spaces: solely conduits for the facilitation of people and capital, unobstructed by static bodies.
Here, homeless bodies are transformed into cultural spectacle, drawing the gaze in rather than repelling it. This enacts a counter-framing of homelessness, in which encounter is invited and thus inverted. The distance that normally separates the ‘lamentable sight of homelessness’ and the ‘spectacle of capital’ is collapsed, troubling the discursive and ideological struts maintaining social relations of inequality (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2220).

Most representations of homelessness, however, are not counter-placements and instead function to reinforce the constructed distance between homed citizens and homeless others. For example, in 2013 the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) ran a story about Victoria’s continued criminalisation of begging and Homeless Person’s Legal Clinic had launched what would be an unsuccessful campaign to have the law changed (Lauder 2013). The article featured a close-up shot of a pair of feet belonging to a body that lay prostrate on stone masonry (see Figure 6). The feet are adorned in filthy and torn socks revealing dry and cracked skin underneath. The caption identifies the feet as belonging to a homeless man though beyond this his identity remains anonymous. This image determines the article’s focus: while ostensibly about a law banning a particular behaviour, the article is in fact about homelessness more broadly.

In another article on homelessness in Victoria, a young person is shown slumped against a wall, their head downcast and face obscured as they hold up a sign reading ‘Homeless and hungry. God Bless You’ (see Figure 7) (McFayden 2016). Although the article is about homelessness in Melbourne, a partially obscured sign appears to read ‘Sydney’, possibly indicating this photo was taken in New South Wales. In 2016, an article on ‘aggressive begging’ in Melbourne features a total of 21

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81 In 2005 the Victorian government repealed the Vagrancy Act 1966, though retained the provision making it illegal to ‘beg for alms’ by inserting this into the Summary Offences Act 1966. See Vagrancy (Repeal) and Summary Offences (Amendment) Act 2005 (Vic).

82 The fact that this is a stock image owned by Reuters brings into question the images authenticity of the image is ‘real’ and whether the man depicted is Australian, let alone a Melburnian.

83 This same image was also used more recently in a story about homelessness in Perth, demonstrating how interchangeable and mobile representations of homelessness are. Such images are granted a powerful
photographs of homeless people (Jefferson 2016a). Another image shows a man covering his face and giving the finger to the camera, raising questions about consent and the media’s right to depict homeless bodies. Also featured is a sequence of photographs in which a man appears to throw a piece of paper at another man as he walks by, ostensibly to evidence the ‘scourge’ of ‘aggressive begging’ (Jefferson and Paynter 2016: no pagination). Such images obviously serve to reinforce the ‘Other-ness’ of those identified as homeless through both anonymity and naming: identifying the people in the photographs as ‘homeless’, vagrants’ and ‘beggars’ (Jefferson and Paynter 2016; McFayden 2016; Jefferson 2016a).

Tony Keenan, CEO of Hanover Welfare Services in Melbourne, stated that as an advocacy organisation, they actively try to increase positive representations of homelessness. But Keenan also noted a level of uneasiness regarding the practice of selecting ‘media-appropriate’ clients to feature in these representations: in his view, such sorting practices undermine the principles of the organisation. He recounted a story in which several of Hanover’s clients were being featured in an article on homelessness for Marie Claire magazine. During preparation for the shoot, Kennan intervened when the people from the magazine tried to dress the clients in expensive clothes and put make-up on them. Clearly the magazine’s editors intended to construct an image of homelessness that remained in keeping with the magazine’s stylistic and aesthetic standards. Keenan also noted that the people featured on the front covers of various pamphlets produced by scientific authority and their accuracy is seldom questioned. Representations of homelessness thus take on a universal quality. See McNeill 2016.

Another article by the same newspaper features nine photographs of this same man. Each of these are captioned with patronising or hyperbolic language, describing the apparent ‘victims’ of this man’s anger as being ‘abused’, ‘unsuspecting’ and ‘manhandled’. Another image shows the man standing over an over-turned bin with the caption ‘Not even a recycling bin escaped his rage’. The final picture is captioned with ‘Other homeless grew tired of his antics’, a rhetorical move which positions him as so far beyond the pale that he is rejected by his own community. See Jefferson 2016a.

Tony jokingly made reference to the comedy film Zoolander (2001), in which a famous clothing designer launches a clothing series inspired by the stereotypical imagery of urban homelessness and made from discarded materials like rubbish bags and old newspapers called ‘Derelict’ (Stiller 2001). This is intended as a satire of the fashion industry, particularly designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, who in 1980, exhibited a clothing line made from ‘trash’, including a dress made from a garbage bag, jewellery made from discarded tin cans and a purse made from a used ashtray.
Hanover were mostly professional models dressed to look homeless. He stated: ‘So look, we’ve learnt how to use the media, we know how to get a story up, and [now] you almost always have to have a real life person... [but] we know if we’ve got a story about a homeless child that that will get more of a run.’ Demonstrably, even positive or ostensibly benevolent representations are highly constructed and seek to direct the viewer towards specific narratives of homelessness.

Popular understandings of homelessness can thus be reinforced by uncritical and mediated representations. Homelessness is often depicted in stereotyped terms: individual, public, anonymous, desperate and potentially dangerous. Those depicted are cut off from other legitimate markers of identity (sometimes even basic ones such as gender and age), defined almost solely by the harsh materiality of their existence outside. Erased from them is a sense of before or after: homelessness appears permanent, a persistent feature of the lives of those depicted and the urban spaces that they inhabit. For the most part, the only thing we know about these people is that they are homeless and occasionally factors relating to their homelessness: institutionalisation, mental illness or criminal history. For the most part homelessness is framed simply: bad, sad, broken, desperate and linked with crime and violence. While there are sympathetic representations, these routinely seek to disassociate homelessness from dirt, crime, substance use or poor behaviour. They do this by using models, or selecting specific empathetic examples to depict, like women and young families. These are not inaccurate (family violence is the leading cause of homelessness in Australia), yet they institute hierarchies of moral and social worth, differentiating types of homelessness. In short, even sympathetic renderings often reinforce the distinction between the Self and Other that structures society’s relationship to homelessness. Instead, these are shifted onto the most isolated and vulnerable section of the homeless population: rough-sleepers and those with complex needs. Exemplifying this, Major Brendan Nottle from the Salvations Army—one of the main providers of homelessness services in Australia— advocates empathy for the homeless while endorsing police
crackdowns on begging, questioning the authenticity of people who beg and openly linking homelessness with crime, drug use and deception (see Dow and Cowie 2015; Lowe 2013).

The mediated nature of homeless imagery highlights the asymmetrical power relations inherent in practices of representation. While the visual is given primacy in how homelessness is perceived and understood, it is demonstrably an inadequate means of engagement with what is a complex set of phenomena. This does not simply mean that representations of homelessness are incomplete, rather they are actively constructed to produce specific and ideologically motivated social and moral ‘truths’, similar to those that shape social understandings of crime (Amster 2008: 42). Homelessness is thus produced as an ontological alterity comparable to that of the figure of ‘the criminal’, instead of a material condition of vulnerability and poverty. The linking of homelessness to crime engenders the salience of homelessness within discourses relating to crime, where it functions to contextualise the commission of criminal acts. In contrast, being homed offers a partial inurement against accusations of criminality: a socio-civil legitimacy that, while not offering protection from criminal prosecution, offers some protection against harsh scrutiny.

**Homelessness and the Spectacle of Crime**

Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos writes that ‘the city fears itself in that any look in the mirror may reveal mismatches between description and self-description, between slums and utopia, legality and illegality, death and survival’ (2007: 10). Crime is a common (and in some ways, defining) characteristic of cities and urban life. Yet the ruling authorities imagine cities as peaceful and safe spaces and treat crime’s occurrence as a rupture to the normal state of urban order. While crime is a familiar feature of urban life (see Garland 1996; Hayward 2004), certain crimes do rupture the veneer of peace and order that encompasses the daily rhythms of the city. When such events occur they acquire ‘a heightened material and metaphysical force’ and extend the ambit of harm to all
inhabitants and the identity of the city itself (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 171). Correlative to this wider range of victimisation, crime of this category also outline an extended ambit of responsibility and thus prompt a reappraisal of the city’s characterisation (as safe, civil and ordered). In short, when such crimes occur, a city is forced to consider its own reflection and hope that it finds it consistent with its own self-conception (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007: 10). Two such events took place in Melbourne in 2014 and homelessness was a prominent feature of each. In both cases housing status was considered an important and perhaps even determinative factor in the commission of these acts and shaped the discursive constructions of those involved. These events are the killings of Morgan Wayne ‘Mouse’ Perry and Yuk Ling (Renea) Lau.  

Morgan Wayne ‘Mouse’ Perry was attacked where he was staying, in an encampment of homeless people at Enterprise Park in Melbourne’s Central Business District in the early hours of January 5th in 2014. The park sits along the banks of the Yarra River and is a relatively secluded spot despite its central location on Flinders Street. This seclusion combined with the shelter offered by the overhead rail bridge means it is a place that rough-sleepers commonly gather to stay overnight in Melbourne (see Figure 8). Perry was a familiar presence in Melbourne’s rough-sleeping community and had been homeless for most of his life (Dow 2014a; 2016b). He was stabbed several times with a ‘large Rambo-style knife’ by 20 year old Easton Woodhead during a confrontation over a motorbike (Deery 2016: no pagination). Woodhead, a graduate from the elite Melbourne Grammar high school, was living in a Flinders Street apartment owned by his mother across from the park.

The violent killing of Perry shocked Melbourne and the rough-sleeping community and the homeless sector in particular. His death was marked by extensive news coverage describing the attack and conjecture regarding possible factors thought to have contributed to it. The tone of media discourse  

86 Perry’s nickname is alternately reported as either ‘Mouse’ or ‘Mousey’, although the flyer for his memorial service read ‘Mouse’ so this moniker will be used here.  
87 An informal tribute to Mouse was constructed in Enterprise Park where Perry used to sleep (see Figure 9) and the people who use the park no longer sleep here out of respect.
surrounding the death of Perry was characterised by uncertainty; the crime itself seemed inexplicable, challenging pre-constructed narratives of crime and victimisation. Later it was revealed that Woodhead had been using marijuana heavily and was experiencing mental illness at the time of the attack, factors that were quickly seized upon by the media and imbued with causative force. Woodhead was found to be suffering from paranoid schizophrenia which was being exacerbated by daily marijuana use and self-imposed seclusion, resulting in episodes of psychosis (Deery 2015). Woodhead’s friends and girlfriend reported that he had become increasingly paranoid and distressed in the weeks prior to the attack. News articles detailed the extent of his delusions revealing that, among other things, he believed that he was immortal; that his father was a werewolf; that injecting printer ink into his veins would grant him special powers; and that he sat at the top of a hierarchy of humanity (Deery 2015; Dow 2014b; Russell 2015a, 2015b). Drug use and mental illness thus bore the moral culpability for the commission of this crime, which was framed as a tragedy for the perpetrator as well as for the victim. In April 2016, Woodhead was found not guilty of murder due to mental impairment though was sentenced to 25 years’ supervision under section 5 of the Crimes (Mental Impairment and Fitness to be Tried) Act 1997.

Several media outlets also ran features about Perry, his life and history of homelessness. In these he was described variously as ‘bubbly’, ‘polite’, ‘generous’ and ‘kind’ (Hawkins 2016: no pagination; Dow 2014a; 2016b). These accounts revealed a long history of institutional abuse, neglect and grief compounded and exacerbated by social marginalisation and structural inequalities (Marks 2014). News of Perry’s death precipitated a significant increase in donations to Melbourne’s homelessness charities and saw many people personally delivering donations of blankets, food and clothing to the camp at Enterprize Park (Hawkins 2016). Perry’s death has since been the subject of an episode of Australian Story, an investigative journalism television program, featuring interviews with Perry’s sister Michelle, his children and friends (2016). This marks a stark deviation from much media
coverage of homelessness which usually obscures or omits these personal details and intimate histories.

Later that year, in June, Scott Allen Miller raped and murdered Renea Lau in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. Lau, from Hong Kong, was living and working as a pastry chef in Melbourne. Lau was walking to work on the morning of June 28th near the Gardens when she encountered Miller. Miller was intoxicated and had been kicked out of a popular Melbourne nightspot for harassing female patrons hours earlier and had been propositioning women on the street before making his way toward the Gardens and his encounter with Lau (Carlyon 2015a). According to Miller’s sentencing report, Lau attempted to run but was knocked down by Miller before being dragged into some nearby bushes where she was beaten and raped (R v. Miller 2015). Lau was knocked unconscious in the attack and died of asphyxiation. Her body was found several hours later. After the attack, Miller caught a train to Frankston in Melbourne’s east before hitchhiking across the border into New South Wales. He was found sleeping on a beach several days later by an off-duty police officer. Miller was arrested and returned to Victoria where he was charged with two counts of rape and one count of murder. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 33 years in prison with a minimum sentence of 28 years (Carlyon 2015a; R v. Miller 2015).

As in the case of the killing of Mouse, Lau’s murder prompted extensive coverage in Melbourne’s news media and provoked considerable public anxiety and outrage. In this case, however, there was no uncertainty as to where blame should lie. Miller was framed as a morally corrupt and dangerous criminal and his histories of homelessness, drug use and a brief experience of mental illness were emphasised and readily incorporated into this narrative. Described variously in news stories as a ‘monster’, ‘mad’, ‘killer hobo’ and as ‘evil’, the categorisation of Miller as quintessentially ‘criminal’ faced few impediments (Carlyon 2015b; Lipman 2014; The Advertiser 2014; Purcell 2015). Lau’s life
and the grief of her family was similarly recounted extensively in the media and a makeshift shrine of tributes, flowers and notes from strangers grew at the site of the attack (see Figure 10).

The moral differentiation made between the perpetrators in these two cases aligns with the discursive moral bifurcations to which homelessness is subjected (as discussed in Chapter Three). Reflecting Garland’s claim regarding the criminologies of the Self/Other, homelessness is here differentiated as either a moral category bound to crime, danger and deviance or alternately as a tragic condition produced by unfortunate circumstances and worthy of empathy (1996: 446). The differences in the public responses to these events can be explained by the particular nature of Miller’s attack and the threat this poses to the community. As we will see, the randomness of Miller’s attack — its nomadic character — and Lau’s position within the bounds of normative society precipitate considerable community anxiety. In contrast, Perry is not regarded as a community member (by virtue of being homeless) and so his death is not experienced as an attack on the community at large.

Young contends that the nomadic nature of crime provokes community anxiety because it highlights the law’s inability to predict (and therefore prevent) crime’s emergence (Young 1996: 9). Lau’s victimisation — especially the randomness of it — highlight the vulnerability of community to crime and the porousness of the borders separating the criminal from community. In contrast, Perry is an empathetic outsider or ‘tragic Other’ perceived and known only by virtue of his vulnerability and death (Stone 2012: 1581). Rather than emphasising the community’s vulnerability to violence, Perry’s victimisation actually underlines the comparative safety that comes with community membership (of which housing is a constituent element).

Young writes that ‘community is founded upon victimisation and victimisation constitutes the necessary entry subscription’ (1996: 10). In normative narratives of crime’s causation, it is ‘we’ (the
community) who is victimised by ‘them’ (the criminal Other). Lau’s encounter with Miller confirms and reinforces this narrative and its differentiation between us and them, Self and Other. In the case of Perry, the familiar categorical distinctions accompanying the traditional victim/offender dichotomy are reversed (Christie 1986). Here, the homeless vagrant with a history of crime and drug use is the innocent victim while the privileged, promising and popular private school student emerges as a maddened and violent killer. The death of Perry (an outsider) at the hands of a community member troubles prevalent cultural narratives of crime and victimisation, prompting a revision of Woodhead’s claim to membership.88 While the Woodhead/Perry case resists familiar aetiological narratives of causation, this does not prevent the law and the media attempting to contain and categorise them.

The presence of homelessness in these cases influenced the media narratives constructed around them. While the case of Miller coheres to traditional narratives regarding crime, there are also particular features of it that challenge the simple categorisation of Miller as ‘evil’.89 Miller had been sleeping rough in Melbourne in the two months prior to the attack and had refused services. Reportedly, he had told outreach workers from the Salvation Army that he was ‘happy living out under the stars’ (Kaila, Argoon and Dowsley 2014: no pagination). An office worker who encountered Miller early on the night of the attack night, accompanied him to a bar and bought him a drink told the media that Miller seemed ‘highly functional… articulate and friendly… an average Aussie bloke’ (Spooner 2014a: no pagination). Miller, who had no history of violence, told police that he was happy to receive a prison sentence because: ‘I’ll be in jail and I’ll have a place to stay and I’ll have food and I’ll be able to speak to people’ (Carlyon 2015a: no pagination). The basic needs expressed in this statement reveal a vulnerability that does not sit well with normative constructions

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88 Arguably, this also prompts Perry’s posthumous inclusion into community which would affirm Young’s claims regarding victimisation as the pre-requisite for community membership (1996). In this sense, Perry and Woodhead essentially trade membership as the former is victimised and the latter is revealed as a criminal.
89 One media story ran with the headline ‘Garden of Evil’ (Vuk 2014) and another declared Miller an ‘evil man’ (Purcell 2015: no pagination).
of the ‘violent criminal’. Further, Miller claimed that he could not remember attacking Lau because he was ‘blind drunk’ though speculated that he must have ‘exploded into a violent rage’ (Carlyon 2015a: no pagination). Here, even the comfort that normally attends the social ritual of confession remains nebulous and out of reach.

Miller’s lack of motive, of memory and his almost child-like comments regarding prison galvanise him as an unknown entity unsuitable for traditional narratives of crime and punishment. However, his unsuitability for categorisation as ‘evil’ combined with the unpredictability of his violence actually renders him a far more troubling entity. The two women who picked up a hitchhiking Miller in their car after the attack were interviewed by the media in the wake of his arrest. The media coverage emphasises their vulnerability to victimisation by Miller and contrasts this against their impressions of him: ‘a bit of a free soul... [who] seemed genuine and nice’ (Buckley-Lennox, Spooner and Mills 2014: no pagination). Here, homelessness functions as a moral category akin to criminality as the women state: ‘I didn’t think he was homeless, he just seemed like he did what he liked to do, that it was a lifestyle choice that he liked to live and to be free and not locked down to anything’ (Buckley-Lennox et al 2014: no pagination). Here, Miller’s interactions with various people in the hours both preceding and following the attack are imbued with a heightened sense of risk regarding their (and by extension, our) vulnerability to unpredictable criminal violence (see for example Spooner 2014a). Underscored by the randomness of Miller’s violence is the law’s inability to predict crime and therefore to protect citizens from it (Young 1996: 6).

In emphasising the state’s inability to protect its legitimate members, Miller’s crime undermines the terms of the social contract (Young 1996: 6). The actuarial tools employed by the State to detect crime are revealed as highly limited because the tools available (parole, post-release monitoring, criminal records) all rely on establishing patterns of previous behaviour in order to determine the level of risk posed by an individual. In lieu of a history of violence, Miller’s indeterminacy —
homelessness, refusing services, having lived in various Australian states — are seized upon in news coverage as evidence of his criminal potential (Purcell 2015; Herald Sun 2014). Here, nomadism is considered tantamount to crime, yet this associative binding is always inadequate as Miller’s transformation from indeterminacy to violent criminality remains untraceable. The nomadism of both Miller and his crime undermine State projects of order building which seek to affix fear by rendering the object of fear known, locatable and thus able to be expelled (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2007: 1). Miller simultaneously fulfils and denies the desire to locate and expel the source of fear as his transition from ‘average Aussie bloke’ to violent killer only becomes detectable after the fact. Writing on the figures of the prowler and stalker, Bauman states: ‘What makes them uniquely fit to absorb and condense our fears is their exquisite freedom to move, to appear and disappear at will and to enter places we thought to be protected against trespass’ (2002:62). As a manifestation of the state’s inability to predict crime, Miller traverses and transgresses governmental systems of detection and containment, both through his heightened mobility and institutional non-traceability. He is unfixed, unattached, transient and outside of the state’s actuarial and predictive capacities. Miller, the ‘killer hobo’, thus transforms into an epitomic figure in which the fears identified by Bauman are realised (Argoon and Hosking 2014: no pagination).\(^90\)

In this sense, the dangerous criminal is a relatively tame social creature compared to the homeless nomad (see Brown and Pratt 2000). Even convicted criminals who then go on to reoffend are less troubling. Systems dedicated to dealing with such people (prison, parole, bail etc.) exist, though may fail in certain cases such as in the case of Jill Meagher who was raped and murdered in Melbourne’s inner north by Adrian Bayley who had an extensive history of violence against women (see Milivojevic and McGovern 2014). In the wake of such events, blame is apportioned and faulty systems are identified and marked for reform (usually through hardening in an attempt to ensure

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\(^{90}\) Exemplifying this is a quote from a newspaper interview with a woman (unknown to Lau) attending the shrine constructed at the site of Lau’s death: ‘I think the message that’s coming to us is we’re not safe on the way to work, on the way home from work, out cycling or going for a run’ (Murphy et al 2014: no pagination).
protection in the future). In contrast, the homeless nomad — one who is truly beyond the state’s actuarial radar and mechanisms of tracing — remains beyond such predictive technologies and thus far more troubling (Kramer and Lee 1999: 151). Thus, it is not the criminal who poses the greatest challenge to the state and its authority to govern, but the nomad who not only exists beyond the state’s subjectivising and disciplining social sphere but resists its institutional structures of detection, tracing and administration as well.

Once Miller is revealed as criminal, the juridical process of charging and sentencing seeks to restore the social order disrupted by the attack. Yet Miller’s statement that he is looking forward to being imprisoned undermines this process by destabilising normative constructions of the criminal. Vulnerability is not a socially recognised characteristic of the criminal, yet here is it is expressed in clear terms. That someone would look forward to being imprisoned because it means being held within a regime of routine, social interaction and relative safety provides an unsettling insight into the particular forms of hardship, vulnerability and isolation that homelessness entails. This casts into doubt the appropriateness of penal responses. Normally, the segregative and incapacitating functions of imprisonment are conceptualised as antithetical to the criminal, a figure that operates by virtue of society’s freedoms (Simon and Sparks 2013). The removal of freedom — the condition that criminal thrives in but does not respect — is therefore appropriate. A key criterion for imprisonment is that those who are so sentenced experience it as a constraint, a punishment (Mathiesen 1990; Kaufman 2015). For someone to embrace the enclosing limitations of incarceration undermines the suitability of the response. For most people, the prospect of imprisonment and the displacement from home, enforced regularity, deprivation of liberty and constraining of mobility that it imposes would be untenable to their ontological reality. Miller’s statement precipitates a discomfiting consideration of the reality of homelessness and undermines his classification within normative systems of intelligibility: as mad, evil or intrinsically violent.
In contrast, the case of Perry offers an alternative set of anxieties. Perry’s death at the hands of Woodhead not only troubles dominant constructions of homelessness and poverty but of privilege as well. As demonstrated, visible homelessness and poverty are often coded as signifying deviance and disorder; unwanted elements in the safe and secure spaces reserved for consumers (White 2008; Snow and Mulcahy 2001). In contrast, the homed and wealthy are omitted from fields of socio-political scrutiny and through this absence are understood as non-violent and civil (Guillaumin 1995: 50). Days before his death, Perry was interviewed by Melbourne newspaper The Age for a story on homelessness (see Figure 11). In the interview Perry said in regard to sleeping rough: ‘You have to sleep with one eye open because you don’t know who’s going to bash or stab or rob you’ (Dow 2014a: no pagination; 2016b). Reading this, one assumes that those who pose this threat are others like him: the homeless, drug users and criminals.

Historically, poverty has been a legitimate site of moral scrutiny and institutional intervention (Filtness 2014). In contemporary manifestations, such scrutiny often precipitates or is accompanied by calls to restrict these groups’ access to welfare, rescind their civil rights, or subject whole categories of people to punitive regimes of restriction (Wacquant 2009; Sharpe 2012). In the wake of the revelation that Perry’s killer was in fact highly privileged and a member of the social elite, such morally-inflected scrutiny was noticeably absent. While there was significant media coverage of Perry’s death, the public response was comparatively muted than that relating to the death of Lau. Further, the scrutiny of Woodhead’s background was mild compared to that to which Miller was subjected. Rather than functioning to explain his violent behaviour (as in the case of Miller), Woodhead’s background is instead used to compound a sense of bafflement regarding his violent attack on Perry. Privilege and wealth are constructed as bulwarks against deviance indicating an individual’s pre-disposition toward lawful behaviour. This is despite a not insignificant history of offending by youth from elite private schools in Melbourne (see ABC News 2008; Mickelburough 2015a, 2015b) as well as a broader history of crimes committed by the socially powerful (see Benson
2009; Rothe 2016). Nevertheless, this event was framed as equally tragic for both Perry and Woodhead, with the latter described as ‘popular’, ‘a promising artist’ who ‘appeared to have the brightest of futures’ (Dow, 2014b: no pagination).

While it would be specious to frame Woodhead’s belief in a hierarchy of humanity as a motivating factor in the murder, it nonetheless remains an interesting facet to contextualise the violent killing of a severely disadvantaged man by someone from a highly privileged background. Woodhead was suffering serious mental instability at the time of the attack and it is important to contextualise his belief in this hierarchy in relation to this. As stated earlier, in the weeks preceding the attack Woodhead had come to believe in werewolves and had asked his girlfriend to check his mouth for fangs (Russell and Dow 2015). Yet in a sense, the hierarchy imagined by Woodhead does have grounding in reality, and finding evidence in support of this notion would not be difficult. The differentials of such a hierarchy can be measured in persistent of patterns of inequality and oppression along contours of gender, race, wealth, cultural background, social and geographic mobility, disability and so on (Smith 1998; Sampson and Raudenbush 2004). So while Woodhead’s actions do not fit with social understandings of privilege, it is nonetheless worth considering how entrenched patterns of privilege and disadvantage may have contributed to the commission of this act.

Given the prevalence of social understandings of homelessness as both wretched and proto-criminal, it seems plausible to consider differentials in advantage a relevant factor. Attending stigmatising constructions of homelessness is an implicit valorisation of privilege, what Guillaumin refers to as an ‘occultation of the Self’ (1995: 50). Given the instability of Woodhead’s mental state, it is possible that the powerful discursive forces that frame the homeless as proto-criminal outsiders could have shaped his understanding of himself, the man he attacked and the legitimacy of his actions. What is more, evidence for this hierarchy of humanity is tangible and readily verifiable in the
stark observable differences between himself and those living under the bridge in the park across from his apartment. Woodhead also believed in the existence of werewolves: a bestial, uncivil and socially shunned archetype whose base nature is legible upon the body (Cohen 1996). He also believed that he had been criminally victimised (specifically that his motorbike had been stolen). Given the association of homelessness and crime documented in this thesis, it is it is not difficult to see how constructions of homelessness could have lent themselves to Woodhead’s psychopathological narratives. If true, then far from being unlikely, Perry instead seems a highly feasible target for Woodhead’s violence.

Later media coverage of Woodhead’s sentencing focused almost exclusively on his mental state, heavy use of marijuana and the breadth and severity of his delusions in detail (see ABC News 2015a, 2015b; Russell 2015a, 2015b; Paul 2015; Cooper 2016). Rather than reflecting a poor moral character, Woodhead’s substance use emphasises his mental instability and vulnerability. Here, marijuana stands in for deviance or a low moral character and fixes Woodhead as a tragic victim of its consequences. The genre of the narrative attending Woodhead is part tragedy, part cautionary-tale that traces the fall of a promising individual while warning other young men against the dangers of illicit drug use. In contrast, Miller’s one-time diagnosis of drug-induced psychosis is translated into a ‘long history of drug abuse’ (The Advertiser 2015: no pagination) and in the sentencing report Justice Betty King shames Miller for ‘thinking [himself] immune’ to the potential psychosis-inducing consequences of marijuana use (Carlyon 2015b: no pagination). Miller’s use of illicit substances is added to a long list of markers emphasising his outsider status whereas for Woodhead, marijuana stands in as the object of social censure and blame.

The purpose of this analysis has not been to engage in conjecture regarding the motivation or mental state of Woodhead but rather to consider the possibilities of how social understandings of homelessness are situated in relation to criminal events as well as the subsequent public, media and
legal interpretation of those events. In these cases, it is evident that homelessness is framed as a contributory factor to criminality, though is less suited to dominant narratives of criminal victimisation. When an offender is homeless, their homelessness and the behaviours that attend this are considered as akin to their offending (Amster 2008: 66). This is despite violent victimisation often being a strong causal factor of homelessness, as well as people experiencing homelessness being more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than to perpetrate it against another (Adams 2014a: 38).

Demonstrably, attached to social constructions of homelessness are conceptions of crime, immorality and deviance. However, these negative stereotypes are far more likely to attach to those bodies and identities that are visibly homeless. That is, those that are marked with the aesthetic signifiers of homelessness. The invisibly homeless are less salient in the social imagination, despite representing a far larger proportion of the population. This chapter now turns to the social ambivalence and fear that are linked to the (in)visibility of homelessness.

**The (In)Visibility of Homelessness**

So far, this chapter has demonstrated how dominant representations of homelessness are unable to capture the complex diversity of homelessness and the people who experience it. In this case, the purpose of representation is to ‘pin down’ the particular threat that unpredictability poses and to affix it within particular bodies, archetypes, groups and spaces. Yet this process inevitably fails. Nomadism is by definition fluid and elusive and attempts to affix it either fail, or if successful, what is captured is no longer nomadic (Sloterdijk 2014: 195). That is, nomadism is by its definition shifting and ephemeral; if one successfully transfixes a nomadic body, the body loses its nomadic quality. It is precisely the impossibility of capturing nomadism and thus neutralising the threat it poses that lends the homeless their disruptive social valence. The practices of representing homelessness discussed above proceed with a desire to render their object stable and in doing so fail to capture its variance.
and multiplicity. Homelessness is framed in reductive and stereotypical archetypes — mad and dangerous, feckless and dissolute or deceptive and exploitative — which then rapidly dissolve under scrutiny. A quote from an interview with a homeless woman conducted by Liebow exemplifies this dynamic:

   Staff people and volunteers are scared of us. They think... homeless are homeless because they’re... dirty and dishonest and lazy. But most of us don’t look like that, are not like that and that really scares them. It’s like a Hitchcock movie. What makes them so scary is that the people in them are so ordinary and look like everyone else. (1993: 129)

Here, the condition of homelessness becomes doubly troubling: both in its difference from and similarity to culturally endorsed images of citizenship and belonging.

Instead of weakening stereotypical constructions of homelessness, the failure of the homeless to adhere to these stereotypes actually strengthens them. The similitude of the majority of the homeless population is troubling because it undermines the symbolic distinctions between the Self and Other produced and maintained by homeless stereotypes. Thus, while stereotypes of the homeless Other emphasise danger and threat, they are also comforting as maintain the symbolic Otherness of the condition and those who experience it. Imagining homelessness as being visually apparent and readable on the body’s surface — what Klinenberg terms a ‘corporeal epistemology’ — neutralises the troubling resemblance of homelessness to the Self (2002: 122). A continual process of not only maintaining the ‘Other-ness’ of the Other, but the unity of the Self as well.

Young claims that seeing the Other is a form of self-reproduction (1996: 15). The Self (the I/ eye) gazes outward yet cannot gaze inward and so in order to perceive itself, it must seek out reflections; negatives of itself. Thus, the seer can only perceive itself in the identification of what it is not
through the identification of Others whose characteristics indirectly trace out the sanctified Self (Braidotti 2010: 409). The knowledge produced in this process thus relies on encounters with difference. For example, the homed consumer-citizen comes to know itself by seeking out images of that which it is not: visibly homeless and impoverished. When a categorical difference (homelessness) is encountered and yet fails to demonstrate its Otherness, this relation between Self and Other threatens to dissemble. Therefore, the encounter with the Others’ sameness is the most threatening encounter of all (Kristeva 1991).

While ‘[s]eeing the outcast makes one feel good to be secure within the normative systems of interaction’, this relation is also strained (Kramer and Lee 1999: 137). The outcast is characterised by their expulsion from the sanctified interior yet must be continually encountered in order to ‘reiterate the boundary within which community constitute themselves’ (Young 2010b: 153). Fortunately for the insider there are many outcasts to be encountered: the homeless, beggars, criminals, deviant youth, gang members, graffiti artists and so on. Yet Young claims these personifications of Otherness are cultural constructions produced by the socially powerful and are therefore highly partisan (2008: 21). Instead, Young argues that the ‘Other’ (or ‘Outlaw’ in her terms) — that which is beyond community — is not necessarily a figure and may be encountered in a character trait, an image, a moment or an affective resonance (Young 1996; 2008). Similarly, the encounter with homelessness is not necessarily determined by the material conditions of an individual’s housing and is instead constituted by a broader array of signs. As with the Outlaw, homelessness may be encountered within a series of traits, images, moments, movements, residues and affective resonances in which one encounters not just homelessness, but the boundary of community itself. What this offers a glimpse of is not what is beyond community, but, far more threatening, what is underneath it: ‘the sudden [brutale] revelation of the ultimate anarchy on which any hierarchy rests’ (Rancière 1999: 16). An encounter with the Outlaw thus reveals the contingency of community.
This dynamic offers insight into the ambivalent civil and crimino-legal gazes that seek out homelessness. On one hand, these gazes are cast with the desire of not finding what they seek; to perceive only order. Yet they can only know order through the identification of its opposite: disorder. As Young shows, precisely who is included within the conception of the public is perhaps less important than who is perceived as outside of it (2010b: 153). In short, representations of homelessness that rely on differentiating between the Self and Other ignore the various ways in which homelessness is produced. Instead, a singular stigmatised meaning is ascribed to visible bodies that meet certain aesthetic arrangements and are then cynically positioned as targets of social censure and opprobrium. If, as stated in Chapter Three, the only common characteristic of those who experience homelessness is poverty, then ascribing any kind of unified (socio-moral or criminal) meaning to this population is both highly tempting and bound to fail.

Therefore, the challenge that the persistent presence of homelessness poses is that it is imagined in opposition to normative citizenship and its practices yet it resists even this by retaining the capacity to appear normative. That is, homelessness retains the capacity to mirror the Self. The challenge to the Self posed by the actual (rather than the imagined) encounter with homelessness is the lurking possibility of seeing the same. Encountering the Self in a constructed figure of Other-ness threatens to dissemble the entire suite of constructed differences used to maintain the distance between the Self and the Other, the homed and the homeless.

The figure of the Outlaw shapes and gives structure to the conditions of the interior by posing a constant yet nebulous threat, just as those inside define the terms and conditions of exile and externality. Returning to Bauman’s discussion of the stalker and prowler, he claims these figures exemplify the public’s own uncertain relation to itself. He writes: ‘Figures of stalkers and prowlers are made to the measure of the incipient, inchoate, yet endemic and ambient, fears haunting the contemporary public’ (2002: 62). While the prowler and stalker are antagonist figures that target
individuals, the homeless nomad shares some common features. Instead of targeting individuals or neighbourhoods, the rough-sleeper stalks, or more accurately *haunts*, society as a whole, its spaces and the narratives by which it constitutes itself. Like the stalker and prowler, the homeless are a spectral presence who emerge from nowhere, disappear again at will and are always of uncertain loyalty. Bauman writes that ‘[i]n the figures of the prowler and stalker our lonely condition meets its faithful reflection’ (2002: 62). In a similar vein, in the figure of the homeless Other, society encounters its own contingency: the myth of stability and of our entitlement to comfort and safety.

The homeless Other is thus constructed to complement the dominant socio-political arrangements of a particular moment and the anxieties that sustain them. Returning to Scott Allen Miller, several news stories emphasised the good fortune of the various people who encountered (and were encountered by) Miller not to have been subjected to his murderous violence (Purcell 2015; Spooner 2014a). Demonstrably, the fears and anxieties that attend the stalker also attend the homeless Other. However, where the stalker’s target is specific, the homeless killer stalks and threatens society generally. The threat of the homeless is thus one of constant potentiality: a violence ‘just waiting to crystallise’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 10).

**Conclusion: Vision and Space**

This chapter has explored the problems that attend an ‘oculocentric’ engagement with homelessness (Carrabine 2015); in particular, the contested nature of both the aesthetics of homelessness and the salience of a highly visible minority within the homeless population influence our understandings of and responses to this condition. As I have demonstrated, representations of homelessness enact an associative binding of homelessness to various morbidities, most explicitly to crime. The uncertainty of the homeless subject is strengthened by the enforced association with

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91 For examples, see Jefferson 2016b, 2016c; Doyle 2016; Jefferson and Paynter 2016.
crime. Where the criminal has actively breached the behavioural constraints imposed by the social contract, the homeless indigent has failed to live up to her obligations: social contribution, individual autonomy and responsible self-governance. In doing so the homeless subject is positioned as marginal to the social body, an alien whose loyalty remains uncertain (Zedner 2013). The potential consequences of this uncertainty are crystallised in the crimes of Miller, who for the public, symbolises the dangers posed by the transient and socially unmoored nomad. Miller’s ability to infiltrate the social polity, to traverse various borders and boundaries, to elude detection and prevention mechanisms and to solidify suddenly in a moment of violence before melting away again lend him a spectral quality that is troubling in the extreme.

Derrida writes of the spectre, that it ‘is the frequency of a certain visibility. But the visibility of the invisible’ (Derrida cited in Anderson 2013: 103). Miller had been invisible, and only became visible too late. Similarly, Amster writes of the homeless that ‘[t]hey are at once exceedingly obvious, and yet ghost-like in their transparency; both visible and invisible at the same time’ (2008:40-1). Thus, the spectral or haunting quality of homelessness is linked to the unpredictability of their movements. In the media, the homeless are routinely described in terms that emphasise their ephemerality: ‘invisible’, ‘forgotten’ and ‘unnoticed’ (Printz and Brown 2016; Anderson 2016; Dow 2016d; Hirschhorn 2013; Cluff 2016). While the visible presence of homelessness is what so often prompts social anxiety and regulatory responses, these spectral qualities render them doubly threatening: not only are they troubling in their presence but in their absence as well.

The indeterminate character of homelessness prompts various attempts to pin it down through practices of representation, registration, surveillance and policing. Yet as this chapter has argued, homelessness always exceeds these technologies of containment, slipping beyond them and continuing to figure within the imagination of urban space, crime and danger. Homelessness and its attendant cache of meanings loom large in the figure of Miller, haunting the spaces of Melbourne in
the troubling unpredictability of his crime. Miller’s crime precipitates an uncertainty regarding the other anonymous figures inhabiting the city: those begging for change, sleeping in thoroughfares or rambling along with unclear destinations and purposes. The ordinariness of these figures and the mundane nature of poverty mask a potential danger: the possibility that a violent criminal is hidden within our midst. Thus, the encounter with homelessness prompts us to question ‘how can we trust those who do not benefit from the norms and laws that we live by?’ The answer, like the homeless subject, is always uncertain.

This strained relation of visibility becomes the structuring feature of relations between normative society and the homeless. Here, I would like to return to Wright’s description of homeless bodies as ‘visible to the streets’ and ‘open to the public’s gaze, the gaze of authority’ (1997: 1; my emphasis). Noted here is the intertwined nature of vision and space which Wright identifies as a defining feature of the public sphere. The public is characterised by its openness to vision (in contrast to the private realm which is closed off). Thus, visibility is both a pre-requisite and a tension of publicity: the question of what is allowed to be public is a question of what is allowed to be visible (Iveson 2007: 25). The publicity of the visibly homeless is on one hand illegitimate, yet on the other is readily apparent. What the visibly homeless exhibit is an inability to retreat to the safety and security of the private realm (Mitchell 1997).92 Counterintuitively, revealed here is that public legitimacy is contingent upon one’s ability to transition across the threshold between the public (open) to the private (closed) and back again. This linking of the private realm to public legitimacy implies the tacit recognition of the violence of the public sphere. To be unable to retreat from this environment is on some level understood as being stranded in a corrosive and hostile landscape.

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92 Readers should note that the association of safety and security with the private realm is imaginary. As criminologists know, the majority of interpersonal crimes (in particular, domestic violence and sexual assaults), occur in the ostensible ‘safety’ of the private realm. See Moral and Dernash (2014).
Encountered here is the intersection of vision and space: the visual-spatial field upon which social relations take place and by which are encounters with others are mediated. Having examined the visibility of homelessness, this thesis moves to situate this visibility in spatial and geographic terms. While homelessness is not uniquely urban phenomena, this thesis is interested in homelessness as it exists and is encountered within urban contexts. Returning to Debord, accompanying the shift from social relations to image relations he identifies, comes a corollary shift from a social concern with ethics to aesthetics that plays out spatially. Thus as Gerrard and Farrugia point out: ‘urban governance practices are often aesthetically motivated practices aimed at creating spaces in which encounters with homelessness do not take place’ (2015: 2227). However, rather than becoming closed off against the homeless, space instead is increasingly opened up. In their conceptualisation of new formations of urban regulation, Bottomley and Moore offer this concept of openness as an increasingly common means of urban regulation (2007: 174). Rather than being enclosed for the purposes of regulation, urban spaces are instead exposed up to vision and thus to surveillance, censure and control. Taken together, visibility and space here form the nexus or field in which encounters with homelessness (whether representational, bodily or residual) occur.

As the following chapter will discuss, the consequence for the homeless is that the entire public realm, including even its physical structures, become part of an authoritative, disapproving and coercive regulatory apparatus. As technology advances, streets and urban spaces are increasingly subject to constant monitoring: a diffuse gaze constituted by thousands of eyes, a surveillant assemblage or ‘oligopticon’ (see Latour 2005; Brighenti 2010: 15). These diffuse technologies rely on both the openness of urban space as well as the construction of particular aesthetic criteria for inclusion in the normative social realm to perform their regulatory function. Coleman writes that: ‘[i]dealised and selective representations of the city aim to create visually pleasing space and extend a view of space... that tie[s] “the look” of the urban fabric to ... appropriate behaviours and
decorum’ (2007: 46). The following chapter moves to consider the combining of vision and space as a means of identification, categorisation, and exclusion of homeless people.
Intermezzo:

The City

I’m walking down Swanston Street with my boyfriend Tim on our way to the opening of the Melbourne Queer Film Festival at Federation Square. It’s a cold winter evening: the sky is overcast and a persistent breeze blows into my collar and down my back. We’re running late and walking hurriedly but I slow as I see a food stall set up at the corner of Swanston and Collins streets. They are packing things away but a sign announces ‘free food for the poor and needy’. Tim points to a van parked nearby, its doors open and a bunch of people sitting around on chairs talking. The van has a couple of washing machines and dryers installed in the back; it’s a mobile laundry service for homeless people. Two men are sitting on fold out chairs wrapped up to their necks in blankets, presumably naked underneath and waiting for their clothes to finish drying. They’re laughing, one gestures enthusiastically obviously telling a joke while everyone laughs along with him. One of the workers at the food van notices me and smiles, ‘Great idea’ I say and she nods. We start walking again, hurrying along past St Paul’s Cathedral, where a group of teenagers are hanging out. A dog sits between a couple leaning against a big pack, a sleeping bag and a pillow. I stop to give them some money; one says thanks, but the others eye me warily. At this moment, I feel disconnected from the topic of my research, distant. I sometimes forget that it is not just an object, or rather, not an object at all. Homelessness does not exist naturally; the condition is defined by us and our responses to it. The simplicity of the idea of the laundry van feels overwhelming, and for a second I am on the verge of tears. I resent the time I have invested into researching homelessness: three years on a project that does nothing to change the material conditions of these people, that they don’t know about and have no interest in. My research feels egotistical; a project of the Self. I also feel foolish for getting emotional over the laundry van; one welcoming gesture revealing a sea of indifference, including my own. I learn later that the van is run by two 20-year-olds from Brisbane, which makes it
seem all the more extraordinary. Arriving at the film festival I think of Sloterdijk’s metaphor of the Crystal Palace in 19th century London: an invisible barrier enclosing and insulating the wealthy and privileged, while those excluded are left outside, exposed to the harsh conditions of the exterior. We watch a Brazilian film set in a private school, and I can only think about what is absent: images of poverty, hardship and destitution. I feel unable to let the research go, to not always be carrying it with me.
Chapter Five:

Geography

Do particular urban imaginaries, with their associated visions of what is in the best interests of the city/public, privilege some interests over others by making them appear 'universal' rather than 'particular' or 'parochial' or 'private'? Do the 'shapes' of these different imagined cities deprive anyone of symbolic enrolment in the city? (Rancière 1999:23)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I examined the social (in)visibility of homelessness and how this shapes the way that homeless bodies are encountered. This chapter considers the spatial dimensions of homelessness, that is, the urban character of homelessness and how the city itself relates to its homeless inhabitants. Sibley claims that '[a] rigid stereotype of place...throws up discrepant others' (1995: 107). In doing so, he identifies how vision and visibility are linked inextricably to space and the conditions of its (re)production (see also Lefebvre 1991). For most of us, vision is key to understanding space and the emplacement (or not) of both ourselves and others. The material, socio-cultural and symbolic boundaries that define and delineate space are encountered primarily through vision, determining what can and cannot and what should and should not be encountered within particular visual-spatial fields (Wright 1997). The nexus of space and vision form the field upon which ‘partitions of the perceptible’ — which Rancière describes as the socio-political conditions that determine the visibility of identities, groups and practices in space — operate (1999: 25; see also Iveson 2007). Thus, correlative to the visibility of an object or person is the question of its (il)legitimacy in space. However, an object’s visibility does not necessarily equate to it being legitimate. That is, illegitimate bodies and objects are often highly visible due to the discrepancy produced by their presence in particular socio-spatial contexts. Visual-spatial legitimacy then is less about whether one is visible (or not), rather it is whether one’s visibility contributes to or maintains
an atmosphere of order, of being in place. The nexus of space and vision thus becomes a prime site for representations of order and the depiction of the ruling authority’s legitimacy (Kennelly and Watt 2011).

As a spatially situated phenomenon, homelessness is subjected to stereotypes of place and space as well as stereotypes of identity (see Chapter Two). Here, I offer a critical account of Melbourne’s geography and the emplacement of homelessness within it. This chapter examines how the spaces of the city are contested, giving rise to conflicts relating to and involving homelessness and associated phenomena. I also examine how the city is an ambivalent space for people experiencing homelessness: alternately inviting and hostile, accommodating and discriminatory, offering both protection and shelter while also facilitating regulation, coercion and violence. The alternating character of the city’s disposition toward homeless bodies is indicative of the ambivalence that characterises social understanding of homelessness — frightening yet vulnerable, immoral yet sympathetic, disavowed yet embraced, Other yet Self.

In the epigraph to this chapter, Rancière identifies ‘imagined cities’ and how their contours — their boundaries, delineations and limits — have consequences for particular groups who inhabit urban space. As Rancière shows, the imagination of a city is not purely abstract. Instead, how a city is imagined plays out materially, socially and spatially, shaping the structures and spaces of a city and the conditions of access attached to them. Thus, imagining a city has material consequences for those who inhabit it, particularly those who are marginalised or excluded. Lefebvre claims that ‘spatial imaginations’ actually produce urban space and define what is possible within them (1991: 42; Shields 1991). Space, according to Lefebvre, is produced via social values which affect the socio-spatial practices of a city’s inhabitants. Urban imaginaries thus determine a city’s shape according to the values, desires and expectations of a city’s ruling authorities and those whose interests they represent (Donald 1992: 435). Developing this idea, Iveson claims that there are multiple imaginaries.
of a city, unique to each inhabitant or visitor who experiences the city (2007: 40). Young also discusses the idea of uncommissioned cities or ‘cities in the city’ (2015: 41). For Young, these cities exist as alternatives to the legislated city (the city constituted by law) and are revealed in unsolicited aesthetic encounters, such as with graffiti, or perhaps, a homeless body. To talk about the city as a unity thus fails capture its multiplicity. We must instead understand each city as a multitude of cities, each with a unique organisation of borders, structures, meanings and values (see also Donald 1992). Focusing on this multiplicity, Iveson argues that the unity of a city is mythic though admits that it is necessary to ‘apprehend the city as a totality because others think of it that way’ (2007: 41).

In Latour and Hermant’s Paris: Invisible City, the authors discuss various reasons why Paris can never be captured ‘at a glance’ (2011: 1). First, any perspective is bound spatially and temporally and is therefore limited in its capacity to apprehend the size, scale and multi-dimensionality of the city. Second, cities are dynamic and multifaceted; subject to a range of shifts and cycles that mean a city is always in flux. The particular shape, conditions, atmosphere and boundaries of a city captured in a moment are subject to constant change. Finally, there is no concrete definition of precisely what a city is and where it begins and ends (Donald 1992: 420). How one perceives and understands a city depends upon one’s position within it. De Certeau demonstrates how different perspectives — from the top of New York City’s World Trade Centre or wandering at street level — are equally limited yet each beneficial in its own way (1984). From the grand view one sees the city as concept, the organising principles (strategies) that structure, its spaces, thoroughfares and patterns are legible to the viewer. Yet, from this grand view how the city is traversed, used and inhabited on a daily basis disappears. Similarly, Latour and Hermant demonstrate how digitisation (the abstraction of space into a series of electronic signs) allows for spaces to be viewed in totality. For example, a satellite photo taken from space may grant a view of all the arrondissements of Paris at once and yet this
perspective remains highly limited. The social, that which binds and orders the spaces of Paris and renders them meaningful is absent from such images. Spatial forms and structures do not exist without people to give them meaning (Lloyd and Auld 2010: 345). Networks of people, whether known to one another or not, produce the social city throughout its material dimensions. Given the absence of the social from these broad views, any perspective that implies a totality must be false: ‘we have no access to the divine view, the view from nowhere’ (Latour and Hermant 2011: 9). As with any city, it is impossible to capture Melbourne in its entirety, to ‘calculate the flows’ and thus know the space panoramically or from the inside out (Latour and Hermant 2011: 4).

While the description of Melbourne offered in this chapter is similarly limited, it endeavours to reveal aspects of the city that are routinely missed, overlooked and ignored. While the city may change from one moment to the next, its dynamism is not purely chaotic: there are systems and processes continually exerting their influence over and shaping the city. These can broadly be described as the characteristics of late-modern capitalism: consumerism, commodification, neoliberalism, globalisation, massification and the modulations of speed these entail (Hayward 2004: 18; Wilson 1992). These processes have come to dominate strategies of urban management and city-building by situating the exigencies of capitalism as their primary animating force. Building on Debord’s notion of the society of the spectacle discussed in Chapter Two, I examine representations of Melbourne that reconstitute it as commodity to reveal another, less visible Melbourne the presence of which is suppressed and hidden from view: a homeless Melbourne.94

93 Latour and Hermant also use the analogy of Mrs Baysal, a school administrator, organising class times and locations using her computer, to reveal how the management of the social spaces is increasingly interiorised and abstracted, reduced to a series of signs and seen as a totality, and thus dominated: ‘Mrs. Baysal... descends into the darkness of her office, gets used to obscurity of the world of signs, and finally sees the whole school, its space, its time, its population and its order’ (2011: 6-7).

94 This notion of a hidden city of the homeless has been developed elsewhere and in relation to other, often marginalized populations. For example, hidden or alternative cities have been described in relation to graffiti writers (see Young 2015), trash-pickers (see Ferrell 2005) and buskers (see Beckett and Herbert 2009).
Homelessness in the City

Melbourne is the capital city of Victoria, a south-eastern Australia state. While geographically isolated, Melbourne has a reputation for being a global, cosmopolitan city and is well known for its contributions to art, culture, music, fashion, and food. Melbourne is Australia’s second most populous city with an estimated 4.5 million people in the greater metropolitan region. The city was founded in the 19th century on the land of the Kulin Nation, an group of five Indigenous peoples who lived as semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers for an estimated 40,000 years prior to white colonisation (Cunningham 2011: 22-5; Blainey 2006). Demonstrably, the land on which the city of Melbourne was built has long supported nomadic and non-sedentary modes of existence and, as we will see, continues to do so.

Melbourne’s CBD is organised into large blocks that form the Hoddle Grid. These are separated by large streets and each block is then sub-divided by smaller streets and shot through with Melbourne’s famous alleys and laneways. These conceal a multitude of cafes, bars, restaurants, shops and art galleries and many are marked with graffiti and street art (see Young 2014). Out from this centralised grid spread Melbourne’s inner suburbs which are connected to one another by arterial roads and public transport infrastructure. As with many Western cities, these historically poor, working-class neighbourhoods have gradually become gentrified through redevelopment and reinvestment (see Harvey 1994). Today, the inner suburbs are highly desirable residential and commercial districts (see Cunningham 2011).

95 The grid was named after its designer Robert Hoddle and laid out in 1837. There are five main streets that run east-west: Flinders, Collins, Bourke, Lonsdale and La Trobe streets, accompanied by five smaller streets that divide each large block. These are given diminutive versions of the larger streets’ names: Flinders Lane, Little Collins etc. Nine streets run north-south: Spencer, King, William, Queen, Elizabeth, Swanston, Russell, Exhibition, and Spring. Hoddle’s original plan did not include alleyways which he warned would invite licentiousness and prompt the formation of slums (see Brown-May 1998; Davison, Dunstan and McConville 1985).
Driving gentrification in Melbourne is the economy, which has shifted away from manufacturing towards service, tourism and culture (see Logan 1985). Cultural attractions such as museums, festivals and sporting events; restaurants and food culture; and Melbourne’s status as ‘coffee capital of the world’ account for much of the city’s economic activity (Lambert 2014: no pagination). Education is also a large industry with thousands of international students moving in and out of Melbourne and its surrounding suburbs every year to study. An interesting corollary to this large annual influx of temporary residents is that most Melbourne’s permanent residents do not live in the city. Of the 107,000 residents of the City of Melbourne municipality approximately 60% are absentee residents living interstate or overseas. An employee at the City of Melbourne told me that in many ways the ‘tidal’ population of Melbourne — the approximately 900,000 who do not live in the city but come in almost every day — is more important governmentally than the city’s municipal residents. This tension between absent residents and present visitors is indicative of the intricacies of residency, emplacement, belonging, mobility and identity in technologically advanced and thoroughly globalised cities.

Further evidencing such tensions, Melbourne has been rated the world’s most liveable city by The Economist’s Intelligence Unit every year since 2011 (EIU 2015). Yet in 2015, the Economist also ranked Melbourne as the sixth most expensive city in the world. Similarly, British lifestyle magazine Monocle also rated Melbourne as the fourth most liveable city in its annual Quality of Life index (Monocle 2015). That a city can simultaneously be ranked one of the most expensive and the most liveable appears to be something of a contradiction. One is prompted to question whose lives and what modes of living are considered in these rankings. Obscured in the averages and means of these

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96 The City of Melbourne’s ‘City People’ unit is a team dedicated to working with vulnerable populations within the city, like the homeless and rough sleepers. However, international students are also included in this portfolio. While demographically very different, the two groups are considered vulnerable and share many issues, such as exploitative accommodation arrangements, social isolation and poor health outcomes.

97 Monocle’s name is indicative of the particular kind of lifestyle it promotes and its readers presumably aspire to. Thus, its definition of what constitutes ‘liveable’ is likely to be markedly different from other definitions of ‘liveability’, such as a human right-based definition.
metrics are various populations: rough-sleepers and the homeless, Indigenous Australians, rooming house residents and those who live in pockets of persistent social and economic marginalisation (Fitzpatrick and LaGory 2000). That these magazines rank cities according to their global standing yet neither publication is based in Australia evidences an assumed level of wealth for their readers. It is assumed that one has sufficient levels of social advantage and mobility to be able to travel internationally. In contrast, poverty is regarded as an abnormal social condition when it actually forms an integral component of the capitalist economies that gave rise to the modern city and instituted its primacy to the contemporary social order (Wacquant 2009; Squires 2013).

This assumption of mobility and advantage is not restricted to magazines. It also influences the design and governance of cities and so shapes how contemporary urban order is conceived. Lofland identifies two kinds of urban order: the ‘appearential’ and the spatial (1973). The former allows citizens to identify others on the basis of aesthetics (clothing, hair-styles etc.) while the spatial is constituted by expectations about what kinds of people should be encountered in particular spaces, such as a specific neighbourhood or area of the city. Urban space is thus a site of multivariate expectations and potentialities all of which may intersect and contradict one another, take on specific forms or may only be visible to certain groups and identities (Hayward 2004). Snow and Mulcahy list four spatial constraints that determine an individual’s experience of homelessness: organisational, political, moral and ecological (2001: 154). These constraints are shaped by various factors such as the geographic location, socio-cultural history and political milieu of a given urban setting. A city’s homeless street life emerges out of the interaction between these constraints and the ‘daily subsistence practices and adaptive routines’ that the homeless use to survive (Snow and Mulcahy 2001: 154). However, they also recognise the dynamism of this interaction: ‘because these constraints are dynamic, frequently changing rather than static phenomena, the daily survival practices of the homeless are subject to frequent change as well’ (2001: 154). So while the dynamism of urban life may be part of its attraction for some, for people experiencing homelessness
the ever-changing nature of the urban environment is something that must be constantly negotiated.

Demonstrably then, Melbourne’s geography is overlaid with various other imaginative topographies and cityscapes: economic, political, legal, and moral. Contests over conflicting conceptions of what the city is and, perhaps more importantly what it should be, are frequent and prone to divisive language. For example, in 2013 the leader of the Victorian Opposition Denis Napthine claimed that the state government’s plan to extend the metropolitan train network would ‘divide Melbourne like the Berlin Wall’ (Johnston 2013: no pagination). While obviously political hyperbole the rhetoric remains powerful; evoking imagery of a dysfunctional city divided by conflict, war and ideology. Evidently, disrupting the public spaces of a city risks courting the ire of its inhabitants. Altering the ‘social-physical’ spaces of a city — space in which identity is bound up — may disrupt the subjectivising spatial routines and practices upon which a population relies for its sense of belonging and self (Wright 1997: 4). Doing this risks precipitating anger, resentment and political opposition, something on which Napthine sought to capitalise. Such conflicts are not solely limited to infrastructure projects: the presence of homeless bodies may also disrupt how people experience a city and its spaces. For example, Melbourne’s Lord Mayor, Robert Doyle has long opposed the decriminalisation of begging in Melbourne, warning that Melbourne would become known as ‘the begging city’ (Tomazin and Topsfield 2005: no pagination). As we will see, the practice of begging is socially synonymous with homelessness and so becomes a key site of contests over homeless bodies and a primary means for their regulation. Demonstrably, the visibly homeless and those who beg are not included in Doyle’s imagination of the city, despite their long-standing presence in Melbourne.

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98 Wright defines social-physical space as the interaction of the networks of status and meaning (both self-determined and those imposed by others) and the physical spaces in which these are embedded. Thus, ‘[f]ar from being separate from one’s identity, social-physical space is intimately bound up with the constitution of our identities, homeless or otherwise’ (1997: 4).
This tension between the familiarity of homelessness and the widespread social disapprobation for homeless bodies highlights another tension. On one hand, the city contextualises homelessness: homeless bodies are rendered familiar and intelligible in urban spatial contexts. Yet despite their familiarity, the presence of homeless bodies in cities also disrupts the constructed and idealised socio-spatial meanings attributed to particular urban spaces. This dynamic recalls Garland’s identification of the contested social positioning of crime in contemporary society as normal yet socially aberrant (1996: 445). On one hand, crime is understood as social breach: an abnormality out of place in civilised spaces. On the other, crime is also acknowledged (often indirectly) as a commonplace facet of social life to which we must adapt through practices of self-governance and securitisation. Populations are warned to lock their doors, not leave valuables in their cars and to not walk home alone at night in order to minimise their chance of criminal victimisation. Homelessness is subject to similar contradictory constructions: simultaneously strange and familiar, socially disruptive yet expected, its presence unwanted yet adapted to. Homeless bodies thus form an unremitting part of the urban environment and this should indicate the operation of broader forces of causation. However, like crime, discursive constructions of homelessness focus on the individual as the primary causal locus, which obscures the operation of systemic or structural forces (Arnold 2004: 89).

Contradicting these individualistic constructions (discussed in Chapter Three), Melbourne is currently experiencing a housing crisis (Weller and Van Hulten 2012; Council to Homeless Persons 2015). This ‘crisis’ has three main features: a lack of affordable housing, a lack of public and social housing and skyrocketing housing costs in both the rental and buyers’ markets. This means that an increased proportion of the population is at risk of experiencing housing precarity or homelessness (Council to Homeless Persons 2014). In Victoria, fewer than 10% of rental properties are classified as affordable while the average time spent on the waiting list for public or social housing is seven years
Melbourne rental and property prices have experienced unprecedented growth in recent years while wages, welfare payments and rates of secure employment have continued to stagnate. Further, Victoria has no inclusionary zoning legislation that would require major residential construction projects to provide a mandated level of affordable housing. As a result, developers opt for building high-end and luxury housing, which returns a higher profit. In turn, this creates a problem of oversupply of non-affordable housing; there are currently 80,000 empty housing units in the greater Melbourne area and less than 1% of these are classified as affordable. Despite the presence of these structural forces pushing an increasing level of the population into housing crisis and rendering it practically impossible for those already homeless to access stable housing, the majority of media coverage frames homelessness as an individual issue (Mendelson 1999; Zufferey and Chung 2016; Zufferey 2009; Cowan 2016). While the housing crisis is addressed in the media, those positioned as ‘victims’ are first home-buyers unable to compete with investors, while the impact of the crisis on rates of homelessness and housing precarity is rarely mentioned.

One reason that homelessness continues to be conceptualised as a quintessentially urban phenomenon is that support services tend to cluster in urban centres (Adams 2014a). While this makes the city more liveable for the homeless, it also increases their visibility which can precipitate

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99 Public housing makes up less than 3% of all housing in Victoria. See Council to Homeless Persons (2013b); Tenants Union of Victoria (2015).

100 High demand for rental properties has driven up rental costs, despite record numbers of approvals for residential building being issued by the Victorian Government with an overall value of $3.5 billion in 2015/16 (ABC News 2015c). Most of these building projects are not classed as affordable housing and are instead marketed towards young middle-class professionals (O’Keefe 2016, see also Hulse, Milligan and Easthope 2011).

101 The Victorian government has committed to building more affordable housing: in 2010 they redeveloped several public housing estates for ‘mixed use’, though this did not see an overall increase in the amount of public housing available in Melbourne (Department of Human Services 2010). The City of Melbourne has also introduced its own inclusionary zoning requirements for new construction projects (City of Melbourne 2015).

102 See Owens 2016; Fitzsimmons 2016; Chung 2016 for examples.
both increased public anxiety and regulation.\textsuperscript{103} Snow and Mulcahy write that ‘the condition of homelessness... forces individuals... to continually negotiate and survive in spatial domains of a community that were neither designed nor intended for residence or basic subsistence practices’ (2001:154). In this sense, while the clustering of services in urban space likely mitigates the difficulties involved in living in a space not designed for you, this also prompts new challenges as cities become more openly hostile towards the visible presence of homeless bodies. Cities are thus fraught and paradoxical space for those experiencing homelessness: simultaneously the site of assistance and ministration as well as dangerous, highly regulated, contested and unpredictable.

In short, the city manifests ambivalence towards bodies that live within the city but are not perceived to belong in it. While the city’s complex multidimensionality provides hideaways and bolt-holes for the homeless and indigent, the city also conveys punitive regulatory apparatuses. These seek out the homeless in order to remove them from the city’s surfaces, or dislodge them from secluded spaces and ad hoc shelters. While Melbourne’s urban terrain accommodates homeless bodies, notices to vacate and police ‘move-on’ powers are regularly utilised against the homeless and others who inhabit urban space adaptively.\textsuperscript{104} Thus, the adaptive inhabitation of public space becomes a primary site of control in the urban environment. The spaces that the homeless inhabit may be ‘parafunctional’: neglected, forgotten or abandoned (Hawyward 2012). However, it may be the presence of a homeless person that renders a space, such as city gardens and an alcove housing ATMs, parafunctional. Regardless, the reclamation of such spaces is always sought eventually in order to render them functional (read: profitable or orderly) once more (Coleman et al 2005). As we will

\textsuperscript{103} Despite the concentration of services in urban centres, there are higher rates of homelessness in rural and remote areas in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011; ABC News 2015e; see also Milbourne and Cloke 2006).

\textsuperscript{104} Notices to vacate were issued to Occupy Melbourne protestors inhabiting City Square in Melbourne’s CBD in 2011. The protestors moved to Treasury Gardens and were subsequently evicted from there. In 2016, notices to vacate have also been used against homeless protestors who inhabited empty government-owned houses in Bendigo Street in Collingwood and to homeless people protesting in City Square and Enterprize Park.
see, it is when prime spaces are co-opted to adaptive uses by rough-sleepers and beggars that explicit conflicts emerge (Snow and Anderson 1993).

However, there are other forces operating in the city that affect the homeless and determine how their experience of the city or how they are understood by the city’s domiciled inhabitants. Cities are subject to forces like weather and may produce emergent and unscripted phenomena: unanticipated events produced by the interactions of various forces such as floods, blackouts or riots (Johnson 2001). For the homeless population, such events can be highly disruptive and they often bear the brunt of rapid or unplanned changes to the socio-spatial environment. Though as Lefebvre reminds us, we must understand that the consequences of socio-spatial constructions for certain groups are neither natural nor inevitable (1991: 38). Instead, the consequences of particular arrangements of space must be conceptually linked to the ideologies and motivations that produce that space. Space is the material dimension of inequitable distributions of social and political power such as class, race and gender that, without which, would remain purely abstract. As such, the homeless do not exist in neutral spaces, but in spaces designed explicitly for the exclusion of nomadic, transient, indigent or unproductive bodies. Cities are structured according to certain forms of emplacement, belonging and political legitimacy and the homeless are not included within these. The city thus lends a physical dimension to the social, political and economic hierarchies that exist in society. Spaces built for the purposes of socially sanctioned consumer activities are therefore not simply more amenable to bodies engaging in these behaviours, but are explicitly constructed to exclude bodies that are seen as unproductive, non-consuming and illegitimate (Davis 1992).

It is not just the intentional aspects of a city’s construction that affect homeless people in the city. There are other factors that alter the city’s spaces and the activities of those inhabiting it. The socio-spatial norms and behavioural constraints that dominate the city during the day are not the same as those found in the city at night (Williams 1989). The ‘night-time spaces’ of the city have a long
historical association with crime and disorder (Lefebvre 1991: 320; Palmer 2000). For the homeless, the night-time city brings new challenges and may increase their vulnerability to harassment and violence. In Melbourne, many rough-sleepers and those who engage in begging report harassment and abuse at night from city revellers (Adams 2014b; Chamberlain et al 2007: 35; Jefferson 2014). The atmosphere of city spaces changes at night and the night-time city is often associated with outsider groups like the homeless, sex-workers, drug users and criminals (Palmer 2000). However, the association between the city at night and crime, deviance and disorder has historically been matched by efforts to open up the spaces of the night-time city to the broader public (Donald 1999: 419). One recent example of such efforts in Melbourne is the White Night festival.

Melbourne has hosted the all-night arts festival White Night annually since 2013. Originating in Paris where it is known as Nuit Blanche, the festival has since become a global arts movement. White Night involves a city hosting an all-night arts festival that transforms urban public spaces and buildings into visual and artistic spectacles. White Night has been described as a ‘meta-event’ that ‘flow[s] through the city’s capillaries’ (Butt 2015: 5). The name ‘White Night’ is a historical reference to festivals held in places of high-latitude where during the summer months the sun never sets completely. Light is thus an integral theme of the festival, further evidenced in the lighting displays commonly exhibited during the event. The stated goal of White Night is to open the city at night up to the public through light, colour and art.\footnote{The event’s website can be viewed at https://whitenightmelbourne.com.au.} While unstated, the language of ‘opening up’ the night-time city to ‘the public’ has an implicit regulatory flavour to it. The goal is to flood the city with light, making dark places light and thus render them safe (Overington 2015). While the event has an arts orientation, it participates in a longstanding tradition of utilisation of light as a technology of regulation to tame urban night spaces (Palmer 2000). Several homeless services that I spoke to run engagement programs in the lead-up to such events to assist their clients in preparing for such events (usually by ensuring they have accommodation for the period in question). This is because
such events can cause significant distress to people experiencing homelessness as their sleeping arrangements are disrupted and their environment significantly altered. Returning to Snow and Mulcahy, events such as White Night, the criminalisation of begging and other governance strategies that significantly affect the urban landscape determine the specific ways homelessness manifests and is encountered. Thus, because the rough-sleeping homeless primarily exist in public space, any change or force that acts upon public space must also act upon homeless bodies.

Factors such as weather alter the urban environment to such an extent that the ways that homeless people use the city are disrupted, prompting further adaptation. While Australia is renowned for its hot weather, Melbourne’s southern location means the city gets very cold over winter. While ambient temperatures do not drop to levels comparable to the United States and Europe, cold weather is a serious barrier to the wellbeing of homeless people. During summer, the heat can pose a serious threat to the wellbeing of the chronically homeless and rough-sleepers who are often unable to access a means of cooling down. In early 2009, Melbourne experienced a twelve-day heatwave during which the temperature did not drop below 28 degrees centigrade, by day or night. The final four days of this heatwave recorded top temperatures above 40 degrees with the final day reaching 46.4 — the hottest day in Melbourne since records began in 1855 (Bureau of Meteorology 2009). On this day, Victoria experienced its worst natural disaster on record, the Black Saturday bushfires. The effects of the heatwave on population health are disputed, though a report by Victoria’s Chief Health Officer Dr John Carnie estimated the number of deaths resulting from the heatwave at 374, inclusive of the 173 killed in the bushfires (Legislative Council Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration 2010).

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106 The effects of Melbourne’s climate are not limited to the homeless population. Due to Melbourne’s relatively temperate climate, housing in Melbourne is often not well-insulated or adequately heated. Recent research shows that cold weather is attributable to a higher percentage of deaths in Australia than in Sweden (6.5 versus 3.9 per cent) due to housing in Sweden being better equipped for the cold (Gasparrini et al 2015).
Being unable to retreat indoors during these kinds of weather puts the health of those experiencing homelessness at serious risk. What is more, people experiencing homelessness are more likely to have chronic health issues which make them especially susceptible to over-heating (Phibbs and Thompson 2011). As Barney Wilson from the City of Melbourne told me:

...during a heatwave one of the critical danger factors is that your body temperature would normally begin to cool down in the later part of the evening, and if you’re unable to do that and you’ve got other risk factors, you really are at risk of dying.

This demonstrates the unpredictable nature of the urban environment for the homeless and their vulnerability to rapid or unexpected disruptions. The spatial equilibrium between a body and the space it inhabits is fragile and if one is unable to retreat indoors, the consequences may be fatal. Melbourne City and Yarra Council now provide free passes to swimming pools and cinemas to rough-sleepers during extreme weather, which allows them cool down. This is a creative if temporary solution to the spatialised indifference of the city towards vulnerable homeless bodies.

What is clear is that the city is an uncertain and ambivalent environment for the homeless to inhabit and traverse, posing both solutions to and problems for the daily demands of their existence. This is particularly true for the chronically homeless and those sleeping rough or begging. However, it is also relevant for people whose homelessness manifests differently: who may be travelling through and across urban spaces, as they attempt to access crisis housing, counselling, financial assistance or drug and alcohol treatment. For those whose homelessness is sudden and unexpected — who have been kicked out of home, are fleeing violence or whose housing arrangements fell through at the last minute — the city can be a barren place void of essentials, lacking sufficient shelter and presenting challenges that one may have never encountered before. These aspects of Melbourne are not promoted in the public imagery and official discourses of the city, which frame the city as
welcoming, safe, efficient, connected, vibrant and convenient. It is to these public images of the city and what is absent from them that this chapter now turns.

**Heritage and Identity, Poverty and Regulation**

Official representations of Melbourne cast the city in idyllic, if occasionally contradictory terms: vibrant, safe, historic (old), modern (young), lively, atmospheric, spontaneous, fun, free-spirited, open to all and somewhere to ‘lose yourself’. Indeed, this latter theme is the premise of a 2007 advertising campaign by *Tourism Victoria* promoting Melbourne as a tourist destination (see Figure 12). Broadcast on television and in cinemas, the advertisement features an attractive young woman who is visiting Melbourne. Sitting in her hotel room, the woman ties a thread of red wool around a leg of her bed before setting out to explore the city. The thread connects to a large ball of wool that the woman pushes along as she travels through Melbourne and several of its attractions. The implication of this device is that at the end of the day she will follow the thread back to her hotel room. This frames the city as a kind of maze or labyrinth, but an exciting and joyful one. As she moves through iconic sites of Melbourne — sandstone buildings at the University of Melbourne, graffiti-filled laneways, a tram, the Royal Botanic Gardens and a 19th century shopping arcade — she leaves a trail of thread that connects these spaces. The ball of thread gradually shrinks until it is small enough to hold in her hands. Towards the end of the woman’s journey, she comes across a line of blue thread. Following this leads the woman through a door, up a staircase, and onto a rooftop at sunset where she encounters an attractive young man carrying a blue ball of thread. He looks at her

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107 The advertisement can be viewed at: [https://www.youtube.com/results?q=it%27s+easy+to+lose+yourself+in+melbourne](https://www.youtube.com/results?q=it%27s+easy+to+lose+yourself+in+melbourne)

108 Similar themes are utilised by *Hidden Secrets Walking Tours*, a Melbourne tour company that emphasises the need for a guide to discover ‘true’ Melbourne experiences. See [http://hiddensecretstours.com/](http://hiddensecretstours.com/).

109 The representation of the Arcades recalls Walter Benjamin’s unfinished *Arcades Project* which documents the consequences of modern capitalism on the social life of the city through the analogy of the shopping arcades of Paris. These transformed the spatiality of the city and its purposes by encouraging people to view city life as a spectacle in and of itself. Benjamin considers arcades the architectural counterpart to the *flâneur* or *boulevardier*, an emblematic figure of the modern urban experience who wanders the city without a specific purpose other than to witness. Here the practice of walking becomes a purpose in and of itself: necessary to perceive the dynamism and spectacle of the city. See also Baudelaire 1985.
with pointed interest, smiling; a look that she returns. The scene leaves the now-couple and pauses at a series of apparently random parts of Melbourne, all of which are tangled with a multitude of threads of various colours. The advertisement ends with a wide, aerial shot of the city at sunset, accompanied by the text, ‘It’s easy to lose yourself in Melbourne’. 110

The advertisement exemplifies the carefully constructed imagery of cities aimed at attracting capital, in this case, tourism. Melbourne is represented here as being characterised by heritage, culture, mystery, safety and vibrancy. Although nominally social values, they are also commodities: features sold as part of the tourist ‘experience’ of Melbourne (Hetherington and Cronin 2008). 111 The Melbourne depicted here is the manifestation of a particular and idealised imagination of the city, what Philippopolous-Mihalopolous describes as a city’s ‘self-description’ (2007: 10). Here, the city itself becomes consumable (Zukin 1995). This transforms Melbourne into spectacle by reducing it to a series of commodified image-relations that render certain aspects of the city visible and legitimate while obscuring others (Hetherington and Cronin 2008: 7). While the purpose of the advertisement is ostensibly to reveal parts of Melbourne, it is also a project of concealment that only reveals the city in certain lights and at certain angles. As we watch the young woman travel through the city, we inhabit her as a phenomenological surrogate: she demonstrates what we could (and indeed, should) be doing, were we in Melbourne. 112 Her experience becomes the potentiality of our own; as we look, we understand her as a manifestation of our own desires (see Young 2010: 13-16). In doing this, the advertisement participates in a larger project of what Harvey calls a ‘politics of image’ aimed at attracting ‘capital and people “of the right sort”’ (1990: 295). Returning to Rancière’s epigraph at the beginning of this chapter, this particular imagination of Melbourne inevitably excludes certain groups from symbolic enrolment in the city.

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110 See Goodbourn 2015 for a feminist analysis of the gendered constructions of safety, urban space and identity in this advertisement.
111 Lloyd and Auld write that ‘[c]ities are now seen as a products in their own right, with quality urban spaces designed not merely for the benefit of the local community but as strategic assets in economic planning’ (2010: 341). See also Urry’s Consuming Places (1995).
112 See Young 2010a; 2010b on spectatorship and the ethics of looking.
The constructed imagery of a city — the city as spectacle — requires constant maintenance, updating and redevelopment. This process of symbolic and cultural renewal is the corollary to the physical projects of urban renewal that are constantly underway in Melbourne. This ‘creative destruction’, in which images and spaces that have aged, degraded, become less lucrative or that simply have the potential to be more lucrative, are renovated or replaced is characteristic of neoliberal strategies urban management (Brenner and Theodore 2002: 365). In seeming contradiction to this is the emphasis on heritage’ — nostalgic representations of Melbourne’s history that can be accessed or engaged with in the present day as consumer experience (Hetherington and Cronin 2008; Urry 1995). The commodification of heritage involves repackaging history as a consumable experience. Examples of this include Melbourne’s historic buildings (both their architecture and social or institutional histories), photographs of Melbourne neighbourhoods from the 19th and early 20th centuries in museums, and new discursive constructions of Melbourne’s history through new mediums.

The maintenance of this complex and constantly evolving city-image, which reimagines the past as well as constructing Melbourne in reference to a constantly occurring future, requires significant levels of regulation and control. However, explicit control and regulation risks undermining the constructed representations of the city by appearing coercive. As a result, regulatory practices must also be framed in the spectacle of urban capital and circulation (Coleman et al 2005: 2517). As Savage and Ward write: ‘[t]he management of image has become a vital aspect of economic policy and political focus’ (1993: 342). Thus, efforts to maintain the images and atmospheres of urban

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113 The extremely popular Open House Melbourne event that takes place annually in July sees buildings normally closed to public access opened up for tours. These spaces include very old or famous buildings, the internal infrastructure of famous buildings and underground infrastructure such as old railway tunnels. Advertising for the event contained the internet hashtag ‘#curiocity’, which again semantically links the spaces of the city with the experience of discovery.

114 For example, the popular city bar ‘Madame Brussels’ is named after the alias of Caroline Hodgson, an infamous Melbourne brothel proprietor from the late 19th century. The insertion of history into practices and spaces of consumption commodifies the past, which can then be participated in through simple acts such as having a drink.
order actually contradict their intended messages. The realisation of the principles of freedom, unfettered access, discovery and (safe) adventure that the city projects counterintuitively requires high levels of control, restricted access and regulation.

The necessity of regulation to Melbourne-as-commodity prompts several questions. What place is there for the Other or the Outlaw in the commodified city? What effect does the encounter with the Other have in spaces that are mediated by images of capital and maintained under the purview of regulatory authorities? And how do these arrangements feed into the explicitly regulatory arrangements we see the homeless and other troublesome bodies subjected to?

The City of Melbourne’s regulation of buskers, jaywalkers, and the homeless exemplifies the regulatory processes of image-maintenance operating in Melbourne. There is an array regulatory apparatuses designed to ensure that the City of Melbourne and its spaces remain tame and predictable, allowing for the smooth flow of capital. Illustrating this dynamic is the regulatory efforts operating in Melbourne’s main pedestrian thoroughfares. Swanston Street and a section of Bourke Street called Bourke Street Mall have the heaviest levels of pedestrian traffic in Melbourne. Swanston Street is the main thoroughfare for north-south tram routes and bicycles through the city, though access for other vehicles is limited (see Figure 13). Bourke Street runs east-west and is open to all traffic, except in Bourke Street Mall which bars access to all vehicles except trams (see Figure 14). Both streets have wide footpaths that allow for large amounts of pedestrian traffic. Each street averages over 65,000 pedestrians per day, with levels regularly exceeding this number.115

The restricting of vehicle access to these streets might imply that they are subject to less overt regulation than other areas of the city that must contend with all kinds of traffic. For example, one might assume that due to the absence of vehicular traffic in Bourke Street Mall that the walker can

115 The City of Melbourne has an online pedestrian counting system accessible at: http://www.pedestrian.melbourne.vic.gov.au/.
cross freely from one side of the street to the other. While the Mall does lack delineated footpaths, it is subject to other, less obvious forms of regulation. For example, in May 2015 police conducted a crackdown on jaywalking in Melbourne’s CBD, with 561 people issued fines of $74 over a 19-day period.\footnote{116} This occurred following the death of a young woman who was hit by a truck while running for a tram in the city, the first pedestrian fatality in the CBD since 2013.\footnote{117} While the crackdown was not limited to Bourke and Swanston Streets, the media reporting on the crackdown showed pedestrians receiving fines in these locations (Devic 2015; Mannix 2015). More recently, Victoria Police announced that they would extend laws banning using a mobile phone while driving to include pedestrians as well, with enforcement to be focused on urban areas, especially in pedestrian-heavy areas in Melbourne’s CBD (ABC News 2016; Butt 2016a).\footnote{118}

Pedestrians are not the sole target of this kind of regulatory intervention. Buskers are also subject to stringent regulations under Melbourne City Council policy. Busking in the CBD requires a General Area Permit from the Council that carries with it various obligations and restrictions. However, due to its popularity, busking in Bourke Street Mall requires a specialised version of the permit.\footnote{119} For this, a performer must have held a General Area Permit for six months, pay an application fee and attend a Safety, Amenity and Performance Review which involves an audition conducted by the city municipal body (City of Melbourne Busking Guidelines 2011).\footnote{120} The stated aims of these regulations are:

\footnote{116}The fine for ‘jaywalking’ (which is not a legal term) currently sits at $74 under part 14 of the Road Safety Road Rules 2009 (Victoria) which prohibits various improper methods of crossing.\footnote{117}There was a 22% increase in pedestrian deaths across the state in that year, which may have also contributed to the crackdown (Devic 2015).\footnote{118}In addition to this, there has been a long-running advertising campaign warning pedestrians of using mobile devices such as phones while in the city, due to the danger trams pose to distracted pedestrians.\footnote{119}The general area permit comes in two forms: a three-month and a 12-month permit. While such regulations may appear minor, they also function as a procedural barrier designed to filter out those unwilling or unable to submit to this process. These policies also form the base apparatus for the regulation and policing of busking generally. The purpose of the permit is not to raise funds, but to provide a framework for the regulation of unplanned or spontaneous busking, other forms of performance an unsanctioned public address (see Iveson 2007).\footnote{120}Professional buskers are reportedly members of the audition panel: http://www.issimomag.com/2014/01/29/sussing-out-melbournes-mysterious-rules-of-busking/.
to support and encourage busking performances; to enhance the vibrancy, vitality, diversity and
ambience of the city; provide certainty and self-regulation to buskers within a clearly understood,
fair and transparent operating framework for managing busking activities; maintain the heritage
of the city’s identity and existing levels of public amenity; minimise complaints, criticism and
other problems associated with busking; facilitate regulated use of the public space. (Street
Activity Policy 2011: 2, emphasis added).

While the argot used here frames these policies as supportive of busking, in reality they are
constitutive elements of a broader apparatus of control. The vague language of the policy allows for
a broad ambit of interpretation. For example, according to the policy, a busker’s performance must
‘contribute to the vibrancy, vitality, diversity and ambience’ of the city (Street Activity Policy 2011:
4). Definitions of precisely what constitutes contribution to these undefined qualities are absent,
allowing this to be utilised for the regulation of a variety of behaviours on an ad hoc basis.
References to public amenity are also left undefined, though the type of amenity imagined by the
governing body is easily anticipated: that which maintains the capitalist urban order and its
‘economy of flows’ (Blomley 2004: 30). Other aspects of these policies can be read in terms of
Foucauldian discipline: ‘provid[ing] self-regulation’ and ‘facilitating regulated use of public space’
may initially appear contradictory. However, as Foucault demonstrates, the facilitating and
expediting effects of discipline are productive rather than restrictive (1977; 1984). Here, activities
like walking and busking are not repressed or prevented as this would be counter-productive.
Instead, such activities are organised and facilitated which ensures they do not disrupt the governing
municipal body’s definition of urban order.

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle has stated that those who busk without a permit will be subject to a fine,
though there is no mention of this in the policy (Dowling 2011: no pagination). Formally, the purpose
of this kind of public regulation is to promote and enhance mobility. This is done by linking
regulation to specific experiences of the city — enjoyment, vibrancy, community, energy and
atmosphere. The city’s statement that these policies ‘facilitate regulated use’ reveals the tensions inherent in certain representations of the city against the political, regulatory and administrative realities involved in maintaining these. One of the main assurances offered by authorities to both visitors and residents of Melbourne is that the city is ‘safe’; however, here ‘safe’ describes a feeling rather than a corporeal integrity or ontological reality. So the concept of ‘safety’ extends to include other social values: aesthetically pleasing, vibrant, enjoyable, civil, and predictable. In order to ensure this sense of the city as benign, the authorities require a control apparatus flexible enough to adapt to almost any kind of behaviour.

Here lies a central tension of liberal governance: regulations and restrictions on behaviour must symbolically lend themselves to the narratives of freedom that pervade liberal capitalist societies. Various contradictions result from this: spaces are pedestrianised but walkers must only cross at designated crossings; buskers may contribute to the city’s ‘vibrancy’ but they must have first sought and paid for permission from the city and ensured that their performance meets the social, cultural and moral standards of the City of Melbourne. The political and tactical possibilities contained in the act of walking identified by De Certeau are borne out here (1984: 104). Encountered here is the tension that exists between the strategies laid down by a governing body to structure the city according to narrow a definition of order and the tactics used by the city’s inhabitants and visitors to navigate, traverse and explore the city according to their own desires. However, Shearing and Stenning demonstrate what occurs when the desires of authorities and those of the consumer-citizen suddenly diverge: the ‘coercive edge’ of the hidden regulatory apparatus emerges (1984: 345). It is worth asking then, what happens if you are not walking in the city, but sitting? Or, if you are performing, not to entertain, but to evoke sympathy and survive another night sleeping on the street? With the highly regulated nature of urban space in mind, this chapter now turns its attention to Melbourne’s homeless bodies.

1 The busking guidelines explicitly state that the content of performances must be socially appropriate, and that general permits can be revoked if these standards are not maintained by performers.
While there is no legal proscription of homelessness in Victoria, several behaviours associated with homelessness such as begging and squeegeeing are legally proscribed. In addition to this, people experiencing homelessness are regularly subjected to unofficial regulation and policing (Adams 2014b). Certain methods of regulating the homeless may not be enshrined in legislation, but that does not mean they are not utilised against people experiencing homelessness. Frieberg has termed alternative, informal or indirect means of controlling particular behaviours or groups as ‘soft regulation’ (2010). However, ‘hard’ regulation (that which is enshrined in legislation) of the homeless still occurs.

In 2005, the Victorian government repealed the Vagrancy Act (Vic) 1966, which criminalised ‘begging for alms’. However, certain provisions such as the one outlawing begging were transferred to the Summary Offences Act (Vic 1966):

(1) A person must not beg or gather alms. (2) A person must not cause, procure or encourage a child to beg or gather alms Penalty: 12 months imprisonment (s.49A Summary Offences Act (Vic) 1966).

Historically, the deployment of this legislation has been highly discretionary, though it has seen increased use in recent years (Adams 2014b: 25). In March 2013, Lord Mayor Robert Doyle officially launched Operation Minta: a crackdown on begging in Melbourne’s CBD overseen by Victoria Police and The Salvation Army. The crackdown was precipitated by an increase in reports of so-called ‘aggressive begging’, such as an unverified report that a person who was begging attacked a woman and dragged her along the street by her hair for not giving him enough money (ABC News 2013; Callil 2013). People caught begging were arrested and assessed to determine whether they were
genuinely experiencing hardship (see Figure 15). If they were found to be ‘genuine’ the ‘offender’ was required to participate in a mandatory diversion program run by The Salvation Army. If after 48 hours they had failed to attend the program a court summons for a charge of begging was issued (Callil 2013). Justifying the crackdown, The Salvation Army’s Major Brendan Nottle stated that so-called ‘aggressive beggars’ were ‘using tactics that bordered on criminal’ (Nightingale 2015: no pagination; Gillet 2015: no pagination). Nottle also estimated that a third of the people who engaged in begging in Melbourne were not actually homeless and instead were international backpackers ‘topping up their travel funds’ (Kimmorley 2015: no pagination). Justifying The Salvation Army’s participation in the crackdown, Nottle emphasised the importance of identifying the ‘genuine’ needy in order to provide them with proper assistance.

While highly similar in many ways, begging and busking elicit highly divergent regulatory responses. People who beg are displaced, coerced and criminalised while those who busk enjoy a conditional and scrutinised acceptance. Both activities involve making a claim to urban space and engaging in forms of public address (Iveson 2007). For those engaging in begging, however, this claim is unsolicited, fails to contribute to Melbourne’s vibrancy and is thus unwelcome. So far, the act of begging has not been commodified: it remains outside of the constructed notions of ‘diversity’, ‘vibrancy’ and ‘atmosphere’ that the city promotes. This may seem a moot point, however, other adaptive, unsolicited and illegal behaviours such as graffiti and street art were once seen as a scourge on the urban environment but have been at least partially transformed into commodified cultural spectacles (see Young 2015). In contrast, the disruption caused by visible homelessness to the spectacle of urban capital persists, and has not (yet) been incorporated into capitalist modes of meaning production. The interactions and meanings offers by the visibly homeless and those who engage in begging remain outside of the commodified aesthetic and spatial codes that dominate urban public space (see Iveson 2007; Mitchell 1995).

122. Here again we see the persistence of the logics of Britain’s Poor Laws, which seek to differentiate between the genuinely needy and the lazy or incorrigible (see Chapter Two).
None of the interviewees who participated in my research could confirm the reports of aggressive begging though all were highly sceptical of such claims as well as of media coverage on homelessness and begging in general. Several did note that perceived aggression from the homeless is a problem (see Adams 2014b; Rodger 2013). Due to the socially transgressive nature of homelessness and begging, those who experience or engage in these may be perceived as aggressive due to the rupturing of social boundaries that this interaction entails (Lynch 2002: 693). Rodger notes that the ‘cultural toolkits’ — behaviours, attitudes and demeanours — adopted by the chronically homeless are essential for their daily survival yet are antithetical to mainstream social values (2013: 97). This calls preconceptions of homelessness and social attitudes towards these produce into the ambit of critical deconstruction. Given the prevalent stigmatisation of the homeless in the media, their exclusion from constructed imagery of the city and the routine subjection of this population to regulatory regimes, we must consider whether it is possible in the dominant socio-political and cultural milieu of cities to experience encounters with homelessness as anything other than threatening. If the condition of homelessness and behaviours associated with it fundamentally threaten contemporary conceptions of urban and civil order, this suggests that any encounter with homelessness must be experienced as ‘aggressive’. That is, the condition of homelessness threatens the ontological unity of the domiciled consumer-citizen and the social stability (current socio-political distributions of power) that sustains their inclusion in the dominant polity (Arnold 2004: 26).

Several of the organisations that I engaged with have conducted their own research on begging, the results of which contradict claims made by police and the media (Horne and Cooke 2001; Adams 2014a; Lynch and Hilton 2006). While some people engaging in begging in Melbourne may be from overseas, the framing of such people as opportunistic backpackers is specious; designed to spark public outrage and garner support for punitive interventions and exclusionary social policies. Media narratives that frame begging as deceptive and fraudulent further marginalise the homeless and
galvanise an already established association with crime. This association with crime situates the homeless in a double bind: their condition is defined by being in public yet it is this publicity that forms the basis of their criminalisation.

Lucy Adams from Justice Connect: Homeless Law — a specialist legal clinic in Melbourne for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness — told me that dealing with the fines constitutes half of the organisation’s workload. These fines are normally issued for behaviours like begging, being drunk in public or taking public transport without a valid ticket. Adams recounted the story of one client, who had accrued over $6000 worth of fines for begging and being drunk in public. Such fines can be waived if the behaviour is demonstrated to be caused by or associated with hardships such as mental illness, addiction or homelessness (Infringements Act 2006). This is to ensure that the legislation does not have a disproportionate impact on the disadvantaged or marginalised. In this case, however, the process of waiving the fines took two years for Justice Connect to complete. According to Adams, this is indicative of the average length of time that such processes take for pro bono legal services. During the two-year process, the client in question experienced another period of homelessness and accrued another several thousand dollars’ worth of fines from police and city regulators, requiring Homeless Law to begin the process anew (see also Adams 2014b). Without services like Homeless Law, this complicated legal process would be impossible for people experiencing serious hardship or disadvantage to navigate.

The offence in this example is not concerned with the nature of the behaviour itself nor the state the person is in, rather it is the space they inhabit. That is, such behaviours are only restricted when they occur in public. Doreen Massey defines public space as a site of possibility, plurality, diversity, chaos, spontaneity and openness; aligned (or at least tinged) with anarchy and characterised by

123 In 2014, media reports emerged claiming that police in Melbourne were confiscating the earnings of people engaged in begging under proceeds of crime legislation (Dow and Mills 2014). The police strenuously denied the claim and none of my interviewees could verify it, though many of their clients had reported similar experiences with police in Melbourne.
unpredictable potentialities (1994: 20). These may never come to pass, but nonetheless exist as a nascent form of energy that influences and shapes public space and the experience of those who inhabit and move through it. This rendering of public space describes the contest between those who inhabit public space and those who administer and regulate it. Just as the citizenry always poses some form of threat to those who seek to control and govern them, public space also challenges those who seek to regulate and tame it (Iveson 2007: 7).

Public spaces thus forms a field for the imposition of representations of order, authority, or the dominance of a particular regime or ideology, which frame themselves as attractive, idyllic, natural or universal (Coleman, Tombs and Whyte 2005: 2520). The city’s surface is read as an indicator of the kind of life and society that it sustains, which in turn reflects those who inhabit and govern the space (Donald 1992: 422). This recalls Klinenberg’s notion of a ‘corporeal epistemology’, where the surfaces of bodies describe ‘essential but otherwise obscured social truths’ (2002: 121). The city is often conceptualised as a body: the health and vitality of its organs and systems understood as readable upon its surfaces (Donald 1992: 420). From this perspective, homelessness and other forms of unsanctioned public inhabitation are understood as negative signifiers of a city’s health or ‘liveability’. Consequently, the issue of homelessness is responded to not as an internal problem produced by internal social and economic forces, but as the product of an external pathogen or force: ‘a threat that emerges from elsewhere’ (Kawash 1998: 321).

Idealised representations of Melbourne that depict the city as a purified body absent of signs of sickness, such as the advertisement discussed earlier, form the ideological corollaries of the regulatory regimes designed to maintain images of urban order. Constructing an image of Melbourne intentionally excises homeless bodies produces the moral impetus for their removal and punishment. Thus, what is included in sanctioned representations of the city traces out the idealised constructions of both city and inhabitants (whether resident or visitor). Extrapolating from
representations of Melbourne and the strategies of regulation employed by its ruling bodies (Melbourne City Council, the State Government and Victoria Police) discussed here, the idealised cityscape is one clear of beggars and indigents while the preferred inhabitant emerges as law-abiding, responsible, mobile and consuming. Thus, the cleansed surface of the city matches the ideal inhabitant: a space solely inhabited by civil, consuming bodies devoid of all others. The city and the citizen thus form an ideal liberal-capitalist couplet.

Liberalism and capitalism shape the contemporary Western city, and are reflected in the city’s surfaces. However, capitalist interests often contradict or supersede the more idealistic aspects of Western society like democracy and equality. A balancing act ensues which constructs images of freedom, inclusion and equality that also maintain the ascendance of capital and its social and governmental exigencies. As such, public space is only maintained insofar as doing so coincides with economic rationalities and interests. As a result, ‘the increasing privatisation and commodification of such spaces... has gradually deactivated public life in the city other than for the purposes of shopping’ (Lloyd and Auld 2010: 352). Indeed, retail and commercial activities have become so intrinsic to the life-world of the city that they are now the primary forces sustaining public life and its spatiality (Bottomley and Moore 2007: 186).

The increasing resemblance of cities to the exclusively capitalist spaces of shopping centres, malls and theme parks is well-documented (Lloyd and Auld 2003; Sorkin 1992; Shearing and Stenning 1984). In his seminal collection on cities, Sorkin proposes that cities have become ‘variations on a theme park’ (1992). For Sorkin, cities are increasingly structured according to the privately defined order of economically driven corporate bodies (1992: 4; see also Shearing and Stenning 1984). Such shifts redefine public space in terms of economic metrics at the expense of its social value. This has initiated the widespread privatisation of public space and the creation of privately owned public spaces or ‘POPS’, which allow greater levels of control to be exerted on bodies while maintaining the
ostensible openness of space (Bodnar 2015; Németh 2016). Conflicts between the municipal council and various protest groups over ostensibly public spaces — Treasury Gardens, City Square, the QV shopping centre and Enterprize Park — exemplify the conditional publicity of these spaces. For example, in 2011 Victoria Police forcibly evicted Occupy Melbourne protesters, dismantled their camp at City Square and made several arrests for public disorder offences (see Aleander et al 2011; The Age 2011; Woodhead 2011). The violent and forceful eviction of protestors from this notionally public space demonstrates how policing legitimates sanctioned bodies and forms of inhabitation while activities like protesting, unauthorised camping and being homeless breach the increasingly narrow conditions of legitimate access. For those whose presence in public is involuntary, the narrowing of requisites for access leaves them with increasingly fewer options for legitimate inhabitation or being. While most inner city municipalities (Melbourne City Council, the City of Yarra and the City of Port Phillip) recognise the rights of homeless people to be in public space, this does not prevent various interventionist forms of regulation being directed towards them (as will be discussed in Chapter Six).

This section has examined the ways that the constructed character of Melbourne shapes the urban environment, determining strategies for the regulation and governance of certain identities, groups and behaviours. Various tensions are revealed as homelessness is encountered within urban space which troubles the coherence of the city-image. This chapter now moves on to consider mobility in the city and the role that capital plays in shaping both the city and the strategies employed by a variety of actors to regulate it. Regulation and control are enacted through positive discursive and political constructions designed ostensibly to enhance, expedite and facilitate, rather than impede or constrain. Just as notions of spontaneity, safety and discovery are utilised as structures of control and exclusion; mobility, dynamism and freedom are employed as regulatory strategies designed to favour and facilitate certain modes and experiences, while disregarding, discouraging and foreclosing upon others.


Mobility and Emptiness

Cresswell rightly claims than any academic inquiry into urban geographies would be remiss to neglect mobility as a lens of analysis (2006: 1). Mobility is an integral facet of the city; it constitutes the primary logic undergirding its design and infrastructure. At a macrological scale, the shape of a city is premised upon circulation: the human circulatory system has long been used as a metaphor for and measure of a city’s health (Cresswell 2006: 8). The greater the circulation and flow, the more robust and efficient the city’s corporeality must be. At a micrological level, mobility is integral to understanding individualism and citizenship practices. Certain types of mobility are imbued with moral values and symbolic meanings, both positive (agency, individualism, power) and negative (stasis, inertia, idleness) (Cresswell 2006: 9). This attribution of moral values makes mobility central to understanding the social and regulatory responses prompted by the encounter with homelessness. This chapter examines mobility in Melbourne: how it is structured, expedited, impeded and responded to, as well as who is afforded expanded mobility and who is not. Specifically, it examines the types of mobility that are legitimate against those that disrupt the optimal state of the city’s ‘economy of flows’: dynamic, liquid and fissiparous (Blomley 2004: 30).

Deleuze and Guattari claim that state power is arrayed against nomadism or ‘nomos’. The state does not seek to eliminate nomos but to appropriate and control it: to capture its energy and yoke it to the state’s purposes (1980: 363). Pinder also argues that ‘nomos stands in opposition to polis’ but polis (the city) is not opposed to nomos (2011: 224). Instead, polis seeks to appropriate (but not destroy) that which exists outside of it. To this end, the state establishes ‘conduits, pipes, embankments, which prevent turbulence which constrain movement to go from one point to

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124 While nomos comes from the Greek term for law (νόμος) and can translate to ‘political authority’, Deleuze and Guattari use nomos to distinguish from polis. In this usage, nomos refers to space outside the city walls not subject to the laws and modes of organisation of the city-state. Rather than describing an alternate mode of social organisation, nomos describes a position outside of normative structures of domination that characterise the state and the sedentary modes of social organisation that attend it. Nomos is thus not only a point of relationality, but a type of energy and spontaneity as well (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 361, see also Holland 2004: 20-21).
another, and [cause] space itself to be striated and measured, which makes fluid [nomos] depend on the solid [polis] and flows proceed by parallel, laminar layers’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 363). Thus, regulatory efforts are not aimed at impeding mobility but at its organisation at macrological scales (McNay 2009: 56). The city is a striated system of duction built to direct and organise flows (Young et al 2013: 220). Any path (flow) must be held between two points or embankments, which determine the direction of flow. Structure gives flow direction, lends the energy of nomos a defined purpose (Pinder 2011: 223). This is the purpose of state operations in the spaces of the city: not inhibition, but orchestration.

Mobility figures large in conceptions of urban order. Stasis represents death; yet nomadic or disorganised mobility evokes chaos and so challenges the principles governing polis (Pinder 2011: 221). Urban mobility is constantly managed and mediated in dual processes of expansion and constraint inscribed into the very spaces and structures of the city. Deleuze and Guattari describe the city as both striated (fixed) and smooth (mobile): a ‘force of striation that reimports smooth space: puts it back in operation elsewhere’ (1980: 481). Certain movements — across specific thresholds, at certain speeds, or utilising certain technologies — are understood as signalling important positions within socio-capitalist hierarchies that dominate urban space. In line with this, Pinder notes that experiences of mobility are shaped by privilege, and thus resonate with other social structures of discrimination and inequality such as sex, race, gender and class (2011: 222). I argue that for the homeless Other, a particular manifestation of the nomad, normative constructions of mobility are dually stigmatising.

This is because certain forms of mobility adhere to normative conceptions of liberal-capitalist citizenship because they are understood as demonstrating progress, agency and freedom. In contrast, having ‘low-mobility’ or being perceived as static or inert within spaces characterised by dynamism, speed and purpose is an important yet neglected facet of stigma and discrimination. In a
social milieu favouring particular forms of movement, alternative or counter movements may signify fecklessness, entropy, even death (Seidman 2013). Exemplifying the ubiquity of these moral framings are various phrases like ‘social mobility’, ‘life trajectory’ and the pejorative ‘going nowhere fast’. The latter negatively references not just an idealised trajectory but speed as well. ‘Nowhere’ here does not simply indicate a spatial nothingness, but a symbolic moral lack: the absence of achievements, capital, commodities, means and momentum. Counterintuitively, momentum is implied—‘nowhere fast’. However, it is not the subject that is framed as dynamic but the social environment as being static within the impelled environment of the contemporary capitalist city can only result in being left behind. Yet Bauman argues that the socially sanctified mobility of late-modern capitalism has neither destination nor point of arrival. Simply put, capitalist mobility is a state of constant motion: ‘a life defined by (capitalist) consumption is a life of travel with no hope or prospect of arrival’ (Bauman 2002: 66). To be understood as having ‘nowhere to go’ is to be marked with a powerful stigma that not only excludes one from the morally valorised capitalist modes of ‘productivity’ but also from the basic benefits of citizenship. For the homeless — those viewed as static and inert — this manifests in a multitude of ways, such as regulatory intervention, police harassment, fines, eviction from ostensibly ‘public’ space, a reduced capacity to participate in democratic activities like voting and being designed out of accessing public amenities such as public transport and seating.

However, these moral constructions of mobility lack a coherent logic: while some forms of mobility exemplify certain celebrated modes of being, others are highly transgressive. On one hand, mobility is a measure of privileged adherence to social, political and economic norms in Western developed nations. On the other, as we have seen in Chapter Two, nomadic mobility may also be a means of transgression and resistance; a movement against, outside or beyond the state and its governmental ambit. Social understandings of mobility are thus ambivalent and pulled in multiple directions. Those forms of mobility granted socio-political legitimacy attach to sanctioned forms of sedentariness such
as the home. For example, movement between home and work, business travel, and holidays are socially endorsed forms of movement. Nomadism on the other hand, movement without reference to or reliance on structures of civil legitimacy remains highly transgressive and socially stigmatised. However, despite moral framings of homelessness that suggest otherwise, the contested relation between *polis* and *nomos* is not a conflict between movement and stasis, but between two different types of movement.

Blomley claims that ‘[m]etaphorical boundaries are important to... liberalism’ (2004: 6). Drawing on Michael Walzer’s description of liberalism as ‘a world of walls’ and an ‘art of separation’, Blomley describes the various ways that liberalism differentiates and partitions, even as it claims to open, clear and connect (Walzer 1984 in Blomley 2004: 6). The contemporary capitalist city is where the walls of liberalism gather, intertwine and coalesce, creating corridors, courses and thoroughfares, or in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms, ‘conduits’ and ‘pipes’ (1980: 363). While mobility is the essential force animating the late-modern liberal city, its potential to disrupt, threaten and incite resistance means that mobility requires constant monitoring, constraint and orchestration.125

Within this contested logic of mobility, homelessness is not stigmatised because it is static but because its displays alternative mobilities that disrupt sanctioned directions of flow and circulation. Homeless mobilities are characterised by different paces, gaits and directions: moving in counter circuits; against strategic direction; with unstructured or undisciplined purposes; impeding normative flows; and cutting across structured systems of directionality. The tactical mobility of homelessness transgresses the boundaries that delineate various socio-political and economic structures such as property rights, capitalist distributions of resources, the public/private divide and the home. The threat that homelessness poses to the normative social world is one of disrespected partitions, disrupted rhythms, transgressed borders and unsanctioned ingresses and egresses. As a

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125 For Deleuze and Guattari, who understand nomadism as a dispersed and dormant disposition toward conflict, any attempt at constraint necessarily prompts resistance (Young, Genosko and Watson 2013; 220).
population, the homeless are understood as being unmoored from the political, social and legal structures of spatial ordering (Parsell 2011: 446). Homelessness thus strays across the symbolic borders that lend form and stability to the infrastructure of the current socio-political and economic hierarchies (of which cities are a physical manifestation). Homelessness does not belong: to family, home, career, institution, and arguably not even to the nation and the collective identity it produces (see Arnold 2004). Homeless bodies thus sit across or outside of the symbolic borders structuring social space and at is at the margin of these borders that punishment is located (Bowling 2013: 292). Being found at or evoking this border thus invites social censure and the punitive technologies that accompany it. Mobility exists as a force within spatialised relations of power: in mechanisms of surveillance; disapproving or absent gazes; and in policies, regulations and strategies aimed at facilitating and orchestrating the movement of certain bodies and excluding or ostracising others (McCosker and Johns 2013: 181).

The specific construction of legitimate capitalist mobility and the predication of a city’s functionality upon this reproduce dominant social formations: in this case, neoliberal capitalism. Homelessness is a spectral figure that is outside dominant systems of meaning, uncommodified, and moving against the currents shaped by normative socio-legal and political boundaries. In urban space, the homeless Other is simultaneously tangible and ghost-like, exceedingly apparent and yet difficult to pin down, a shadowy presence that leaves lingering traces of itself (Miller 1991: 164). Keeping these qualities of homelessness in mind, the extent of its transgression becomes clear. Homelessness deconstructs liberal-capitalist space by constructing its own alternative meanings as it moves through them (Amster 2008: 34). In the presence of the homeless, thoroughfares, benches, doorways, alcoves and heritage-listed buildings are transformed into camps, beds, shelters and lean-tos. Spaces of expediency, excess and flow become congested and snagged with defiled bodies,

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126 See Brenner and Theodore (2002) for an account of neoliberal capitalism’s adaptability and adjustment to extant social and cultural forms and economic institutions in different geographic and national settings.
bare-life and survival. Any meaning that liberal-capitalism imposes on space can be deconstructed by the presence of homelessness and it does so, apparently, without even trying.

**Bubbles and Capital**

Don Mitchell claims that ‘[t]he nature of public space in part determines the nature of citizenship’ (2005: 85). However, as we have seen, how a city is imagined determines its structure. Thus, public space and citizenship are linked: each resembling the dominant ideological construction of the other. Much critical attention has been paid to the decline the social values of public space, which are displaced by economic rationalities Sennett 1978; Davis 1998). Public space functions as a conduit for the physical transportation of bodies, commodities and capital. Various scholars have identified the construction of public spaces as ‘consumer playgrounds’ that provide activities and leisure for those who can afford it and offer little to anyone else (Lloyd and Auld 2010: 340; Hayward 2004; Pennay et al 2014; Minton 2009). According to these perspectives, public space is designed for particular purposes with access increasingly restricted to only include particular bodies and identities that adhere to these (White 2008). The presence of alternative ways of inhabiting or occupying public space may disrupt meaning, impede enjoyment, or threaten the ostensible ‘publicity’ of the space. Sibley claims that preferences for certain ways of being and categories of people in public space reflects a broader social, cultural and political plane of meaning regarding who belongs and why (1995: 92). This suggests that expectations, intentions and desires invested in public space determine the conditions of access attached to it. While popular conceptions of public space understand it as open and accessible by all, Iveson notes that public space has never been universally open (2007: 25). With the rise of the neoliberal city — which sees economic values assert expanding influence over the public and its spaces — legitimacy in public space has become increasingly dependent on economic rather than social values (Squires 2013: 221).
Emerging from the neoliberal restructuring of public space has seen the emergence of the ‘purely atomic’ individual who is surrounded by a ‘bubble’ or buffer zone of inviolable legal authority (Mitchell 2005). But the existential consequences for individuals of this new ‘bubbled’ subjectivity are significant: ‘...as frightening as it is lonely: it is defined, for many, by an almost abject sense of insecurity’ (2005: 78). While Mitchell discusses the specifically legal formation of this bubbled individualism, I am more concerned with the social and cultural effects of it, such as consequences for public space and the homeless. In contrast to dominant discourses regarding the rights of women, sexual and cultural minorities, we see the further retraction of those rights for the homeless to the point where some homeless people are disconnected from formal citizenship and its benefits (Arnold 2004: 27). This prompts a re-examination of the social contract and the rights that ostensibly attend citizenship. Following Marx, Mitchell argues that social relations are increasingly replaced or colonised with economic relations: economic measures of value, worth, right of access and legitimacy (2005: 77; see also McNay 2009). Dominant arrangements of contemporary citizenship are characterised by an abridging of rights and an expansion of obligations in line with neoliberal rearrangements of the welfare state (Wacquant 2009). The insecurity of this reorganised social sphere, combined with the legally quantifiable nature of economics and property, mean that the law reinforces property and economic-based citizenship, essentially laminating an economic body within juridically reinforced housing.

There are multiple layers to this reinforced, protected body. For example, economic capital inures the consumer against basic human needs by granting access to various markets. In urban space, money becomes the primary condition of access for meeting one’s daily needs. While there are some public amenities meeting needs such as public toilets, in several municipalities in Melbourne these have been either closed or replaced with fortified and automated units that foreclose upon
adaptive uses. Other items, such as food, appropriate clothing, an umbrella or even a place to rest — for a few hours in a cinema or overnight in a hotel — are easily accessible with capital. In contrast, being unable to participate in economic activity renders much of what the city offers beyond one’s means, while also making begging a necessary activity for survival. An individual’s need to access necessities has little to no bearing on their ability to do so in the majority of a city’s spaces (exceptions being soup kitchens and other services catering to the homeless and poor). Even public seating is increasingly restricted in terms of who can access it, designed in ways that disallow adaptive uses (lying down or sleeping, for example) (see Figure 16). Compounding the inaccessibility of urban amenities is the power of aesthetic markers of homelessness, which, if displayed, may preclude access to amenities due to the powerful stigma attached to it (Adams 2014b).

Inuring the consumer against the harshness of the urban environment is access to economic capital. Although the city is characterised by excess, choice and variety, access to this surfeit of resources is conditional. With capital, one can transition smoothly from public to private and back again, legitimately traverse public spaces, and meet one’s needs at short-notice and with little effort. People experiencing homelessness have far fewer options, both because of the disposable resources required as well as the stigma and discrimination they experience.

As discussed, capital facilitates movement through the city, but it also protects and inures the body against threat, sanction and inspection. Both economic and symbolic capital (money and the performance of consumer-citizenship), insulate the neoliberal subject against intervention by demonstrating socio-economic and political legitimacy. While outright transgressions of the law will of course prompt police intervention, those appearing to lack economic capital are subject to increased inspection, surveillance and intervention (Adams 2014b). And capital is, in part, signified

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127 The homeless are not the sole targets of public toilet facilities hardened against adaptive uses. The practice of using public toilets as beats (spaces for men to engage in anonymous sex with one another) is also restricted by removing or upgrading of toilet facilities (see Iveson 2007: 83; Dalton 2006).
by mobility: sanctioned modalities, speeds and movements. In contrast, the alternate mobilities of the visibly homeless signify their marginality to normative and insular capitalist regimes of discipline in which bodies are disciplined for market participation. Bodies displaying a shuffling gait, that have no clear direction or purpose or that have sunk to the ground in a thoroughfare, remain a troublesome and corporeal presence in the contemporary capitalist cityscape. Yet it is the *construction* of the stark delineation between civil and uncivil, normal and abnormal, belonging and unbelonging that gives these alternative mobilities the socio-moral force they carry in the regulated and mediated spaces of the city. If we take the spatio-aesthetic otherness that homeless bodies signify at face value then the ‘materialised strategies of...sovereignty’ that take shape in the city remain outside the ambit of critique while foreclosing upon ‘alternative vision of social order and justice’ (Coleman 2007: 53). Thus, it is the *construction* of certain mobilities in particular moral framings that produce the otherness of bodies exhibiting them rather than the other way around.

**Conclusion**

Sloterdijk considers the rituals of territorialisation — the ‘obsessive equation of place and self’ — that ‘virtually all settled groups throughout human history’ have imposed upon themselves (2014: 150). The result, he claims, is an equally obsessive fixation on the maintenance of borders and the aesthetic identification of ‘outsiders’: those who do not belong. Homeless people, particularly those who are visibly homeless, are disconnected from the semiotics of space and place and therefore from processes of group identity formation. This, in sum, is the basis of the spatial threat that the presence of homeless bodies poses to the settled polity (Ranasinghe and Valverde 2006).

If not contained, the threat of ‘de-territorialisation’ — the disruption of the proper meanings of space and place — threatens to spread. Recalling Goodrich’s claim that fear of nomad and vagabond suggests ‘an extreme fear... of internal decay’, the visibly homeless are feared because they signify
the deconstruction of the spaces they inhabit but do not belong in rendering them unfamiliar and strange (2005: 129). The homeless achieve this by transgressing the powerful yet largely intangible social and cultural boundaries that form the basis of the meaning(s) of public space. According to Bottomley and Moore (2007), the defining characteristic of contemporary urban public space is openness, or, put otherwise, emptiness. The social functions of public space, they claim, have been hollowed out and replaced with economic functions. The new purpose of contemporary public space is to act as a conduit that facilitates and expedites while pre-emptively foreclosing on unanticipated and unsolicited encounters. Bodies that fail to adhere to the sanctioned modes of dynamic movement in public space represent impediments or snags in the flow. Even the sight of such bodies, the visual or aesthetic encounter, roughens the journey through the smooth spaces of the consumer-city.

The corollary to this open, empty city is the vehicular body: encased in capital and inured against the environment and the social ecology, the product of Mitchell’s ‘atomic individualism’ (2005: 79). While the social and political values of public space appear to be in retreat, claims that public space is ‘dead’ appear to be overreaching (Sennett 1978; Sorkin 1992; Iveson 2007: 6). Public space is certainly changing and this is visible in the emerging arrangements of how public homelessness is encountered and regulated. As White Night demonstrates, there are instances of publicity, where the purpose of public space is to inhabit it rather than simply to move through it. However, as I have demonstrated, the exact nature of this publicity and the conditions attached to it are subject to increasing levels of intervention, regulation and control.

In cities, multitudes of bodies are emplaced within spatialised regulatory practices and situated in relation to the maintenance of borders. This occurs through the privatization of technologies of surveillance and exclusion, as well as the restructuring of ostensibly public spaces. Shopping centres utilize technologies that displace disruptive youth, commercial property owners install hostile
architecture and cafes and restaurants privatise public space through outdoor seating available only to paying customers. As such, a significant amount of spatial regulation is outsourced to the private sector which has few if any formal obligations to the vulnerable or those who fall outside the boundaries of civil propriety. The city becomes a site of overlapping regulatory ambits in which consumer bodies are enticed, propelled and drawn into a multitude of strategies that facilitate particular bodies and squeeze out those deemed problematic or risky. While the spaces of the city have been colonized by economic values, moral conceptions of order are still cleaved to. Thus, the failure to spend or consume properly in spaces defined by capitalist values is ascribed a moral significance.

In this sense, urban public space becomes the connective tissue linking an endless array of consumer choices so that we may ‘lose ourselves’ within their discovery. Returning to the advertisement, it predicts a troubling existential conundrum for the visitor to the city. In reality, the experience of losing oneself in the city is unlikely to be as enjoyable as the advertisement implies and, in fact, may be terrifying (see Goodbourn 2015). Bauman claims that the body is the last site of solidity in an increasingly liquid and uncertain world (2002: 63). The woman’s thread, similar to the one offered by Ariadne to Theseus, offers her stability and a guaranteed means of return. However, in a liquid world absent of solids and dominated by risk and uncertainty, threads may fray, break or be cut. In many ways, the homeless are those whose threads have frayed, slipped from their fingers, or snapped: some are able to find their thread again, or tie broken ends together. Though as the data on homelessness demonstrates, with each break the thread weakens and the chances of one’s homelessness becoming chronic or permanent increase significantly. Moreover, what of those never had any thread to begin with, such as those born homeless or into generationally entrenched poverty and placelessness? Demonstrably, the dominant causative narratives of homelessness need updating to reflect the entrenched and systemic nature of its causes.
The spatial and visual encounter with the homeless body hints at the spaces between the edifices of lawful society: gaps in the ostensibly encompassing and totalising structure of the state (Philippopolous-Mihalopolous 2007: 12). This chapter has examined the nature of that encounter — of coming face to face with the conditionality of citizenship and the contingency of the benefits that accompany membership — as it occurs in the spaces of the city and the responses that this prompts.

When the city encounters discrepancies in its ‘self-description’ such as the presence of impoverished, placeless bodies, these become a troubling reminder of the chaos underlying all systems of order (Ranciere 1999: 16). Processes of image maintenance become existentially necessary not just for the continuing influx of capital but for maintaining the myths under which consumer citizens labour on a daily basis. These processes are not just limited to advertising, but are embedded within daily systems and routines, such the continuous process of waste management and disposal. For cities dominated by late-modern consumer capitalism, the disposal of waste (both material and symbolic) is so essential that it becomes the primary sustaining force. As Philippopolous-Mihalopolous claims, a ‘city must get rid of its waste in order to carry on functioning and not being buried under the sheer horror of its excreta’ (2007: 10). Waste, that product so essential to capitalism, comes in many forms, all of which feature in processes of order maintenance. Rubbish, old buildings, degraded neighbourhoods, homeless bodies, all must be responded to and either renewed or disposed of. This chapter now turns to the broader political processes of responses to homelessness, to examine how homelessness is conceived politically, and how the irreconcilable tensions that homelessness poses for the state are shifted, managed and moved around.
Intermezzo:

Brunswick

I’m doing observational fieldwork in Brunswick. It is approaching 30 degrees Celsius, an unusually hot day for late March. I’m on Lygon Street in East Brunswick and taking photographs of the urban landscape, focusing on signs of decay and renewal. There are a lot of construction sites around here. It is difficult to walk 200 metres in any direction in Brunswick without encountering some kind of redevelopment. The temporary fencing erected around the sites is covered in graffiti. At one site, I am photographing the cranes as they lift packets of steel beams high into the air (see Figure 17). I am trying to capture the contrast between the space left by whatever had been there and the half-built skeletons of what will be there soon.

A man in a high-visibility vest approaches me and taps me on the shoulder. The vest says CFMEU (Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union) on it, so he must be a construction worker. ‘You gonna come back and tag up that crane huh? You and your mates?’ He speaks in a friendly way but his manner is aggressive and his tone accusatory. ‘No’ I reply, and pretend to show that I am not intimidated by taking another photo. He remains standing by me, watching me and points to a tag on a nearby wall. ‘That one of yours, is it? You think that’s good, that’s cool, huh?’ ‘No’, I reply again. ‘Heh’ he says and moves off, nudging into me as he walks past to get in his car. He really puts his shoulder into it and I stumble back a step. I haven’t finished taking photos but I start to move down the street anyway, taking my bike with me. I see a group of five men across the road, all in high-vis vests, watching me. I look back towards the man who pushed me; he is sitting in his car staring at me, hands crossed over the top of the steering wheel. I get on my bike, shaken, and ride to another part of Brunswick.
I can’t remember the last time I had my own spatial legitimacy challenged so directly; not since high school probably. I then think about women who get wolf-whistled, about Aboriginal people inhabiting public space as a cultural practice, and I think about people who are homeless. I think about how informal most policing is; how being read a certain way (as a graffiti artist, a criminal, or as homeless) can result in direct challenges to your being in public. Behaviour — violence — that would not otherwise be socially acceptable suddenly is, and is imbued with a moral force and imperative. I realise that the signification of Other-ness (criminality) through formal mechanisms (the law) is in many ways less important than informal systems of signification, categorisation and policing. To be understood as not worthy of civility, of basic social etiquette, is a truer measure of one’s marginalisation than the legal categorisation of one’s behaviour. Behaviours that are normative, such as taking photos can, in certain contexts, suddenly render you a legitimate target for informal justice. Does this help to explain the public violence and harassment homeless people report or the stories, similar to Mouse’s, where homeless people are killed in apparently trivial confrontations? I wonder whether such events are actually random or can instead be considered informal acts of social exorcism.
Chapter Six:
Responsibility

*There is politics because man is the living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion.* (Agamben 1998: 8)

*In the modern nation-state, there are two principle reactions to the homeless and immigrants: demands for assimilation and criminalisation. In either case, these demands spring from the desire to subsume the other into the same or to radically expel the Other to maintain the purity of the (political) self.* (Arnold 2004: 52)

**Introduction**

Coleman writes: *‘[l]ooking beyond the formal institutions and pronouncements of “criminal justice” agencies provides a necessary step for understanding how deviant categories emerge and are sanctioned within a complex of public-private institutional activity’* (2007: 50). For Coleman, the necessity of exceeding the traditional institutional boundaries of crime and criminality is necessary to capture and comprehend broader conceptions of deviance and illegitimacy. Similarly, Young claims that the ‘criminal’, as a figure or an aesthetic, can be detected beyond the institutional borders of crime as jurisdiction (1996: 7). For example, as Garland shows, social welfare institutions have historically longstanding links to the governance of crime, criminality and disorder (1985: 235). More recently, Rodger has given an exhaustive account of what he describes as the ‘criminalisation of social policy’ (2008: 195) and Wacquant has described the *rapprochement* of social and penal policy (2009: 13). Clearly then, there is need to look beyond the technical and often reductive legal categories of ‘crime’ and examine broader trends, logics and strategies in the governance of social order to see how categories of deviance and illegitimacy emerge.
As this thesis has argued, the criminal justice system is employed to regulate people experiencing homelessness. However, the social and welfare responses targeted at this population may also be imbued with punitive logics, isolationist strategies and moral opprobrium, though the reproachful tenor of these regimes may be more difficult to discern. Exclusionary institutional practices can operate indirectly or through inactivity, such as the neglect or mismanagement of essential services (Coleman 2007: 50). This may be as simple as withholding funding despite increasing demand. From a critical perspective, such a dynamic characterises political and governmental responses to homelessness in Australia generally. Despite a long-standing surplus of demand, chronic underfunding of homelessness services and public and emergency housing in Australia is the norm. De-prioritisation appears to be the unofficial political and economic model for governing homelessness, an approach that I describe as ‘punitive neglect’.

The previous chapters have set out various ways in which homelessness and associated behaviours are encountered and regulated within the spaces of the city. As shown, are constructed binaries and corollary tensions relating to how homelessness is understood biographically and aetiologically; its visible presence (or not) in space and how this influences the regulatory dynamics operating in urban environments. With these tensions in mind, this chapter considers how homelessness is situated in the political sphere, how responsibility for homelessness is conceived by the state, and how the tensions and contradictions identified play out in governance strategies. Specifically, efforts to variously contain, administer, isolate, assist, include and exclude the homeless are considered as part of a complex and oftentimes-contradictory strategy for governing homelessness.

Bauman writes that ‘[t]hroughout the era of modernity, the nation state has claimed the right to preside over the distinction between order and chaos, law and lawlessness, citizen and homo sacer, belonging and exclusion, useful (read: legitimate) product and waste’ (2004: 33). The construction of the homed/homeless binary and the orientation of responses around this distinction reflect this
normative process of differentiation. Like the binaries identified by Bauman, the distinction between homed and homeless is an artificial, serving to reinforce extant hegemonic structural relations and the uneven distribution of political power (2004: 33). This chapter examines these distributions of power as they play out in strategies of governance. ‘Governance’ here does not refer solely to state efforts for social control but instead indicates ‘a pluralistic understanding of regulation freed from its (conceptual) chains to the sovereign state’ (Crawford 2006: 450; see also Levi-Faur 2005). In particular, this chapter examines the ways that homelessness undermines modern liberalism’s claim to universal enfranchisement and the array of regulatory and alleviative responses that this animates. These responses are, I claim, oriented toward the coercive insertion of homeless bodies into relations of domination precipitated by their persistent social presence.

The main barrier to conceptualising political responsibility for the homeless (and the coherent responses that would flow on from this) is that homelessness is discursively cut off from its systemic and structural causes. It is understood as isolated from the structural and socio-political forces from which it emerges. In other words, homelessness is conceived as abnormal within the context of late-modern capitalism. As Kawash states: ‘homelessness is [understood] not [as] a problem that occurs within the public sphere but [as] a threat that appears from elsewhere’ (1998: 320-1). In seeking to resist this discursive displacement of homelessness, I identify responses across a broad political field that function to maintain the symbolic externality of the homeless. In an effort to subvert the siloing of homelessness within particular institutional boundaries, my analysis traverses a range of socio-political spaces of governance. Underpinning this approach is a political proposition about the homed/homeless binary. Having identified the various ways in which clear demarcations between home/homeless are unreliable, albeit persistent, this chapter proposes a deconstruction of the symbolic demarcation of home (belonging) from homeless (non-belonging). In deconstructing the distinction between inside and outside, a radical politics of inclusion emerges in which strangers are welcome not in spite their strangeness but because of it.
While this chapter and this thesis more broadly are focused on the regulation and isolation of the homeless, this should not imply that the constructed Other-ness of homelessness is monolithic or all-encompassing. Encounters with homelessness can be and often are characterised by compassion, connection, recognition and inclusion. However, many of the structures dedicated to the management of this population, such as the homeless sector, serve covert regulatory functions in addition to their ostensibly inclusionary and therapeutic work. Taken together, the various means of regulating homelessness and behaviours associated with it produce an overall strategy that is inconsistent, inadequate and contradictory in nature. While this might appear to be the product of various institutional actors with competing goals, viewed from a broader perspective the ineffectiveness of policy responses can be read as intentional: a governmental mechanism for maintaining the status quo.

This chapter begins by offering an account of the array of responses to homelessness that constitute the field of governance dedicated to this population and then offers an alternative understanding: internal exclusion, or the isolation and neutralisation of problematic populations within the social body. This model deconstructs the previous distinction in order to demonstrate that even putatively inclusive responses may be pursued and supported largely within the state’s interests. That is, to maintain the ‘invisible’ character of homelessness and suppressing its socio-political salience. This allows the state to continue abdicating its responsibility for the homeless via the outsourcing of governance strategies to the community and private sectors. I will argue that this is an attempt to reconcile a thus far irresolvable tension between the suppression of the political and economic origins of poverty and homelessness, and the persistent presence and visibility of poverty within the socio-political sphere (Arnold 2004: 54).
Governing Homelessness.

Meagher (2004) and Healy (2004) describe the social services system in Australia as a ‘mixed economy’: a complex interrelation of state, community and private sector bodies involved in the delivery of welfare and social services. Since the end of the World War Two there has been a gradual shift away from the modernist welfare state toward outsourced and privatised state functions (including the administration and delivery of welfare and human services), dubbed the ‘third way’ (Dow 1999: 209; Billis 1993). The outsourcing and privatisation of many state responsibilities is now the norm in many Western democracies, which has given rise to the community sector: a collection of bodies that manage many of the social and human-service functions previously administered by the state. However, a new, non-community sector affiliated collection of homelessness services appears to be emerging in the form of mobile services run by private social enterprise bodies. These are not-for-profit organisations that provide basic services via a van or bus parked near where some people experiencing homelessness commonly gather. Church groups and charities providing food for the homeless and needy from soup vans have used this model for decades, though mobile service delivery is now being used to provide things like showers, clothes washing and even a bed for the night. The emergence of this social enterprise service sector potentially signals a further mixing of the service economy, and potentially, the further marginalisation of the State’s role in human and welfare services.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes how in the shift from sovereign to disciplinary power arrangements, authority becomes extra-judicially located (1977). That is, authoritative power is decoupled from the judicial apparatus and diffused throughout the structures of society, what Levi-Fair describes as the state’s ‘delegation of regulatory efforts and tactics’ (2005: 13). Sites of subjection to power are thus dispersed through the social and political fields rather than being

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128 The area of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) has an interesting and expanding body of scholarship. While the intricacies of these complex relationships are beyond the scope of this thesis, Marique’s recent and insightful examination of these partnerships and their relevance to law is an apt starting point (2014).
centralised or monopolised by particular state institutions. Garland also provides an exhaustive account of the penal, coercive and regulatory features of contemporary welfare responses (1985).

Given the lack of a single overarching regulatory force, the governance of homelessness is dispersed across a multitude of public and private bodies and across a range of institutional and political fields. Some see the outsourcing of various social responsibilities as signifying the gradual retreat of the State from directly interventionist roles (Dow 1999). However, Lea and Hallsworth propose that it is more productive to view the state as facilitating the differentiation and multiplication of its functions rather than signaling the diminishment of state power by incursions from non-state actors (2013: 32). From this perspective, the ‘difference between the state and society, politics and the economy does not function as a… borderline, but as an element and effect of specific governmental technologies’ (Lemke 2008: 18). That is, the ostensible retreat of the state can be viewed alternately as an extension of its authority through co-optation of various other social bodies. Or as Lea and Hallsworth put it: ‘…much of what appears as the privatisation or retreat of the state and the rise of governance by ‘non-state actors’ is in effect the emergence of new coalitions and technologies of state rules and state action’ (2013: 32).

Instead of seeing the community sector, corporations, business alliances, retailers and cafes as non-state actors exerting autonomous control over public space or policy, they can more productively be viewed as constituent bodies of a dispersed network of governance. They are islands that, as a group, constitute a collection of state-sanctioned regulatory functions: an archipelago of governance in which the state is the primary, but not the only, actor. These multiple actors exert a coercive regulatory force on space and bodies via their participation in the sanctioned pursuit of profit and capital. As Coleman et al put it: ‘[t]he struggles that determine the trajectory of the governing process take place within the alliances between locally powerful agencies… [and] their partnerships between city centre managers, chief executives, developers, local authorities [and] senior police
[that]... herald a new form of neoliberal statecraft’ (2005: 2512). Thus, the homeless are under the governmental influence of multiple bodies: not just municipal and civic, but private and entrepreneurial as well.

The government’s role in governing the homeless is mostly in the development of policy frameworks, funding allocation as well as in recognising and rewarding organisations that engage with people experiencing homelessness. For example, two of the four Victorian Australians of the Year for 2016 were honoured for work relating to homelessness, though neither is employed in a dedicated role relating to homelessness. Given the state’s outsourcing of homelessness services to the community sector and the chronic underfunding of this sector, these awards hint at the State’s abrogation of its responsibilities for vulnerable groups like the homeless. While on one hand this is welcome, private-sector participation in homelessness services should not be accepted uncritically. The participation of corporate bodies in the homeless sector can be viewed as these organisations attempting to mitigate or obscure the effects of their activities on the poor and vulnerable. For example, in Australia, corporate bodies routinely campaign against increasing worker protections or raising the minimum wage and are involved in processes of redevelopment and gentrification that result in the displacement of homeless inhabitants.129 The consequences of urban revitalisation projects and property development for groups like the homeless, the unemployed and the assumed-to-be-idle youth are either not considered at all or, worse, the marginalisation of these groups from these spaces is the goal of revitalisation. In short, this mixed economy of groups engaging with homelessness is highly complex, with actors often engaged in activities that assist or advocate for the homeless as well as those that marginalise and exclude them.

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129 Property investment, construction and urban redevelopment companies have few legal obligations to consider and minimise the impact of their activities on the original inhabitants of areas under development. In addition, the few obligations that exist only recognise those who own property in an area as legal inhabitants, whereas homeless people who may have lived in an area for years are not considered at all (Valverde 2012: 66).
Sarah Toohey from the Council to Homeless Persons recalled working at the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) in energy policy. She said her main role was to repeatedly ask ‘How will this effect poor people?’ in policy development meetings between the government and the energy sector, usually to little effect. Toohey identified a common dynamic in political responses to homelessness and poverty: the technical inclusion of these groups as objects of consideration as a means of politically neutralising them (Dean 2011). In this sense, efforts by the state and private sector to assist the homeless can be viewed as them attempting to mitigate the harms their other activities (the de-regulation of the housing market, area redevelopment and tax incentives for property investors) impose on vulnerable populations. In addition, this example shows how groups like the homeless are disproportionately affected by policies and projects that exist outside of the homelessness policy silo, and so make few explicit references to them as a group.

Organisations within the homeless sector regularly issue policy proposals to government on a wide variety of issues not readily associated with homelessness, like energy, taxation and urban planning. Changes in these areas can have disproportionate effects on the homeless and precariously housed (Jones 2005; Berry et al 2001). For example, the effects on the homeless of policies designed to make markets more competitive, streamline the welfare system or promote investment in housing and construction are significant (Chester and Morris 2011; Taylor, Gray and Stanton 2016). Yet, the institutional siloing of homelessness marginalises it politically and renders it invisible except within the narrow horizons of the homeless sector (and to a lesser extent, the criminal justice system). This political isolation of homelessness galvanises the symbolic distinction between homed/ homeless and serves to maintain its existing connotations (with crime, deviance, irresponsibility, and lower socio-moral worth). Exacerbating the consequences of the siloing of homelessness is a stagnant welfare system that no longer adequately covers basic costs of living and structurally risk-averse public housing associations that remain out-of-reach for those most in need (Anglicare Rental
This ensures that the most vulnerable are also the most visible, meaning that the stigmatised minority are understood as representative of homelessness generally. Indirectly, the social institutions of the ‘home’, the family and ‘market-citizenship’ (where participation in markets becomes the vehicle for citizenship practices and participative democracy) are politically endorsed and normalised, ensuring the persistence of the symbolic externality of homelessness (Havemann 2005: 73; Valverde 2012: 65).

This has the consequence of marginalisation the homeless from the majority of political decision-making and policies that affect them. Thus, the myriad ways the homeless are systematically excluded and marginalised from the normative socio-political sphere remain hidden behind the looming figure of the homeless Other. It is at the borders of the state’s authority that the violence involved in maintaining the status quo becomes clear, and it is at the edges of inclusion and exclusion where the state’s coercive mechanisms become visible. In light of this, this chapter now turns to the penal responses utilised against the homeless.

**Penal Responses**

The contradictory nature of governance strategies is reflective of the generally contested and ambivalent nature of representations of homelessness discussed in various manifestations throughout this thesis. The stark moral terms used to effect a severe delineation between the homed and the homeless contributes to criminogenic constructions of homelessness and legislative attempts to differentiate the deserving from the undeserving homeless (as recounted in Chapter Three) that fragment the homeless population into various sub-categories freighted with different symbolic and moral values (for example, the homeless ‘battler’ versus the ‘aggressive’ beggar).

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130 Housing associations and providers are overseen by the Housing Registrar and must abide by their regulatory framework. The strict rules for risk management and financial viability mean that people deemed ‘high-risk’ (who are also more likely to experience long-term or chronic homelessness) are legally excluded from accessing housing through these agencies (see Department of Human Services 2007/2010)).
Social or governmental to homelessness are in turn influenced and indeed organised around these moral categories, exemplified by recent crackdowns on begging in Melbourne (discussed in Chapter Five).

The formally non-criminal status of being homeless means that, in conjunction with the legal protections granted to all citizens, the homeless are generally protected from coercive state intervention that explicitly targets or punishes them for being homeless. However, this constraint prompts creative responses from both the state and private bodies that target the homeless population indirectly. Examples of this include broad-base political austerity measures; the continued retrenchment of welfare; the manipulation of space and urban ecology such as hostile architecture; and the privatisation of public space; and the criminalisation of behaviours associated with hardship, poverty and homelessness (Coleman et al 2005; Theodore, Peck and Brenner 2011).

The most visible responses to homelessness are those carried out by the judicial arm of the state: the police and to a lesser extent government officers like public transport employees. Police respond to homelessness through the criminalisation of certain behaviours, in particular begging, squeegeeing at traffic lights, using public transport without a ticket and public drunkenness (Adams 2014b; Masanauskas 2016c). While the latter two have ambits of effect beyond the homeless and visibly poor, these groups are disproportionately affected by such laws (Adams 2014b: 6). A stated, the most common consequence for people experiencing homelessness who break these laws are fines.

O’Malley writes of the fine that ‘money can be seen as consistent with legal penalties that are levied anonymously, not necessarily against specific individuals per se so much as against them in their roles and positions of ownership or employment’ (2009: 7). In the case of the homeless, I would add ‘or lack thereof’. While these financial sanctions are technically levied against behaviours, their
utilisation against a group of people whose very presence in public is deemed unacceptable extends beyond mere reproach and into outright moral condemnation. While the meaning of the pecuniary fine is ostensibly universal, in reality the political effectivity of a fine is anything but (O’Malley: 7). For the consumer-citizen, the fine functions as a disincentive that discourages certain behaviours and thereby encouraging adherence to the dominant socio-legal norms of behaviour (O’Malley 2009: 23). For the homeless and publicly destitute, a fine penalises their presence and visibility in public space. While the use of fines against a group characterised by financial poverty makes little strategic sense, it clearly fulfils other, less logical, motives or desires.131

Research has shown that fines constitute an aggravating factor in housing instability and increase the chances of becoming homeless. In addition, fine-based debt forms a significant barrier for people attempting to end their homelessness (Adams 2014b: 25; Pennay et al 2014: 1091). People with complex needs and experiencing ‘multiple exclusion homeless’ — those who are loud, disruptive, behave erratically and are thus more visible to the public and police — are more likely to be targeted with fines (Fitzpatrick et al 2013). As discussed in Chapter Five, while there are mechanisms for the waiving of fines in extenuating circumstances access to these is highly prohibitive.

While the police do use discretion in their engagement with the homeless population, the public nature of homelessness and the criminalisation of private behaviour carried out in public means that encounters between the homeless and police are frequent. Anne Barton, a planner in the Housing and Advocacy portfolio at Yarra City Council, told me that the Council has a good working relationship with police in the area specifically in relation to the regulation of street practices associated with homelessness and the local Indigenous population. For example, their rough-

131 Fines are the most common legal sanction utilised by the criminal justice system generally. Given we know that a huge proportion of crime is economically motivated or at least contextualised, the persistence of the fine as the favoured penal sanction is troubling (see O’Malley 2009).
sleepers protocol states that all Victorians have a right to be in public space and someone sleeping rough should only be approached if they appear distressed, require assistance or pose a safety risk (Yarra City Council 2012). Melbourne City Council has similar provisions (City of Melbourne 2006), yet these are obviously undermined by restrictions on begging, camping and other activities. Many of JusticeConnect’s clients face prison sentences due to unpaid fines, which constitute one of the primary means of entry into the criminal justice system for people experiencing homelessness (Adams 2014a: 57). Whether intentionally or not, fines and other penal mechanisms levied against the homeless are not mere disincentives, but take on a new, more punitive effectivity when utilised against this population.

Even ostensibly social responses to homelessness become incorporated into a broader penal apparatus. As discussed in Chapter Five, ‘Operation Minta’ was a crackdown on begging coordinated by Melbourne City Council, Victoria police and The Salvation Army. People caught begging were arrested and required to participate in a diversion program run by the Salvation Army. However, in Victoria, diversion programs require the entrance of a guilty plea, which can result in a criminal record (s. 59, Criminal Procedures Act 2009). Therefore, while the participation of offenders is technically voluntary, refusing to participate means being charged with begging while cooperating requires pleading guilty to the same charge, possibly resulting in a criminal record. Even a program designed to divert the homeless away from entry into the criminal justice system involves them being coercively inserted into it. At the time of Operation Minta, it was reported that two people arrested in the crackdown had been jailed and nine more were participating the Salvation Army’s ‘special programs’ (precisely what the program involved is unknown) (Masanauskas 2013). Of those nine, four failed the program and were facing prosecution. Lord Mayor Doyle was quoted saying: ‘My view would be, don’t lock them up straight away. You have to give real battlers like this a couple of cracks at it. But if you don’t go on this program, if you waste this chance, you’re going to finish up in jail’ (Masanauskas 2013: no pagination). According to the Salvation Army’s Major Brendan Nottle,
the purpose of the crackdown was to ‘get... them the help that they desperately need’, though from this perspective it appears designed to insert individuals into the criminal justice system and to thus place further restrictions on their behaviour with more severe consequences for breaching these (ABC News 2013: no pagination).

This exemplifies the ‘criminalisation of homelessness’. Despite homelessness not being formally criminal, homeless individuals are dealt with primarily through criminal justice mechanisms. These work in concert and consultation with homeless services and charities (such as The Salvation Army), utilising methods that combine regulatory responses with outreach/advocacy programs. Such tactics, labelled ‘assertive’ outreach, often involve the threat of onerous punishments to coerce the people into entering state-funded disciplinary programs (Mantzioros 2015; Parsell and Phillips 2012). Thus, while homelessness is not itself criminal, homeless people are responded to through enforcement-based approaches that result in their entrance into the criminal justice system.

Strategies of indirect criminalisation can be contextualised politically by a state-wide focus on anti-social behaviour and law and order policing by the conservative state government in power at the time in Victoria. For example, 2011 saw the introduction of on-the-spot fines for swearing in public places. This was followed in 2013 by a suite of new police powers including new legislation for regulating protest; the introduction of discretionary move-on orders that attract a $720 fine for non-compliance; exclusion orders allowing police to ban individuals from an area for up to 12 months; and making ignoring a police directive an arrestable offence (Summary Offences and Sentencing

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132 Loader identifies how various agencies and sectors (for example, the community sector and homelessness agencies) are drawn in and contribute to dispersed practices of regulation Loader describes as an ““extended policing family” [that] joins up a range of... other agencies (housing, social services, youth offending teams) in local social control activities coordinated by the public police’ (2006: 205).

133 Swearing and offensive language are outlawed under Victorian law in the Summary Offences Act 1966 (Vic), however prosecutions under this for offensive language alone require a courts summons and are thus a significant amount of effort and resources. The granting of on-the-spot fine powers to Victoria police avoids this. See Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2011 (Vic) s. 10.
Amendment Bill (Vic) 2013). While the Bill was repealed in 2014 with a change of government, several provisions able to be utilised against the homeless were retained, such as increased penalties for ‘trespass, besetting, obstruction of roads and footpath’ (Summary Offences Amendment (Move-On Laws) Bill (Vic) 2015).

The corollary of this bulking up of the arsenal of police powers is the paring back of protections for the homeless and groups at risk of homelessness. For example, the recently passed Consumer Acts and Other Amendments Bill 2015 (Vic) allows tenants to be given notice to vacate via email. The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is a free and accessible tribunal that hears housing matters such as tenancy disputes and eviction challenges. In 2011, the Supreme Court ruled that VCAT could no longer consider the Victorian Charter of Human Rights in eviction proceedings (Director of Housing v Sudi [2011] VCSA 266). Section 38 of the Charter describes obligations held by social landlords (who provide low-cost housing) to not evict a tenant into homelessness as this would breach their human right to safe and adequate housing. The ruling effectively places the Charter outside of VCAT’s jurisdiction. Proceedings regarding a landlord’s compliance with the Charter must now be heard in the Supreme Court of Victoria. While the Charter requires public authorities to act in compliance with its principles, this decision excludes those facing eviction into homelessness from accessing the protections it enshrines. Furthermore, it makes the work of under-funded homelessness services and specialist legal centres representing tenants facing eviction far more difficult and costly. As Adams succinctly put it to me, ‘...human rights aren’t really that realistic if you have to go to the Supreme Court to have them enforced.’

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134 Anna Radonic from YouthLaw (a specialist legal service for youth at risk of homelessness) noted that the police have always moved marginalised individuals and groups on, regardless of whether or not they were formally empowered to do so (see also Walsh 2007).

135 The decision of Director of Housing v Sudi [2011] VCSA 266 in the Court of Appeal found that VCAT did not have the power to review the lawfulness of the Director of Housing’s decision to apply for a possession order of the property in question as VCAT does not possess a judicial review jurisdiction. Judgement available at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/cases/vic/VSCA/2011/266.html
While various police and punitive responses are explained elsewhere in the thesis, it is the retrenching of avenues of recourse that typifies the state’s abrogation of its responsibilities for the homeless. Consequently, systems of redress and review for harms experienced by the homeless are systematically situated beyond their means of access, meaning the rights that accompany property ownership are valued above human rights. Adams writes that ‘[i]n the absence of understanding why people are engaging in the conduct that is the subject of concern, it is difficult if not impossible to develop sensible, effective, sustainable solutions to the perceived problem’ (2014a: 87). Common understandings of homelessness and its causes do not function as a means of understanding why people are homeless or engaging in certain conduct, instead, acting as a barrier to such understandings. As stated earlier, homelessness becomes an organising principle, identifying and delineating those worthy of socio-moral denunciation through the apportioning of the rights and benefits of citizenship. Thus, being unable to access the benefits of citizenship does not signify a failure of the State to provide the means of access, but instead become the failure of an individual or group to actively partake of them.

**Outsourced Obligations: The State and Community Sector**

In contrast to the explicitly punitive responses just examined are the therapeutic or ameliorant responses aimed at mitigating the social and personal harms of homelessness and assist those currently homeless to gain stable housing. Most of these operate within the community sector (usually under the direction of and with funding from the state). The community sector delivers a wide variety of services to people, including those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. While there is a dedicated homeless sector within the broader community space, most community services

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136 The main difference between the community and private sectors is that the private sector is for profit, whereas the community sector is not (Andrews 2006: 314). However, this difference does not necessarily prevent the private sector from delivering the same services as the community sector. For example, there are for-profit drug and alcohol rehabilitation organisations — usually prohibitively expensive — which, when delivered by a state-funded not-for-profit, are considered a community service (Andrews 2006: 315).
(such as alcohol and drug treatment, financial counselling, social work etc.) likely work with people for whom housing is an issue. In this sense, the entire community sector can be understood as constituting an apparatus the purpose of which is, in part, the prevention of homelessness. In regard to organisations that make up the dedicated homeless sector, their work ranges from preventative, reactive and palliative.\textsuperscript{137}

Many of the services whose staff I interviewed have in recent years shifted from paternalistic ‘charity’ to empowerment models. Such models seek to empower users of a service by engaging with them in reciprocal relationship of respect. For example, Tony Keenan told me that Hanover does not routinely provide meals to clients: ‘So here at the crisis centre we provide food, and people can access a space to cook, we do nutrition courses, we do a community barbeque a couple of times a week, but we think that plonking a meal down three times a day is not empowering.’\textsuperscript{138} Similarly, Jason Rosant, the director of advocacy at CoHealth, an organisation based in Footscray stated:

\begin{quote}
[S]o a key component to our service design approach to the way that we work is around consumer and community control, and developing models of consumer co-design so ultimately our consumers and communities ought to be at the centre of determining what we do and how and why we do it, and assisting and participating as much as possible in all aspects of planning, delivery, design and evaluation of those things.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{137} I use the term ‘palliative’ here to describe the easing of hardship for extremely marginalised and disadvantaged people who have zero chance of maintaining stable housing. Bruinhout from Melbourne City Mission said to me: ‘Down at Wintringham they’re working with old people who have been homeless for decades, they’re at the other end of their life course and you ask them where they’re going to be in five years, they know damn well where they’re going to be in five years.’

\textsuperscript{138} It should be noted that rather than shifting to a model of empowerment, Hanover Welfare Services have always sought to work within such a model. Set up in 1964 as an organisation driven by empirical research with the goal of empowering its clients, an ethos which differentiates it from most services.
However, Keenan was not supportive of all aspects of these recent developments. While he said the shift away from paternalist models had many benefits, he was also critical of the resulting professionalization of the community sector and of human and social services more broadly:

So, you know, I’m an atheist now but I was brought up a Catholic, and what that did — that thing of hanging out at the Church — was you had to put up with the poor and the smelly. And it was all part of a community, but now, more and more, you’re an individual unit; more and more you hang out at cafés, you send your kids to private school and so we cut out any sort of interaction with disadvantage and poverty. So I think those sort of social changes have really impacted upon those at the margins. And things like the decline of collective activities: unions, churches, groups like Rotary and the rise of individualism. I think they’re the major drivers of marginalisation and our response has been professional services... Our response has been ‘So we’ll get a little bit of money, not much, and we’ll fund professional services and prisons to look after those people.’

But a professional service can’t provide what those other things used to provide.

Here, Keenan is describing what Zygmunt Bauman terms the ‘melting of the solids’, where the networks of connection and meaning (life-long careers, family, church, community etc.) in which individuals used to be held have fractured and dissolved (Bauman 2000). Responses to homelessness were once centred in communities and mostly administrated and delivered through churches or by volunteers. What was once a complex network of overlapping and multivalent community relationships is now unilateral, professionalised and stripped of personal meaning. In response to this, Keenan stated that the most important work they do at Hanover is the informal events that focus on community building, such as weekend barbeques and a women’s soccer team. Such programs address the non-material elements of homelessness, housing precarity and marginalisation — such as loss of social connection, reduction in quantity and quality of

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139 Bauman names the current era ‘liquid modernity’, which is characterised by a progressive liquidising of formerly solid and consistent sites of meaning production (2000).
relationships, degradation of communication and identity — rather than the more obvious material dimensions of housing and financial resources.

While Keenan identified these shifts in the community sector, he said the real problem was funding: ‘Well, we’ve got a pool of funding so we can stop the immediate crisis... but then [our clients] say “Well, now I need a house”, and I say, “Well, what I can offer you is case management and an African drumming class”.’ Funding arrangements tied to political cycles are the norm in the community sector in Australia and this regularly affects the scope of the sector’s work and ability to operate. All my interviewees cited a lack of funding as a primary barrier to the effectiveness of their service, while several noted an ethical discomfort regarding what this meant for their work. The state only provides enough funding to prevent a significant worsening of current arrangements and to manage the social visibility and political salience of homelessness. In this sense, the community sector is incorporated into a broader form of neoliberal statecraft, in which community and social services become struts maintaining the authority of the state.

However, the dominance of universalised human rights discourses requires that governments formally align themselves with vulnerable groups such as the homeless (Dean 2011: 80). This does not foreclose on the possibility of punitive or regressive state responses to the issue, and instead merely determines the political rhetoric that frames such responses. For example, when elected in 2007, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd released a governmental White Paper on homelessness which proposed halving the number of homeless people and offering supported accommodation to all rough-sleepers in Australia by 2020. Rudd also created the Australian Social Inclusion Board, an independent body that would advise government on reducing poverty and disadvantage through research and policy reform. During Rudd’s notoriously turbulent and short-lived term in office, the

140 Another example of this in Australia is the political discourse on refugees. Current policies of offshore detention and processing of refugees that attempt to reach Australia by boat are routinely framed as being in the interests of refugees, for example, to prevent deaths at sea and the exploitation of refugees by people smugglers (see Bui 2015; Vogl and Methven 2015).
initiatives failed to get off the ground and were subsequently abandoned in 2013 with a change of government. When asked in 2010 whether he would match Rudd’s 2020 targets, the conservative opposition leader Tony Abbott stated: ‘we can’t stop people from being homeless if that’s their choice’, as well as quoting the Gospel of Matthew: ‘the poor will always be with us’ (Nader 2010: no pagination, Perusco 2010: no pagination).

Subsequently, in 2015 the conservative Federal Government cut $21 million from the three national homelessness and housing peak service bodies and a further $44 million from the National Partnership on Homelessness.\textsuperscript{141} When justifying these cuts, the then Social Services Minister Scott Morrison spoke of ‘fairness’, ‘efficiency’, and ‘ensuring the state provides for the most vulnerable’ (Borrello and McDonald 2015: no pagination). Such cuts impair the capacity of services to deliver outcomes to their clients, and often require the reorganisation or redevelopment of services to better suit the budgetary constraints and investment goals of the state (Mendes 2008).

As such, community-sector responses are not by definition inclusive, constructive or reparative. For example, the cultural homogeneity and bureaucracy of the community sector is a significant barrier for some groups accessing them, such as Indigenous Australians (Berry et al 2001: 6). As Meena Singh from the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) told me, this is a core reason why rates of removal of Indigenous children have increased in Victoria recently (Waters 2013; Australian Institute of Family Studies 2015). According to Singh, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and non-Indigenous welfare organisations often fail to recognise Indigenous understandings of home and family (such as non-blood kin as care-givers or guardians).\textsuperscript{142} This is despite such individuals forming

\textsuperscript{141} This was part of a broader $1 billion worth of cuts to social and community services nationally over 2014/15 (ACOSS 2014).

\textsuperscript{142} The issue of children and homelessness is highly complex and fraught with tensions around verification, notions of ‘best interest’ and inconsistent understandings of precisely what does and does not constitute homelessness. For example, in 2016 a Melbourne man who was incorrectly assumed homeless had his daughter removed from his custody by the New South Wales police. The man appealed her removal at the
an integral aspect of the child’s cultural conception of family. Due to this, the policies of these organisations often fail to recognise the legitimacy of Indigenous housing and care arrangements. Thus, state and community sector efforts often function to maintain the norms of social institutions (such as housing), which can actually function to disadvantage vulnerable groups like Aboriginal Australians.

Clearly, the state’s involvement in and funding of community services are motivated more by a desire to impose order upon particular populations, rather than seeking positive outcomes for the individuals involved. One effect of this cynical managerialism is widespread resentment and antipathy for the homeless and other marginalised groups (Schoefield and Butterworth 2015). For example, occasionally a politician departs from the approved cant of non-committal benevolence to express hostility towards the homeless and very poor. Robert Doyle’s statements about beggars being ‘swept from the streets’ is a prime example (Tomazin and Topsfield 2005: no pagination).

While funding cuts to the community sector are common, the amounts of money spent on these populations appear significant, particularly in relation to groups routinely framed as lazy, feckless and unwilling to work. Despite this, or rather because of it, the problematic funding cycles persist. This persistent cycle builds resentment and galvanises beliefs that the homeless are either lost causes or welfare cheats leeching off the system. However, what is not communicated effectively is that funding levels are comparatively low given the size of the target population (Zaretzky et al 2013; Baldry et al 2012). Here stereotypical constructions of homelessness emerge as the recipients of government (and therefore taxpayers’) money. These perceptions are inaccurate, as the majority of funding goes to crisis services and specialist programs, such as those targeting women, families and youth. Absent from the discourse on homelessness funding are the institutional costs (crisis housing, health, community services and criminal justice) of not adequately addressing homelessness.

Research by Baldry et al measured the costs to the state across the life-course of eleven individuals Children’s Court and was granted custody, though his daughter had spent eleven days in emergency accommodation under care of the state (see Ritchie 2016).
who were experiencing chronic homelessness; the results ranged from $900,000 – $5.5 million per individual (2012). Perhaps in response to the widespread ambivalence regarding public funding of homelessness services and the apparent inadequacy of the sector to address rising levels of homelessness, a new entrepreneurial group of services appears to be emerging.

**Entrepreneurial Philanthropy**

While the majority of homelessness services are delivered through the community sector, there is growing involvement from various entrepreneurial social-enterprise bodies. These are generally small, not-for-profit organisations unaffiliated with the community sector that provide basic services such as showers, clothes washing services, sanitary products, coffee and even job training. For example, Rebecca Scott and Robert Gillies were each honoured in the Victorian of the Year awards in 2016 for their work with people experiencing homelessness. Scott is a co-founder of STREAT, a social enterprise that assists young homeless people by providing training and work experiences in hospitality at several Melbourne cafes. Gillies is a co-founder of the *Homeless of Melbourne* photography project and *HoMie*, a not-for-profit clothing store that donates clothing to homeless people. Other examples include the Sleep Bus; the Streets Barber who provides free haircuts to rough-sleepers; mobile laundry service Orange Sky Laundry; and Dress For Success, a charity that provides professional attire for job interviews for people experiencing homelessness.\(^{143}\) However, while these organisations garner praise in the media for their charitable activities, a critical perspective reveals the ‘soft’ regulatory functions embedded within them (Frieberg 2010).

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\(^{143}\) One notable example is ‘The Period Project’, which provides sanitary products for homeless women to better help them manage having their period (which is understandably more difficult when you are homeless). The Period Project’s aim is to assist women experiencing homelessness to avoid the indignity of not being able to access these necessary products, while also seeking to reduce the stigma of the issue of menstruation more broadly.
In my research for this thesis, I interviewed Nick Pearce from HoMie, a clothing store that operates on a ‘one-for-one’ model where for each item of clothing bought by a paying customer, another is donated to a homeless person. Large clothing brands donate the clothes while designers and graphic artists volunteer the designs that are printed on the clothing. While HoMie has received a lot of praise, the inclusive façade of the enterprise obscures regulatory goals and an exclusionary and judgemental mindset. The first indication of these apparent contradictions is the location of the store. While the stated aim of Homie is to promote inclusion of people experiencing homelessness, the stores are located in the Melbourne Central shopping centre in Melbourne’s CBD and on fashionable Brunswick Street in Fitzroy. The irony here is that shopping precincts and malls have long been associated with exclusionary practices that target certain groups viewed as disorderly, including homeless people (Millie 2011; Lloyd and Auld 2010). Pearce said that the security team at Melbourne Central had to be briefed before they opened to ensure none of their homeless ‘customers’ were prevented from entering or removed. However, the store is not freely accessible to people experiencing homelessness anyway. Instead, homeless people who wish to access the charitable functions of HoMie (as opposed to accessing it as a paying consumer) are required to register their interest through homelessness services partnered with HoMie. As Pearce said:

No one can just come straight in and say ‘I’m homeless, give me clothes’, they’ll actually have to engage with a service... So on that day they’re invited to register prior to that in-house, so they sign up in that service. We advertise in those services, provide a sign-up sheet for people, and then the idea is that on the allocated day they come in and say ‘I’m Nick from the Salvos’, tick their name off and ‘you beauty, you can come in here and anything you’d like, up to five items of clothing is yours...’ [And] then on those allocated shopping days we’ll be open just like any other store: we’re not advertising it to people saying we’ve got homeless people in here; it’s very much a discreet operation...
Pearce reveals a logic that appears to be both exclusionary and disciplinary. It is exclusionary in that the homeless are set apart from ‘proper’ customer and their access is highly conditional (much more so than for someone with money to spend). Here, the marking of the homeless as flawed consumers is reflected in their second-tier position in the hierarchy of consumption. The disciplinary aspect of HoMie is revealed in their operative logic. To access the charitable function of HoMie, a homeless person is required to register with a service and can only access the clothing on an allocated day. This paternalistic structure reinforces the notion that the homeless are untrustworthy, as an authoritative third party must verify the genuineness of their housing status. Again, the logic of the British Poor Laws, differentiating between the genuine and deceptive homeless, is legible within contemporary responses. What is more, there also appears to be a form of ‘aesthetic discipline’ operating here. While HoMie does not address the forces that cause homelessness, it does address its visible dimensions by providing people experiencing homelessness with designer branded clothing. This is further evidenced by the fact that, at the time of the interview, HoMie also had a barber and a make-up artist volunteering their services at the store on the days allocated for the homeless.

HoMie exemplifies what appears to be the increasing prevalence of private social enterprises that incorporate homelessness into their business model. While these enterprises address certain needs of people experiencing homelessness, they also perform hidden regulatory functions. The tying of services to private regulation is most explicitly identifiable in another organisation called ‘The Sleep Bus’ — a bus providing mobile accommodation for homeless people. The bus is fitted out with ‘sleeping pods’, has lockers for people to store their belongings in and even animal cages in case they have pets. However, the bus is also fitted out with multiple CCTV cameras, attended by a security guard (the purpose of whom is unstated) and in each sleeping ‘pod’ is a television that plays a loop of information on what services are available to them and various strategies they can employ to end their homelessness (Webb 2016: no pagination). This service addresses an immediate need
for the people who access it but this is also tied to a particular regulatory logic. Like HoMie, the bus addresses the aesthetic disruptions caused by the homeless by containing their visibility overnight. These organisations are a recent phenomenon in Melbourne and their presence in the broader response sphere is yet to be critically evaluated. However, while such enterprises do offer necessary services, they also fulfil state-sanctioned regulatory goals. What is more, due to the small size of the sleeping pods, it is unclear whether the bus may be infringing upon the legal and human rights of those it accommodates. Either way, it is unlikely that a certified and government-funded housing service would be legally able to provide emergency accommodation of this nature.

As a persistent and stigmatised form of social disorder and decay, homelessness has thus far been unamenable to assimilation into capitalist modes of meaning production. As discussed earlier, visibly homeless bodies disrupt the spectacle of commodification and the saturation of public space in the aesthetic images of liberal capitalism (Gerard and Farrugia 2014: 7). This differentiates homelessness from other symbols of disorder or incivility like graffiti, which, over the last two decades, has been initiated into mainstream culture and capitalist codes of meaning (see Young 2015). This is not to say graffiti and its practices of production are no longer contested, or that the subversive power of graffiti has been politically neutralised. However, with works by famous street artist Banksy selling for upwards of $500,000, there is little doubt that these practices are now thoroughly commodified. Gerrard and Farrugia state that homelessness ‘cannot be transformed easily into entrepreneurial opportunities’ (2015: 2226). However, with the emergence of these social enterprises this may be changing. Many of these services are focused on aesthetics (offering haircuts, clothes washing or new clothing) and capitalist disciplinisation (modelling consumer behaviour) which potentially indicates the beginning of the incorporation of homelessness into commodified economies of meaning.
While it is clear there is an array of governance strategies designed to assist those experiencing homelessness and mitigate their hardships, these are not unproblematic. Even ostensibly inclusionary responses appear to contain embedded regulatory functions and exclusionary logics. Offered now is an account of these seemingly diverse responses to homelessness examined together as a regime. When examined in this way, this broad apparatus appears to constitute a mechanism for maintaining the socially marginalised status of the homeless while excising the State from responsibility for this vulnerable community. In short, responses to homelessness are not aimed at addressing the structural and systemic forces that produce homelessness but are instead intended to contain, capture and register the homeless within the state apparatus. As Pratt stated earlier, in the modern state it became increasingly intolerable for anybody to remain outside of and thus unknowable to the state (2000: 39). In light of this, the broad array of responses to homelessness can be viewed as inserting homeless bodies into a state-sanctioned system of registration, the purpose of which is to render the nomadic body fixed, contained and knowable.

**Inside Out**

Thus far, the argument of this chapter has focused on the varied nature of governance responses to homelessness. Different strategies are informed by varying community and stakeholder needs, different conceptions of advocacy, charity, justice and order as well as competing understandings of homelessness and its causes. Understandings of these issues are informed by specific moral conceptions of the social world and distorted by stereotypical constructions of homelessness. For example, representations of homelessness and the attending discourses are frequently utilised for a variety of purposes, such as fundraising, lobbying for law reform, or crackdowns on certain groups or behaviours (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015: 2223). These representations frame and contextualise homelessness in particularised socio-moral narratives, resulting in contradictory and competing conceptions of what causes homelessness and who is responsible for it. These representations are
not only produced in the media; organisations within the homeless sector routinely construct and utilise images of homelessness then serve their purposes. Indeed, much of the advocacy work engaged in by the homeless sector involves reaffirming certain constructions of homelessness while attempting to dismantle others. These competing constructions have consequences for how responsibility for homelessness is conceived. Representations that focus on the individual carry a corollary notion of responsibility, whereas those that represent homelessness as a social issue expand this to a wider ambit.

Conceptions of responsibility for vulnerable groups such as the homeless inevitably run up against conceptions of sovereignty and liberalism. Orford writes that '[t]he sovereignty of the nation state is grounded on the inclusion of the bodies of its subjects through the management and transformation of human life' (2007: 209). Here, Orford identifies ‘inclusion’ as a specific mechanism through which sovereignty is maintained and governance strategies are implemented. The subjection of bodies to the disciplinary regime of the social contract is achieved as much through inclusion in the social as it is by the threat of the penal (Garland 1985: 230). Foucault articulates this dynamic in his conceptualisation of ‘discipline’ and the ‘docile bodies’ it produces (1977). Instead of reactive and coercive strategies of social control (the threat of violence, coercion and death), adherence and conformity are fostered through the internalisation of discipline by subjects. As Foucault notes, discipline is not a technology of coercion but of freedom: a way to render free subjects predictable (1977; O’Malley 2000: 21). However, as we have seen throughout this thesis, the intrinsic slipperiness of the category of homelessness means that it is anything but predictable.

All responses to homelessness serve a regulatory function at some level. Homelessness is conceived as a social problem and thus any formal response to it is aimed at remedying this. Denying this would ignore the particular social and political arrangement of society that has produced the homeless subject as marginalised, stigmatised and Other. This is not accidental; instead, it is the
product of specific forces (capitalism, colonialism, globalisation) that determine distributions of social and political power. Gramsci identifies culture as a key mechanism in the maintenance of social control and political order as it captures ‘the hearts of and minds of subordinate classes’ (Miliband 1982 in Ransome 1992: 132). Gramsci further argues that the penetration of everyday social and cultural norms by the ideals and values of the ruling classes maintains these structural inequalities (Gramsci 1988: 54). Much like the United States and other liberal Western democracies, Australian culture is shaped by capitalist conceptions of homed-ness, property, freedom and the individual. Importantly, these hegemonic conceptions disallow and actively suppress alternative (for example, Indigenous or homeless) understandings of society and its institutions (Havemann 2005; Memmott 2014). While many responses to homelessness are motivated by social justice, they are also embedded within hegemonic understandings of a world in which homelessness is marginalised. As such, the goals of services addressing homelessness are informed by these understandings. What is more, due to the role of the state in funding the homeless sector, the goals of services addressing homelessness must align with a state conception of order and the regulatory goals that flow from this. The ubiquity of settled life modes and the construction of the social world and apparatuses such as the law to reflect this, render alternatives extremely difficult if not impossible.

Examined against analyses of late-modern sovereign power, strategies for the governance of homelessness are revealed as oriented toward the (re)insertion of problematic bodies into sites of discipline and subjugation. Discourses attending these strategies routinely refer to empowerment, increased capacities and enhanced freedoms. Viewed through a Foucauldian lens, what is described here is the reconstruction of the homeless individual as a successfully disciplined subject. That is, docile, non-disruptive and thus conforming to and coherent within the conceptual horizons of liberal-capitalist conceptions of personhood and subjectivity (Arnold 2004: 125). In short, under disciplinary regimes the well-disciplined do better than the poorly disciplined (Naffine 2009: 14; McNay 2009). Any strategy aimed at reinserting homeless bodies into normative structures of
political citizenship also seek to align that body with broader ideological conceptions of political and civil legitimacy.

Despite the persistent presence of placeless, homeless and nomadic bodies throughout history, homelessness continues to challenge the orthodoxies of sovereign authority and citizenship in the contemporary era. Homelessness challenges contemporary governance strategies focused on fostering individual responsibility, entrepreneurialism and participation in consumerist economies of bodily pleasure (Pratt 1997: 140; Foucault 1997: 249; McNay 2009). Those outside of the disciplinary, subjectivising and civilising sites of subjection to state power such as property, tax, employment, the public/private divide, remain unpredictable and thus unknowable to the state. As Presdee states: ‘[t]he response by authority to the unfathomable is to outlaw and to criminalise’ (2000: 7). However, given the inaccuracy of homeless stereotypes, most homeless people are not unknowable to the state in this way. People who experience homelessness also work, pay taxes, own or rent property, go shopping, and generally participate in the normative economies of citizenship and belonging (Stenson 2013: 48). Yet the concept of homelessness and its persistently visible archetype — the urban rough-sleeper — continue to challenge to the operations of state power and thus shape the strategies of social control directed at it.

As this thesis demonstrates, the regulation of homelessness in the city involves an array of responses ranging from inclusive and therapeutic to the regulatory and punitive. These flow into one another at various points, at times operating in both concert and contest. However, all responses to homelessness also attempt to bind the homeless in sites of control, such as housing contracts, welfare obligations, registration in the criminal justice system (through fines and processes of fine-waiving), diversion and reform programs, and now even shopping (see the above discussion of HoMie). The homeless are, in Deleuze’s terms, caught in a ‘continuous network’ (1992: 6).
For Deleuze, debt is a key mechanism of social control in the late-modern capitalist world: ‘Man is no longer man enclosed, but man in debt’ (1992: 6). Debt inserts bodies into a multitude of relations of obligation, contract and control, as well as into circuits of registration and tracing like databases and transaction histories. Debt connects bodies to institutions, corporations and markets and is always traceable (Deleuze 1992: 6). Deleuze also argues that debt is a subjectivising force in the late-modern world that registers and evidences one’s existence to governments and corporations while affirming one’s subjectivity within a world of capitalist relations. Debt is an anchor in the liquid world that Bauman describes; not providing stability or traction, but situating one within a web of economic (as opposed to social) relations (2000; 2005). Debt forms part of a broader apparatus of governance through risk and responsibilisation (Sutton 2000; Garland 2001). Yet the homeless, with their persistent anonymity, remain resistant to these technologies of registration.

This unknowability — the anonymity of the beggar and the rough-sleeper and their unwillingness to participate voluntarily in these networked relations of governance — renders them incalculable. From the perspective of government, this necessitates their coercive insertion into networks of registration such as debt, with or without their consent (Pratt 2000: 39). Although it can be readily claimed that fining homeless people makes no sense because they cannot afford to pay them, such a statement would miss a crucial point. Fines are the most common form of punishment levied against the homeless because this registers them in a debt-relation with the state. Here, debt evidences the state’s persistent efforts to track and trace these bodies as fines produce information that is recordable, traceable, and storable. Pratt states: ‘To try to remain unknowable in modern society was thus to threaten its very modality of governing’ (2000: 39). Debt is thus levied against the homeless not as a disincentive, as it is clear that this is not only ineffective but actively counter-productive as it imposes additional barriers to ending homelessness. Instead, fines appear to be utilised as a means of forcing a relation of obligation between nomadic, placeless, unpredictable bodies and the state. Whether the use of fines in this way against homeless populations is
intentional or whether it is a convenient (yet obviously imperfect and contradictory) by-product of legal controls that assume an individual’s coherence to sedentary socio-legal norms is unclear.

That the condition of homelessness is understood in contrast to the behavioural standards of debt relations — individual responsibility, adherence to contract and the willing and sustained subjection to the inequalities of capital — is not enough to exempt them from debt. In fact, it is even more reason to have them indebted. Recalling the ideal homed subject discussed in Chapter Three, the homeless (and other groups affiliated with risk) are actively discriminated against in housing markets, yet are held responsible for their own exclusion. Their perceived intractability to debt-relations fails to recognise debt’s implication as a causal factor in many people’s homelessness (Muir, Alford and Stubee 2012; Arnold 2004: 17). Indeed, debt galvanises the conditions of poverty conducive to housing instability and homelessness. This not only presents problems for creditors, but also for the state as a stakeholder in the maintenance and stability of these relations. The state cannot abide the externality of those outside debt as a means of social control, and so in lieu of normative mechanisms of debt (bank loans and mortgages) they are subject to alternative forms. These alternatives are fines, behavioural obligations and the criminalisation of essential behaviours and practices. Instead of fostering discipline and participation in state-approved freedoms, such alternatives enclose the individual within punitive relations of debt-accrual and deficit (Arnold 2004: 88). That the pecuniary sanctions for behaviours associated with homelessness far exceed the inadequate welfare to which the homeless are entitled evidences the punitive logic in operation here. Fines thus inscribe homeless individuals within the bureaucratic structure of the criminal justice system. Where a consumer-citizen is enlisted in debt relations with a bank, the begging rough-sleeper is in debt relations to the state, owing hundreds if not thousands of dollars accrued through the offence of their being in public. Such an inscription becomes the means of monitoring

144 See Simmel (1990) for an account of the exploitative nature of interest.
the behaviours and activities of homeless people while applying heightened behavioural obligations and increased penalties for non-compliance (Wacquant 2009: 79).

Financial debt is not the only means of capture, the theme of debt is also present in alternative mechanisms (Arnold 2004: 53). Alternative forms of inscription within relations of social control exist, such as the erosion of benefits and expanded obligations that accompany welfare (see Hamilton 2014; Scholfield and Butterworth 2015; Mendes 2008). These position the poor in relations that indebt them to the state (rather than as products of state facilitated systemic inequities). In turn, the state becomes increasingly direct in its extraction of what it believes it is owed. For example, recent policy changes to federal welfare provision were aimed at ‘incentivising’ independent employment and individual responsibility by restricting access to welfare (Marston 2014).

Here we see disciplinary creditor/debtor relations continued through alternative (coercive) mechanisms. When the individual responsibility fostered through neoliberal disciplinisation fails, other mechanisms come into play (Garland 2001). These mechanisms seek the insertion of problematic bodies into alternative relations of social control characterised by entrenched poverty and indigence as opposed to sanctified practices of responsibility and autonomy (Wacquant 2009).

145 Since the 1980s the Australian welfare state has undergone continual erosion, including the thinning of benefits for disadvantaged groups like the unemployed and single parents. Some groups (particularly, Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory) have had their welfare payments quarantined through income management (Mendes 2013). Recently introduced legislation by the conservative federal government has also changed the eligibility criteria for income support and introduced a six-month waiting period to access income support for the unemployed. See Department of Human Services, Federal Government of Australia: https://www.humanservices.gov.au/corporate/budget/budget-2014-15/budget-measures/young-people-and-students/stronger-participation-incentives-job-seekers-under-30.

146 Related to the use of the euphemistic use of the notion of ‘incentive’ to justify the punitive rearranging of social services, Sloterdijk describes the ‘radically renewing’ dynamic of debt-based social control as a situation where ‘moral fault becomes an economically logical relationship of incentive’ (2014: 46).

147 A 2015 report into Centrelink (Australia’s national welfare body) reported that a quarter of calls went unanswered and average phone waiting times had increased to 17 minutes. A subsequent report in 2016 found that service delivery had worsened in the 12 months following the report, while the government had spent $28 million on advertising for Centrelink in the same period (Neave 2015). One politician was quoted as describing Centrelink services as ‘unusable’ (Donald 2016: no pagination; see also Lavoipierre 2016).
Here the primacy of responsible economic self-management to citizenship practices and benefits is revealed. The incapacity or unwillingness to manage one’s personal finances responsibly borders on criminality and at the very least warrants direct state intervention. Even if the consequences of poor financial management are largely borne by the individual, the state considers itself a victim and seeks redress through the alternative mechanisms described above. These are not just deployed against the homeless but at more general populations such as the poor and socially disruptive. If individuals do not take on debt willingly or take it on irresponsibly, the terms of the debt-contract change. Payment for these failures are instead subtracted from their rights as citizens — to housing, to privacy, to be free from arbitrary punishment — often with interest charged heavily. Arnold claims that '[t]he fiduciary nature of citizenship is a way to erase the guilt of creating a lower caste and allows for the political conviction that it is in fact the poor, as political and economic parasites, who are the debtors.' (2004: 17). Thus, by framing homelessness and poverty as primarily economic issues (rather than social or human problems) responsibility for the desperation, suffering and indigence that characterise these can be easily disavowed by the state and placed on the shoulders of the poor and homeless themselves.

The purpose of this dynamic of control is to embed marginal groups like the homeless within the state apparatus at some level, even if doing so also poses problems for the maintenance of order. This avoids what the state cannot abide: that which is unknowable and thus outside its ambit of governance. The ultimate threat to sovereign power, even in its late-modern iterations, remains that which is external to yet that is encountered internally. This is reflected in the socio-politics of the home — the sanctification of the inside through the stigmatisation of the outside and those who characterise it — with the nation-state functioning as a macrological corollary. This dynamic is most noticeable in other social issues where anxieties about Otherness, belonging, citizenship and danger focus on specific figures: migrants and terrorists (see Zedner 2010; 2013). Like them, the homeless threaten to bring the conditions of the outside into the safety of the political interior. Thus, the
homeless exist as pockets of exteriority that the state not only refuses to take responsibility for but cannot ignore. To do so would involve relinquishing control over internal bodies; something the state cannot abide even if those bodies are onerous, troublesome and of little economic value. The maintenance of the status quo — the distance between stigmatised bodies and those that adhere — is too valuable for the state to abandon. Even though the homeless are routinely constructed in terms of passivity, visibly homeless bodies retain an element of unpredictability and thus of threat. While visible homelessness is a manifestation of severe vulnerability, it remains disruptive enough to warrant pecuniary sanctions, spatial exclusion, targeted regulation, surveillance and in some cases imprisonment.

Here, how the homeless are inserted in an array of coercive relations that range from normalising to punitive becomes clearly visible (Garland 1985). However, viewing these responses individually is a limited perspective. In the words of Deleuze, these responses are not ‘distinct analogue spaces that converge toward an owner, [rather, they] are coded figures — deformable and transformable — of a single corporation’ (1992: 6). In other words, while these seemingly varied responses — police, community sector and social enterprise — appear discrete; if viewed as a whole, they comprise a governmental array for the subjugation of problematic bodies dispersed across multiple institutional fields. The site of a body’s insertion does not matter, what matters is that they are inserted and thus subjectable to regimes of control. The diversity of responses is reflective more of the political import of an encompassing governance apparatus than it is of recognising the diversity of this population.

Australia has not seen the more extreme responses to homelessness of some other countries, like the United Kingdom and the United States. In the United Kingdom, the homeless are targeted with Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance (IPSAs) that can render just about any behaviour criminal (Crawford 2006: 465). In the United States, the homeless have been packed into buses

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148 IPSAs have replaced the United Kingdom’s notorious Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) (see Brown 2013).
and dumped in the hinterlands of adjoining municipalities or coercively hemmed into geographic Skid Rows surrounded by militarised borders (see Ferrell 2001a: 164; Davis 1992). However, this should not suggest an absence of similarities between these geopolitical contexts. Like the UK and the US, Australia has seen widespread the deployment of urban design strategies intended to target rough-sleepers such as the closure of public toilets, the introduction of public seating that disallows lying down and the utilisation of automated technologies such as sprinklers to render particular spaces uninhabitable by people who need to sleep rough (Liveris 2015). In Australia, strategies for the regulation of homelessness appear caught between the forcefully exclusionary and forcefully inclusionary: a confused and constrained middle ground where the homeless are recognised as vulnerable yet remain a deeply resented population.

Political debates about homelessness (which generally exclude the voices of those experiencing it) mostly agree that reducing homelessness is desirable but see this as politically unachievable. The point of contention in political debates about homelessness is what to do instead: both what methods work and how much effort (read: resources) the state is willing to commit. Regardless, the state has been largely unwilling to initiate genuine reform on this issue (excepting the aforementioned attempt by Kevin Rudd). Instead, the state has implemented policies that ‘incentivise’ not being homeless while engaging services to prioritise those with good prospects of rehabilitation and cynically manage the rest. The question of what causes homelessness is thus of little relevance to the state and its politicians. Individual members of the government may understand the causes of homelessness as individual or structural or somewhere in between. But what matters is that the state, in its uncertainty, reverts to the notion of individually determined homelessness as a means of disavowing responsibility and managing risk. Here causal factors become irrelevant; what matters for the state is that the homeless exist, are disruptive and therefore must be governed.

149 See Petty (2016) for an analysis of ‘hostile architecture’ in the UK and the social responses elicited by its deployment in liminal spaces that sit between public and private.
Conclusion

‘Eliminating is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment’ (Douglas 2003: 2, original emphasis).

During the course of this research I have read the mission statements of many organisations that deal either directly or indirectly with homelessness. For example, Launch Housing’s statement is ‘It’s time to end homelessness’; HomeGround Services is ‘Ending homelessness in Melbourne’; the Council to Homeless Persons ‘envisions an end to homelessness in Victoria’; while Homelessness Australia claims to be ‘creating a framework for ending homelessness’. While such goals are noble, if somewhat vague, envisioning an end to homelessness has three main limitations. First, these claims maintain the symbolic other-ness of homelessness as a wretched, disempowered and marginalised condition. Indeed, #VoteHome — a political campaign run by an alliance of advocacy groups during the 2016 Federal election advocating for political action on homelessness — stated that ‘homelessness has no place in Australia’.150 Despite its good intentions, this campaign explicitly frames homelessness as unwanted and illegitimate, not just in terms of immediate proximity, but within the broader symbolic and political space of the nation as well. Second, organisations that seek the elimination of homelessness often fail to reconcile their complicity with the normative (structural and systemic) origins of homelessness. While most organisations do advocate for systemic change, they also run programs focused on reforming homeless individuals to assist them in navigating a system that is structurally stacked against them. Further, in being funded by the government, the activities of these organisations must cohere with the governmental goals of the state. Thus, the majority of services are actively engaged in maintaining the social and political alterity of homelessness. Third, calls to end homelessness fail to acknowledge the complexity and

150 See https://www.change.org/m/vote-home-let-s-end-the-housing-crisis-by-2025-2b749c36-ff87-4f0c-bc58-54c500f85f2f.
diversity of experiences of homelessness while proclaiming on behalf of the homeless that their condition should be erased for the betterment of society.\textsuperscript{151}

However, not all organisations proclaim the elimination of homelessness as their goal. For example, Orange Sky Laundry, the free mobile laundry service discussed earlier in this chapter, has the following mission statement:

\textit{Our Vision is a world where people who are homeless are positively connected with the community.}

This astonishingly simple claim recognises homelessness as belonging to the community, rather than seeking the elimination of the condition or reform of those experiencing it. In their way, what Orange Sky seeks is radical: to reform society so that it too may come to recognise the homeless as belonging. In comparison, the grand goal of ‘ending homelessness’ appears desperately normative. What remains unaddressed in calls to end homelessness is a description of what the realisation of this involves. What processes must be undertaken to bring about a world that retains the current obsessive fortification of the Self, the ‘home’ and the symbolic inside against feared Others, while also enacting a kind of universal social inclusion?

It is worth considering what is implied in the realisation of a world in which homelessness has been eradicated. Homelessness is undeniably a site of harm and suffering, it is also a form of difference and that overused yet nonetheless integral term ‘diversity’. This is what is at stake in rhetorical projects of ending homelessness. Calls to end homelessness are borne from the same ideological space as the systemic inequalities that produce widespread poverty, and thus endorse the current

\textsuperscript{151} This recalls Spivak’s famous essay ‘Can the subaltern speak?’ in which she questions whether the voices of those who inhabit the periphery can truly be heard and considers the ethical dilemmas of speaking on behalf of others (1988).
arrangements of state power and capitalist institutions of ownership and property. Rather than seeking to dismantle such systems, calls to end homelessness apparently seek the inclusion of everyone, and thus fail to recognise that these systems depend on differentiation and exclusion to function. In short, they exemplify what Dean describes as a ‘fantasy of politics’: where the negative, antagonistic or violent aspects of governance are suppressed, engendering a de-politicised discursive field in which all outcomes are positive and ‘everyone and everything is included, respected, valued, entitled...’ (2011: 75). Thus, the goal of eradicating homelessness fails to recognise that current arrangements of social belonging are obsessed with danger, difference, identity, fear and the myth of embedded ontological stability, and thus require stigmatised outsiders to maintain their unity and coherence. The utopian worlds we imagine without the homeless remain bounded by the conceptual horizons of the very system that produces them: neoliberal and capitalist understandings of space, property ownership, and belonging.  

Homelessness represents an outer limit of the state’s power: bodies unamenable to its regimes of discipline. The State perceives intractability to discipline as disorder. This is a problem, as the homeless are symbolic of the failure of the state’s disciplinary systems: the faulty units of an apparatus designed to produce reliable, predictable and productive citizens. However, unlike other faulty units (criminals) able to be disposed of and politically neutralised through the rituals of the criminal justice system, the homeless are formally protected from the state’s juridical mechanisms. Due to the failure of the homeless to explicitly breach the terms of the social contract, the state remains largely unable to utilise explicit mechanisms of coercive intervention or formal expulsion against this population. The state’s desire to punish intractable and visible vulnerability is thwarted

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152 This is to say nothing of the issues of homelessness, placelessness and belonging specific to Aboriginal people. Paul Memmott uses the term ‘spiritually homeless’ to recognise the continuing consequences of colonisation and white settlement of Australia on Indigenous conceptions of place, belonging and the specific cultural formations of identity (both individual and communal) that are attached to these. Memmott defines spiritual homelessness as involving a separation from traditional land, separation from family and kinship circles and a crisis of personal identity resulting from this (2014:36). Calls to end homelessness fail to recognise that the continued presence and settlement of non-Indigenous people in Australia is a primary cause of Indigenous homelessness.
due the technical inclusion of these bodies within the legal protections of citizenship. Instead, the state must strike a balance between politically unpopular and vitiated welfare responses, and indirect strategies of coercion and criminalisation. Generally, such a mix achieves little more than shifting this vulnerable population around, both geographically and in terms of people churning in and out of various institutional responses.

Arnold states in the epigraph to this chapter that the two principal state reactions to homelessness are either to subsume difference into the social body or to expel it (2004: 52). As should now be clear, there is no clear demarcation between these broad movements. Instead, there is a high degree of overlap between the two, resulting in responses that seek to include individuals while disempowering them and hobbling their prospects of achieving genuine stability. Some strategies seek to assimilate the homeless by utilising the threat of punitive sanction, or to insert them into networks of control-through-debt with fines. Others still, attempt to makeover the surface of those experiencing homelessness by offering haircuts, professional business attire and employment skills to improve the prospects of the homeless and ‘help them help themselves’.¹⁵³ Such reformative responses are socially and politically popular due to their focus on the individual. Ending one’s homelessness (especially through personal ambition and determination against the odds) offers the prospect of recasting the individual in a new image and reorganising the stigma of homelessness into more virtuous characteristics such as individual ambition and determination.

These reformist approaches are intended to assist individuals to transition out of homelessness: from a body located outside of a violent and exclusionary socio-political system to a body included within it. The methods employed and their effectiveness varies considerably, though even punitive

¹⁵³ ‘Help[ing] them help themselves’ was described as the primary purpose of drug and alcohol and homelessness services in 2015 during a meeting of the Federal Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement in 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problem posed by crystal methamphetamine or ‘ice’ to vulnerable populations like youth and the homeless (see Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement 2015).
sanctions aim to ‘incentivise’ exiting homelessness by rendering the condition even more intolerable. Johansen describes the effectivity of such regimes as ‘enforcing the unenforceable’ through a ‘minimalist biopolitics’ (2013: 258). However, even if such strategies were effective, they are curtailed by the apparently intentional (or at the very least, reckless) rendering of housing markets as impenetrable for those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Such strategies maintain the constructed symbolic boundaries differentiating the homed from the homeless so by galvanising established mechanisms of social sorting. These mechanisms distinguish the successful from the failed, the included from the excluded and the legitimate citizen from the subaltern. Comparatively little is done to break down those socially constructed barriers that separate and polarise the homed from the homeless. Rather than deconstructing the stigma of homelessness, many responses are aimed at assisting the homeless to better navigate stigma, or to change the tone of judgement from opprobrium to pity.

In short, most responses to homelessness work to maintain the marginalised status of homelessness, while encouraging the marginal to transition back into the normative sphere by framing inclusion as increasingly desirable and rendering marginality increasingly intolerable. This analysis should not be read as a criticism of services that directly engage the homeless on a daily basis, nor a failure on my part to recognise that most people experiencing homelessness do want stable and secure housing. Of course, while many homelessness organisations and charities do work towards ending the stigma of homelessness, this work is arguably undermined by their efforts to end homelessness. This means that even those who seek genuinely just outcomes for the homeless also remain complicit in reproducing the conditions that sustain homelessness as an inevitable social phenomenon. As such, what we must pay attention to is the political effectivity of governance strategies aimed at the homeless (from the punitive to the ostensibly therapeutic) in a broader field of political power, urban spatiality and neoliberal strategies of social ordering (McNay 2009: 55).

Koshravi describes punitive welfare responses to vulnerable populations as ‘hostile hospitality’: a method of rendering inclusion so intolerable that the unwanted group or populations elects to leave (2009: 53).
Rather than focus on a particular responsive mechanism, we should focus on whether such mechanisms are socially and politically popular and why this might be. We should ask, for example, do such strategies, individually or as an array, result in a reduction of the social visibility of homelessness and the occlusion of state responsibility for the persistent existence of this condition? If so, then the purposes of these governance strategies and our own support of or complicity in them must also be placed within an ambit of critical analysis. This will assist in identifying ‘different economies of violence’ that may be operating within current governance strategies, legal frameworks and economic processes that initiate, facilitate, enable, license and perpetuate the crime of homelessness (Christie 2000: 182; Barak and Bohm 1989).

As I have sought to establish throughout this thesis, homelessness is more than a material condition. While we can (and should) work towards a kind of structural justice (in which affordable housing is readily available and systemic factors pushing people toward homelessness are absent), this still neglects the creation of a space where difference, material and otherwise, is both legitimate and welcome. The consequences of ending homelessness go way beyond the material: homelessness is a set of identities, practices, habits, meanings, cultures, moments of incivility and resistance to power. The loss of these non-material dimensions, I claim, would be socially, politically and culturally detrimental.

In terms of conceiving of responsibility for homelessness we must shift away from a tense relationship between the state and the individual, where the state’s responsibility appears grudging, resentful and is regularly redefined in narrower terms. In contrast, individual responsibility for homelessness is organised as censure for those experiencing this condition, or as affirmation for charitably-spirited citizens. If we are to genuinely address homelessness as a systemic problem, reform is desperately needed: not only of the state and community sector, but of ourselves and the normative politics of citizenship and belonging as well. Responses must be compassionate to the
homeless while recognising their condition and subjectivity as politically legitimate. That is, the homeless must be respected as homeless. But this process requires the critical deconstruction of the current arrangements of socio-political power that rely on particular understandings of space, property and ownership, civil behaviour and citizenship. The stigmatisation of the homeless involves the uncritical sanctification of the self, which is anathema to a genuine politics of radical inclusion. In short, ending the stigma of homelessness is a more just and inclusive proposal, though it involves radically reconceiving the socio-political sphere. To achieve this, efforts at reform must be focused on the normative spaces of those that dwell within, rather than on those that dwell without.

This thesis has attended to the myriad ways that homelessness is equated with criminality, which prompts and is in turn reinforced by governance strategies based on or informed by the strategies for the regulation of crime. This has been an account of the subjection of the homeless to various objective, coercive, interventionist and callous forces that seek, through various ways, their removal or eradication. What remains is to consider the possibility of resistance to the seemingly encompassing arrangement of the socio-political world against those not held in secure housing.
Intermezzo:

City Square

I am walking south down Swanston Street towards City Square in Melbourne’s CBD. I caught the tram to Uni but alighted a full block before my stop. This is a delaying tactic as I am feeling uneasy about approaching the homeless protest camp. I scold myself for being nervous about talking to them. One of the main themes of my research is the Other-ing of the homeless, yet I am anxious about the prospect of a conversation. I arrive at the camp; cardboard placards are stacked messily against a step, and several people are sitting around talking while others spread about the place, lying on benches or sitting with their backs against various structures like statues. There is no clear boundary to demarcate their camp from the rest of the city, just as there is no boundary between their protest and their existing I walk past too nervous to stop, instead I take out my camera and take some photos of Melbourne’s scenery, slowly edging towards the camp. There are two men deep in conversation, the younger of the two seeming to be in charge.

I decide to ask him if I could take some photos. I approach but they ignore me and I wait patiently, desperate not to be disrespectful. The older man turns to me, ‘You from the press?’ he asks. I reply ‘no’ and he nods, satisfied and walks off leaving the younger one. I ask if it is okay if I take some photos, not of people, just the space. He shrugs, vaguely hostile and preoccupied, but then jumps up. ‘Yeah, take whatever’, and he walks off. I take a few photos of the structures they have erected, made mainly from milk crates with tarpaulins and tents pulled over for cover, all around a central tree (see Figure 18). The ‘Shower Bus’, a mobile shower service is parked across the street, and several people jog back and forth from it. One young man sees me and starts dancing so I take a few shots of him. The man from before, the leader, is suddenly there again, telling me to take photos of everyone. ‘Here, gimme your camera’, he says holding his hand out, ‘I’ll get some with you in them’.
A young woman has joined me; she wants to be in the photos. ‘Where you from?’ she asks in a strong Kiwi accent. ‘Melbourne Uni’ I say. She looks impressed, ‘Cool’.

I don’t want to hand over my camera, but I do, not wanting to seem like I don’t trust him. The young woman drags me into the middle of a group, throwing her arm around me a giggling. The man takes a bunch of photos, clicking madly and not bothering to look through the viewfinder. He keeps backing further and further away, and, despite myself, I become increasingly convinced he has stolen my camera. The young woman keeps giggling inanely as the man directs us into ever-more complex poses, I suspect to the annoyance of most of the people I’m posing with. Fuck, I think to myself, there goes my camera and all my photos, as I try to remember the last time I transferred the photos onto my laptop. A few minutes later he tosses my camera back to me. He’s grown bored and leaves to talk with some others who have just arrived. I’m stunned and ashamed of myself for reading his enthusiasm as criminality. I start talking to a woman in her thirties. ‘He’s a dickhead’, she says, ‘Thinks he’s in charge, but he’s not. I am.’ I ask about interactions with the police, and she says they’ve been really nice but that her being at the protest violates the conditions of her parole so if they want to arrest her, they can. We chat for a while as I make a donation, but she leaves to go organise some food. I stay for a little while longer, but after half an hour there is little to do. I have read accounts of homelessness which emphasise the debilitating boredom that accompanies it, but that didn’t sink in until now. I had imagined that the protest would be active and purposeful, like the protests I attended as an undergraduate. But for the homeless, when you are essentially protesting against your own condition and the state’s abandonment of you, protest involves just being in space.
**Conclusion:**

**A Note on Resistance**

Driven by the fragmented and contingent vagaries of life in an era of deconstruction and dislocation, the vagabond renounces bounded place in favour of infinite space, wearing her indeterminacy as a badge of resistance. (Amster 2008: 4)

Where there is power, there is resistance and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power... Points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of Great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. (Foucault 1984: 95-6)

In this concluding chapter, I move to consider a theme that has threaded, perhaps imperceptibly, through the preceding chapters: the notion of resistance. Prefacing this is a short account of several conflicts over housing, homelessness, property, belonging and placelessness that are (at the time of writing) continuing to play out in Melbourne. As we will see, 2016 was a tumultuous year for the politics of housing in Melbourne, with several smouldering issues igniting into outright conflict.

First, it is worth considering the current political climate of housing in Australia. Crises of housing affordability (concentrated primarily in Sydney and Melbourne) have been regular features in political debate in recent years. The tax arrangements that benefit property investors over owner-occupiers have been a key site of conflict, particularly in the 2016 Australian Federal election. The victorious Liberal National Coalition (an ongoing coalition party of conservative social and liberal fiscal values) refused to reform these arrangements, despite unprecedented growth in rental and property prices and national rates of home-ownerships having recently reached their lowest levels.

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155 The two main policies being debated are negative gearing and discounts on capital gains tax. The former allows property investors to claim losses from investments on their taxable income, significantly reducing the amount of income tax they pay. The discounts on capital gains tax reduce the amount of tax a property investor pays when selling property assets. For example, current discounts allow property investors to halve the amount of tax paid on capital gained from selling an investment property (see ACOSS 2015).
since 1966 (ABS 2015; Bessant and Johnson 2013). The year of 2016 also saw a dedicated campaign in the news media to target Melbourne’s rough-sleeping population that sought to cast this population as deceptive, deviant, violent and inveterate (O’Brien 2016; Doyle 2016; Jefferson 2016a; 2016d; Masanauskas 2016a, 2016b, 2016c; Panahi 2016). In addition to likening the homeless to criminals, the media has routinely called into question the genuineness of rough-sleepers and the authenticity of their precarity. This was achieved by highlighting some of the difficulties of assisting members of this community who have complex needs. For example, being unable to maintain a private tenancy or being resistant to services is framed in purely volitional terms. Thus, the intractability of the situations faced by many rough-sleepers can be framed as a product of the population’s obstinacy rather than indicating the severity of the consequences of rough sleeping. Framing homelessness as a choice — that sacred liberal concept — serves to reinforce pervasive cultural narratives about homelessness and neutralises systemic issues such as insufficient supplies of affordable and public housing as legitimate sites of scrutiny.

In May, a group of homeless people set up a protest camp in City Square in Melbourne’s CBD. The protesters cited demonization in the media, increased levels of policing, inadequate services and a lack of affordable housing as factors motivating their political action (Mannix, Butt and Dow 2016). This provocative act sits in direct and explicit contravention of both the law (the ban on ‘illegal’ camping) and the social norms that structure encounters with urban homelessness (passivity and geographic dispersal of bodies). That is, by actively staking out a highly visible geographic emplacement, their usually dispersed inhabitation of space becomes an active occupation as a politically engaged collective. The media response to this was vociferous and while regulatory responses were relatively measured, they were nonetheless interventionist. Various social and political commentators including Melbourne’s Lord Mayor, lambasted the protesters in the media, claiming they were not in fact homeless but were instead criminals, drug users and hardened agitators cynically manipulating the genuinely homeless in pursuit of radical political ideologies.
(Doyle 2016; Panahi 2016; Jefferson 2016b; Masanauskas and Kinniburgh 2016). Police and municipal officers dismantled structures (see Figure 19) set up at the camp after approximately one week. However, rather than re-dispersing, most of the protestors moved to Enterprize Park (where ‘Mouse’ was killed),\textsuperscript{156} which prompted a further another round of municipal intervention and invective from the media (Dow 2016a; 2016c; Jefferson 2016c).

In addition to the protest in City Square, in March 2016 a group of homeless people began occupying several state-owned residential properties on Bendigo Street in Collingwood, a suburb in Melbourne’s inner north-east. The State government had compulsorily acquired these properties (along with approximately 100 others on neighbouring streets) for demolition to make way for an infrastructure project: a road project linking two freeways. This controversial and highly politicised project was abandoned with a change of administration in 2014 (see Gordon 2015). After the election, the new Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews, said that twenty of the properties would be used to provide housing for Melbourne’s homeless population (Cook 2014; Foley 2015). Two years later, only a few have been donated to a charity for homeless youth while the government quietly announced that the rest would be sold back onto the private market (ABC News 2015d; Dobbin 2016). Responding to this, a group of protestors — a significant number of whom were women made homeless by domestic violence — began squatting in several of the Bendigo Street properties (Dow and Preiss 2016; Lucas 2016). Police and government officers monitored the squatters and issued them with numerous notices to vacate. In August 2016, the Supreme Court of Victoria issued an emergency injunction preventing the police from evicting the squatters (Woods 2016). When the injunction expired in November, the protestors were evicted from the properties, and several individuals were arrested (Woods 2016).

\textsuperscript{156} See Chapter Four on the killing of ‘Mouse’ by Easton Woodhead.
This thesis has examined how the concept of homelessness is constructed to produce a condition that, through its exclusion, functions to reify dominant conceptions of legitimate political subjectivity and citizenship. The product of these constructions, I have argued, is a highly stigmatised, externally defined and ascribed condition that obscures identity and serves as an organising principle for the distribution of social censure, moral disapprobation and regulation. Homelessness is produced as an object characterised by material conditions but indicating and exhibiting various socio-moral forms of deviance, impropriety and immorality. The coherence of the figure produced — the ‘homeless Other’ — relies on narrowly defined codes of spatial and social legitimacy designed to exclude certain groups, bodies, practices and identities. These are framed as outsiders and are responded to as though their visible presence in space constitutes an act of aggression or invasion (Kawash 1998). A range of coercive and often punitive regulatory responses are animated, which galvanises the distance of these groups from ‘circuits of inclusion’ — the rituals and practices that optimise individuals’ potential for inclusion and self-advancement in society (Iveson 2007: 150; Rose 2000). This dynamic relies on the perpetuation of the myth that the visibly homeless and poor are the product of an externality: an outside, the violent conditions which they exemplify (and worse, bring with them). This conception thus legitimises responses that seek to displace, exclude or reform the homeless. However, understanding the origins of homelessness as coming from the outside is false. Homelessness is not a product of external forces, but rather is produced via the subjection of individuals and groups to the internal forces of normative society, especially the fracturing and exploitative dynamics of late-modern capitalism (Kramer and Lee 1999: 148). In this sense, the homeless are native inhabitants of capitalism and its spaces.

Despite these origins, the homeless are still subjected to regimes of coercive intervention and regulation. Is it possible then to conceive of resistance against such an enclosing, self-perpetuating and hermetically sealed system of exclusion? To remain Other in this system invites interdiction and one’s insertion into various disciplinary or regulatory institutions: state housing, emergency shelters
and the criminal justice system. Yet to reform or rearrange oneself to cohere with the norms of this exclusionary system (by performing the socio-political legitimacy linked to housing) involves the willing subjection to those same disciplinary norms. Here, both inclusion and exclusion serve to reinforce the system, its norms and the distribution of its benefits. In light of this, I ask whether an ethic of resistance is possible.

According to Sparke, many scholars who use resistance in their work either fail to define it or do so in narrow and romantic terms (2008: 243). He argues that simplistic conceptualisations of resistance rely on discrete and localised structures of oppression, as well as epistemologically Western and liberal conceptualisations of agency and autonomy (Sparke 2008: 244; see also Katz 2004: 241). Romantic analyses focus on behaviours or contexts where an oppositional consciousness evidenced by action is observable. Actors who display this are ascribed the capacity to undermine or supplant explicitly oppressive structures while a range of alternatives are excluded from this capacity. Similarly, Katz warns that uncritical conceptions of resistance ‘have come to seem too broad and too uncomplicated to be of much use in the face of the erosive conditions associated with contemporary capitalism’ (2004: 241). For Sparke, ‘[i]t is a romance that is initiated by assumptions about autonomous actions and animated by diverse forms of idealism: a romance that ultimately imagines agency in the existential and geographical terms of some seminal and heroically universalised human spirit...’ (2008: 423).

In short, these scholars are wary of definitions of resistance that are only recognisable within dominant Western liberal understandings of autonomy and the individual. Returning to the various representations of homelessness discussed earlier in the thesis, romantic conceptions of transience are clear. Individuals who practice a robust type of self-hood and prevail against the odds are celebrated as exemplifying a rugged form of individualism valorised in neoliberal and capitalist values. Such themes are evident in examples like the homeless high school student studying for
exams (Dow 2015a; 2015b), or ‘Melbourne’s most accomplished homeless man’ who learned French, travelled to Paris and earned a university degree all while squatting in Melbourne’s east (Dow 2015d: no pagination). Such examples, while undoubtedly impressive, reify normative narratives of homelessness and individuality discussed in Chapter Two, while also constructing hierarchies from these examples. In short, such narratives prompt the question, if these people can do it, surely all homeless people can do the same? As a result, those who are unable — often for good reason — to demonstrate such valorised behaviours become subject to ever more intense moral censure.

Romantic conceptions of resistance (and the neoliberal constructions of the individual they attach to) are of little value in a study of homelessness, except to contextualise responses within dominant systems of value. As this thesis has shown, the homeless are often understood as passive, lacking agency and so failing to display the autonomous subjectivity necessary to engage in resistant practices. In this sense, resistance is conceptualised as requiring the very characteristics that the condition of homelessness is understood to foreclose upon, except in the exceptional examples discussed above.157

Populist constructions leave little capacity for the homeless to display political autonomy or practices of resistance. In fact, when the homeless are seen to perform political autonomy this often precipitates hostility and scepticism regarding their authenticity. For example, in response to the protest by homeless people in City Square, conservative newspaper columnist Rita Panahi suggested that the protestors should not be considered homeless in the true sense, as they are choosing to be homeless as a means of pursuing ideological goals (2016: no pagination). As I have previously shown, the capacity for politically autonomous behaviour is readily attributed to those entrepreneurial individuals who respond to homelessness through social enterprise organisations providing free

157 Snow and Anderson offer a reconceptualization of the homeless, framing them as ‘bricoleurs’ who actively assemble a life from scant resources in a hostile environment (1993).
clothes or haircuts. However, the capacity for autonomy (let alone political resistance) is not extended to the homeless themselves who are at best framed as needy beneficiaries of the voluntary generosity of others. In exceptional situations where a homeless person’s behaviour is recognised as autonomous or agential, this has generally been restricted to behaviours that contradict the limitations inscribed upon the homeless or activities directed towards ending their homelessness through personal ambition and industriousness.

Notions of resistance and autonomy are thus warped, or even produced, by the logics of neoliberal capitalism. The notion of ‘resistance’ becomes tinged with entrepreneurial values. Counterintuitively, one’s ability to resist becomes dependent on one’s ability to conform. This exemplifies a kind of ‘if you can’t beat them, join them’ logic that Žižek identifies in cultural forms of capitalism (2009). According to Žižek, in late-modern capitalism ethics are incorporated into consumer choices. This results in the narrowing of legitimate avenues for autonomous political expression, confining them to consumerist behaviours. Those who cannot or will not engage in legitimate consumer behaviour remain outside these narrow conceptual horizons of political autonomy. From this perspective, to resist homelessness and the poverty and precarity that capitalism produces, the individual must generate their own solidity and conditions of access, opportunity and wealth (McNay 2009: 58). That is, achieving these pre-requisites for resistance legitimately is only possible through an entrepreneurial ethic of incontestable self-interest. Counterintuitively, resistance to the exploitative and unfair dynamics of capitalism is achieved by thriving under its harsh conditions. This involves using one’s ambition, agency and entrepreneurial spirit to win in a competitive game that two-thirds of the world’s populations lose (Sloterdijk 2014: 195). Thus, to resist the exploitative aspects of capitalism one must become a capitalist par excellence.
McNay elaborates on the apparent contradictions of resistance under the conditions of late-modern capitalism (2009). Where once strategies of governance and social control constrained personal freedoms, they now ‘involve...shaping... individual lives in a way that does not violate their “formally autonomous” character’ (Miller and Rose 2008 in McNay 2009: 61). Social control is no longer achieved by restricting personal freedoms but through their expansion and facilitation. Thus, sanctioned modes of autonomy become the means of social control (2009: 55). As McNay queries:

If individual autonomy is not the opposite of or limit to neoliberal governance, but rather lies at the heart of disciplinary control through responsible self-management, what are the possible grounds upon which political resistance can be based?’ (2009: 56).

O’Malley offers an optimistic perspective: ‘If we live our lives through commodities then these commodities become a vehicle for expression of resistance’ (2009: 14). While there is some truth to the idea that consumers having some capacity to determine certain outcomes through their consumption choices, this constrained autonomy is ultimately dependent upon adhering to sanctioned norms of behaviour (that is, sanctioned consumption). Thus, positioning consumerism as the primary means of participative democracy leaves little political space for those unable or unwilling to consume. Katz is more critical: ‘Consumption is at best a partial means of incorporation into the social relations of production and reproduction associated with capitalism, and alternative practices of consumption are not resistance’ (2004: 240).

Katz avoids narrow or unelaborated notions of resistance by breaking down the concept into three forms: ‘resilience, reworking and resistance’ (2004: 241). She contrasts romantic conceptions against alternatives that do not necessarily involve dismantling oppressive structures but that on some level demonstrate counter-practices (2004: 243). For Katz, resistance is the successful countering of oppressive or restrictive power structures through direct and visible oppositional practices. In
comparison, ‘reworking’ is the reorganisation of current exploitative or uneven conditions in order to lessen their effects or render existence within them more viable. Katz writes: ‘projects of reworking tend to be driven by explicit recognition of problematic conditions and to offer focused, often pragmatic, responses to them. They generally operate on the same plane and scale that a problem is experienced...’ (2004: 247). Finally, resilience comprises practices of self-maintenance and survival within conditions that render this difficult and these practices necessary. Resilience is often small in scale and invisible, for example, the innumerable practices employed to exist and survive within difficult or hostile settings, the origins of which are vast in scale and dispersed across innumerable sites.

According to Katz, these three forms of resistance need to be understood in the context of ‘revanchism’. She defines this as ‘the vengeful social, cultural and political-economic policies and practices of ruling groups and nations who in the 1960s and 1970s faced a number of “others” who questioned and sometimes threatened their power and authority (2004: 241, see also Smith 1996).

In short, revanchism is the punitive targeting of groups who claim (or even just appear to claim) independence from dominant structures of governmental authority. Processes of welfare reform underway since the late-1970s and the spread of neoliberal rationalities throughout systems of government exemplify this (see Coleman et al 2005; Brenner and Theodore 2002). Revanchism has, in a sense, become the dominant strategy for dealing with populations understood as deviant, criminal, troublesome or Other in the late-modern era.158 After several decades, these strategies have become the norm, resulting in the violence they institute becoming invisible. The classic defence of neoliberal reform from the 1980s — ‘TINA’ or, ‘there is no alternative’ — has disappeared. However, this is not due the successful rejection of this logic, but rather because of its now glaring self-evidence in dominant socio-political spheres (Minton 2009).

158 See Garland on the ‘punitive turn’: a shift toward harsher penalties and hostile understandings of deviant behaviours in the governance of crime and the administration of punishment (2001).
So how should we conceptualise resistance within an enclosed social and political system characterised by the adaptable and resilient neoliberal logics of a ‘putatively placeless capitalism’ (Katz 2001: 709)? Within this system, homelessness is at best an economic nuisance and at worst a persistent threat to safety. Chapter Six described how an expanded and fractured apparatus of registration, incapacitation and control has enclosed upon homelessness. Initially, resistance to this array may appear impossible. However, interventionist and coercive regulatory responses are utilised against members of the homeless community because of the persistent challenges such individuals and groups pose to the state’s authority. In particular, often those who are intractably homeless — often termed ‘resistant to services’ — are subject to the most interventionist strategies. While the classification of an individual as resistant to services is used to indicate the severity of their marginalisation, we must consider the possibility of this being an expression of the individual’s political autonomy. While the condition of homelessness and the subjectivities it produces should not be glorified, we must resist the tendency to read difference within rigid categories of passivity and powerlessness. As Butler claims, instituting a political right to difference within the social polity involves relinquishing the right to determine the forms that difference may take (2013: 141). While homelessness, its practices, behaviours and demeanours may not be socially approved, or may not resemble the culturally valorised images of political resistance we are used to, this should not exclude the homeless from the capacity for political autonomy.

This thesis has highlighted various ways that homelessness may transgress social, cultural, political and legal norms and borders. The danger of overly narrow conceptions of political autonomy is that these foreclose upon recognising those practices that do not manifest in familiar and sanctified forms. For example, today political protest is only considered legitimate if it is civil, peaceful, approved by the governing authority and registered with the local police (Smith 2016). Behaviours

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159 Garland has noted that in many instances, behaviours or activities formerly understood as mere nuisances or even just tolerable differences within the complexity of the realm of the public, such as homelessness, are increasingly governed through the criminal justice system (1996; 2001). O’Malley has also described a shift from corrective sanctions to incapacitation and punishment for minor offences (2000: 27).
that breach these norms — the 2011 London Riots, the violent protests at the Melbourne G20 summit in 2006, the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014 — are widely condemned and discursively stripped of political legitimacy (see El-Enany 2015). The narrowing of legitimate avenues for autonomous political behaviour excludes alternative behaviours and bodies that transgress the current political arrangements of domination. The bodies that perform these behaviours are ambiguous, throwing into doubt neat social delineations between inside and outside, order and chaos, stability of form and amorphousness, life and death. Similarly, the transgressive dimensions of homelessness result in the conceptual exclusion of homeless bodies from the capacity for political autonomy and resistance. A discursive bind is created here where homelessness and political agency become mutually exclusive. The logic is that if one can participate in practices of resistance (and thereby display political autonomy) one must not be genuinely homeless. Anyone claiming to be homeless while demonstrating agency (for example, by protesting) is either not really homeless or has chosen the condition as a political act (and is therefore undeserving of empathy or assistance). Evidence of autonomy is reframed as laziness, volitional intractability and the refusal to contribute. However, arguably the truest test of whether something is resistant or not is whether it transgresses dominant social and political norms. If it does not, it does little to destabilise the dynamics of the dominant power relations that produce the alterity of the Other, and its designation as resistant should be re-evaluated.

Returning to homelessness and to Katz, in this context the practices of the visibly homeless and poor can be understood as demonstrating forms of resistance while being constrained by social, economic and political forces. The homeless and their persistent transgression of norms of space, place and belonging demonstrate forms of resilience and reworking. Drawing focus away from the individual and onto the condition, the intractability of homelessness forms a persistent undermining of the universalist claims of liberalism and capitalism. The doubt this creates must then be disavowed constantly through stigmatisation and policing. The subjection of this population to intensive
regimes of stigmatisation, interventionist policing and exclusionary governance strategies should not be read as evidencing their lack of capacity to resist, but counterintuitively, as indicating a significant capacity for resistance. The particular forms of homeless political action — whether high-profile squats and protest camps or more diffused and less explicit manifestations — should not determine a population’s capacity for political autonomy. Rather, our responses — social, political, economic and judicial — should be the site of scrutiny. In short, we should question why, if these bodies are non-resistant and apolitical, do we dedicate such a startling amount of force to their removal, reform, exclusion and incarceration?

What is challenging about recognising practices engaged in by the homeless as constituting resistance is that this necessarily locates ‘us’ within an oppressive structure. Doing so risks framing the Self as complicit with dominant operations of power that produce excluded, exiled and defiled bodies. Here, an unkind reflection of the Self is encountered — one that is explicitly bound up in relation to the Other — and this threatens to dissemble the subjectifying delineation between these two positions. Such is the challenge posed by any project of removing the stigma of homelessness: it threatens a kind of vertigo in which the Self is no longer understood because the Other disappears.

The processes of stigmatisation that the homeless are subjected to function to occlude and render bewildering people experiencing a condition characterised by severe vulnerability. Conducting this research has convinced me that removing of the stigma attached to homelessness would significantly mitigate the harms, both individual and collective, associated with the condition. This is not to say homelessness would cease to exist, but it would no longer have such extreme consequences for an individual’s inclusion in society. This involves some difficult tasks, such as de-fortifying the barriers that separate the avowed inside from the frightening, unpredictable and dissembling forces of the exterior.
To conclude, I return to the origins of this thesis: criminology and my continued study of it. Criminology is an odd discipline, as it lacks a discrete or stable object of study. Instead, it is the study of labels and the social consequences these have. Homelessness, like crime, is not a discrete entity; rather, it is a matter of definition. There is no pure essence of homelessness, just as there is no pure crime or essence of the criminal. It is the imposition of a system of order and the identification of the conditions and behaviours that breach that order that renders crime not only possible but inevitable. Thus, neither homelessness nor crime can ever be eradicated as they are produced in the very act of being named. Homelessness is produced by the construction and delineation of the symbolic spaces of the ‘home’ and ‘inside’, and the cultural, political and economic meanings this separation is imbued with. The various systems of enclosure that we use to barricade ourselves against the supposed danger and chaos of the symbolic ‘outside’, make the encounter with ‘outsiders’ — those who do not cohere — inevitable. The more fortified the barrier, the more transgressive and threatening those who transgress or approach it appear. Homelessness is, in this sense, ghostly or spectral: unamenable to destruction by force or to banishment through the erection walls and barriers. Instead, the threat of homelessness is ethereal and will continue to haunt the spaces of the city and home so long as they are barricaded against the nomad, the stranger, the vagabond and the Other. It is this barricading that institutes homelessness as inevitability: a reality not just for some, but for all.

Katz does not offer a solution to this cycle, but offers, at the very least, a first step. In seeking to alter how the encounter with homelessness and unsanctioned transience is understood, she offers the phrase ‘vagabond capitalism’. This, she claims, ‘puts the vagrancy and dereliction where it belongs — on capitalism, that unsettled, dissolute, irresponsible stalker of the world (Katz 2001: 710). Recognising capitalism’s vagabondage as the impelling force that drives the poor and desperate into the public spaces of cities as well as across borders is the first step towards systems of governance
that seek not to punish unsanctioned mobility but to investigate, understand and address its underlying causes.
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Appendix I

School of Social and Political Sciences

Consent Form

Project: “At the Margins: Crisis, Citizenship and Disadvantage.”

Name of participant: ____________________________

Name of researcher(s): James Petty (PhD candidate).

1. I consent to participate in this project, which is for research purposes. The details of which have been explained to me in a written plain language statement. I have been provided with a copy of this statement to keep.

2. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher.

3. I understand that my participation will involve an interview, which will be recorded, and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described in the plain language statement.

4. I acknowledge that:

   (a) This is a project conducted for the purpose of research;

   (b) I understand that participation is completely voluntary, I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and I understand I am able to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided until data analysis has begun;

   (c) I understand that I can elect to be referred to by a pseudonym in the thesis; however, given the small number of people being interviewed, I understand there is a possibility that someone may be able to identify me;

   (d) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide such as interview responses will be safeguarded (subject to any legal requirements) and will be stored at the University of Melbourne and destroyed after five years;

   (e) I have been informed that a copy of the research findings will be forwarded to me, should I ask for this.

I consent to this interview being audio-taped

□ yes □ no (please tick)

I wish to be identified by a pseudonym

□ yes □ no (please tick)

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

□ yes □ no (please tick)

Participant signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
Appendix II

Plain Language Statement

Project: “At the Margins: Crisis, Citizenship and Disadvantage”

Prof. Alison Young (supervisor)
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James Petty (PhD Candidate)
School of Social and Political Sciences
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ph: 0401 079 292

Introduction:
You are invited to participate in a research project which is being conducted by James Petty (PhD Candidate) at the School of Social and Political Sciences at The University of Melbourne. This research will contribute to his PhD project and is being supervised by Prof Alison Young and Dr David McDonald. This thesis has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The aim of the study is to investigate social disadvantage and marginality. It will do this by investigating causes and perceptions of social disadvantage and the interviewee's professional experience with these issues.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked to take part in a 45-60 minute semi-structured interview that will explore how citizenship and crisis are understood. You will be asked to reflect on your professional experience with the socially disadvantaged and marginal. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded to ensure an accurate record of your responses. A copy of the interview transcript will be made available on request.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
We intend to protect both your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses as much as possible and within the limits of the law. Personal information such as your name and contact details will be stored securely and cannot be linked to your responses. Any references to personal information that might allow someone to identify you will be removed. You can elect to be referred to by a pseudonym by ticking the ‘yes’ box on the consent form if you do not wish to be referred to by your name. As this research project is only interviewing a small number of people, there is a possibility that someone may still be able to identify you.

Once this project has been completed, a brief summary of the findings of this research will be sent to you upon request. This project's data will be stored securely for five years from the date of publication at the Faculty of Arts, before being destroyed. The results will also be presented at academic conferences and/or published in academic journals.

How do I agree to participate?
Please be advised that your participation in this study is completely voluntary and as such, should you wish to withdraw at any stage, or to withdraw any unprocessed data you have supplied, you are free to do so until data analysis takes place. If you would like to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by reading and signing the consent form provided.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the researchers with any questions or concerns relating to the nature of the project. Prof Alison Young is the responsible researcher for this project. You may also contact the Executive Officer of Human Research Ethics with any questions or concerns on ph: 8344 2073.
Appendix III

Research Project: “At the Margins: Crisis, Citizenship and Disadvantage.”

Interview Questions:

• Can you describe the organisation you work for and your role within it?
• What impact does your organisation have with the work it does?
• Why is this work important? What would be the consequences of not doing this work?
• What do you think are the main barriers to your organisation having the impact you would like it to have?
• What would you identify as the key forms of marginalisation in our society?
• What do you see as the main causal factors for these forms of disadvantage or marginalisation?
• Are there structural factors that affect people experiencing disadvantage or marginality?
• Broadly, through what mechanisms are these problems governed?
• Can you describe for me any encounters and experiences with people disadvantaged or marginal you’ve had in the course of your work?
• What do you see as their main concerns?
• What kinds of responses make a difference in these people’s lives?
• How do you think the wider community regards issues of disadvantage or marginality?
• How can the issues that your organisation deals with be further addressed or mitigated?
• How severe are these problems?
• Can you recall any examples of disadvantage or marginality being featured in the media or in political discussion recently?
  o What was said? What was your sense of how the issue or problem was framed?
• What do you think about the recent case in the media highlighting the use of anti-homelessness spikes and other ‘hostile structures’ in public spaces?
• What are your thoughts on Victoria’s recent introduction of anti-protest legislation?
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Petty, James William McRae

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