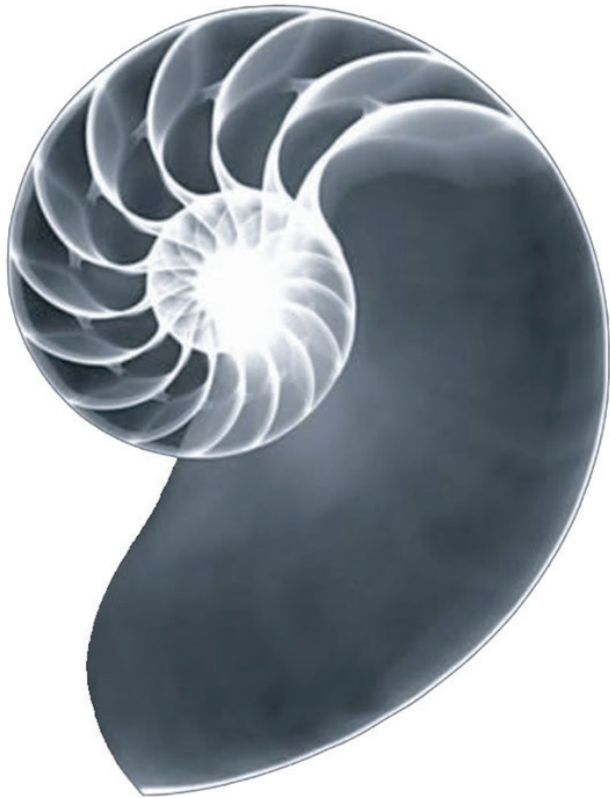# THE ETHICS OF SPACE

Homelessness and Squatting in Urban England

Steph Grohmann

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For all who are out of place

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Acknowledgements

Preface to *The Ethics of Space: Homelessness and Squatting in Urban England* by Steph Grohmann

Nicholas De Genova

The ethics of space: Homelessness and squatting in urban England is a rare and extraordinary work that deftly integrates fine-grained and sensitive ethnography with a bold philosophical imagination. With this remarkable book, Steph Grohmann not only exhibits her remarkable capabilities as an ethnographic researcher with a tenacious critical intellect—attuned to the complexities of contemporary hierarchies of wealth, power, and prestige—but also delights the reader with her exceptional talents as a writer. Based on fieldwork with squatters and other homeless people, primarily in Bristol, during which Grohmann was herself living as a squatter, the book examines how people who are not securely housed, and are therefore "home"-less, are also socially and politically produced as being always "out of place."

In this book, Grohmann transports the reader into a vivid and deeply moving exploration of her firsthand experience of homelessness and squatting in urban England. Her purpose is not to reduce those experiences and struggles into a voyeuristic pornography of misery and marginalization, nor to orientalize or romanticize homeless people as the contemporary urban equivalent of wild "savages" with their own exotic culture. Rather, Grohmann aims to elaborate a

critical lens through which to ask fundamental questions about the larger con-figuration of social inequality and class hierarchy in neoliberal, neo-Victorian Britain. Grohmann's incisive social critique does not remain confined to the sociological or anthropological "peculiarities of the English" (in the felicitous phrase of Perry Anderson), but instead mobilizes the ethnographic insights of her research as a platform for exploring the social dynamics of empathy, recog-nition, and ethics.

In this context of social marginalization and precarious housing, Grohmann discerns how squatters' practices of appropriating space produce their own sens-es of "home" and "safe space," and thereby collaborate in constructing moral subjectivities. The book demonstrates that squatting is not reducible to mate-rial deprivation or political disobedience but must also be understood as an ethical practice intended to counteract the traumatic loss of full moral status, or "social death," which is so pronouncedly evident in the condition of homeless-ness. For homeless people, Grohmann shows, experiences of spatial and social displacement enact specific territorial forms of unequal power and prestige. Consequently, conflicts over legitimate access to, and control of, the physical environment become decisive sites in which to understand and transform the cognitive construction and social production of embodied moral subjectivities in space.

By purposefully and defiantly asserting their right to occupy vacant houses and other buildings, the squatters whom we meet in this book not only challenge the sanctity of private property or neoliberal housing policy but also remake themselves and one another as "spatial selves," as embodied ethical subjects. In other words, what is at stake in their struggles to create practical solutions to the permanent "crisis" of affordable housing and the consequent scourge of home-lessness is a more elemental question of ethics, as they also seek to redress the moral dilemma of how we live and relate to one another within the dominant regime of private property and social life under capitalism. Through their strug-gles for housing, squatters initiate a more fundamental struggle to inhabit and take hold of social space, and thus to make modest but no less daring efforts to remake the world through very localized but determined measures to change their immediate, everyday lived realities. In doing so, they challenge the larger social and political order of neoliberal capitalism, and in working to transform life, they also transform themselves and their relations with the wider society, and engage in new and creative experiments with how we might begin to reor-ganize all of our collective social life.

Introduction

One cold day in the winter of 1921, Harry Cowley, a chimney sweep from Brighton, decided that enough was enough. A drummer boy in the Royal Navy in his youth, Cowley had been injured at the age of seventeen, and after his recovery, had been redeployed to bury the dead soldiers of World War I. On his return to Brighton, he had found the survivors and their families living in abject poverty in overcrowded slum accommodation or in tents on the local racecourse. Cowley's patience with this state of affairs ran out the day he found the family of an ex-serviceman camped out in the tent city overlooking town: "I thought; this won't be allowed to go on, I asked the man 'are you prepared to go in a house if me and my men find you one' he said 'yes' So we got together our boys and at 3 in the morning under cover of dark we forced our way into an empty house in Cheltenham Place and moved the family in."[1]

Cowley proceeded to form a group of local men who began to routinely break into empty properties and move in homeless locals. The group not only lent practical support to the squatter families but also acted as vigilantes to protect the new residents from eviction and violence by landlords or the police. Their actions continued until after World War II, when a new wave of impoverished and traumatized ex-soldiers returned from the front, to find what in today's terms could be referred to as a housing bubble. In Cowley's words:

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1. https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/17/a4212217.shtml.

> Well when this last War ended Brighton was loaded with empty houses, yer see. There was a lot of people buying empty houses cheap and selling them or renting at exorbitant prices, people couldn't afford them., One day I went to do some work in an old ladies home, she saved £400 in her life, her and her husband was old people. I valued the house at £600 and they was being asked £1,600. I thought this don't come right, your £400 gone up in the air and you'll never live long enough to buy the place and be secure.[2]

Cowley's keen sense of justice made him not only a squatting activist but also a staunch antifascist: "When I read about the brutality to the Jews, anything like that, I could cry and have cried. And I felt it was my duty to fight against it." Fueled by this sense of moral commitment, Cowley and his group fought the rising Far Right in the shape of Oswald Mosley's "British Union of Fascists"—often physically. Cowley recounts being assaulted and hospitalized, having his property attacked, and having himself incited violence to shut down local fascist rallies. Asked to justify their actions after one such bloody battle, he replied on behalf of his men: "No mine wasn't rough boys; they were conscientious."[3]

Some ninety years later, Mike Weatherley, Conservative MP for Hove—a place so close to Brighton that nowadays they are considered the same town, Brighton and Hove—launched an entirely different campaign. Weatherley had become irate with the activities of local squatters, whom he saw as infringing on the fundamental property rights of Hove's citizens:

> It is true that some of those who are homeless have squatted but this does not make them squatters. A typical squatter is middle-class, web-savvy, legally-minded, university-educated and, most importantly, society-hating. They are very often extremely intimidating and violent. They are political extremists whose vision for society is a dysfunctional medieval wasteland without property rights, where an Englishman's home is no longer his castle.[4]

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2.   https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/17/a4212217.shtml.

3.   https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/17/a4212217.shtml.

4.   Mike Weatherley's official home page: http://www.mikeweatherleymp.com/2013/03/04/squatting-statement/.

Weatherley went on to spearhead a political campaign that saw "squatting in a residential building" redefined as a criminal offence under Section 144 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. Previously, squatting in England and Wales had been regarded as a dispute over private property between a squatter and a landlord, to be resolved in the Magistrate's courts. Section 144 turned the practice from a civil affair into a crime against the state (O'Mahony, O'Mahony, and Hickey 2014), punishable by a £5,000 fine or a six-month prison sentence. The implementation of Section 144 in September 2012 was preceded by a two-year-long publicity campaign on the part of the government and the tabloid media, designed to shift the public perception of "the squatter" from that of the heroic protector of the vulnerable represented in Harry Cowley, to that of the terrifying, violent invader of Weatherley's imagination.

"Weatherley's law," as Section 144 came to be known, coincided with an intensification of England's perpetual housing crisis in the wake of the 2008 financial crash, and the following austerity cuts, job losses, and welfare reform. The term "housing crisis" should be taken with a grain of salt—after all, "the idea of crisis implies that inadequate or unaffordable housing is abnormal, a temporary departure from a well-functioning standard. But for working-class and poor communities, housing crisis is the norm" (Marcuse and Madden 2016: 21). This certainly seems plausible when considering that the following words—which apart from the precise numbers could be taken straight from one of the numerous news articles about the current "housing crisis"—were actually written in 1979:

> Most large British cities suffer a housing shortage but London is measurably worse. Thirty-five percent of the city's households live at a density of more than 1.5 persons per room, compared with 16.1 percent elsewhere in Britain. Only four percent of the country's households have to share their home; the figure in the capital is twenty percent. Many of the more than 100.000 empty government-owned houses in London remain unoccupied for five to ten years, yet there are 190,000 homeless families on housing council waiting lists. Another 51,000 privately held properties are unoccupied, one-fifth of which have been vacant for at least two years. The homeless reside in "temporary" government shelters or with relatives or friends under stressful, often intolerable, conditions. (Kearns 1979: 590)

Post-2008, the situation was aggravated, however, by a soaring number of repossessions, as well as house-price inflation that pushed property ownership out of reach for large parts of the population and increased the proportion of privately rented homes by over two-thirds.[5] At the same time, rents in the private sector increased far ahead of inflation, especially in London, while incomes stagnated and housing-related benefits were cut. Private renting in Britain is insecure at the best of times—unlike in Continental Europe, British law contains few protections for tenants, and evictions often happen for no other reason than that a tenancy has not been renewed because a landlord has an eye on charging higher rent to somebody else. Along with a general fall in income, these factors led to a 36 percent increase in people accepted as homeless by government agencies between 2009 and 2015.[6] It is important to note that this figure only concerns those who were recognized by the government as eligible for support—if the number of unsuccessful applications is included, the figure would be about twice as high. Additionally, a large number of homeless people do not present to government agencies at all—according to the charity Crisis, between 50 and 75 percent of all single homeless people have never used temporary shelter (Reeve and Batty 2011). Crisis estimates that the majority of homelessness is "hidden"—people with no fixed address who sleep on floors and sofas at the houses of friends or family, or sometimes even at their workplace. For women, this frequently translates into vulnerability to violence and sexual exploitation, as they are often specifically targeted by men offering shelter in exchange for sexual and domestic services. As for rough sleepers, there are no comprehensive statistics on their numbers; government figures show, however, that the number of *counted* rough sleepers has increased by 55 percent since 2010[7]—not including those who, for whatever reason, do not become visible enough to be counted.

Against this backdrop, the campaign to criminalize squatting saw itself confronted with a challenge: in order to make it plausible to parliament and the public that squatting was a pervasive "problem" that had to be stamped out, any connection between this practice and the chronic lack of affordable housing

5.   http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmcomloc/50/50ii05.htm.

6.   http://www.crisis.org.uk/pressreleases.php/678/5-rise-in-homelessness-reveals-desperate-state-of-private-rented-sector.

7.   https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/407030/Rough_Sleeping_Statistics_England_-_Autumn_2014.pdf.

had to be categorically denied. Weatherley, and subsequently other government agencies such as the Ministry of Justice, achieved this by enlisting the tabloid press in launching what has been described as a "moral panic" (Dadusc and Dee 2014) during 2011–12. This campaign involved a great number of news stories that portrayed squatters as violent invaders, "parasites," enemies to the values of society, and importantly, as foreigners (especially "Gypsies") who had come to Britain to exploit its alleged "soft touch" approach to crime. In particular, it drew on the concept of "home" in a purposefully misleading way, as squatters were portrayed as thieves who invaded occupied properties when the inhabitants had just briefly left, and proceeded to "desecrate" (David Ward MP, cited in Middleton 2014: 97) this most personal and sacred of spaces. The government's official position was that it did

> not accept the claim that is sometimes made that squatting is a reasonable recourse of the homeless resulting from social deprivation. There are options open to those who are genuinely destitute and who need shelter which do not involve occupying somebody else's property without authority. No matter how compelling or difficult the squatter's own circumstances are claimed to be, it is wrong that legitimate occupants should be deprived of the use of their property.[8]

This rhetoric of squatters "depriving legitimate occupants from the use of their property" was criticized even by the Criminal Bar Association and the Law Society as "headline-grabbing" and "unnecessary" (O'Mahony, O'Mahony, and Hickey 2014: 5), since squatting an *occupied* property already was a criminal offence under Sections 6 and 7 of the Criminal Law Act 1977. In the overwhelming majority of cases, squatters were well aware of this fact, and therefore targeted *vacant* residential properties (O'Mahony, O'Mahony, and Hickey 2014: 5), a fact that the criminalization campaign purposefully ignored.

Despite these misrepresentations, however, what little data there existed about the prevalence of squatting among homeless people still made it difficult for the government to completely deny that some squatters, in fact, were in urgent housing need (see also Reeve 2014). The subsequent emerging consensus, supported also by the opposition, was that while some squatters were indeed desperate and destitute, this vulnerable group had to be distinguished

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8. http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110713/wmstext/110713m0001.htm.

from those squatters who were merely freeloaders. As Andrew Slaughter, then
Shadow Justice Secretary, summarized the emerging view:

> It is also right to say that there are, for want of a better term, "lifestyle squat-
> ters"—people who are part of the something-for-nothing society. We disagree
> with that, and we support the criminalisation of their activities. However, many
> squatters are homeless, and often have severe mental health and addiction
> problems.[9]

As an anthropologist researching squatting, I am frequently astonished at the
prevalence of the view that there is a categorical distinction between the "vul-
nerable homeless" and so-called "lifestyle squatters" (see also Middleton 2014),
a.k.a. "political squatters." In practically any talk or presentation on the subject I
have given over the years, at least one member of the audience steps up to clarify,
without any malice, that "surely not all of them are really homeless?" To a degree,
this view may stem from a popular imaginary that associates homelessness pre-
dominantly with rough sleeping and the associated publicly visible problems of
substance abuse and mental illness, and that casts "the homeless" as a group as
passive and helpless (and for this reason morally "pure") victims. On the other
hand, however, it also demonstrates that the government's targeted campaign
to categorically divide squatters into the deserving victim and the undeserving
scrounger has been successful even with those who would not normally be ex-
pected to take their social analysis from the likes of the *Daily Mail*. The problem
is exacerbated, on the one hand, by the relative dearth of academic research on
squatting in Britain, resulting in the fact that little is known about actual num-
bers of squatters and their circumstances, motivations, and practices (O'Mahony,
O'Mahony, and Hickey 2014: 5). On the other hand, despite the fact that the
government acknowledged that "at present there is very little information held
centrally about the number of people who squat, their reasons for doing so or
the types of buildings that tend to attract squatters" (cited in Dixon 2011: 3), its
official communications—and their coverage by the tabloid press—not only cate-
gorically rejected the idea that there is a large overlap between squatters and those
conventionally defined as "homeless," they actively promoted the distinction.

One purpose of this book is therefore to extend this sparse existing research
base by ethnographically documenting the circumstances, motivations, and

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9.   Hansard, HC debates, 1.11.2011, col 870.

practices of squatters in a specific local context, also and especially regarding the relationship between squatting and homelessness. Based on eighteen months of fieldwork conducted between 2010 and 2011 in Bristol, England, I aim to demonstrate that while "homelessness" is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, there is an undeniable connection between squatters and the "vulnerable homeless," insofar as squatters saw themselves as homeless people who had chosen to do something about their vulnerability. This means, on the one hand, instead of relying on dwindling public resources for homelessness services, they actively challenged the social and material conditions that made them symbolic and literal "outsiders." On the other hand, however, this collective practice, be it as a deliberate political strategy or simply as a means of survival, addresses "vulnerability" in a very specific way: by making it the center of an ethics of solidarity that frames the collective occupation of forbidden spaces as not only a political but also and especially a *moral* response to the pervasive human vulnerability to a lack of shelter. This is not to say that I want to portray squatting as a moral, as opposed to a political or economic issue; rather, the politics of negotiating access to space that underlie squatting contain an element of moral reasoning, which points beyond its immediate context to the connection between space and the ethical more generally.

The campaign to criminalize squatting showed these connections in a number of ways: the discursive shift from the figure of the squatter as protector of the vulnerable to that of the violent and alien invader, for example, drew on a number of categories that express spatial as well as moral properties. The Western concept of the "home," which I discuss at length in chapter three, for example combines a particular conception of space (most often an enclosed, protected and "sacred" space) with particular moral assignments.[10] "Home" (the idea, if not the really existing home) describes a space of safe containment, a haven and sanctuary, within which the self "takes to cover, hides away, lies snug, concealed" (Bachelard 1994: 91). The violation of somebody's "home" is thus perceived as morally reprehensible because it constitutes an illegitimate intrusion of the outside into the "sacred" inside, and the negative moral evaluation of the invader is due not only to his flaunting of social or legal rules but also to the fact that he

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10. As discussed in chapter three, this conception of "home" has been widely challenged as an idealized notion concealing the fact that many really existing homes are not "safe havens" at all but rather contain relations of violence and oppression. As the government rhetoric demonstrates, however, this does not mean that the ideal construction of "home" as a sanctuary is not a potent cultural image.

has illegitimately gained access to a space within which he does not belong. Like "dirt" for Mary Douglas is offensive because it is "matter out of place" (1966), so the figure of the invader invokes outrage because he is a "person out of place," and in this very spatial nonbelonging consists his moral repugnancy. Enlisting this construction to vilify squatters was successful precisely because there is a moral consensus in our culture that a "home" should be free from intrusion, and to "steal" it constitutes not only an economic but also a moral violation. As I will discuss in the following chapters, the invocation of this construction by a state that had few qualms about invading "homes" whenever deemed necessary to uphold public order, demonstrates quite a stunning degree of hypocrisy—it was, however, in no way accidental. As I will argue, it turned on a fundamental principle of how humans represent the world to themselves and others: we construct moral categories in spatial terms, and conversely, we construct social and material spaces according to moral classifications. The second purpose of this book is therefore to draw on the example of squatting and the politics that surround it to make a larger argument: that space is not only socially but also and especially morally constructed. I will briefly introduce the ethnographic context of this book before explaining what I mean by this.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF "SQUATTER'S RIGHTS"

The ethnographic fieldwork for this book was conducted in Bristol between October 2010 and March 2011, during which I lived exclusively in squats and thus was, at least in legal terms, "genuinely" homeless. While this book is therefore in many ways autoethnographic, I have tried my best to avoid excessive navel-gazing and use my own experience not so much as evidence but rather as a methodological tool—I will leave it to my reader to decide how successful I was. As I recount in chapter one, my choice of field site was somewhat coincidental: I had come to Bristol through connections within the larger squatting movement, of which the city was then an important and well-known hub. Bristol has been a center for squatting and radical politics since the 1970s days of the "Bristol Squatters Association,"[11] and right until the criminalization, was

11. Oral history evidence by Mac McConnell for the Bristol Radical History Group, http://www.brh.org.uk/site/events/housing-activism-and-squatting-in-1970s-bristol/.

renowned for its activist and squatting "scenes."[12] Before coming to Britain, I had visited and stayed in squats in Germany, Austria, Greece, Spain, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Belgium, and Hungary, and part of the reason it was very easy for me to gain access to the "scene" was that despite different legal situations, squats in all of these places functioned according to very similar rules. For the culturally initiated, it was therefore quite easy to travel Europe for free, drawing on a network of squatted spaces—the assumption nearly everywhere was that as "one of us," a transient squatter should be given at least temporary accommodation. Squatters generally thought of themselves as part of a global movement, characterized by particular ideas of politics, economics, and ethics, as well as a "subcultural" aesthetic and practice. Developments in other places—such as the 2010 criminalization of squatting in the Netherlands—were seen by British squatters as directly affecting their own communities, and Section 144 was contextualized as part of a wider strategy to regulate squatting across the European Union. Moreover, there were strong social and material links between squatting in Bristol and in the rest of the country as well as Europe—squatters freely moved between cities and countries, and more high-profile evictions usually drew support from well beyond the border. Therefore, while my ethnography describes a local microcosm, Bristol squatting can in many ways be seen as representative of squatting in England and Wales more generally, and in its basic impetus, squatting as it is found throughout Europe (see Kadir 2016; Squatting Europe Kollektive [SQUEK] 2013; Cattaneo and Martinez 2014).

At the same time, squatting in England and Wales was especially prolific because until Section 144 came into force, it was, for practical purposes, "legal" (that is to say, not punishable). The folk notion of "squatter's rights" pointed to the fact that the construction of squatting as a civil matter gave squatters a relatively greater scope for agency in dealing with property owners and the police as compared to other places, and the protection this situation awarded allowed for vibrant and diverse cultural forms to flourish in and around squats. The (legally not entirely correct) notion of "squatter's rights" referred, on the one hand, to the fact that squatters were protected from eviction until a Magistrate's court had established whose claim to a property was to be privileged: theirs or the owners. This meant that until such a verdict had been reached, neither the legal owner of

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12. As I discuss in chapter one, "scene" was the term most often used by squatters themselves, albeit not without a degree of sarcasm.

a property nor the police had a right to evict. As I discuss in chapter three, the emblematic Section 6 of the Criminal Law Act 1977, which spelled out that the rights of present occupiers were not to be infringed upon except by court order, formed a material part of squatting practice, in that a copy of it was usually affixed to the door of a squat as a warning to the landlord and police. On the other hand, the idea of "squatters rights" also in part referred to the Common Law principle of adverse possession—the traditional view that by virtue of occupying a space for a prolonged period of time, the occupant acquired an entitlement to it, whether or not they were the legal owner on paper. As Emma Waring notes, the doctrine of adverse possession is based on the idea that a landowner who neglected their duty of stewardship of their land gravely enough for squatters to occupy it, had, by virtue if this very negligence, forsaken some or all of their entitlement to it (2014: 178). It was therefore for a long time possible to acquire property in land and dwellings by means of occupation, and the squatting scene abounded with anecdotes of squatters who had successfully obtained property rights in a squat by simply living in it for long enough.

In another sense, the notion of "squatter's rights" was also grounded in the long history of squatting in England and Wales. Squatters often trace their heritage to the Diggers or "True Levellers," a religiously motivated land-squatter movement led by Gerrard Winstanley, which in 1649 began to occupy and cultivate common land in England. These occupations, along with widespread resistance to the restriction of squatter's cottages on common land in the seventeenth century, can be seen as the first of several English squatter's movements (Reeve 2014: 134). More recently, as the story of Harry Cowley shows, squatting was an integral part of recovery after both World Wars, and involved widespread occupations by both ex-servicemen and families displaced by bombings. After 1945, Britain experienced the first of many subsequent "housing crises," with widespread destruction of infrastructure accompanied by soaring rents and property prices (D. Watson 2016). Families responded by moving not only into vacant residential properties but also abandoned army bases and former prisoner-of-war camps: "By June 1946, 20 local authorities reported squatting in their areas and by October, it was estimated that 1,038 camps were occupied in England and Wales, housing 40,000 families" (Reeve 2014: 135). After a twenty-year hiatus, squatting again emerged in the context of 1960s counterculture (Bailey 1973), with the London Squatters Campaign soon followed by the London Street Commune and other local movements, and links being formed with squatting communities in other places:

Squatting is now well advanced in Great Britain, Italy, Spain, France, Denmark, and The Netherlands and it is increasing in Sweden and West Germany. Close communication links have been established over the past five years among various European squatter communities, particularly British, Dutch, and Italian. Squatting has spread from London to other large cities in Britain and the total population is estimated at more than 50,000. (Kearns 1979: 589)

As with earlier squatting movements, there was no doubt at the time that these squatters—countercultural though they were—were also genuinely in need of shelter (Ward 1976: 171). Occupations continued throughout the 1970s, benefitting from the localized concentration of empty properties at the time (Reeve 2014: 137).

During the 1980s, however, public attitudes to squatting changed, and squatters found themselves targeted by the ideological nature of Thatcherite housing policy, which promoted the notion of a "property owning democracy" and actively sought to eradicate not only publicly owned social housing but also other forms of nonmarketized dwelling. In some ways, this period marked the beginning of the redefinition of squatting from a reasonable recourse of those who had no other means of obtaining shelter to a privileging of private property and the rights of landowners (see also Dee 2014). This was achieved also and especially by introducing the distinction between "squatters" and "homeless people," which eventually culminated in the campaign for Section 144. Despite the fact that the government's campaign relied heavily on this dichotomy, it is not solely a product of the British Conservative imagination: what little academic research there is on squatting has, at times, reproduced the very same categories. Hans Prujit, for example, distinguishes between "deprivation-based" and "political" squatting (2013: 21), implying that people either squat because they are homeless or to actively critique capital and the state, but not both at the same time. Similarly, Claudio Cattaneo and Miguel Martinez distance "political" squatting from the kind that has "no other motivation than to remedy a desperate situation, secretly and in silence" (2014: 3), as if remedying a desperate lack of shelter, even silently, were not a "political" issue. The problematic construction of "the political" in these accounts would warrant a longer discussion on its own, and is ultimately not the purpose of this book. What becomes obvious here, however, is that the impetus to distinguish between the "vulnerable homeless" and "lifestyle squatters" is by no means limited to the enemies of squatting.

As my ethnography shows, however, the distinction is not, and never was, absolute. People frequently drifted in and out of categories—a mere "desperation squatter" could and did become politicized, and as my own example shows, a political activist could suddenly find themselves homeless. Most often, people occupied both categories at once—as research by homelessness charities illustrates, squatting is a common and frequent step in homeless people's "careers" between hidden homelessness and rough sleeping (Reeve 2014), thus commonly bringing them in touch with more formal political approaches to housing rights, such as in the example of the Bristol Housing Action Movement (BHAM) discussed in chapter two. There are no reliable statistics about how many squatters are also homeless, or conversely, how many homeless people squat—the most often cited figure for England and Wales before the introduction on Section 144 was 20,000 (Reeve 2014). What is more, the question of whether or not squatters are "really homeless" strongly depends upon what definition of "homelessness" one wants to use; there are significant differences between the government's specification as to who counts as "homeless" in terms of their entitlement to support, and the estimates of advocacy organizations as to how many people de facto have no legal entitlement to any kind of shelter. The squatters I lived with, finally, had their very own solution to the question: to their minds, not a single squatter was homeless, since by virtue of the very fact that they had chosen to occupy a vacant property, they had actively removed themselves from the category "homeless" and were now "squatters," despite the fact that they may have still been homeless in the legal sense (see chapter two). I suspect that this logic underlies some of the debates among squatters during the public consultation in the run-up to Section 144 (whose findings the government subsequently ignored): there was a degree of unease among them about utilizing the "homelessness angle" to make their case, since they did not want to appear in need of support from the state, or divert attention from the issues of housing rights and private property by focusing merely on questions of welfare provision.

A GLOBAL PHENOMENON?

There is a certain risk involved in comparing squatting in Europe (and specifically in Britain, which itself differs from other European countries in important ways) to practices that have been described under the same label in countries

of the Global South. While the smallest common denominator of squatting is certainly the act of occupying space where one is not supposed to, the vastly different cultural, political, and economic contexts make it necessary to carefully denote exactly what one is talking about in each case. It would be difficult, for example, to compare the occupation of a bookshop in Bristol's Stokes Croft by ten anarchists to the mass occupation of land by an indigenous movement in Ecuador (Huarcaya 2018) in any other way than that in both cases, a group of people is claiming a space they have no formally recognized business to claim. At the same time, however, it is interesting to note how starkly the tone of research on squatting in the Global South differs from that adopted in its European counterpart. For example, in a paper on "Squatting and culture" in Latin America and the Middle East, Nezar Alsayyad could claim in full earnest that "the cultural argument which highlighted a pathological explanation of urban problems that blamed the poor for lacking motivation to change their living conditions is now history. Today we recognise the innovative genius of the urban poor in taking advantage of the specific cultural opportunities to survive and improve their living conditions" (1993: 34), a statement that would have certainly surprised my respondents to hear. But why is it that what counts as "innovative genius" in one part of the world is seen as "part of a something-for-nothing society" in another?

I can claim no particular expertise when it comes to squatting in the Global South. However, a very brief look at the literature can perhaps shed some light on this difference in tone. In the 1960s, squatting in all parts of the world was commonly discussed as the same phenomenon, with authors like Herbert Gans (1962), John Turner (1963, 1966), and William Mangin (1963, 1965, 1967) discussing common infrastructural features of squatting settlements in the West and the Global South (see also Harris 2003). These infrastructures were overwhelmingly framed "as solutions to difficult social problems rather than as problems" (Mangin 1967: 67), and policy recommendations held that squatters therefore should be supported in their efforts at self-organization. By the 1970s, however, this view was coming under attack, as Janet Abu-Lughod summarizes:

> With perhaps too much ease, these developments, having roughly the same morphology and dubious legal status, are assumed to have arisen from similar causes, to serve similar sociological functions, to have similar social organization, and, finally, to produce similar consequences. I am not certain that some of the generalizations we have been making in this area of comparative urban studies are at

all justified. There seem to be critical differences in traditions of land ownership and therefore the legal status of squatting, in patterns of political power and therefore the relationship of squatters to the state, in the sources, motivations and circumstances of migration and therefore selectivity and characteristics of squatter populations, which ought to yield place-specific variations. . . . Nevertheless, we keep attempting to generalize about what does or does not go on in urban subareas so ostensibly similar in type. (Abu-Lughod 1975: 15)

This shift in opinion coincided with a shift in global policy. Since 1972, "a substantial portion of the World Bank's urban lending program was based on the proposition that sites and services and squatter area upgrading projects, providing secure tenure and a range of basic services, would enable and encourage poor households to improve their housing through self-help financing and/or construction" (Conway 1985: 178), while a 1976 United Nations Habitat Conference on Human Settlement "unilaterally recognized the necessity to take appropriate measures to upgrade uncontrolled settlements and to integrate their inhabitants into national development processes" (Conway 1985: 178). Squatting in the Global South had thus come to be defined as a problem of "development" or lack thereof, and this feature alone categorically distinguished it from squatting in "developed" nations. By 1979, as Kevin Kearns documents, this divergence had given rise to the categorical assumption that "intraurban squatting in Western industrialized nations differs in form and function from its Third World counterparts" (1979: 538), and so did the policy interventions necessary to tackle it.

The distinction between squatting in "developing" and in "developed" nations perhaps foreshadowed the later distinction between "desperation" and "lifestyle" squatters in some ways: whereas under conditions of low economic functioning and rapid urbanization, squatting was seen as a disorderly but morally legitimate first step toward a proper housing market, the very definition of Western countries as terminally "developed" meant that there, any such excuse fell flat. As a result, around the turn of the millennium squatting in the West all but disappeared from the literature, with the exception of areas that could count at least in some ways as "developing," such as parts of Southern and Eastern Europe (Suditua and Vâlceanu 2013; Pojani 2013; Tsenkova 2012). But new subdivisions also began to appear *within* the conceptualization of squatting settlements in the Global South. While some scholars continued to sing the praises of squatting as a laudable form of self-help and community spirit among the

urban poor (e.g., Rivadulla 2012; Harris 2003; Alsayyad 1993), others pointed to the fact that at closer inspection, squatter settlements actually often turned out to more closely resemble informal property markets than commons. Susan Eckstein (1990), for example, recounts how the inhabitants of the Mexico City squatter settlement she first studied in the 1960s had, by the late 1980s, built small housing units called *vecindades* around their homes, which they rented out to others. Similarly, Philip Amis observes that "squatting as it is conventionally defined no longer exists in Nairobi. . . . The provision of such low-income shelter is now a commercial activity" (1984: 87). Mike Davis (2006) uses the term "pirate urbansiation" (37ff.) to describe scenarios where squatting is not undertaken with the intention of opposing private property, but rather, of acquiring it.

These practices appear to challenge the idea of squatting as inherently opposed to private property, but it would be too easy to attribute them to some kind of inevitable "tragedy of the commons." To be sure, squatters, especially those in the Global South, easily lend themselves to projections along the lines of a "noble pauper" myth that ascribes to them some kind of inherent revolutionary consciousness—as Frantz Fanon wrote, "they constitute one of the most spontaneous and most radically revolutionary forces of a colonized people" (1967: 103)—and is then bitterly disappointed when the wretched of the earth turn out to have less lofty aspirations. However, it needs to be recognized in this context that first, being a full-time revolutionary especially in the Global South is dangerous in ways Western squatters are rarely confronted with (see Corr 1999, chapter 5) and second, it is generally unhelpful to assume that people can only be either completely anticapitalist or completely corrupted by property. A useful concept in this context is the idea, borrowed from Critical Theory, of a "dialectic of immanence and transcendence" (Ng 2015), most often used to refer to the notion that any social critique has to acknowledge that that which it critiques (society) is at the same time the condition of possibility for its own existence. An example of this principle would be an academic who is paid a wage to critique wage labor—a paradox only if one assumes that these things are mutually exclusive. In the same way, anticapitalist praxis always struggles with the fact that it is embedded in capitalist structures, while at the same time trying to transcend them. The resulting tension is not easily resolved and, as Critical Theory argues, should not be—rather, acknowledging and enduring the resulting contradiction is the hallmark of reflective theory and praxis.

To apply this idea to squatting means to recognize that in some ways, it is decidedly immanent—the praxis depends on a capitalist infrastructure in order

to provide it with the very spaces it appropriates—but at the same time, it challenges this structure by sheer virtue of existing. This contradictory relation is not static—what can begin as a spectacular moment of transcendence can slip back into immanence, as in the case of the regularization of squats in New York that made all the "little capitalists com[e] out of the closet" as former squatters embraced property ownership (Starecheski 2016: 160). What begins as pedestrian immanence can spill over into transcendence, such as when tenants of a London housing estate resist forced expropriation by "squatting" their own properties (Lees 2014). Rather than asking if a particular instance of squatting "is" immanent or transcendent, one could therefore adopt a more Hegelian view and look at those tendencies or "moments" within its life cycle that point toward immanence or transcendence, alternating over time. Such a view would show that transcendence is not an immutable characteristic of all squatting everywhere all the time—rather, like a wave, a transcendental moment builds up, breaks, spills over into adjacent areas, and finally collapses back into immanence, in just the way that observers of squatting in the Global South describe.[13]

This distinction can also shed some light on the difference in tone between accounts of squatting in the Global South and in the West. The very idea of "developing" places speaks to the concept of a possible beyond, and the Western imagination has romanticized the "Third World revolutionary" enough to grant him a shot at a different world. In the West, however, the myths of the "end of history" and "fully developed market capitalism" mean that transcendence is no longer considered possible. TINA ("there is no alternative") means that there is no "outside of" commoditized relations to aspire to, and so the Western squatter can appear only either as a desperate wretch or a willful criminal, but certainly not a revolutionary. This reactionary narrative is reinforced every time squatters do something—such as legalizing their status—that brings them closer to a normalized lifestyle, as the immanent moment of their praxis is taken for the whole: "Look, at the end of the day they all want to become homeowners." Such accusations are unfair and inaccurate, since they neglect that different squats and different squatters will express the moments of immanence and transcendence at different points in time. Rather than demanding that all squatting must be all-transcendent all the time in order to count as "revolutionary," we should therefore pay attention to those circumstances that allow for a transcendent

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13. It shares this trajectory in common with most social movements.

moment to emerge and push at the limits of capitalist normality, before slipping back into it.

Within the official political discourse around squatting in Britain, the distinction between "lifestyle" and "desperation" squatters thus served to obscure, if not deny, the possibility of transcendence, and make squatters simply into another instant of "deserving" and "undeserving" homeless (see also Susser 1996: 412). The former thus had to formally be brought under the tutelage of the state, while delegitimizing the latter as not only criminal but also immoral. The rhetoric of the "vulnerable homeless" who were contrasted with so-called "lifestyle squatters" of course reflected a considerable amount of cynicism in light of the fact that the government was simultaneously rolling back social security provision on an unprecedented scale, also and especially including services for the homeless. I have therefore tried to strike a balance in this book between the "homelessness" and the "activist" end of squatting, without assuming a strict demarcation between the two. At the same time, I will forego some perhaps more obvious angles of approaching the issue, specifically concerning the legal and economic sides of squatting. The small literature on squatting in the United Kingdom already contains some comprehensive treatments of the subject in terms of legal and political theory (O'Mahony, O'Mahony, and Hickey 2014; Cobb 2012), social policy (Reeve and Batty 2011), the securitization of the nation state (Manjikian 2013), and activist networks and social movements (Squatting Europe Kollective [SQUEK] 2013; Cattaneo and Martinez 2014; Dadusc 2014; Milligan 2016). In more general terms, scholars like David Harvey have discussed housing policy and urban development in the context of shifting relations of capital. As Neil Cobb (2014) demonstrates, particularly the analysis of neoliberal approaches to housing and private property can help to understand why squatting was banned now, of all times in history. However, while I will draw in different ways on all these analyses, my theoretical purpose here is somewhat different.

For one thing, while squatters will certainly be the protagonists of this book, it is not primarily intended to be "an ethnography of squatters," in the sense of a comprehensive description of a discrete group of people and their customs and habits. As any ethnographer of social inequality knows, there is a distinct risk for work like this to descend into another rendition of the "Culture of Poverty" trope, which anthropologists have rightly criticized for some time (Eames and Goode 1996; Bourgois 2001; Small, Harding, and Lamont 2010). The Culture of Poverty argument turns on the assumption that it is

something about the practices, value system, or character of poor people that leads to the reproduction of poverty (Lewis 1969), neglecting, as critics point out, structural conditions and material context. The literature on homelessness contains a number of versions of this kind of argument: Megan Ravenhill's *The culture of homelessness* (2012), for example, uses the word "culture" to explain how the individual difficulties and collective survival practices of homeless people are actually the cause of homelessness. Ravenhill identifies "adverse childhood experiences" as one of the major causes of "rooflessness" (Margaret Thatcher's preferred term), along with "institutionalization, prostitution, drug and alcohol abuse [and] personality disorders" (xvii). The real problem for her, however, are the social relationships homeless people develop among each other: "If we are serious about preventing and resolving rooflessness we need to understand the importance of the homeless culture, in attracting and holding members" (2012: 145). Another example, *Braving the street: The anthropology of homelessness* (Glasser and Bridgman 1999), blithely frames the homeless ("throughout the world," no less) as some kind of exotic tribe of "modern nomads," promising its readers a "'native or 'emic' point of view" (1999: xi) on the lives of these mysterious creatures. The authors profess, through ethnographic fieldwork, "to understand *what drives individuals to life on the streets* and to shelters, and what prevents them from gaining permanent and secure housing" (1999: 6; emphasis mine), and enlist the full armory of culturally relativistic ethnography to "enable us to see the world through the eyes of the homeless themselves" (1999: 7).

Glasser and Bridgman's overexoticizing of homelessness people as mysterious and remote Others, "driven" by inexplicable impulses to live on the streets, could pass as a hilarious parody of the pompous habitus of colonial anthropology, if it wasn't intended to be entirely serious (see, critically, Madden 2003). It is thus a prime example of the danger inherent in a formulaic approach to ethnography along the lines of "practice x among group y in locale z" when applied to poverty in the West. The homeless—or squatters for that matter—are a discrete group of people, perhaps even a "community," but they are not a "culture" or "tribe" emerging from some quasi-natural process of cultural differentiation. As a group, they are constituted and reproduced not from within but through larger social, political, and economic processes causing them to experience a common set of problems and—in the case of squatters—develop communal practices to resolve these problems. It would therefore be misguided to present this work as

"an ethnography of squatters," purporting to give my readers comprehensive in-sight into a particular subculture, while remaining silent on the larger culture it is embedded in. It would be equally wrong, however, to present this work as "an ethnography of Britain"—while it is situated within British culture socially and geographically, "British culture" itself is not a homogenous or one-dimensional concept, and I cannot even remotely claim to give a comprehensive description of it in this book. Perhaps the best descriptor of my aim would therefore be "an ethnography of British culture as seen from the perspective of squatters"—a partial and situated view, but nevertheless one that takes notice of how home-lessness as a phenomenon is produced within contemporary British society, and how squatters frame their actions in explicit relation to it.

As such, this book also comes from a slightly different ethnographic per-spective than many well-known ethnographies of homelessness, poverty, and addiction, such as Philippe Bourgois and Jeff Shonberg's *Righteous dopefiend* (2009), James Spradley's *You owe yourself a drunk* ([1970] 1999), Irene Glasser's *More than bread: Ethnography of a soup kitchen* (2010), Kim Hopper's *Reckoning with homelessness* (2003), or Kathleen Stewart's *A space on the side of the road* (1996). While these ethnographies, for the most part, avoid both the quasi-colonial voyeurism and the universalizing impulse of *Braving the street*, their self-understanding nevertheless frames the ethnographic encounter as taking place between a pioneering but "normal" researcher (subtext: "one of us") and a set of strange "hidden" people whose habits must be explained to the main-stream of society. I cannot claim this type of positionality primarily because my fieldwork did not originally emerge from a pure research interest, but rather from the fact that while in the field I was inadvertently and against my will "gone native" by circumstance. A few weeks after arriving in the field, I was made homeless—not as a methodological choice but "for real"—and thus, be-came a "native" ethnographer to the community I was researching via the very same avenue that made everyone else a "native." As detailed in chapters one and two, this did not only cause a shift in my position vis-à-vis my respondents, it also affects my position vis-à-vis my readers—much as I might want to, I cannot claim the laurels due to a particularly adventurous ethnographer who intention-ally embraces homelessness for the sake of ethnographic insight. More than anything, this ethnography is the result of happenstance, and precisely in this way, it is perhaps a more "authentic" account of living with a lack of shelter than I would have been able to give if I had signed up for it on purpose.

SPACE, TERRITORY, AND THE BODY

Anthropologists are sometimes accused of a fondness for reinventing the wheel, and I do not suggest that I am not somewhat guilty in this regard. In defense of our discipline, there is a good reason we do this. We have learned, from painful experience (painful for others more than for us), that imposing Western "common sense" categories on the experience of people from vastly different cultural contexts amounts to a form of epistemological colonialism, as much as to a distorted representation of ethnographic data. At the same time, I want to argue that if there is to be any "ethnography of the West" that does more than just taking Western conceived wisdom at face value, then we must at least attempt to apply to it the very same methodological principles: just like in any non-Western ethnography, we must build theory from data and not vice versa. This means, also and especially, to rigorously question Western "common sense" categories, particularly when they appear to provide the most obvious way of framing an issue. In the context of this book, this applies especially to the category "property," about which I have, perhaps to the surprise of my reader, relatively little to say. This is the case because, despite the fact that private property was a central category in public discourse about squatting in recent years, I want to argue that, in this context, the concept is merely a placeholder for a particular type of social relations. The word "property" in the English language can refer to two different things: one, a politico-legal concept that describes the relation between a property-owner, that which is owned, and the rest of the world; and two, that which to American English is known as "real estate"—namely, land and dwellings. In the discourse around squatting, these two meanings come to overlap in interesting ways, as "property" here most often means "property in property," that is to say, a politico-legal relationship between a property owner, their land and dwellings, and the rest of the world. In this context, "property" therefore specifically describes social relations to do with the distribution of space—that is to say, *spatial* relations.

"Property" thus becomes a convenient shorthand for the ability of some to control others' access to particular kinds of space, a type of relation that has also been referred to as "human territoriality." This term describes "the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area" (Sack 1986: 19). Not to be confused with animal territoriality (although, as I will argue in chapter four, not entirely different either) or the political behavior of

nation states, "human territoriality" refers to a specific type of social relationship, in which the delimitation of an area is used "to affect [others'] behaviour by controlling access" (1986: 19). "Territoriality" thus describes the fact that a lot of human interaction—both in an immediate physical and an abstract-symbolic sense—turns on the question of who gets to decide who is allowed to access what type of space, and when. As I will argue, the power to control one's own and others' access to space is therefore also a substantial factor in how humans construct social categories—also and especially where such categories are intrinsically morally loaded. In this context, "property" thus appears as what a Marxian would call a "fetish category": an ideological construct that both describes and ideologically obscures a material-social relation, which, as this book claims, is essentially about space, power, and morality. As I hope to demonstrate in the following chapters, these three concepts interact in particular ways, both in the context of squatting and in the context of what I will refer to as the "moral construction of space" more generally. If one combines space and power, one arrives at the above concept of territoriality as control over access to space. If one combines power and morality, one arrives at a hierarchy of virtue, in which social status translates into moral status. Taken together, territoriality and moral hierarchy, then, are the two central axes along which moral identities are spatially constructed—in the context of squatting and, as I will argue, beyond.

The importance of spatiality for the construction of social relations stems, in one sense, from the simple fact that we are beings with three-dimensional bodies, navigating a three-dimensional environment. This rather obvious characteristic has two consequences: one, we cannot help but symbolically order the world, including our perception of ourselves, in spatial terms; and two, space itself, or more precisely, the ability to occupy some of it, is a crucial necessity for us. This primacy of spatiality for our experience is reflected in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1962) *Phenomenology of perception*, which understands the spatial relation of the body to the world as prior to any reflective relation of consciousness (see also Csordas 1990, 1993, 1999; Hallowell 1955). In orienting itself to the world and acting upon it, the subject first experiences itself in its intentionality, or as Iris Young puts it: "There is a world for a subject just insofar as the body as capacities by which it can approach, grasp, and appropriate its surroundings in the direction of its intentions" (1980, 145). This primacy of the body as a spatial object is illustrated, among other things, by our propensity to conceive of and describe our embodied existence in spatial terms, expressed in notions such as

"having ones' physical boundaries invaded," "retreating inside of oneself," or the famous "out-of-body experience."

These expressions are not merely metaphors; philosophers of consciousness such as Thomas Metzinger believe that our tendency to conceive of our bodies as "spaces" is a necessary consequence of how our brains process the conscious experience of embodiment. In constructing the all-important "self-world-boundary" (2004: 313), our brains specify what part of our experience we should consider "I" and what part is "everything else," thus creating an experience of our embodied selves as spatial objects endowed with an inside and an outside. To be sure, cognitive anthropologists such as Bradd Shore have pointed out that "variations in cultural cognition can be traced to important local differences in the specific models and general schemas that constrain ordinary perception and understanding" (1996: 7), and therefore, general models of the mind must be able to account for cultural diversity (see also Kronenfeld et al. 2011; Bennardo and de Munck 2014; Shore 1996; D'Andrade 1995; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987). At the same time, however, Shore emphasizes that human minds are shaped according to the affordances of the body: "Basic cognitive skills like perception, classification, and inference have evolved in the species and develop in individuals as ways in which a particular kind of body (a human body) interacts with the contours of a particular kind of physical world" (1996: 4). It is difficult to think of a healthy embodied being that does not have some capacity to distinguish between its physical self and the rest of the world, and so, while the specific way a self-world boundary is drawn may vary in different times and places, the fact of embodiment dictates that on the level of embodied experience, such a boundary must be drawn. What is more, according to Metzinger, "emotional content is always spatial content" (2004: 382), since emotion is bound up with the spatial perception of the body. This is also and especially true insofar as we use emotions to make evaluative judgments about the world: through embodied emotion "we are not only given to ourselves as spatially extended beings, but as beings possessing interests and goals" (384), which make it necessary to determine whether something is conductive to these interests or contravenes them. At the core of our ability to make judgments (also and especially moral judgments) is therefore our ability to relate ourselves to the world in spatial terms.

At the same time, space, for beings like us, is an important resource. "Space" in this book will refer to a number of things: the three-dimensional physical environment we operate in; "social space" as the symbolic space of a particular

type of sociality; and what one could call "headspace"—the way that the spa-tially ordered world is represented in the cognitive architecture of our minds. Here, however, I am talking about space in its material-geographical sense: for embodied beings, the ability and entitlement to occupy space is a crucial survival concern. In order for our bodies to function, we need at minimum a safe place where we can rest and recuperate, by sitting or lying down undisturbed for a sufficient period of time. The condition of homelessness, which at its most basic is defined precisely by the absence of entitlement to such a place, demonstrates how quickly this lack can translate into a matter of life and death: homeless people are five to six times more likely to die than the housed, with exposure being among the chief causes, along with "shocking" levels of violence inflicted upon them by the general population (B. Thomas 2012: 8ff.). The roots of this violence are a topic in itself, which I will talk about in chapter eight. What ex-poses the homeless to it, however, is their inability to escape it to what the set-tled take for granted: a place that shelters them from the hostility of the world. Similarly, on a collective level, populations who have historically been seen to not have a right to occupy space within the territorial nation state, such as Jews and Gypsies, have also been at higher risk of suffering violence and death. Both for individual humans and for groups, entitlement to space is therefore a fun-damental survival need, thus making control over access a chief concern within human relations.

Our dependency on the ability to place ourselves somewhere means that we are as vulnerable to a lack of space as we are to a lack of any other survival resource, like water or air. Of course, to speak of a "lack of space" is somewhat misleading: after all, it is all around us, nothing but space as far as we look. One feature of human culture is, however, that we have found a number of interest-ing ways of making the available space artificially scarce. As I discuss in chapter four, like other primates we negotiate social status via control over access to space—the more territory an individual controls, the more power they have over controlling others' spatial position, and the higher they rank in the dominance hierarchy. We have this in common with many species of nonhuman animals: status goes along with not only the right to walk, sit, and lie down anywhere one pleases but also with the ability to prescribe the spatial position and tra-jectory of lower-ranking individuals, and to punish them if they contravene this dictate. Of course, as Maurice Bloch (2008) reminds us, humans no longer interact solely on the level of dominance hierarchies—we distinguish ourselves from our primate ancestors through our development of cultural forms that

transcend the immediacy of dominance enactments, and assign status according to enduring symbolic systems of meaning. Looking at territoriality, however, it becomes quite apparent that sometimes these enduring cultural forms simply dress up the same old jockeying for rank in transcendental terms. As Jean Jacques Rousseau once famously remarked: "The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said 'This is mine,' and found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society" (1754: 29); pointing to the fact that although this man has not done much else than underscore his primate claim to territory by means of language and tool use, the invention of symbolic forms such as "property" has woven this act into the symbolic fabric of culture as an enduring spatial entitlement. Along with civilization, Rousseau's first man therefore was also and especially the inventor of the momentous idea that territorial claims can transcend the moment of their making, and thus the idea that space can be accumulated and hoarded.

Like the private hoarding of any other survival resource—for example, water—this creates a pervasive problem: if a few own something that everybody needs, then conflicts over access are unavoidable. On the one hand, struggles over territorial control can therefore be seen as struggles over social status—the practice of squatting, in disputing the Englishman's claim to his "castle," undermined the very sovereign control over space that founded his claim to royalty. On the other hand, however, these struggles are also struggles over legitimacy. The discourse around the British housing crisis, for example, is often framed in terms of a lack of available space, and thus the suggested solution most often consists in "build more housing." At the same time, according to the Institute of Public Policy Research, there are over 600,000 empty properties in the United Kingdom, 200,000 of which have been empty for more than six months.[14] While there is thus, in principle, plenty of space to go around, the way we organize access to it—namely, through the devices of private property and rent—means that legitimate access depends on an individual's ability to participate in the market, and thus on the possession of the kind of qualities that enable it to do so. The concept of "property" thus obscures not only basic territorial power relations, it is also a fetishistic expression of the fact that the transcendental legitimization of territorial claims depends on the assignment of particular attributes to people and groups. For British Conservatism, legitimacy

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14. http://www.ippr.org/assets/media/publications/pdf/back-on-the-market_ Dec2014.pdf.

is thus traditionally constructed as the result of individual industriousness, especially, as Corey Robin (2011) argues, the industriousness of the victorious territorial invader (see chapter six). In other contexts, these attributes are assumed to be physical: the "Blood and Soil" ideology of Nazi Germany legitimized territorial claims by constructing the German body as organically connected to the land, while Jewish bodies were seen to lack such a connection. But whether organically grown or acquired through labor or conquest, the ability to establish legitimate access to and control of territory most often translates quite openly into the assumed possession of superior moral worth. As I discuss in chapter six, this becomes also and especially apparent in the Thatcherite association of property ownership with civic virtue: for Thatcher, and for British Conservatism more generally, territorial control, mystified in the idea of "property," is associated with the full moral status of citizens, while a lack of (or disinterest in) territory identifies a person as not only an economic but especially a moral failure. Squatting, of course, also challenged this construction of legitimacy, and was precisely for this reason perceived to upset the moral order of the "property owning democracy."

If space is perceived as scarce, or, as in the case of the British housing crisis, is actually made artificially scarce by ancient patterns of landownership (see chapter six), then questions of status and legitimacy can become quite urgent social problems. Studies show, for example, that housing shortages strongly correlate with negative sentiments about migrants (Rutter and Latorre 2008), whose claim to what little space there is appears as competing with that of "natives." In the same way, recent antimigrant campaigns by the likes of Britain's United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)[15] play on the idea that the country is "full" in general, and that there is not enough *housing* to go around in particular. Portraying space as a scarce resource thus produces the necessity to distinguish between the "worthy" and the "unworthy" in order to determine who should be excluded—the lengths to which some political debates go to painstakingly distinguish worthy "refugees" from unworthy "economic migrants" may be a case in point. Again, this distinction draws on moral assignments: a "refugee" is assumed to be morally "pure" in that he or she has done nothing to cause their displacement, while an "economic migrant" is assumed to simply be too lazy and selfish to make a life for themselves wherever they come from. Like any kind

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15. Now defunct and replaced with the newly founded "Brexit Party" under the leadership of former UKIP leader Nigel Farage.

of scarcity, the artificial scarcity of space thus invites the evaluation of people's worth relative to one another: If there is not enough to go around for everyone, then there must be some criteria by which to decide whose interests to privilege. The grandmaster of territorial ideology, Adolf Hitler, demonstrated how quickly this type of reasoning can boil over into murder: by convincing the Germans that they stood to run out of precious "Lebensraum," the survival interests of the peoples he subsequently invaded were construed as negligible compared to those of the worthier "Aryan race."

THE CONCEPT OF "ETHICS" IN THIS BOOK

Making the claim that spatial practices are moral—or ethical—practices, of course raises the question: What do I mean by morality/ethics, and what, if anything, is the difference between the two? In the course of what in recent years has come to be known as anthropology's "ethical turn," anthropologists have developed a broad and diverse range of answers to these questions, and to even summarize what has become a vast and flourishing literature here—let alone work out in detail the important commonalities and differences between individual approaches—is certainly a daunting task. I can therefore here discuss only those themes and arguments that most closely relate to my ethnography, while asking my reader's leniency for the necessary incompleteness of my account.

Let me start with the second, and somewhat more straightforward question: what is the difference between morality and ethics? Anthropologists of the ethical turn fall in broadly two camps on this issue: one that makes a distinction between the two, usually for analytical reasons, and one that uses both terms interchangeably (Fassin 2012). A prominent example of the first type is Jarret Zigon's (2007) work, which distinguishes between the moral as unreflected, automatic rule-following and moments of "ethical breakdown" that demand actors choose how to proceed. Joel Robbins makes a similar distinction when he uses "morality" and "ethics" to denote two distinct "cultural systems" (2004: 216) operating side by side among the Urapmin. Another rendition of the distinction comes from James Faubion (2011), who contrasts the notion of the ethical with that of what he calls the "themitical." As Robbins (2007, 2012) remarks, all of these distinctions in different ways turn on a strategic opposition of the reproduction of a moral order versus the notion of freedom and choice in ethical

matters. At the same time, as Webb Keane reminds us, this should not be taken to imply that the two spheres are necessarily separate or independent: for Keane, the "morality system" (2015: 18) constitutes a subset of ethics, insofar as specific abstract moral rules are embedded in—and sometimes obscure—the ethical as a genuinely interpersonal realm.

On the other side of the debate are those anthropologists who either do not see a reason to make a conceptual distinction between the two terms, or actively reject it. Among them are a number of authors writing in the "Ordinary Ethics" school of thought. As Michael Lambek (2010) notes, "ordinary" ethics refers to the assumption that the ethical is a necessary and ubiquitous dimension of human life, and therefore permeates all human practice in tacit and implicit ways. Veena Das sees the purpose of this approach in "think[ing] of ethics as an expression of life taken as a whole rather than to privilege dramatic moments of breakdown or ethical dilemmas as the occasions for ethical reflection" (2015: 56). As a result, writers in the Ordinary Ethics tradition have turned their attention from singular, dramatic acts of ethical choice to the notion of practice the sustained and ongoing exercise of ethics (but see, critically, Zigon 2014). As will be apparent in my own formulation that spatial practices have an ethical component, I do align myself with this view, despite the fact that moments of dramatic ethical choice are not absent from my ethnography. Although the distinction between morality and ethics has thus been made very productive in capturing important conceptual distinctions in specific theoretical and ethnographic contexts, I will here heed Lambek's warning that "the many interesting distinctions made between 'ethics' and 'morality' in the philosophical and, to a lesser extent, the social science literature are not consistent with one another. Maintaining such a distinction is thus bound either to lead to confusion or to limit discussion to the province of one particular thinker" (2010: 9). I have therefore decided, for the purpose of this book, to use both terms interchangeably and to let textual flow, rather than conceptual distinction, decide on which term to use in a particular passage.

This, however, still leaves the first question unanswered: If we assume that "moral" and "ethical" refer to the same thing, then what kind of thing is it (and is it a "thing")? This question arguably is much more nuanced and complex than the previous one, and so are the answers that anthropologists (not to speak of philosophers and other social scientists) have given in recent years. Among this rich body of work, a few themes have emerged, not so much with the intention of formulating an ultimate definition of what ethics is, but rather, in discussing

how best to approach the complex set of beliefs, attitudes, practices, and social relations anthropologists of ethics have discussed. One influential approach has been Robbins's call to return to the long and illustrious history of the anthropological study of social values, understood as "cultural conceptions of the good or desirable" (2012: 120), which he argues can reconcile the focus on the reproduction of norms with the theme of freedom in making ethical choices. Other authors have come out more clearly on the side of freedom: James Laidlaw (2002: 2013) argues that a concept of freedom is essential to understanding how ethical subjects constitute themselves by aligning themselves with particular ideas of "the Good." The constitution of the ethical subject is also the focus of a number of other anthropologists, notably Charles Hirschkind (2006), Saba Mahmood (2005), Thomas Widlok (2004), Cheryl Mattingly (2012), and Michael Lambek (2008), whose approaches could be characterized as broadly virtue-theoretical. Other anthropologists have chosen slightly different angles—next to the already mentioned Ordinary Ethics school, there is an influential body of work in the tradition of phenomenology (e.g., Throop 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014; Zigon and Throop 2014; Hirschkind 2006) centering on the notions of experience and sentiment as well as conceptualizations of moral reasoning (Sykes 2012), and narratives (Zigon 2012; Mattingly 1998, 2010; Faubion 2001).

In presenting these major themes, I do not want to imply that they constitute discrete and incompatible approaches, nor that the anthropologists I cite limit their work to just one of them. Some of the most compelling work in this area has demonstrated how bringing together more than one of these themes can illuminate the complexity of ethical life. In this spirit, my own discussion as well will touch upon several themes—specifically on the relationship between values (understood here as ideas of what good social relationships look like) and particular forms of ethical practice. As we will see, my respondents not only professed particular values, such as "solidarity" or "mutual aid," but also ranked these against other societal values, such as the sanctity of private property. This form of ethical judgment was, quite explicitly, both their rationale and their justification for squatting, and it was also precisely what put them at odds with the values of what they referred to as "mainstream society." Most centrally, however, my discussion will also touch upon a theme that for many anthropologists of ethics is the most crucial—namely, the role that ethical practice plays in the formation of the self. Anthropologists, notably those working within the Aristotelian tradition, have used various metaphors for this relation: the aforementioned "work on oneself," or the "fashioning" or "crafting" of the self, all of

which emphasize the creative autopoietic element contained in ethical practice (see Faubion 2001, 2011). They have also emphasized the relational aspect of this process of becoming, specifically in taking up Foucault's conception of ethics as a relation of the self to itself, as well as by noting approaches emphasizing the relation to the Other as exemplified in feminist writing on the ethics of care (e.g., Noddings 1984).

My own approach in this book will take up this relational element, both in terms of the relation of the self to itself and its relation to the Other. In this, I am taking inspiration from a philosopher who so far has not figured prominently in the anthropology of ethics: Axel Honneth, specifically his work on power and recognition (1992ab, 1996, 2001, 2014). The reasons Honneth may not appear as an obvious choice for anthropologists of ethics may lie in his Hegelian (and insofar, ontologically universalist) leanings, or in the scant attention his account of ethical life pays to the nuances of cultural difference.[16] Perhaps some may also note that Honneth writes in the tradition of Critical Theory (capitals), a school of thought expressly developed to *critique* Western societies, while—precisely because of its negative impetus—not necessarily applicable to other cultural contexts. However, since my ethnographic data comes from a Western setting (albeit, as I discuss in chapter one, not entirely my own), and my respondents are culturally very close to my own WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) background, I do find Honneth's approach useful in the case of my own work, bearing in mind that the extent to which it can be applied to radically different places remains to be established.[17]

What makes Honneth's account of ethical life particularly salient for my discussion is his focus not so much on particular qualities of the ethical subject but rather on the way that this subject itself is the product of ethical relations.

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16. Where Axel Honneth does articulate difference is in terms of historical particularity, which points to the fact that while he wants to discuss universal features of ethical systems, he also acknowledges that they constitute common features of very different historical societies. This is not so different from anthropologist's efforts to develop an overarching frame of reference for discussing ethics, while keeping close to the cultural differences emerging from the ethnographic data.

17. At the same time, Honneth's theory of recognition is not entirely out of the bounds of what anthropologists of ethics have been talking about: his well-known exchange with Nancy Fraser (2003) has been an important contribution to the discourse around the ethics of care, and while Heonik Kwon (2010) does not explicitly reference Honneth, he does draw on Hegel. Michael Lambek also mentions Object Relations, which Honneth uses as the psychoanalytic basis of his theory.

Ethical relations, in this view, are thus those that enable the emergence of ethical subjects—that is to say, people who in turn can enter into ethical relations. This account of ethics, therefore, starts not from the perspective of the ethical subject but rather from the intersubjective conditions of possibility for ethical subjects to emerge. These conditions must be fulfilled on a number of levels. In the first (and most intimate) sense, the conditions for a person to become an ethical subject are laid in the immediate social relations within which the subject grows up. Honneth here draws on the work of D. W. Winnicott (1986), Jessica Benjamin (1992, 2013), and a range of other Object Relations theorists, who use a Hegelian dialectic model of relationality to describe the process of self-becoming starting at birth. Central to this account is the notion of "recognition," understood as a particular type of relating to one another, in which one party (in the case of the infant, the main caregiver; in the case of the adult, another subject) affirms the other's status as a subject: that is, somebody who is, in principle, capable of participating in ethical life. Lambek expresses a similar understanding when he writes of the people he researches: "They have acted largely from a sense of their own dignity; they have refused positions or attributions of indignity, and they have treated, or understood that they ought to treat, others as bearing dignity of their own" (2010: 40). As Zigon (2014) points out, however, "dignity" should not be understood here as an essential, universal feature of humans, but rather, "as the outcome of a particular social configuration" or assemblage, and the same is true for Honneth's concept of subjectivity.

The affirmation as a person worthy of ethical consideration is vital to self-becoming, Honneth argues, since without being affirmed by another, the subject is incapable of self-affirmation, and is thus thrown into crisis. At the same time, recognition is necessarily a two-way street: in affirming another's subjectivity, I simultaneously affirm that they are the kind of being who can award me recognition in return. In awarding recognition, I thus also pave the way for being recognized, laying the seed of my own self-becoming by enabling the becoming of another. Recognition could therefore be called a process of mutual cocreation, or if you so want, *autopoiesis*-by-proxy: subjectivity here is not just crafted through relating oneself to the world but also through creating a feedback loop in which one changes the world so it may in turn change oneself. Where recognition is absent—denied, or not available for whatever reason—this process of mutual co-creation breaks down. Honneth refers to this as a state of "misrecognition" or "disrespect," meaning here the denial of a person's subject-status and their reduction to a mere object, or "objectification." As the relation of the self to itself

mirrors the relation the self has with others, this also results in a disturbed relation of the self to itself, in which a person can no longer perceive of themselves as a participant in ethical life.

This approach echoes recent work within phenomenological anthropology emphasizing the intersubjective nature of subjectivity (Desjarlais and Throop 2011; Throop 2010; Duranti 2009, 2010; DelVecchio Good et al. 2008; Biehl, Good, and Kleinman 2007; Kleinman 2006; Luhrmann 2004; Desjarlais 2003, 2011; Csordas 1990, 1994, 2008; Hollan 2001; Jackson 1996, 1998). As Michael Jackson writes, "the notion of intersubjectivity resonates with the way that non-Western peoples tend to emphasise identity as 'mutually arising'" (1998: 7), giving "ontological primacy" to the relational nexus in which individual persons and objects are implicated. In a similar way, Honneth follows Hegel in conceiving of ethical life in a fundamentally interpersonal sense, as ethical selves can only arise in ethical interaction. At the same time, this conception of the self also echoes anthropological work on the psychological consequences of power, or more precisely, a lack thereof. As Tanya Luhrmann (2008) has extensively discussed, there is a compelling connection between experiences of being denigrated, rejected, or subjugated, for which she uses the term "social defeat," and mental illness, specifically psychosis (2007). "Social defeat" is a concept borrowed from animal studies, and caution is certainly necessary when applying it to human relations, lest one ends up naturalizing social domination. Luhrmann's general point, however—that "social defeat" is involved in psychosis because the self cannot cope with a sustained lack of positive affirmation by others—in many ways expresses a very similar idea as Honneth's concept of misrecognition. Whether one prefers psychoanalytic or behavioral explanations, misrecognition or social defeat are not just superficial, "cultural" concepts: they point to the close connection between social status/power and the experience of embodied selfhood, which for Honneth makes this a matter of ethics.

As the subject matures, it gradually moves beyond these personal relations (although they do continue to play a role in intimate relationships) and begins to participate in more abstract, general social relations governed by norms and laws. With Hegel, Honneth thinks of these relations in terms of rights, not relating to specific legal systems but rather to the general recognition of individuals in their capacity to be bearers of rights. As such, Honneth argues, they lay claim to recognition as members of a particular community, entitled to the same treatment as any other member. In contrast, Honneth argues, people finally

also participate in a third kind of relations of recognition—namely, insofar as they recognize one another in their specificity and particularity, and want to be recognized themselves in this way. Honneth calls this kind of relation "solidarity," pointing to the fact that recognition of this type is what underpins political associations and "communities of value." Thus, taken together, these three spheres of recognition—the interpersonal, the abstract/legal, and the political—for Honneth comprise "ethical life," in so far as they produce the conditions of possibility for ethical subjects to emerge.

At the same time, all three spheres provide the potential not just for recognition but also for misrecognition. Just as people can be disrespected in terms of their basic personhood through violence or neglect, so they can be refused equal rights, and they can be rejected in terms of their membership of a particular community (the latter aspect is also discussed at length in Charles Taylor's essay, "The politics of recognition" [1997]). This is where, for Honneth, the elements of freedom or ethical choice come in: independent of the concrete historical setting, some social practices tend to produce relations of recognition, while others tend to do the opposite. Ethical choice here therefore means first and foremost choosing what kinds of practices to engage in, insofar as these can either produce favorable conditions for the emergence of ethical subjects, or impede it. In choosing one kind of practice over another, subjects thus make ethical choices to change the world in particular ways, connecting Honneth's idea of ethical life to political struggle. This connection between the ethical and the political echoes the words of Jarret Zigon, who writes of the organized resistance of the residents of a Vancouver neighborhood torn apart by the so-called War on Drugs: "Here is an example of how from the breakdown of a world, out of its unbearableness, a demand for another kind of ethics emerges; this is an ethics of dwelling, which we can also call politics—that is, politics as a process of world-building" (2014: 760).

The basic opposition of recognition and misrecognition may illuminate why, as some early readers of this manuscript have remarked, my presentation is characterized by a number of "sharp dichotomies." Not only will I portray my respondents, as per their own understanding, as engaged in political struggle to elicit recognition from a reluctant Other whose practices they saw as in fundamental opposition to their own, I will also argue more generally that spatial practices—insofar as they are social practices—are equally apt to display a tendency to produce relations of recognition, or to do the opposite. The reader will find this principle inscribed in the distinction I make between two

different patterns of spatial relating—one, it is implied, structures a space in such a way that relations between ethical subjects can flourish, while the other does the inverse. As I will argue, this is not to say that each of these patterns can be observed in the field in a pure, strictly demarcated form; as these patterns are tendencies rather than fixed states or structures, in practice they come to overlap, and sometimes conflict, in observable situations (see chapter four). The general distinction between recognition and misrecognition, however, explains why I am speaking of *two* patterns here, rather than three, twelve, or infinitely many: as my only criterion in this context is the capacity of a pattern to either enable recognition or impede it, the choice really is between one or the other.

SPACE AS MORALLY CONSTRUCTED

Talking about space being "constructed," morally or otherwise, recalls a body of literature most often associated with the work of Henri Lefebvre (1991), who speaks of the "social production of space," and later, with the work of human geographers such as David Harvey (1973, 1990, 1996, 2003, 2008) and Edward Soja (1989, 1996), who have been content to use "production" and "construction" interchangeably. Although I will draw on these authors, I do not place myself entirely within this theoretical tradition, for a number of reasons: on a practical level, Lefebvre's work alone is so complex and, in parts, ambiguous that just clarifying his terminology would require supplying with this book a manual of equal size. More importantly, despite the fact that the notion that "space is socially constructed" has become widely accepted in the social and especially geographical sciences (e.g., Massey 2005), Lefebvre's original formulation of this assertion is less straightforward than its taken-for granted use suggests. Like many Marxists, Lefebvre subscribes to the assumption of an epochal break between the emergence of capitalism and its prehistory, which means that any continuity between premodern and modern categories, including that of space, cannot be assumed. For the Marxian, therefore, Lefebvre's claim that precapitalist space (what Lefebvre calls "absolute space") is something categorically different from "abstract space" as produced under capitalism requires little qualification (Stanek 2008). It is not quite clear to me, however, how the notion of "abstract space" as the fetishized and commoditized result of capital relations functionally differs from "property" in the sense discussed above. At the same

time, Lefebvre goes to great lengths to distance his concept of space not only from scientific notions, particularly those of physical geography (Unwin 2000; see also Massey 1999), but also the "mental space" of epistemology (Lefebvre 1991: 6), which stands in direct contrast to some of the arguments I will make in this book. Finally, Lefebvre explicitly speaks about the "production" of space in the sense of the Marxian concept of "production"—the broader notion of space as "constructed" or "created" (Harvey 1990) in fact overshoots Lefebvre, and draws in other theoretical influences, such as those of Foucault and Edward Said (Unwin 2000).

My own use of the "construction" of space is therefore somewhat (but not entirely) different from similar ideas in human geography. On the one hand, I refer to the abovementioned fact that the spatial nature of our embodiment means that we inevitably cognitively order the world in spatial terms. Since our ability to evaluate the world is bound up with our spatial existence, the evaluations we make are similarly spatialized: that is to say, we assign value, among other things, through imagining the spatial position of something in relation to us. We speak of "distant" relations and "close" friends, we say that something is "beneath" us or that we are "beside ourselves" with grief or rage. The very concept of "status" expresses the idea: by imagining people as spatially located relative to one another in terms of altitude, we simultaneously convey an idea of their respective worth. This is so intuitive for us that we rarely question *why* being "above" should be better than "below," we simply accept that it is the case. The same goes for the momentous ascription of localization inherent in the idea of "insiders" and "outsiders"—by specifying these people's location relative to where we imagine a symbolic center and boundary, we simultaneously specify who is one of "us," and who belongs to "them" (B. Anderson 2013), and thus assign them a relative value. Just like for Mary Douglas "matter" transforms into "dirt" depending on its location in culturally ordered space, people are thus transformed into different *kinds* of people also and especially depending on where we locate them within the spatial order. This insight can be traced back to Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss's classic *Primitive classification* ([1963] 2009), which points out that societies tend to associate the spatial center of their social and cultural lives with the center of moral life, and spatial with moral distance. Pierre Bourdieu, drawing directly on Durkheim, describes "social reality" as "those very relations which constitute a space of positions external to each other and defined by their proximity to, neighborhood with, or distance from each other, and also by their relative position, above or below or yet in

between, in the middle" (1989: 16).[18] In a more recent rendition, Keith Basso demonstrates the connection between Apache place names and culturally important events in the history of the people inhabiting the landscape: "As roundly ubiquitous as it is seemingly unremarkable, place-making is a universal tool of the historical imagination. And in some societies at least, if not in the great majority, it is surely among the most basic tools of all" (1996: 5). When I speak of "construction" in this context, I therefore also refer to what anthropologists call "classification"—the cognitive assignment of phenomena to culturally specified categories within the cognitive architecture of our minds.

At the same time, I use "construction" in a more Foucauldian sense also to refer to the ways in which we order material-geographical space to reflect and reproduce these classifications. For example, in chapter three, I discuss how the material space of the "home" produces particular gendered and racialized categories of people; in chapter five, I describe how the architectures of homeless shelters reproduce morally loaded categorical distinctions between homeless people and support workers. What they have in common is that here social categories become reflected in recurring patterns of material structures, which then in turn assign the bodies within them to social categories by virtue of their location. As David Sibley (1995) demonstrates, just like the category "dirt" is the product of a specific ordering of space, so the ordering of the built environment produces a human surplus that occupies a social status analogous to "human waste" that also and especially attaches to the homeless. In these examples, cognitive classification therefore produces material structure, produces classification—reproducing the same types of socio-spatial relationships between bodies in recurring patterns. Moreover, just like the spatialized transformation of "matter" into

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18. While Pierre Bourdieu makes ample reference to physical and metaphorical space, it is less clear how his approach can be reconciled with the study of ethics. As a number of authors have remarked (e.g., Sayer 2005; Lamont 1992, 2000), while Bourdieu is not categorically opposed to discussing the moral dimension of social life, his theoretical focus on questions of status and social power lead him to downplay moral judgments and practices that do not neatly fit within this framework. Nevertheless, as Gabriel Ignatow (2009) argues, Bourdieu's work on habitus as the mode by which social norms and expectations come to be embodied particularly has the potential to be an invaluable resource for the sociological (and by extension anthropological) study of morality. I tend to agree with this view, however, as Ignatow suggests, making Bourdieu's categories fruitful in this manner would require careful and detailed work to integrate his conceptual framework with those currently used in the study of ethics, and is therefore beyond the scope of what this book can hope to achieve.

"dirt" involves an evaluation, so does the transformation of "humans" into a type of "human waste" whose main characteristic is its offensive nonbelonging (see also Desjarlais 1997: 5). This phenomenon has also been referred to as "social death" (Patterson 1982), and as I discuss in chapter eight, it points to the fact that the expulsion from the material and symbolic space of the moral majority, a person loses not only their social but, importantly, their moral status.

When I talk about the "moral construction of space," I therefore refer to a form of what Mary Douglas called "patterning"—namely, the imposition of a symbolic order "whose keystone, boundaries, margins and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation" (Douglas 1966: 51). The word "ritual" must certainly be interpreted loosely when applying this idea to social exclusion in the West; however, as I discuss in chapter eight, in terms of its psychological function, the publicly enacted "social death" of the homeless can be seen in some ways to have a ritualistic, if not strictly speaking religious, character. In all other respects, Douglas's idea of patterning describes what in this book I call a "spatial configuration": a specific spatial ordering mechanism[19] that produces mutually reinforcing, recurring patterns in social relationships and material structures. One example of such a pattern is that which I will call a "territorial spatial order" (or simply "territoriality"). This order, as I will argue, describes not only a set of human behaviors regarding control over access to space, it also describes the enduring material, social, and cognitive patterns this behavior produces. On the one hand, these patterns involve the drawing of boundaries and the ability to defend these against intrusion. As Robert Sack argues, a delimited space "becomes a territory only when its boundaries are used to affect behaviour by controlling access" (1986: 19). On the other hand, territoriality involves establishing control over the inside of the thus delineated space—the drawing of the "internal lines" that control the movement of those within. Insofar as internal control is not usually equally distributed (not all "insiders" control the territory to the same degree), this internal ordering most often also produces hierarchy. As an abstract ordering mechanism—one could say, a spatial algorithm[20]—a

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19. The term "mechanism" here refers to the concept of causal mechanism as defined within Critical Realism—namely, a structure of causal factors that explains a particular phenomenon (Bhaskar 2014).

20. Although we are most accustomed to using the term "algorithm" in the context of information processing, at its most basic, it simply means a specific set of rules for problem solving. A set of rules for ordering a sequence of numbers, for example, is not inherently different from a set of rules for ordering space.

territorial ordering pattern therefore does two things: a) it demarcates a defensible boundary, thus creating "insiders" and "outsiders" (i.e., "exclusion"); and b) it orders the inside by bringing the "insiders" under the control of the territorial actor(s), thereby creating hierarchy (i.e., "internment").

How this works in practice is exemplified in what architects and planners since Oscar Newman (1972, 1996) have called a Defensible Space architecture. This is a way of ordering the built environment that is supposed to "design out crime" by way of arranging material structures so that they give "insiders" a maximum of territorial control. Along with the obligatory perimeter fencing, Defensible Space architectures come with a number of internal and external surveillance features that allow the residents to control who enters, as well as ordering the inside in such a way that it discourages "deviant" behavior. Also and especially, it aims to reduce the amount of commonly held areas, since it is believed that sharing space prevents people from taking responsibility for their "patch," and thus the internal order of a Defensible Space always tends toward fragmentation and individualization. However, what I refer to as a "spatial configuration" is not simply a way of arranging the built environment: Newman himself explicitly stated that the arrangement of physical structures he proposed was designed to evoke a sense of territoriality in its inhabitants, which would encourage them to be vigilant toward any potential mischief. He thus implied that there is a connection between patterns in material space and patterns in the cognitive ordering of the world: whoever lived within a material environment structured by a territorial pattern would thus also be more likely to begin to think about human relations in a territorial way. In this sense, I want to suggest that spatial configurations describe processes of patterning across three levels: the cognitive, the material, and the social.

Territoriality can be read as a particular way of ordering physical space—characterized by securitization, exclusion, and internment—but also as a particular way of imagining and experiencing the embodied self. As scholars like Laura Brace (1997) and Jens Bartelson (1995) have noted, dominant ideas of the "self" in Western thought have often endowed this self not only with a spatial, but specifically a territorial structure, exemplified in the Hobbesian conception of a self who must be constantly defended against attack in the "war of all against all," and is thus primarily preoccupied with securing itself against the risk of invasion. In order to achieve this, the self also has to rationally order its inside and bring it under its own sovereign control. The "territorial self" thus becomes characterized by "a rational inside coping with problems on the outside"

(Bartelson 1995: 42), aiming to establish "despotic dominion" within while defending the boundary. Although it originates in political theory, this conception of the self is not merely theoretical; as I discuss in chapter three, in many ways it can also be seen to structure the "really existing" embodied and enacted self, especially in the context of gender. Within the space of the self, internal and external demarcation lines are drawn by the cognitive processes that psychoanalysis refers to as "splitting," "projection," and "compartmentalization," which can be seen as ways of ordering the internal "space" of the mind analogous to the way that architecture orders geographical space. Just as with physical territories, these "defense mechanisms" demarcate the territory of the self by drawing an experiential boundary between the "I" and the "non-I."[21]

The fact that we experience the self as spatial enables us to psychologically banish something we experience as "out of place" within us by imagining it as cut it off from our "selves" and attached to another person or group, thus producing psychological "outsiders" with whom we ostensibly have nothing in common, known to anthropologists as Others (with a capital O). Exactly what is experienced as "out of place" within the self depends to a large extent on what is considered undesirable within a specific cultural context. In general terms, however, analogous to the removal of "dirt" as hygiene, splitting and projection have the psychological function of keeping the "inner space" clean, by externalizing whatever is socially and morally unacceptable. This is precisely the psychological mechanism that Newman sought to trigger in the inhabitants of his defensible spaces—by learning to be suspicious of outsiders to whom attached all kind of undesirable attributes (deviance for one), they were simultaneously encouraged to create "order within themselves" by externalizing their own deviant tendencies. For Newman himself, encouraging the adoption of such a "territorial self" was thus also an explicitly pedagogical project, designed to morally purify the poor: "For low-income people, Defensible Space can provide an introduction to the benefits of mainstream life and an opportunity to see how their own actions can better the world around them and lead to upward mobility" (1996: 9).

Newman's intuition that recurring patterns of material structures would produce recurring patterns of cognitive ordering, and vice versa, thus illustrates

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21. While this view of the internal dynamics of the self has been discussed extensively with respect to Western concepts of selfhood, it should also not be omitted, as Robert Desjarlais reminds us, that "recent discussions of forms of language and selfhood in non-Western societies, such as Samoa, suggest how human beings need not depend on profound interiors or complex psychological dramas" (1997: 15).

my claim that spatial configurations—understood as abstract ordering patterns—can and do co-occur on a material and a cognitive level, and thus mutually reinforce one another. At the same time, both in their material and in their cognitive dimension, they serve as ordering mechanisms *for* something: they employ a recurrent spatial pattern to produce recurrent categories of *people*. In the case of territoriality, these categorizations employ two rough distinctions: between insiders and outsiders; and between those who control the territory and those who are being controlled. Although this sounds remarkably simple, as I will demonstrate in the following chapters, this ordering mechanism can be found to underlie any kind of space functioning as a territorial configuration, from the microcosm of the "home" to the macrocosm of the nation state. To be sure, what distinguishes a "home" from a state comes down to a lot more than just this basic way of producing spatially defined categories of people, and I do not claim that it can or should be reduced to this. I do want to point out, however, that despite the many more layers of complexity that distinguish different spaces and scales, this mechanism and the basic distinctions it produces are the minimum logical requirements for any space organized as a "territory," different though these territories may be.

ANTI-TERRITORIAL ETHICS?

The social categories produced by a spatial configuration come with prefabricated evaluative judgments. As I have touched on above, the construction of territories goes along with questions of social status and legitimacy, which frequently translate into questions of moral worth. In a territorial configuration, the "outside" is always construed as dangerous, and those who symbolically or physically dwell there as a potential threat to the "insiders." Defending the boundary therefore also means to ideologically delegitimize these outsiders' demand for access, as exemplified in the construction of "the squatter" as a morally depraved invader. At the same time, the *internal* ordering of a territory comes with ascriptions of moral legitimacy—those who control the territory are, on the whole, seen as morally superior to those who are being controlled. As I discuss in chapter five, this becomes evident in the way conservative ideology (not just that of British Conservatism but conservatism in general) legitimizes power through the obligation of the morally worthy to lead the morally weak on the one hand, and the association of moral fortitude with territorial control

on the other hand (see also Robin 2011). The figure of the Lord of the Manor, who owns all the land and precisely for this reason is assumed to be qualified for moral leadership of his tenants, aptly summarizes this construction. Within the space of the territorial "home," internal hierarchy has traditionally been constructed along gendered lines, with men subsuming women and children not only to their territorial control but also their assumed greater moral fortitude. As I discuss in chapter three, this also points toward the close association of territorial control and legitimacy in dominant Western constructions of gender, where masculinity is also and especially defined as the ability of a man to defend his real or symbolic "turf," including that of his body. The ability to defend one's boundaries—physically and geographically—is thus also associated with ideas of honor (Luhrmann 2008), and the inability to do so with a lack of honor that is seen to characterize both feminized bodies and colonized peoples. Where the former are construed as dishonored when they have failed to defend their physical boundaries, the inability of the latter to defend their lands from invasion underlies their subsequent experience of shame (e.g., Fanon 1967).

However, while the structure of a territorial spatial configuration is thus a pervasive and ubiquitous way of morally ordering space across a number of different levels of emergence[22] and scale, it is not the only possible one. As my ethnography shows, squatting as a spatial practice can be read not only as a form of resistance to the territorial order of private property, it also and especially contrasted this order with a different socio-spatial imaginary. As I will argue in chapter two, at its core was the implicit acknowledgement of the vulnerability of the embodied self to a lack of shelter, and the construction of a moral order based on mutual aid and protection, particularly with regard to this need. If territoriality as a spatial configuration thus speaks of bordering and a hierarchical internal order, then the spatial pattern implied in squatting in many ways did the opposite; instead of a defensible boundary it emphasized the importance of

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22. "Emergence" refers to the idea, known for example within Critical Realism, that reality can be looked at as comprising different levels of complexity that are interdependent but not reducible to one another. In this view, that which we call a "mind" therefore emerges from, but is not reducible to, the physical body, and that which we call "the social" emerges from, but is not reducible to, individual body/minds. I use this term here to refer to the fact that spatial configurations apply to biological bodies, to the cognitive architecture of the mind, and to the collective social level of symbolic and material representations (see also Bhaskar 2009; Danermark et al. 2002).

"open doors" and "no borders," instead of internal hierarchy, it sought to effect equality among the "insiders." As will become obvious, this ideal construction of a "nonterritorial space" was not always successfully implemented in practice, as the disputed status of squats often forced their inhabitants to act in territorial ways whether they wanted to or not. Yet, the ethical understandings of squatters, as formally codified (chapter three) and as implicitly assumed, clearly pointed toward an ethic of protecting precisely the person or group who held the *least* territorial power. In accordance with how squatters referred to this way of constructing space, I will call this configuration a "Safe Space," and as will become clear in chapter four, this means a lot more than what has been popularized (and criticized) on university campuses under the same heading in recent years.

Like territoriality, a "Safe Space" configuration can apply on different levels of emergence and scale. While material spaces can be constructed in such ways that they foster an ethics of openness and equality, such as we will encounter in the reconstruction of the HUB drop-in center for the homeless in chapter five, I will argue that the same configuration can also be seen to inform an alternative construction of the embodied self. Brace (1997) has called this model that of a "spatial self," and in contrast to a "territorial self," it is imagined as emerging from an original state of oneness and unbroken-ness. Brace traces this idea back to Gerrard Winstanley, the leader of the Diggers, and his description of the world as an original Garden of Eden that became fragmented and territorialized only through the human error of building "hedges" or "dams" through it because of "selfish imaginations" of separateness (Brace 1997: 138). For Winstanley, this also and especially concerned the idea of hierarchy between humans, to which he was firmly opposed, and the institutions of wage labor and private property that he saw as maintaining this hierarchy. His aim was thus to restore the self to its rightful dwelling place in the original order of oneness with the divine, by breaking down the "dams" and "hedges" of illegitimate territorial power. As we will see, while modern squatters would possibly disagree with the religious metaphors Winstanley used, their practical ethics reflected the very same ideas.

To be sure, the ubiquity of territoriality as a spatial ordering mechanism in Western culture (and, although this will not be my topic, potentially elsewhere) means that the spatial configuration I call a "Safe Space" will, to some extent, remain more elusive and difficult to pin down in these pages. For any instant of an ethics of vulnerability and protection I point out, the reader will find two of the opposite, sometimes enacted by the very same people at the same time. My

attempt to untangle the complex, shifting patterns of recognition inherent in just a single dispute over a squatted space in chapter four illustrates that within a social order pervasively structured by the logic of territoriality, a pure "Safe Space" configuration is almost impossible to create. In reality, squatting practice was therefore hybrid, operating in a field of tension between an ethics of inclusiveness and openness, and the necessity to defend one's turf from violent intrusion. Yet, in pointing out glimpses, here and there, of an alternative way of ordering space, and thus of producing alternative moral categories of people, I hope to show that squatting did more than just put a roof over the heads of the "vulnerable homeless": in its fundamental ethical demand to protect vulnerability wherever it confronted power, it also contained the age-old utopian blueprint of a different social order.

In this light, Harry Cowley and Mike Weatherley thus represent not only two different moral narratives about squatting, they can also be seen to stand in for two different types of spatial ethics. Cowley stands for the idea, at least as old as Winstanley's metaphor of the Garden, that space should be allocated on the basis of need, while Weatherley personifies a shift—or as I will argue, a return—to the primacy of a territorial ethos that has long been at the very core of British Conservatism. As we will see, the campaign against squatting can also be seen as one moment within a political program that Margaret Thatcher long ago referred to as an economic strategy designed to change "the heart and soul of the nation":[23] a form of "trickle-down territorialism" designed to induce the masses to identify with the political interests of aristocratic landowners, by giving them the opportunity to become miniature territorial overlords themselves (see also Robin 2011). As I discuss in the epilogue, this program did not stop at vilifying squatters. When it was done with them, it marched on to infect minds and hearts, until the fear and hatred of "outsiders" became strong enough in 2016 for the British electorate to vote to leave the European Union based on little else than a hatred of immigrants and a demand for a vaguely defined "sovereignty." The moral campaign against squatting foreshadowed in many ways the very discursive figures that determined the referendum result: the figure of the foreigner as invader and thief of scarce resources as much as the idea of national sovereignty as analogue to the absolute territorial control of the property owner. While this book will therefore not speculate about what the future may hold for Britain after the referendum, it may in some ways illustrate how it came about.

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23.   http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104475.

ONE MORE THING . . .

I have chosen to present the above theoretical argument entangled in the ethnographic narrative of my fieldwork, in the exact temporal order in which it happened—as a nod, perhaps, to the fact that while space and time are connected, it is better to only mess with one of them at a time. For this reason, the following chapters are best read in the order they are presented. In between them, the reader will find a number of ethnographic vignettes, which each correspond to the chapter they precede and provide some of the ethnographic material the chapter discusses. A last caveat when it comes to my description of the people who appear in this narrative, as well as the presentation of data on some of their more legally (if not morally) questionable activities: as I demonstrate in chapter seven, due to the fact that squatting was closely associated with political activism, Section 144 effectively targeted not only homeless people, it also and particularly targeted political dissent. This, and the associated police surveillance and repression squatters faced, means that as an ethnographer I have to be vigilant to not supply information that may be used to the detriment of the people described in this book, also and especially concerning the possibility of ethnographic data being misused as an infiltration manual by the police. I have therefore taken a number of precautions in order to protect my respondents: for one thing, all names and personal details in this book are freely invented, and in some cases, I have composed characters from different real people. For the same reason, the reader will not find any detailed case studies or descriptions of particular life histories here, and in some parts of the text I will have to resort to unusual ways of depiction. For example, in presenting a particular squatting action in chapters six and seven, I will adopt a form of narration that does not place any particular person at the site of the occupation, and that voices the aims and goals of the project through materials the activists themselves intended for the public view. For the same reason, I will read the 2011 Bristol riot in chapter seven through materials that have been deliberately put in the public domain by eyewitnesses, which is a necessary step to ensure that this book does not cause any harm. This strategy has had the effect that halfway through this ethnography, the reader may notice a shift in perspective: while we will spend the first four chapters looking into the field from the outside, we will spend the last four situated inside the field, looking out.

TROLLEY PROBLEM

Picton Street, Bristol, five in the afternoon. I am pushing everything I own, packed into bags and bin liners, through the streets of St Pauls on a wooden trolley.

The trolley is heavy and unwieldy, and more than once tries to escape my grip on the icy roads to launch itself into the rows of parked cars that line the pavement. Gavin saunters next to me, ostensibly refusing to get involved in my struggle with the vehicle. We are heading south from Redland to his squat in Easton, where I am allowed to store my belongings until our crew has finally sorted out a squat of our own. We have just been evicted for the third time in two weeks and I'm tired of hurried packing maneuvers and heavily loaded treks across the city. If there is no safe place for my body at this point then at least for the carefully selected objects that constitute the whole of my worldly belongings.

Swearing, I try to wrestle the trolley around a sharp corner and nearly end up flying downhill towards Shaftesbury Avenue, dragged by its sheer weight. Gavin grudgingly stretches out a hand and stops both me and the trolley before we can turn in to a bag-lady-shaped missile. A few careful turns later we are back on even, yet slippery, ground, beginning to feel warm despite the –15º Celsius temperature.

The intervention seems to have triggered Gavin out of his sullen silence. "This trolley is shit," he declares, "where'd'ya get that from anyway?"

I inform him that the trolley has been sourced by Simon, who borrowed it from another crew, who has picked it up somewhere under unclear and possibly not entirely legal circumstances. Gavin rolls his eyes.

"Simon's an idiot," he says, "I mean, did he really think squatting hospital property was going to fly? I mean, really?" Gavin stretches out the last word to emphasize his disdain: "ree-ah-ly."

I bite my tongue and keep pushing while he launches into a lengthy analysis of our most recent eviction and our crew's general ineptitude at squatting. He is not being fair, but then I'm guessing the source of his aggravation is not our crew's strategy, nor the origin of the trolley for that matter. He proves me right a second later.

"I don't get what you're doing anyway," he says, pointing at my miserable load. "I mean, look at you." I look at myself. In my tatty army coat and five layers of woolly jumpers, I look like an extra from Les Misérables.

"I really thought you were cleverer than this," he continues, shaking his head. "You're just like all the other middle-class kids coming here playing revolution. Like, 'look at me, I'm homeless, I'm hard-core.'" At the word "hard-core" he makes the ironic speech-mark-gesture with his fingers: "You should ask some people who really are homeless, they'll tell you how hard-core it is."

Of life and fieldwork

If anthropologists and the homeless have one thing in common, it is that they are people out of place. In the case of the homeless, this is hardly controversial; homeless people are, by definition, out of a place to live in, and at the same time, they are normally to be found exterior to the places that the settled consider their own. Physically and socially, the homeless are "outsiders"—external to society, external to buildings—to the extent that their lack of spatial allocation becomes the determining factor of their very existence. To be homelessness is "to be a person without a place of one's own, to be someone who is dis-placed or out-of-place" (Wardhaugh 2000: 111), quite similarly to the way that for Mary Douglas, the definition of "dirt" is "matter out of place." The analogy has not been lost on writers discussing the ordering of space with regard to the built environment, and many have emphasized the way that the human landscape, by virtue of its being ordered, produces a human surplus that occupies a social status analogous to "dirt" (Sibley 1995). Homelessness and placelessness are therefore in many ways synonymous: he or she who does not have a home is seen to consequently have no place in society at all.

The case of the anthropologist, at first glance, appears quite different. Anthropologists, on the whole, do have spaces to live in, and despite the vagaries of contemporary academic careers, few of us would consider ourselves so removed from our social context as to figure as its waste product. Yet, as Pierre Bourdieu

observed, once we leave the ordered system of our departments and universities and delve into that mythical and perilous space we call "the field," something peculiar happens:

> The anthropologist's particular relation to the object of his study contains the markings of a theoretical distortion inasmuch as his situation as an observer, excluded from the real play of social activities by the fact he *has no place* (except by choice or by way of a game) in the system observed and *has no need to make a place for himself there*, inclines him to a hermeneutic representation of practices. (Bourdieu 1977: 1; emphasis mine)

In making a methodological point, Bourdieu here touches upon a strange feature of fieldwork: as soon as we arrive in whichever place we have chosen to do our research in, we simultaneously lose our place as a "real" player, and become mere observers of circumstances that do not actually affect us much. The field-worker thus joins the homeless person in a place where their presence within the network of social relations that constitute the system is, from the perspective of the system, superfluous, a nonposition. Both are seen to contribute nothing to the "real play of social activities" and thus, are presumed to have no stake in a social order they can only observe from the outside. What distinguishes them, however, is that the homeless person is, in most explanatory models, presumed to have had this position foisted upon them, while the anthropologist figures as a free agent who can elect to make a place for herself or not. Bourdieu points out that the latter—choosing to remain an outsider who tries to reconstruct the rules of a game he has no particular interest in playing—constitutes what is commonly seen as scientific distance or objectivity, and thus ethnography consists to an extent in "making a virtue out of necessity by converting a de facto exclusion into a choice of method" (1977: 10). While therefore both the anthropologist and the homeless person face a "de facto exclusion," only the anthropologist can be assumed to have brought this state upon herself.

Precisely this was the subject of the argument I had with my friend and fellow squatter Gavin in the fieldnote preceding this chapter. Gavin, a longtime squatter, occasional street-sleeper and, at the time, all-round destitute person, could not understand why I, endowed with all the privilege he had been denied, would freely elect to make myself as placeless as he involuntarily was. There would have been little point in explaining to him that, at the time the discussion took place, I was no less formally homeless than he was. He knew all too well

that in contrast to him, I had had ample opportunity to spare myself the indignity, and that I was therefore guilty, in Bourdieu's sense, of electively dis-placing myself. To Gavin's mind, this was not only silly, he took personal offence to it, since by recklessly embracing the very circumstances that were oppressing him, I was making a mockery of his hardship. Just like Bourdieu, Gavin had concluded that nothing compelled me to occupy the nonplace I had chosen to take up next to him, and therefore, my bag-lady lifestyle constituted little more than a "game." Unlike Bourdieu, however, Gavin did not attribute this state of affairs to my being an anthropologist (even if he had cared about what that is), nor was he particularly concerned about my representation of his practices, hermeneutic or otherwise. What really ticked him off was the fact that I had *no need* to make a place for myself among the squatters, and thus, the social and material restrictions that governed his life, for me, were merely "data."

My dispute with Gavin touches upon a number of themes that will guide this book, first and foremost, the way that space and place shape ethical relationships. Examples of this will take many forms throughout these pages, some more conventional, some perhaps more experimental. The space I have chosen to begin with is perhaps the most "sacred" known to our profession, and at the same time, the most elusive, simultaneously located in all geographical places at once and nowhere at all—the space I mean here is the space of the ethnographic field. Anthropologists carry this space with them, neatly tucked into the back of our minds, until we decide to whip it out and superimpose it on whatever geographical location we have chosen as our "field site." In declaring a place "the field," we are making it our own; like intellectual nomads we pitch our tent and subsume those around us under its roof. At the same time, this mythical transformation of someplace into the field comes with a reordering of social relationships: under the "field" umbrella, relationships follow their own rules, and others are not necessarily aware that they have become the counterparts to our professional neuroses. What is conventionally accepted as "research ethics" is one aspect of this; declaring a place "the field" means that the fieldworker must adhere to formal rules of engagement, usually specified in special ethics procedures designed to avoid damage to research participants and lawsuits for universities. At the same time, anthropologists have spent extraordinary amounts of time discussing ethics outside of these formal codes, as the debates on reflexivity and power relations in recent decades demonstrate. But as important as these issues are, they do not yet touch upon what is perhaps the most profound issue—namely, the way that the notion of the field as a unilaterally declared space

of engagement in and of itself produces particular moral relations. As Bourdieu writes, the peculiar placelessness of the fieldworker consists, first and foremost, in the fact that she does not *need* to be there, does not have to fit in or get along, can always choose to walk away and play a different game—much in contrast to those for whom the "game" is the stark reality of their lives. As Andrew Sayer puts it, "this removal from the pressures of practical activity also reflects and signals the privileged social position of the academic" (2011: 15), and thus, declaring somewhere "the field" has the strange tendency to make the anthropologist untouchable, immune to the mundane concerns and anxieties of those to whom whatever is going on actually matters.

George Devereux (1967) makes a similar argument when he frames the cognitive distortion inherent in fieldwork in terms of the psychoanalytic concept of countertransference. As the fieldworker enters into the liminal phase of fieldwork—"after separation from one's familiar lifeworld but before one finds one's feet and feels at home in one's new environment" (Jackson 2010: 41)—they experience a kind of separation anxiety as they are plucked from their familiar environment and thrust into a bewildering new world. In the countertransference, they experience in the other unknown and unacknowledged parts of themselves, and resort to a range of cognitive maneuvers to deal with the resulting tension. Devereux argues that a good share of anthropological methodology—certainly the type of disinterested "objective" distance Bourdieu attests, but also all manner of perceptive filtering and projection—is in essence an attempt to mitigate this anxiety, to manage the transition between the familiar and the strange and the frightening encounter with the other. The challenge of good fieldwork then, for Devereux, is not to eliminate such distortions but rather to make them conscious and use them knowingly to understand oneself in one's interaction with the environment. As in the psychoanalytic encounter, however, where this psychological dynamic is combined with material or social inequality, these maneuvers can become not only tools of self-defense or insight but potentially also methods of establishing and maintaining social power. For anthropologists, there is therefore often a power move contained in "declaring the field"—and Gavin was all too aware of that.

My relationship with Gavin has shaped the research for this book like none other, academic or ethnographic, and it is no exaggeration to say that without him, this book would not have been written. Our friendship was the happenstance result of the sort of cultural dilettantism that is the hallmark of the new

immigrant (in this case, myself).[1] When I first arrived in Britain, I was clueless enough about the subtle codes of class and status in my newly chosen home to simply not realize that Gavin and I were not actually supposed to be friends until it was too late. I had first arrived in Brighton to pursue a postgraduate degree at the University of Sussex after a short and unsatisfying career as a social worker, and did not decide to turn to anthropology, let alone the anthropology of Britain, until much later. I approached "British culture" with all the naivety and enthusiasm of a privileged immigrant who is making a polite effort to fit in, but has not yet bet her fate and fortune on her chosen destination (insofar I was perhaps already an anthropologist in the making). I had been heavily involved in vaguely defined "anarchist" politics in my native Vienna, Austria, and thus circumvented British "mainstream" culture as a matter of course, aiming to join the British branch of the same movement I already considered myself to be part of. Luckily, Brighton supplied ample opportunity to attach myself to what by dress code and jargon I identified as my subcultural niche, and it did not take long until I met my first squatters. What I did not immediately understand, however, was that squatting in England—for the most part—was very different from I was used to.

"Squatting" is not a particularly well-defined term. In its most basic meaning, it simply refers to occupying a space one has no legitimate right to be in, and the term is thus applied to a range of practices, from partying in disused buildings in the West, to the occupation and cultivation of agricultural land in the Global South. While there is a sizeable literature on the latter, the type of occupation happening in the cities of the West is not often considered a subject worthy of academic attention. In part, this appears to be due to the fact that squatting in the West is considered "subcultural" and therefore frivolous, while elsewhere it is "cultural" and therefore serious. In part, however, it also reflects the fact that the clandestine nature of squatting means that short of joining

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1.   Anthropologists and others studying migration in general use the term "migrant" instead of "immigrant" to emphasize the concerns of those in movement over those of the inhabitants of the spaces they move to. "Immigrant" certainly has a racialized and somewhat derogatory connotation, as the well-known distinction between "immigrants" and (white) "expats" demonstrates. I will therefore follow the usual convention when it comes to talking about other migrants; however, in speaking of myself, I embrace "immigrant" over "migrant" to show my solidarity with those described under that label, and to let those who would rather see the back of me know that I'm here to stay.

the movement, researchers often find it difficult to obtain information about it (e.g., Manjikian 2013). One of the few systematic attempts to map squatting in the West, by Dutch researcher Hans Prujit, offers a taxonomy of five squatting "configurations": deprivation-based squatting; squatting as an alternative housing strategy; entrepreneurial squatting; conservational squatting; and political squatting (2013: 21). Each of these corresponds to a different conception of social problems—lack of affordable living space for the poor, danger to sites of cultural significance, etc.—and employs different strategies to amend those. For example, in "deprivation based squatting," there is

> an organizational pattern that makes a clear distinction between activists and squatters. . . . The activists open up buildings for the squatters and support them . . . the central demand in this configuration does not involve structural change, but instead focuses on helping the squatters obtain (temporary) leases or alternative accommodation. (Prujit 2013: 21)

In "political squatting," in contrast, "squatting is not a goal in its own right; it is attractive because of its high potential for confrontations with the state . . . because here the involvement in squatting is driven by an ulterior anti-systemic political motive" (Prujit 2013: 44). This distinction between "political" squatting and the kind that has "no other motivation than to remedy a desperate situation, secretly and in silence" (Cattaneo and Martinez 2014: 3) is rarely questioned by squatting researchers, academic and activist alike, and to a degree it also informed the understanding of the matter I brought with me to Britain.

Shortly before I left, Vienna had seen some fairly spectacular squatting actions[2] on the part of a radical left that was composed largely of middle class students like myself. The modus operandi of these actions involved a very public takeover of high profile (council) properties, passionate demands (addressed to no one in particular) for "autonomous spaces," and subsequent heavy-handed eviction by police, usually all within a matter of days. The occupations drew intense media attention, especially when they involved more than the normal degree of police brutality, but rarely made it beyond a performative assertion of

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2.   "Action" was the term chosen by the activists involved. The term is significant insofar as it emphasizes the performative and transient character of the squatting activity: "action" squats were occupied to publicly intervene in political discourse, without any ambition to extend the occupation beyond its political usefulness.

solidarity with those deprived of affordable living space. Few of the occupiers themselves were precariously housed, and the occasional participation of actual homeless people tended to turn theoretical solidarity into practical class conflict very quickly. This, however, was my unquestioned understanding of "squatting" when I came to Britain, and I was thus thrilled to be told that here, squatting was actually legal (or at least not punishable), and any empty building was, in principle, ours for the taking. The first squats I visited in Brighton were grim, dingy places full of fungus, without heating and sometimes without electricity, but how lucky were these anarchists (which is what most identified themselves as) to have an unlimited supply of spaces to turn into anything they wanted! I did not realize at the time that while Prujit's taxonomy may well be appropriate in continental Europe, in Britain, social inequality in general, and lack of affordable housing in particular, had well and truly quashed the distinction between "deprivation-based" and "political" squatting. As Crisis, one of the largest national homeless charities, reports:

> Squatting is relatively common for single homeless people with 39 per cent having squatted at some point. . . . Most homeless people who squat try other avenues for resolving their housing problems before turning to squatting. While a few describe the squats as in a reasonable condition and have positive experiences living in them, this is not the case for many. The conditions in squats are often difficult to discern from rough sleeping; with dereliction, discomfort, and life with no amenities or furniture typical.[3]

I met Gavin one night after a squat party, me trying to get out of the house by the half-barricaded entrance, him trying to get in. He was seventeen years old and making a point of classic punk attire, including a tidy green mohawk, a Subhumans[4] t-shirt and 18-hole boots. Tipsy banter soon turned to a serious conversation, and it emerged that Gavin had just been thrown out of the squat he was staying in because of a romantic relationship gone bad and had nowhere to go. In the spirit of solidarity, I offered him to crash at the windowless room I was renting in a flat near the seafront. Once there, it soon became clear that

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3.   http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/squatting.html, September 2013. This description is then followed by a quotation from a supposed squatter that involves rat infestations and used needles.

4.   The British punk band.

Gavin's experience somewhat differed from mine: for one thing, his appearance sent my middle-class housemates scrambling to hide their valuables. Offended by their lack of respect for my new friend, I assured the embarrassed Gavin that my house was his house, and over the next few months he became a regular visitor when he was in between squats or just plain hungry. One of the first born-and-bred British people—as opposed to other academic migrants—I came into contact with, he forever shaped my intuitive understanding of "British culture" by introducing me to The Specials, trilby hats, and the *This is England* films. Much later, I would sometimes wonder why some British people turned up their noses at me, until I realized that what I thought of as "cultural integration" was my idiosyncratic interpretation of a leftist English skinhead habitus, circa 1980s.

Gavin's biography, which he volunteered over the course of my first year in England, was an education in cultural difference. When I first mentioned I that was a social worker (in Austria, synonymous with "bleeding heart liberal"), his eyes darted to the nearest exit and he appeared extremely uncomfortable until I explained that I wasn't entitled to work in Britain. As it emerged, Gavin, who had been homeless at age fifteen, had filed social workers right up there with the police as authorities that were not to be trusted. Far from what I considered my professional purpose, his experience of the system of homeless provision was one of coercion and antagonism, and he empathically preferred squatting or even the street to the "help" the authorities offered him. I was simultaneously impressed and horrified at his aptitude at survival: street-wise in a way I could never have been, life had taught him to look at the world with the eyes of someone who could find use value where others saw only waste. I would watch in dismay as he investigated bins and thrown-away lunch packs for edible scraps, and was informed that he had once, when there was nothing else, eaten a pigeon. In time, we developed an awkward dance around food and other provisions I bought for both of us. Gavin's survival instincts clearly told him to go for a free lunch when one was offered, but his pride meant he had to refuse at least twice before accepting.

It was Gavin who first invited me to visit Bristol, as his guest at first and later as a member of the "squatting scene" in my own right. "Squatting scene" was the term most often used for the social network that this book is about by the people who were part of it, but not without some reluctance and often an undertone of derision. The reluctance stemmed from the fact that while one was aware that one was, to some degree a "subculture"—complete with dress

codes, music, specific slang, etc.—the network was also something more than these performative factors, insofar as it was profoundly linked to its member's material reproduction. One could have called it a "community," but as anthropologists have pointed out, this concept is not without its problems (Amit and Rapport 2002), and the word was in practice never used as a self-descriptor by the squatters, even though other social groups—for example, "the black community in Bristol"—were sometimes referred to under this heading. The word "scene" mirrored the image the police and media often gave of political activists, such as in "the extreme left wing scene," and thus was hardly ever used without a hint of sarcasm, but it provided a convenient enough shorthand to describe what was a distinct and complex subgroup of Bristol's population.[5] Thanks to Gavin, I grew into this subpopulation for about a year, before the notion of "the field" ever became relevant.

THE "FIELD" AS MORALLY NEUTRAL ZONE

Before we declare the field on it, a place is just a place, and we are just a person in it. Once "the field" is established, however, and the relationship of "anthropologist" to "Other" superimposed on its social structure, a process of psychological splitting is initiated that ends in what Bourdieu describes as his "theoretical distortion." Splitting means a thought maneuver in which cognitive content is neatly separated into two or more mutually exclusive categories, in order to reduce complexity and psychological tension—for example, psychological ambivalence about squatters may be resolved by splitting them into morally pure victims and immoral invaders. Declaring the field involves just such a splitting maneuver, in that it forces the ethnographer to draw a distinction between "fieldwork" and what they normally think of as their "life." In Bourdieu's words, the "field" becomes separated from "life" by virtue of the circumstance that in the "field" the ethnographer does not hold an actual stake, or at any rate, the stake they may have (perhaps in the acquisition of data) is of a fundamentally different nature than that of the "native." This act of creating a space in which the normal rules of involvement and affectedness do not apply is so fundamental to ethnographic practice that anthropologists only ever appear to notice it

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5.   In keeping with this usage, I will stick with "scene" throughout this book—in scare quotes, just as it was usually spoken.

when it fails. For example, a 2008 volume discussing the "blurred boundaries between ethnography and life" reports that the invitation to address the "shadow side of fieldwork"—that is, "situations where the borders of personal life and formal ethnography begin to blur and the research field loses its boundedness" (McLean and Leibing 2008: xii)—attracted an unexpectedly high number of submissions. It appeared that a great number of researchers, both junior and seasoned, were struggling to implement and maintain the neat split between "formal ethnography" and "personal life"; few, however, questioned why they should be doing so at all. Instead, a fair number of submissions recounted instances in which personal life—feelings, attachments, moral judgments—had seeped into fieldwork in unexpected an unwelcome ways. There was a sense of transgression and confession in these testimonials, as if the admission that personal affectedness had inadvertently contaminated the purity of the sacred space of "the field" was simultaneously shameful and liberating. A few accounts even carried a certain air of defiance, as if these ethnographers sensed that in transgressing against the life/fieldwork boundary, they had also reconquered the place as a "real player" that declaring the field had forced them to relinquish.

Perhaps one reason that transgressing the life/fieldwork "boundary" is so tempting is that it allows for something anthropologists are traditionally wary of: moral judgment. The wariness, of course, has good reason: too often, passing moral judgment from the unquestioned perspective of Western moral common sense has resulted in arrogant dismissal of "native" moral ideas, the ugly consequences of which are taught in any introductory anthropology class. However, as Sayer (2011) points out, the assumption of moral neutrality on the part of the researcher too comes at a price; within the space of the field the anthropologist is usually the only one who can afford the moral purity of disaffected objectivity. She is awarded this luxury by the very fact of Bourdieu's distortion: if one has nothing at stake in a social situation, then one is at liberty to suspend moral judgment while those to whom things actually matter have no such privilege. This fact is a fundamental feature of the scripted configuration of relationships established by declaring the field; in sacrificing her place as a "real player," the anthropologist asserts her privilege by renouncing the mundane restrictions imposed on those who, out of necessity, interpret the world around them in the form of normative judgments. They do so "because, while we are capable and can flourish, we are also vulnerable and susceptible to various kinds of loss or harm; we can suffer" (Sayer 2011: 1), and therefore, evaluating things from the perspective of their potential to cause one or the other is the hallmark of the

"real player." Casting the field as a "morally neutral zone" therefore automatically makes the anthropologist an outsider to precisely the dimension of social life that matters most to people, resulting in "bland accounts of social life, in which it is difficult to assess the import of things for people" (2011: 6).

The strange stepping-outside of the "real play of social activity" involved in declaring the field is certainly much more obvious when one attempts to do it in a social setting that one has been a normal participant in for some time. In my own case, it did not happen until quite late in the game. My first forays into Bristol were private weekend excursions, designed most of all to get away from everything else going on in my life. Bristol intrigued me precisely because I had no connection to it and no particular reason to be there. It became a kind of hiding place that despite the stark poverty the local squatters lived in felt strangely comforting. I was blissfully unaware at the time that there was such a thing as "slumming," or I may have accused myself of it—as it was, I found myself both fascinated and appalled by a degree of social inequality practically unheard of in my home country. I stayed wherever Gavin was currently bedding down—sometimes I would be hosted in a stately Victorian building in the center of town, sometimes in a ramshackle warehouse in an area not even the squatters liked to walk around in at night. My friend took his role as a host very seriously, making sure that I had a safe place to sleep even when he himself did not. On one occasion, a squat we were staying in was evicted during my stay and Gavin made a point of depositing me at the door of the safest squat known to him (the Co-op Road squat that was going to become an important hub in my Bristol geography in the years to come; see chapter eight) before disappearing to an unknown crash place with all his belongings stuffed into the stacked up bags he carried on his back. I would, in return, buy food, drinks, and tobacco for both of us, and sometimes the entire house, always vaguely guilt-ridden at this obvious display of my economic privilege.

When housing was secure, we spent our time walking around town and visiting important nodes in the ever-fluid network of squats and social centers. Gavin, having nothing else to do than socialize all day, was a walking grapevine of information that he passed around on his tours, and always knew where a particular group or person could be found. Having very limited funds and a deep-seated distrust of bicycles, he walked everywhere, and trudging along behind him often for several hours at a time, I got the topography of Bristol into my feet long before it ever reached my head. In Tim Ingold's words, "as people, in the course of their everyday lives, make their way by foot around a familiar terrain,

so its paths, textures and contours, variable through the seasons, are incorporated into their own embodied capacities of movement, awareness and response—or into what Gaston Bachelard calls their 'muscular consciousness'" (Ingold 2004: 333). My own muscular consciousness, however, appears to be chronically disoriented. As a result, my learning-by-walking resulted in a spectacularly distorted mental image of Bristol's geography, which I only came to realize when, after several months, I finally looked at a map. Like most squatters, I never used public transport, mainly due to the prohibitive price of tickets,[6] and so getting lost remained a frequent experience throughout my fieldwork and beyond.

What Bourdieu's "theoretical distortion" means in practice—namely, essentially a behavioral distortion—became clear to me one afternoon as Gavin and I visited a squat (now long gone) near the Fishponds junction of the M32, an area that would later become my home for over a year. The squat was a smallish terrace with low ceilings and a narrow staircase, kept well and, judging from the degree of furnishing and gardening already accomplished, squatted for quite a while. When we arrived, the handful of residents assembled in the cluttered living room were engaged in animated debate, and there was a palpable sense of agitation in the air. As it emerged, the squat had been visited by a team of students from one of the local universities just hours previously. The students had elected to do a research project about squatting for one of their courses (apparently this was all the rage among "radical" students at the time, myself being no exception) and had approached one resident, who had agreed to do an interview. Evidently though, things had gone south from there:

> They just come barging in here and shove a camera in everyone's face and stick their nose in people's rooms. I mean, I never agreed to be filmed. I don't give a fuck about their project. And then they ask what we live on and so and if we break into houses, what the fuck! Like, yeah, I do criminal damage all the time, (and they expect me to say this) on camera!

Apparently, the students had invaded the squatters' private space with a camera, filmed without permission, let themselves into bedrooms, and poked around the kitchen cupboards, as if the squat was some sort of cultural exhibit

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6.   Compare here John Urry's (2000: 51) observation that due to affordable public transport, walking has largely lost its stigma as connected to poverty—this does not necessarily mean that it *isn't* connected to poverty.

instead of somebody's home. "Ya know, I *live* here!" was said several times during the discussion, as if to reaffirm that a squat was indeed a home like any other, and that the rules of etiquette that apply to being invited to someone's house apply here as much as elsewhere: "You don't go round someone's home and film them in their undies, do you?"

This "academic burglary" demonstrates how the anthropologist's being out-of-place can also lead to her being decidedly "out of order." Declaring the field on the squat, the students had unilaterally established a set of social relations that the squatters found wholly unacceptable, and for good reason. As the "real players" in this scenario, the squatters were strongly invested in the game that rendered their squat a "home." Playing this game involved a set of specific rules about how one behaves inside a "home," and the students, playing an entirely different game, had trampled these rules underfoot while looking for a crime story. In the process, they had not only spectacularly failed to appreciate what mattered to the squatters about the squat (namely, precisely the fact that it was a home) and thus missed out on a core dimension of what they were purportedly researching, but also aggravated their "subjects" to the point of insult. Acerbating the sheer intrusiveness of the researchers was, for the squatters, the fact that felt exploited. Since no mention had been made of how they themselves would benefit from the research, they had, perhaps correctly, concluded that the researchers' prime motivation consisted in a grade, a degree, or something else that was going to advance their careers, and that they themselves had been made into means to this end. This enraged them for a number of reasons, one of them being the clear class connotations they ascribed to being a student in the first place. It was conventional wisdom among the squatters—not entirely without basis—that studying at university was a "middle-class" pursuit; that is, something only the relatively privileged in society could even consider. The majority of the squatters I met squatted because they could not afford any other living space, most identified themselves as working class,[7] and many did not have access to the labor market due to immigration, health, or disability status. Some had dropped out of school, others had drug problems, criminal records, or histories of mental illness. In short, for most, going to university was a matter of a privilege they did not possess.[8] The students in this specific case had then

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7.   See chapter two.

8.   This was true also for myself, although for some reason, my "student" identity always remained secondary to my "squatter" one.

added insult to injury by being quite obvious about the fact that the game they were playing was called "get me some data," but in fairness to them, the logic of "the field" left them little choice.

The crux here is that anthropologists don't go all ethnographic on people for no reason; "the field" is usually declared for a specific purpose, be that the pursuit of knowledge or fame, or the pursuit of a salary, and the relationships it establishes are therefore, from their inception, secondary to that purpose. As Clifford Geertz wrote long ago, the fieldworker has to

> combine two fundamental orientations toward reality—the engaged and the analytic—into a single attitude. It is this attitude, not moral blankness, which we call detachment or disinterestedness. And whatever small degree of it one manages to attain comes not by adopting an I-am-a-camera ideology or by enfolding oneself in layers of methodological armor, but simply by trying to do, in such an equivocal situation, the scientific work one has come to do. (Geertz 1968: 157)

In contrast to what Bourdieu would call a "real player," the anthropologist must thus adhere to a "vocational ethic" that adds an extra layer to their experience of the field, a reference to the outside that does not, in the same way, exist for her informants. For Geertz, this dilemma cannot be resolved, but only managed by the "cultivation of an attitude in which engagement and detachment are, if never fused, brought into close contact" (Throop 2014: 71). Geertz is skeptical of approaches to fieldwork that purport to reject detachment for friendship: all too often, he suspects, anthropologists gloss over the ethical vagaries of unequal fieldwork relations by "a set of partial fictions half seen-through" (1968: 151), exaggerating the depth and intimacy of these relationships because they fear that they ultimately have nothing to give their informants "but themselves." Throop contrasts this pessimistic attitude to fieldwork friendship with that of George Devereux, who held that the generalizing and typifying "vocational ethic" of social science itself leads to cognitive distortions, since it promotes "a 'segmental theory' of human existence that focuses primarily upon those aspects of the human condition that are the least morally problematic and anxiety provoking for the ethnographer" (Throop 2014: 72). Genuine friendship, therefore, for Devereux can only flourish where these anxieties, and the countertransferences they produce, are worked through, but then it has the potential to "represent a possible space wherein an *existential orientation* to the complexity, dynamism, and uniqueness of *actual persons* is

made possible in the ethnographic encounter" (Throop 2014: 73; emphasis in original).

While the unconscious anxieties of the ethnographer doubtlessly have an effect on relationships in the field, however, there is also another aspect to this, which often remains bracketed in discussions of fieldwork practice—namely, that anthropology, in the overwhelming majority of cases, takes the form of wage labor. To an extent, fieldwork is therefore also characterized by what Max Horkheimer's (1974) classic definition refers to as the instrumental reason governing capitalist rationality:

> Instrumental reason has two opposing elements: the abstract ego emptied of all substance except its attempt to transform everything in heaven and on earth into means for its preservation, and on the other hand an empty nature degraded to mere material, mere stuff to be dominated, without any other purpose than that of this very domination. (Horkheimer 1974: 95)

The "other" in fieldwork is thus not only a representative of another culture or an object of scientific interest, importantly, they also become the "stuff" from which anthropologists try to forge careers in the marketized institutions that employ them. In this context, a "vocational ethic" does not only refer to the intellectual interests of the discipline but also to the fact that in order to be able to work within this discipline, anthropologists have to compete in the academic marketplace by publishing, obtaining grants, and winning the approval of student-customers. "Fieldwork" (with its etymological link to "work," i.e., labor) and life are therefore separate also because fieldwork is that which one does in order to be able to "live" as an anthropologist. At the same time, the social structure of the discipline is deeply entrenched in, and dependent upon, this kind of commodification. Membership is established by proving that one has successfully declared the field on someone or other, and thus subordinated them to one's own economic interest and the discipline's scientific one. The ethnographic text, which represents the final gestalt of the Other made into a commodified artifact, functions as proof of this act. Every anthropologist is therefore required to produce at least one such text to be initiated into to the discipline. Anthropological instrumentality, therefore, involves also and especially the establishment of relations between equal market subjects through the ritualistic objectification of a third party—a kind of metaphorical human sacrifice, if you so will—which appears diametrically opposed to friendship.

Of course, many anthropologists would interject that this is hardly the whole story of doing fieldwork. Many of us have, after all, found "a form of sustained communion" (Jackson 2005: 153) in the field, as much as with colleagues in our places of work, and one would have to be a particularly pessimistic Adornite to claim that capitalist relations infuse human relationships to such an extent as to make friendship categorically impossible. In addition to the various cognitive distortions inherent in our "professional stance" (Throop 2014: 73), however, I would argue that we also have to be mindful of the effects that increasingly precarious academic labor has on our ability to genuinely relate to our "others." When Throop writes,

> in viewing friendship as a possible means to move beyond the segmental orienta-
> tions embedded in taking up a professional stance, orienting to others as typified
> culture bearing "informants," or seeing particular acts as tokens of cultural types,
> friendship is thus taken by Devereux to represent a possible space wherein an
> existential orientation to the complexity, dynamism, and uniqueness of actual
> persons is made possible in the ethnographic encounter, (2014: 73)

we must therefore also ask if, when, and how it also provides a means to move beyond the competitive orientations forced upon scientists of all stripes in the marketized university, and the instrumental relation to our informants it produces. Geertz is pessimistic as to the possibility to resolve the ethical dilemmas of fieldwork. In his view, the anthropologist simply deceives him- or herself into viewing the barter-like process of "data gathering" as more special and intimate than it really is, until such point as "the implicit agreement to regard one another, in the face of some very serious indications to the contrary, as members of the same cultural universe breaks down" and anthropologist and informant "are shut up once more in their separate, internally coherent, uncommunicating worlds" (Geertz 1968: 152). If anything good is to come from a focus on the conditions of academic employment, therefore, then perhaps it is this insight: when it comes to life under global capital, we inhabit very much the same cultural universe, no matter how different our positions in it. To acknowledge this fact can potentially lead to friendship; more importantly, it can lead to the kind of recognition Axel Honneth (1992) means by the term "solidarity."

In my own case, solidarity was as much methodological necessity as it was an outcome of my methodological choices. As my plans to embark on doctoral research crystallized, and somewhere had to be declared "the field," I decided

that the city I had been introduced to by Gavin was a good place to start. I still did not understand very well this strange, Dickensian world I had stumbled into, but the colorful characters and outrageous goings-on I had encountered warranted further investigation. I did not fully realize at the time what a curious ethnographic position I was adopting: I, an immigrant, had elected to represent British culture to British anthropologists, an undertaking not without its potential pitfalls. My initial fears of presenting my research were assuaged, however, when I realized that I was poking around in a corner of "British culture" most of my British colleagues had no idea existed. In a sense, my immigrant-ness turned out to be a blessing, since my cluelessness and frequent social blunders highlighted facets of "British culture" that a "native" might have taken for granted. At the same time, the episode with the students had made it clear that a conventional "researcher" habitus was not going to be regarded with much sympathy by the squatters. On the one hand, there was the abovementioned connection of academic work with class privilege; on the other hand, since there was a considerable overlap between squatters and "leftist" activists engaged in a variety of causes, the squatters were well aware that police infiltration was a real possibility (see also chapter seven). The resulting mistrust of any kind of "data gathering" meant that anyone who wanted any information about squatting had better put their money where their mouth was and joined the "scene" as a full member. This meant that my initial plan to rent a cheap room during "fieldwork" was soon abandoned, and I opted instead to go all in and live in squats throughout my research.

This choice turned out to be quite momentous. For one thing, I was soon to find out that being a squatter (rather than just being a visitor in squats) demands constant attention and focus. The logistics of scouting, opening, repairing, and securing buildings, the legal scuffles over possession, eviction proceedings, and the near constant threat of exposure to the street that I will describe in the following chapters are not only time-consuming but also put the mind and body in a state of constant alert, as there is never quite a sense of safety, even in sleep. At the same time, the "activist"[9] nature of squatting, its political and ethical underpinnings, inform a political identity that (by virtue of removing one's own

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9. I use the concept of "activism" with caution, since similarly to "fieldwork" it implies a bounded set of practices, which are removed or distinguished from "normal life." Squatters did not commonly refer to themselves as "activists" since they regarded their political activities (including squatting) as a necessary consequence of their condition. For them, being politically active *was* their life.

and others' life-threatening lack of shelter) relies heavily on a sense of collective survival. While I had previously experienced similarly unsafe-yet-invigorating situations as part of political activism, these had always been temporary, a matter of days or weeks. With constant exposure, as I was to learn, a situation like this produces a peculiar form of embodiment, a sense of physical interdependency with those around oneself that categorically precludes the kind of disinterested detachment that constitutes Bourdieu's distortion. On a methodological level, this meant that I never quite accomplished the splitting maneuver required to establish the dichotomy between "fieldwork" and "life," and only afterward, when writing up my data, realized that it had been an option. More importantly, however, on a practical level a number of circumstances conspired to ensure that the distinction would have been quite useless even if I had attempted it. How it happened is a long story, but as a result, a few months into "fieldwork" I lost access to any kind of accommodation outside of squatting and found myself, formally and practically homeless, pushing a trolley through St Pauls. I have never been able to decide whether, at that point, I was an anthropologist playing at being homeless, as Gavin accused me of, or whether I was a homeless person playing at being an anthropologist. What is for certain is that while I was attempting to declare the field upon Bristol, Bristol had unmistakably decided to declare life upon me.

REFUGEE

"Ok, so who needs a space?" Joe's eyes scan the small circle of about two-dozen bodies he currently presides over. A few hands go up.

Joe points his pen at a young man who is indecisively perched on a chair between the circle and the door. As attention shifts to him, he sits up and clears his throat.

"Hi, I'm Andy," he says. "I heard about this in the bookshop. I've been evicted from my place two weeks ago. Now I sleep on my mate's couch but I can't stay there. The people in the bookshop said I should try coming here."

"Have you squatted before?" Joe asks. Andy shakes his head. "Anyone got space?"

For a short moment, the room is alive with nonverbal communication. Glances wander from Andy to other participants, faces are made and hands waved. Andy shifts uncomfortably as he is aware he is being sized up but does not know what rules he is being judged by. From where I'm sitting, I can tell he won't have it too difficult. He is in his early twenties, looks fairly together, and does not show any obvious signs of alcohol or drug abuse. He should be easy to house.

Eventually Liz, who is sitting with a small delegation of her squatmates, speaks up.

"We have plenty of space. It needs a lot of fixing though. You any good with fixing roofs?"

The question is asked half-jokingly, as if to imply that the roof-fixing is not the make-or-break condition of this offer, but Andy nods enthusiastically. "Sure, I'm not too bad with tools, I can give it a go." He seems relieved to have found something to contribute that will ensure his accommodation. Liz smiles and nods. "Cool, you come with us after this."

"Great," says Joe. "Next?"

Shelter

The scene with Andy and Liz took place in late 2010, at a meeting of the Bristol Housing Action Movement (BHAM), which happened every Monday night in a squatted shop space near Stokes Croft. According to its official website (still active in 2019), BHAM is "a non-heirarchical [*sic*] collective of squatters and their supporters. We help provide housing and other support for homeless people." During my fieldwork, BHAM was the public face of Bristol squatting. Unless one was already part of the scene, it was the first point of entry for new squatters, and at the same time it served as a communication and coordination platform for existing crews and individual activists. BHAM meetings covered a number of issues, from the individual (such as allocating newly homeless persons to groups or supporting them in getting their own squat) to the collective (as in the case of campaigning, lobbying, and providing information). The meetings served as a platform for the pooling of skills, tools, and information, from warning each other about problematic persons within the scene to discussing current developments in the housing market. Despite its nonhierarchical approach, BHAM meetings were usually presided over by a number of "old-timers," most of them men in their 40s or 50s. Joe, whose experience made him especially apt at moderating meetings with such a diverse range of topics, was widely considered as the heart and soul of the group. Joe was not a squatter himself, but he nevertheless devoted a majority of his time to organizing, spreading

information, and mediating conflicts within the scene. He led through meetings with calm and routine and when, at the end of the session, he asked for donations, a small heap of coins unfailingly formed at his feet. The donations went toward tools, equipment, or necessary repairs for all who needed them, as well as into publicizing written materials.

Meetings usually opened with taking stock of existing spaces, acknowledging new ones, and flagging up those that were threatened by eviction. After this followed a phase of distributing tools and skills—who needs what and who can provide it—before attention shifted to the newcomers who turned up practically every week. BHAM was a well-known institution, and on most nights there was at least one anxious and disoriented person, newly homeless or just about to become homeless, who came for help. Some did not immediately want to squat and were looking for information about how to deal with landlords and courts, others were all too eager to join the squatters. Many expressed explicitly political reasons for wanting to enter squatting rather than entering the official system of homelessness prevention provided by the council. Some were coming from within that system, having lived in hostels and B&Bs, but found themselves disempowered and socially isolated in these places. They did not exactly speak ill of them; they frequently acknowledged that council workers were doing the best they could, and they were certainly strongly opposed in principle to these services being reduced. Yet, while they accepted that for "some people" these services were vital, these "some people" were always others; for themselves, services were seen to be doing more harm than good by separating them from community support and forcing them to become wholly dependent on the state. Their criticism is reminiscent of what María Patricia Fernández-Kelly calls "distorted engagement": "conditions in which government agencies designed to address the problems of poverty supplant and transform normative exchanges in the economic, social, and symbolic realms . . . [until they] become a key factor eroding the capacity of [the poor] to mobilize resources and create alternative means of subsistence or defense" (2015: 115). Squatting thus appeared preferable because it provided social (instead of just material) security as well as a greater scope for self-determination.

BHAM's motto—"opening doors for the homeless since 1984"—pointed to the fact that squatters did not necessarily think of themselves as "homeless." By strictly legal definition, as laid out in the Housing Act 1996, a homeless person is one who

has no accommodation available for his occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which he—(a) is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court, (b) has an express or implied licence to occupy, or (c) occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving him the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.[1]

As squatters generally had no "license to occupy" their squats beyond the temporary shelter of an unclear claim to possession, they technically fulfilled this definition. In terms of their own understanding, however, squatting was seen as a remedy for, rather than an extension of, homelessness. A squatter, one could say, was a homeless person who had decided to take their fate into their own hands, and by virtue of this very fact had turned themselves into something other than homeless.

BHAM's "opening doors for the homeless" motto was therefore somewhat misleading, insofar as many of its core members were legally homeless themselves, although not by self-identification. On the one hand, the "doors" they referred to were physical doors, as they offered practical support in making "empties" accessible. On the other hand, the "opening of doors" also pointed to the symbolic meaning of the door as a threshold at which a political identity is transformed through an act of disobedience and appropriation, the threshold at which a mere homeless person becomes a squatter. The crowbar, a ubiquitous component of squatting-related art and imagery, was both a tool of this overcoming and a weapon in what was seen as a political struggle: "We are committed to the opening of community spaces and to solidarity with existing social centres. We campaign against the privatisation of public land and housing and for the defence of public space," the BHAM flyer continues, "Whilst commercial property developers are continuing to evict squatters from buildings that have sometimes been left empty for 10 years or more in the Bristol area the rising tide of people being made homeless continues to increase. . . . Squatting is one of the solutions to the housing crisis."

Squatters usually formed "crews" of roughly three to ten people in order to occupy a building, and the size of consecutive spaces permitting, such crews could remain stable over a long period of time. Crews could be organized around preexisting friendships, but most often were simply formed around a

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1. Housing Act 1996. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/section/175.

mutual need for shelter. It was possible to squat on one's own, but to do so posed practical difficulties (for example, because one person always had to be inside the squat to ensure legal possession; see chapter two), and was also considered dangerous in case of illegal eviction. Because of the dependence of crew members on one another in order to fulfill a fundamental physical and psychological need, the social ties within crews could become exceptionally strong, as has been demonstrated for different kinds of "survival groups" (e.g., Torrance 1954). To an extent, "crewing up" for me was not only a necessary step in joining the "scene," it also to some extent determined my position as an observing participant, in putting me literally and figuratively into the same space as my "respondents." When I finally began my official "fieldwork," my first concern was therefore to find myself some squatmates.

Gavin was excited at the prospect of my moving to Bristol. However, since he had not always proven himself the most gifted at finding himself a good crew to live with, I was somewhat doubtful whether I should rely entirely on him to find me one. Another avenue had opened up in the form of Ralph, another Austrian immigrant and fellow activist I had met a few months previously. When we first met, Ralph and I had sized each other up with a mixture of territorial suspicion (another Austrian on *my* turf??) and the sentimental excitement that sometimes grips exiles when encountering something associated with their "native" culture. Ralph had left Austria for much the same reasons as me: boredom and a sense that the world had more to offer than the quaint, parochial tranquility of our home country. We soon became friends, bonded over the traditional Austrian pursuit of *raunzen* (a mixture of bad-mouthing others and complaining, which we consider part of our cultural heritage) and the fact that we knew enough activists in common back home to dissect their various flaws and shortcomings for hours on end. Our shared nationality elicited a kind of instinctual solidarity on either side; when I told him I was going to move to Bristol, he took me under his wing as a matter of course.

When I finally arrived in "the field" one sunny October afternoon, I only had to walk a few blocks from the bus station into St Pauls to arrive at my new squat. Ralph had already gained the residents' permission for me to move in with them indefinitely, which meant that he must have unconditionally vouched for me as a safe and sane person. He himself lived in the three-story building along with seven other people who occupied all but one of the one- and two-bedroom flats. The remaining flat was inhabited by a middle-aged man who was hardly ever at home (I never established if he knew that no one else in the house was

paying rent, but if he did, he did not seem to care). The five flats each consisted of a living room with kitchen area, a bedroom, and a bathroom. Apparently, the house had been accessed by means of an open window some months previously, and the remaining flats had then been opened by tunneling through walls and ceilings until the doors could be opened from the inside to avoid the flat's individual alarms. On the ground floor lived a couple in their late twenties with their dog, the first floor was occupied by Ralph and three other men, and on the top floor lived another young man and two women. Since there were no more spare rooms, I was to share with someone else until one became available. After inspecting the impressive array of various species of mold in Ralph's quarters, I opted for the living room of the top-floor flat. I shared this flat with Joe, a friendly, perpetually smiling guy in his early twenties with a predilection for reggae music and weed. Completely unfazed by the installation of a stranger in his living room, he bid me a warm welcome and treated me to a semiclean mattress that had just been "tatted" from the streets[2] in anticipation of my arrival. I had stayed with Gavin often enough to appreciate a functional mattress—or indeed, any other piece of furniture or equipment—found on the street as an asset rather than a health hazard, and proceeded to build myself a nest in a corner. It was located in the living room/kitchen, and people were in and out of the room continually, giving me little sense of privacy. Despite the crammed conditions, however, this "most sordid of all havens, the corner" (Bachelard 1994: 137) functioned as my personal space, in the sense that everyone—residents and visitors alike—kept a respectful distance. Nobody sat on my bed without invitation, none of my things were removed, and if I wanted to rest, people went out of their way to make noise somewhere else.

There was a certain paradox involved in the allocation of personal space in squats. On the one hand, since the space was clearly none of the resident's property (not even in the temporary sense of being rented), others could not be excluded from it on that basis. It was therefore acceptable practice to simply knock on the door of a squat and ask for temporary accommodation if one had just arrived in town or was in transition. Some squats used particular symbols on the outside of the building to indicate to informed passersby that shelter

2. It is general practice in many places across England to put no longer required but still functional items of furniture on the street outside of the perimeter of one's property to signal that they are free for the taking. Most furniture in the squats—but also in many rented homes—I've lived in came from that source.

was likely available. On the other hand, as we have seen in chapter one, squatters had no less requirement of the inviolable personal space of a "home" than other people, and the continuous presence of strangers was sometimes seen as disruptive. Large enough spaces—such as the former social center "The Factory" in St Pauls—solved this issue by segregating residents and visitors on separate floors, smaller ones most often decided on an ad hoc basis if a visitor could be accommodated. In general, however, keeping an "open door" was seen as an important expression of the political aims of the squatting movement.

Over the course of my first few days in Bristol, I met the other residents of the house. There was Dan and Mary, the couple with the dog, mostly referred to as a functional unit named "Danandmary." The first floor inhabitants were Tariq, who came from a North African country that, as it was implied, he'd had a very convincing reason to leave;[3] Drew, a very quiet man in his forties; and George, the house pariah. George appeared to live a precarious existence on his bunk in the living room, as he had previously upset the rest of the housemates with drunk and homophobic behavior, and there was an ongoing debate as to whether or not this was grounds enough to put him out on the street. Finally, there were "the brothers," two men in their late twenties who treated the house to Dubstep at high volumes and their newly acquired pit bull puppy (a hyperactive little monster that left turds all over the house, which made navigating the stairs at night a challenge), plus their sister who shared one of the top-floor flats with another British girl named Therese. I had only a rudimentary ability at the time to guess British people's class background by their accent and mannerisms, but as it turned out I was right in inferring that Therese was one of the few squatters who came from a wealthier background and was mainly living in a squat to make a point to her parents.

The residents were a fairly representative sample of the Bristol "scene" as a whole. Relatively balanced in terms of gender, the largest group of squatters was white and in part British, in part composed of European migrants. A smaller subgroup came from non-European countries, and a subset of those had no legal claim to remain in Britain. While a fair few squatters came from an Asian British background, I met very few from Black, African, Caribbean, or Black British backgrounds, an issue I do not have a definitive explanation for. One

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3.   He left everyone guessing as to his immigration status, an issue that would later become relevant when during a large-scale altercation his behavior prompted the calling of the police; see chapter four.

explanation—confirmed at least by one Black British squatter I spoke to—is that Black people in Britain experience a disproportionate amount of police repression as it is, and involving themselves in the squatter/activist scene would make them prime targets for police violence. Squatters themselves, usually sensitive to racial issues, wondered frequently as to how the "scene" could be rendered more ethnically diverse without, however, ever producing a viable strategy of outreach. Squats were often located in the poorer (and thus by implication more "diverse") areas of the city, such as Easton and St Pauls, but despite a generally peaceful coexistence with the local population, a clear boundary remained between "squatters" and "locals."

In terms of class, definitions were difficult. Most squatters identified themselves as "working class," but precisely what that meant remained disputed. The term "working class" was used to mean a number of different things: some squatters used it strictly in the sense of the Marxist political economy, others in a more sociological sense, and again others to refer to a binary relation of domination and subjugation they identified between the "ruling" (including the "middle") and the "working class." While some used "class" to refer to type of employment (culminating in the perennial debate as to whether cops are workers), for others it referred to the height of income, and still for others to the existence and amount of family wealth. Certain markers, such as a university degree or owning property, were considered by some to automatically exclude one from the "working class," while for others, it was all a matter of what one identified as, regardless of material circumstances. To make things more complicated, some held that if one was born "working class" one remained so despite social mobility. Others claimed that even formerly "middle-class" people could become "working class" if they fulfilled the ideological or material requirements. Disagreements over the meaning of "class" and its membership could fill entire evenings without a consensus being reached, and I see little point in imposing some kind of class definition on this diverse group just to have the last word. What was obvious, however, was that only a small percentage were in a position to have access to other forms of accommodation, and thus squatting for most was a matter of material necessity.

The person I bonded most with in the house, after Ralph, was Drew. My first impression of him had been of extreme shyness, as when he spoke at all, he did so in a voice so low as to be barely audible. I found it hard to believe when Ralph told me that Drew had a completely different side to him, and that I should mind my step with him as he could exhibit an explosive temper. To my mind,

here was a kind and gentle person who, once he warmed up to conversation, possessed a subtle wit, a sophisticated political standpoint, and heart-warming common sense. I had decided to be upfront about my ethnographic activities from the start, in order to give people a chance to avoid me should they not approve, but as it turned out I was far more concerned by the potential ethical pitfalls of my status than anyone else. My studying anthropology was mainly regarded as some kind of eccentric hobby, especially since few knew what anthropology even was (and my attempts at explanation did little to elucidate the matter). Most often, I was good-naturedly teased for being a "useless intellectual" who would nevertheless kindly be fed when the revolution finally came. The few exceptions to this—of which Drew was one—believed that my research could in some way benefit the squatters' political cause. After observing me for a couple of days with an intelligent alertness that became somewhat unnerving, he began to strike up conversations about politics and direct action. I learned that he had studied biology at university before deciding to turn his back on mainstream society and apply himself to all sorts of political projects—a story that, as I would later learn, was only half the truth. Drew was among the few who received state benefits at the time, a large part of which he used to procure food for the entire house. Nearly every evening, we would come home to find he had prepared a full roast dinner or other meal that we would eat while watching films together, until people went to sleep and Drew passed out in his chair after having consumed staggering amounts of beer.

Life in the house followed a daily rhythm that I soon got accustomed to. Mornings started late with the brewing of great amounts of strong coffee and breakfast of eggs and bacon in one of the living rooms. As soon as the smell of coffee filled the house, residents would one by one come out of their rooms and sit around chatting and chugging caffeine until about midday. Then activity started and people left to go about their day's business, most of which took place in one of the numerous squats and social spaces around Stokes Croft, to reconvene around evening for another communal meal. After this, most evenings there would be a party or other social gathering in one of the squats, or we would sit around drinking, smoking, and talking until the small hours of the morning. In all this, there was a pervasive sense of communality. It rarely occurred to anyone to segregate themselves and eat on their own, and rarely did people retreat to their rooms and close the door as a sign that they wanted to be undisturbed. The constant company was unfamiliar for me at first, but in an astonishingly short amount of time I got used to thinking of myself as part of a

"we." This "we" was not in the first instant a matter of identity, in the sense that I became "a squatter" as opposed to "an anthropologist." Rather, the communal provision of food and shelter pointed to a deeper level of interconnectedness: with few exceptions, we were all dependent on one another in order to preserve and reproduce our bodies.

AN ATTACK ON ONE IS AN ATTACK ON ALL

Judith Butler points out that for the Western subject, the experience of dependency on others for physical survival is largely regarded as shameful (2004). Dependency is reserved for children, the very old, or those in ill health. For the "normal" adult, however, independence is not only a matter of pride but central to one's understanding of oneself as an autonomous individual. The notion of "autonomy" has been attacked and critiqued for a long time, and anthropologists will be familiar with the arguments. To name just one example, in *Capital*, Marx goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the material independence of the individual is fundamentally an illusion, created by the fact that relations of interdependence between humans, under capitalism, become mystified in projected relationships between objects (Marx 1867). Rarely, however, is the Western subject confronted with this illusion in practice. Confrontation only occurs in situations when the two major social structures that mediate relationships between persons, the market and the state, no longer function, be it because an individual has lost access to them (such as in abject destitution) or because they have broken down on a large scale. In situations like these, the subject realizes that fulfilling his own needs as an independent consumer is no longer possible, and the only path to survival is cooperation with others.[4]

The experience of such dependency, for the "autonomous" subject, is initially frightening. If the other has the power to raise the chances of one's survival, then he or she ergo also has the power to lower them. Consequently, such dependency is rarely discussed in the context of anthropology (for an exception, see Geertz 1968), although a fair amount of the time anthropologists are fed and

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4. Or, alternatively, the violent subjugation of others. This option was generally not available to squatters, due to a lack of the sheer material means to dominate more than a handful of others at the same time, and thus cooperation was effectively left as the only viable option.

sheltered by the people they study, and, especially in remoter areas, would be in serious trouble if this were not the case. Alas, to admit to such basic bodily dependency would not only topple the superiority of the "traditional" anthropologist, it would also put into question the capacity of the more progressive one to frame the interests of those who temporarily give him life as subjective. Writing therefore traditionally takes place after the anthropologist has returned from the field, and his autonomy from the people he has lived among is reaffirmed. In the "fieldwork" situation, however, the denial of dependency is another aspect of the distortion I have discussed in the previous chapter. A "disinterested" stance is, after all, impossible to maintain if one's basic survival depends on the same conditions as the survival of the other. Part of the "life-fieldwork" dichotomy is therefore the assumption that one's basic needs are being met by some means *outside* of the field, and that the basic survival concerns of the other are separate from one's own.

If this separateness breaks down—by design or, as in my case, the constituent power of accident—the fieldwork situation shifts. The asymmetric investment of Pierre Bourdieu's distortion gives way to a situation in which the anthropologist has at least as much at stake as the "native," if not more (since the "native" may already be an expert at survival under the particular conditions, while the anthropologist's dependency is exacerbated by the fact that he or she lacks this knowledge). With this shift also comes a shift in how the utterances of the other are regarded. What could formerly be framed as merely somebody's subjective point of view now had better have some truth-value because the anthropologist's life might depend on it. The question of whether or not squatting constitutes a legitimate response to being without shelter ceases to be "academic" if one *is* without shelter. The suspension of evaluative judgment that drives the "life-fieldwork" dichotomy is therefore revoked, not for methodological or formally ethical reasons, but because the focus of the anthropologist's concern has shifted. The evaluative judgment of the other about the potential of a situation to foster flourishing or cause suffering ceases to matter only as an object of inquiry, and begins to matter as a way of navigating one's own embodied existence, making the possibility of objectivity a rather urgent concern.

Among the many vulnerabilities suggested by embodiment is also and especially a peculiar *spatial* vulnerability, stemming from the simple fact that physical bodies are spatial objects and spatiality is therefore an integral feature of conscious experience, grounded in the very way our brains process the fact of embodiment. Some philosophers of consciousness have argued that our

experience of ourselves as beings who have "selves" is a consequence of our brains creating a model of our entire psycho/physical system, and endowing it with a first-person perspective (Metzinger 2004). Since the "system" is spatial, the protagonist of this perspective—the entity we call "I"—is thus by definition also experienced as spatial. It is created by the brain constructing a "self-world-boundary" (2004: 313) that specifies what part of our experience we should consider "I" and what part "everything else," thus representing our embodied selves to ourselves as spatial objects endowed with an inside and an outside. Thomas Metzinger here echoes an argument that has been made within anthropology by Irving Hallowell (1955), who approaches the nature of the self not from the perspective of the individual but rather from the necessary embeddedness of the individual in what he calls its behavioral environment. This embeddedness, Hallowell argues, necessitates certain features of the self. One of them is self-awareness, or the ability to experience oneself as an object among other objects. Another is the distinction between subject and object, which Hallowell frames as precisely the ability to draw a boundary between what belongs to the self and what does not.

Thus constituted by, and at the same time co-constituting, its cultural environment, the self orients itself in a number of ways. Deictic language terms—names, personal pronouns, kinship terms—describe the position of the self in relation to culturally specific frames of reference, and different objects in the environment to each other. A particular—and for Hallowell, universal—subset of such terms are place-names, which in concert with temporal markers allow the self to orient itself in space-time. Finally, the self is oriented within the moral dimension of its cultural environment, through establishing its place within the moral order as much as through its position in relation to specific norms and rules. Metzinger adds to this yet a third dimension of normative orientation—namely, the position of objects in the environment in relation to the self's own survival needs. Since for Metzinger, the spatial self-model is constructed by mapping input from the nervous system about our physical states, "emotional content is always spatial content" (2004: 382).

The emotional self-model can be analyzed as the integrated class of all those representational states modeling the overall state of affairs of the interests of the system. As opposed to other forms of representational content they are structured along a **valence axis**. They contain a **normative** element, and this element is, for instance, expressed as affective tone. What is nonconceptually represented

by this affective valence or tone will in many cases be the **survival value** of a specific state of affairs. (Metzinger 2004: 382; emphasis in original)

In essence, this is nothing other than an evolutionary biologist's version of Andrew Sayer's claim, heard in the previous chapter, that things matter to people because they impact on whether we flourish or suffer. What is more, for Metzinger, our ability to flourish or suffer is inexorably bound up with our experience of ourselves as spatial: "By possessing a conscious, emotional self-model we are not only given to ourselves as spatially extended beings, but as beings possessing interests and goals" (2004: 384). The spatial nature of the self and its relation to the world therefore means that in many ways, we cannot help but symbolically order the world in spatial terms, also and especially when it comes to evaluation.

Metzinger refers to the self of his account as the "phenomenal self" (2004: 15), emphasizing the centrality of experience—as opposed to mere "representation"—for self-awareness. He thus echoes a line of thought that within anthropology has been the hallmark of phenomenologically oriented approaches to embodiment. As Thomas Csordas summarizes, these arguments "begin from the methodological postulate that the body is not an object to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered as the subject of culture, or in other words as the existential ground of culture" (1990: 5). Csordas draws on Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Pierre Bourdieu to formulate a paradigm of embodiment that collapses conceptual dualities—between subject and object as well as between structure and practice—by pointing to their continuous co-constitution in embodied experience (see also Csordas 1994, 1999). If, as Merleau-Ponty asserts, "perception ends in objects," that is to say, the objects we perceive are a result of our reflection, then reflection itself begins with the body being in the world, "in Hallowell's terms, . . . an object among objects" (1962: 9). Yet, for the experience of selfhood to "end" in the object of the body necessitates that the body is perceived not just as one of a random collection of objects; for the embodied self, the body is never just "a body" but rather "*my* body," not just "an object" but "the object that is me." "From a phenomenological perspective, the living body is considered the existential null point from which our various engagements with the world—whether social, eventful, or physical—are transacted" (Desjarlais and Throop 2011; see also Desjarlais 1992; Ingold 2000; Good 1994; Jackson 1983). Claims to, and about, bodies thus become claims about selves—about persons—precisely because for the embodied self, there is

no such thing as "the body" as a general, abstract category. "The body," even in the preobjective, existential sense of Csordas's argument, is always either "my" body or something other than that.

Metzinger therefore emphasizes that "a self-model precisely emerges from drawing a self-world boundary" (2004: 313) and assigns to that which is inside the boundary the quality of internality or "mineness" (267). To be sure, as anthropologists have shown, where and how this boundary is drawn, how permeable it is held to be, and therefore how vulnerable the embodied self is experiencing itself to be to spatial intrusion is subject to a considerable amount of cultural variance. Yet, as Hallowell argued, if self-awareness is a universal condition of culture, then so is the existence of *some* kind of boundary—be it rigid and absolute, such as in Western conceptions of the self, or more permeable and shifting—that delineates the subject of such self-awareness. Where this experiential boundary is disrupted and "mineness" challenged, the very experience of being an embodied "self" becomes uncertain. As Axel Honneth (1996) writes, violations of bodily integrity such as violence, torture, or rape therefore can have devastating psychological long-term consequences, precisely because the person's taken-for-granted congruence with the bounded space of their body is (deliberately) shattered by the intrusion of another. Violence of this kind can thus be seen as a form of interpersonal colonialism, in that it establishes the territorial rule of another in the internal space of the self, and to undo this intrusion and reestablish confidence in one's physical integrity can be a long and arduous process.

However, our spatial vulnerability does not stop there. The immediate space of the embodied self is embedded in another layer of spatiality, not completely private, but also not quite public. This "personal space," for want of a better term, is the area within which any event is potentially of immediate consequence for embodied consciousness. Personal space in this sense constitutes an extension of the domain of the "self," and its violation is universally experienced as adverse since it potentially preempts the violation of the actual body. Exactly what is considered personal space differs culturally and individually (Sussman and Rosenfeld 1982; Hall et al. 1968), but its invasion by strangers appears to be universally experienced as unpleasant. Conversely, allowing another person to enter one's personal space constitutes an act of trust that is usually reserved for intimate relationships, like those between friends or lovers. But personal space also refers to the fact that the immediate material environment also has a decisive influence on physical reproduction—for example, in terms of providing

the necessary rest and recuperation. We therefore also consider private the area that is included in a person's self-domain insofar as it provides the body with the minimum amount of space that it needs to rest and recuperate. An example of such a space could be a person's bed or sleeping area. This area is considered intimate because in it, the sleeping body is at its most vulnerable and exposed, and at the same time, the existence of a space for rest is a fundamental requirement of physical functioning (e.g., Pilcher and Huffcutt 1996).

On the one hand, we are therefore beings who experience ourselves as spaces; on the other hand, we exist only in and through space. These two dimensions of embodiment mean that we are, on the whole, extremely vulnerable to a lack of space, or more precisely, to a real or perceived lack of *entitlement to occupy* space. In terms of the spatial experience of ourselves as selves, this means that challenges to our self-model are often experienced as challenges to our very spatial existence. In *Black skin, white masks* (1967), Frantz Fanon describes with searing clarity how "in the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema" (83); the racist gaze directed at him makes his "corporeal schema crumble" (84) and induces in him a shame that makes him want to disappear—"Where shall I hide?" (85)—until he experiences himself fading away under the authoritative ascription of otherness: "I moved toward the other . . . and the evanescent other, hostile but not opaque, transparent, not there, disappeared. Nausea" (84). Colonialism, for Fanon, is thus not only an experience of the external appropriation of the body, it also involves an internal displacement, an eviction from the occupation of his own body by the colonial gaze—"Where shall I find shelter from now on?" (88)—a forcible disruption of the quality of "mineness" that disputes his inhabitation of his body and turns it into a prone object at the disposal of the white man: "Sprawled out, distorted, recolored, clad in mourning in that white winter day" (86).

In the second sense, our spatial vulnerability also consists in our necessity to put our bodies somewhere, and a lack of entitlement to do so can quickly translate into a matter of life and death. In one sense, this is due to the fact that without a space to rest and recuperate, our bodies soon stop functioning. Sleep deprivation is thus also a form of torture in that the tortured is robbed of the right to be in a place where the body is left in peace. In another sense, the absence of a minimum amount of shelter—a nook or corner enveloping the body at least—like the absence of food or water, poses a significant survival threat, due to exposure to the elements and, as we will hear, human hostility. The prevalence of architectural arrangements meant to prevent the homeless

from finding such shelter, such as the installment of metal spikes in inviting recesses, emphasizes that for some, a lack of entitlement to occupy space is not a metaphor: to be street homeless means that not only is one's body not assigned a proper location where it is allowed to be (what for the rest of us is our "home"), it means that in consequence, one does not have a right to exist anywhere at all, one is always at best temporarily tolerated in a space that is assigned to a different purpose. As spatial beings, we are thus vulnerable not only to exposure but also and especially to the actions and attitudes of others that determine whether exposure will occur.

For the anthropologist as much as the homeless person, the "fundamental sociality of embodied life" (Butler 2004: 28) thus consists in "a vulnerability to the other that is part of bodily life . . . [and] . . . becomes highly exacerbated under certain social and political conditions, especially those in which violence is a way of life and the means to secure self-defense are limited" (2004: 29). This means not only a vulnerability to one another's potential aggression, but also and especially to the absence of one another's protection. In the absence of other kinds of shelter, the presence of the other, strange and unfathomable as he may be, may be the only safety the world has to offer. For the anthropologist in the field, this also means a fundamental vulnerability to the "native," not just in the sense that he could try to actively harm us but also in the sense that he could decide to abandon us, to remove his protection, and expose us to an unfamiliar and hostile environment. In my own case, this was quite literally true: as a newcomer to squatting, I did not have the knowledge and skills to squat on my own, and so I was entirely dependent on my newfound friends to put a roof over my head. At the same time, we were also all equally vulnerable to an absence of shelter, which for us was more immediate of a possibility than for many others. And so, in responding to one another's need, protection inevitably became mutual.

Butler argues that the Western subject goes to great lengths to undo and deny its basic vulnerability, and the anthropological self is no exception, in that it has made "invulnerability" (the illusion of disaffectedness) its epistemological position of choice.[5] If this distortion is removed, however, the shared experience of vulnerability can engender "a sense of political community of a complex

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5. Joel Robbins's (2013) attack on what he calls the "anthropology of the suffering slot" might here be a case in point—whether or not one agrees with Robbins's argument that anthropologists should cease to identify with the "suffering subject," the underlying assumption is that they are by definition free to choose to do so or not.

order, and it does this first of all by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility" (2004: 22). Within the squatting scene, this sense of political community was not so much of a theoretical than of a practical, material nature. Our crew did not only live, eat, and sleep together but also had a shared project in the form of the Smiling Chair bookshop just a few corners down on Stokes Croft. The street, leading from the city center in northeastern direction up toward the up-and-coming Montpellier, was the main artery of "alternative" Bristol, and at the time, the squatting scene. At any one point there were at least four or five squats on Stokes Croft, among them the Smiling Chair, the Free Shop (see below), a former motorcycle shop that was being used as an event space, and several housing squats, including the (in)famous "Telepathic Heights," the eviction of which sparked the Bristol riots in 2011.[6] The Stokes Croft area had a longstanding reputation as the center of alternative art and politics. Famous for its music venues and an ever-changing visual landscape of colorful shop fronts interspersed with graffiti by local artists such as Banksy, it was home to an eclectic mix of punks, hipsters, students, artists, and squatters. After what was commonly referred to by locals as a long period of "intentional neglect" by the council, the opening of the Cabot Circus shopping center nearby had led to a steep rise in land values in the area, and when I arrived, the battle against the gentrification and "regeneration" of Stokes Croft was already well under way.

There was a somewhat uneasy strategic alliance between local residents, shopkeepers, and squatters in this conflict. Although the enemy was clearly identified as the property developers who had secured contracts with Bristol City Council to "improve" the area by building offices and flats, the squatters were keenly aware of the class differences between them and the middle-class "hipster" types who frequented cafes like the Canteen in the self-managed Hamilton House. The most vocal community action group, the "People's Republic of Stokes Croft" was frequently referred to as the "Pretentious Republic"—a jibe that pointed to the fact that while the cultural flair of Stokes Croft was doubtlessly important, squatters had more at stake than others in the battle against gentrification. On the one hand, rising interest in properties in the area meant an increase in Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)[7] issued by the council

6.   See chapter seven.
7.   A legal instrument that allows local authorities to buy property that has been abandoned or neglected without the owner's consent.

for derelict, empty spaces—the very spaces that the squatters lived in and had often renovated and repaired in months of hard labor. On the other, there had been heightened police interest in the area, mainly targeting the street drinkers and rough sleepers at the bottom rung of the Stokes Croft food chain. It was generally assumed that "driving out the squatters" would be the council's first step toward making the area more interesting for investors and homebuyers—a suspicion that would later prove only too accurate.

The Smiling Chair was a small shop space with a bright pink front at the bottom end of the street, just across from the Free Shop. It provided zines and flyers, a lending library, some books for sale, and tea and coffee in exchange for donations during the day; the shop doubled as a meeting room for various activist groups in the evenings. With the comfortable sofas and coffee for a few pence rather than the several pounds the "pretentious" Canteen charged for its lattes, it was also a favored hangout and community hub for squatters. Several members of our crew were involved in running and maintaining the space, stocking the shelves, and introducing the project to anyone new who stepped through its door. Although the space was in theory open to anyone, members of the general public only entered infrequently; the aesthetic of the shop front and the look of its usual patrons may have put them off. It was, however, a meeting place for squatters and their associates, and during the course of a normal day, one would meet at least one representative of every squat around the area there. As such, it served as a kind of "village square," a hub for information, gossip, and rumors and a place where plans for actions and campaigns were devised. As my personal rhythm adjusted to that of my new crew, I found myself there most afternoons, showing my face as the new person in town and making myself useful.

I had initially planned to spend most of my time in Classics, the Free Shop across the road, as I had previously been involved in a similar project in Vienna. This plan was soon abandoned, however, mainly because my conviction that Free Shops provide a viable model for an economic alternative to capitalism had somewhat waned. Free Shops are spaces where items that have outlived their usefulness for their owner can be deposited and picked up by whoever needs them, free of charge. Numerous such projects exist throughout Europe and are generally based on a mixture of three arguments: an ecological one (waste reduction), a social one (providing for the poor and disadvantaged), and an economic one (wanting to demonstrate a viable economic alternative to the commodity economy). It was this last argument that I was most interested in, as the intellectual underpinnings of Free Shop collectives often refer to some

concept of a "gift economy" as derived from a more or less (most often less) in-depth reading of Marcel Mauss's classic essay. The project I had helped to run in Vienna was no exception in upholding this presumed logic of a "gift economy" as the revolutionary alternative to commodity exchange.

While Free Shops undoubtedly contribute to their local communities in redistributing goods and providing a commerce-free space for socializing, I had a rising suspicion that the politicized concept of "gift economies" had turned into something like the economic equivalent of the "noble savage"—the morally superior exotic other of the commodity economy.[8] In practice, the donations to the Free Shop tended to come from people with more economic power and a relatively secure housing situation, while poorer patrons contributed compa-rably little and possibly benefitted relatively more. There is, of course, nothing wrong with this in principle; if translated into an economic doctrine, however, it is difficult to see how it differs from traditional ideas of redistributive charity. Unless the question of private property is addressed—an issue notably absent in the politicized "gift economy" concepts and possibly the reason they tend to appeal to middle-class liberals—an economic model that focuses entirely on consumption surplus is hardly a radical alternative to the status quo.

Squatting, on the other hand, addressed the rule of property directly, mostly by contravening it. This was true not only for squatters' practice of setting up homes in vacant properties but also for the way that things were distributed within and between squats. Material goods came roughly in three categories: First, personal items such as sleeping bags, clothes, mobile phones and laptops, books, and objects of personal value. The individual ownership of these items was rarely, if ever, disputed and they could normally be left in accessible places without being carried off. Second, communal items, which belonged to an en-tire crew or house, were used by all residents, and were often the most difficult to salvage in the event of an eviction (these were things like tools, cookers, kitchen items, washing machines, amps, and occasionally a computer). The third category is made up of items that occupied a place somewhere in between the two—objects that were in principle communal but that somebody was pres-ently using and that were therefore treated as if they were personal items until

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8.   There are, in fact, striking parallels to the concept of the "noble savage" in terms of its racist/colonialist implications. Several "gift economy"-related email lists and blogs use the term "potlatch" as a vignette for "radical" gift giving, seemingly oblivious to its cultural context and history.

the person did not need them anymore. This applied to things like mattresses, heaters, small furniture, lighting, and blankets.

With the exception of personal items, distribution of things within—and to a lesser degree, between—squats followed a needs-based logic. If an item was not in use, and would not be in the near future, it was generally accepted to ask for it or to give it away to someone who did need it. If a squat was short of a mattress due to a new inhabitant, and another squat had one to spare, the mattress generally changed its location. It has been suggested to me that this could be referred to as a kind of gift-giving scenario; I am, however, doubtful whether this concept applies here. Most objects were simply not regarded as individual or collective property, in the sense of an inalienable association between object and owner that transcends the moment of its actual use, and thus fit to be "given away" by one individual or group to another. The situation was closer to a form of commons or pool of resources, which extended throughout the "scene" and sometimes beyond it to affiliated nonsquatters. Yet, despite this lack of ownership, objects could "live" in a particular squat. A tool, for example, could be located in one squat and returned there after use (rather than kept) in order to make sure it was available to all. Exchange of things between squats developed a particular dynamic in times of evictions: since vehicles with which to move the contents of an entire house were in short supply, many crews abandoned (or sometimes simply lost) a good part of their material possessions when they moved on. Since evictions were usually expected, crews would announce that there was "stuff to go" some days in advance, so other, temporarily more established, crews could pick it up. In one case an entire building, scheduled for demolition, was not only cleared of its inhabitants but also stripped of heaters, cookers, electric showers, fans, shower trays, and washing basins, many of which reappeared as community assets throughout the scene. Even so, equipment like showers (for crews that squatted in commercial properties) and washing machines were in short supply, which engendered a kind of cleanliness tourism between squats. I often walked from one end of town to the other to have a shower at Gavin's squat, only to realize that the long walk home rendered the entire exercise futile.

Evictions were a regular part of everyday life for squatters. I was evicted over a dozen times during my fieldwork, not counting the time I spent living in a caravan on the roadside (see chapter eight). Evictions came in two forms: legal evictions, where the owner of a property had gone through the civil court system to obtain a possession order as specified in the Criminal Law Act 1977;

and illegal evictions, in which owners attempted to take the law into their own hands and evict squatters by means of threats or violence. The former usually gave squatters time to prepare a legal defense, move their possessions in case the owner was given right (which nearly always happened eventually), or organize resistance. In case of the latter, attacks by irate owners (or "heavies" sent around by them) could happen quickly and without warning, and were sometimes the reason crews lost all their belongings in chaotic escapes. These evictions were illegal because the law forbade an owner to force his way into a squatted property or use violence to get the squatters out, but a many property owners were unaware this was the case.

For this reason, there was a system of eviction alerts in place that functioned much like an emergency phone tree. If a crew found themselves under threat, a notification system allowed for the quick mobilization of a large number of people who would gather around the threatened squat to "show presence" and demonstrate to the attackers that their actions would not go unnoticed. Alerts could come any time day and night and usually resulted in all but one crew member jumping into clothes and boots, and cycling or running to the site of the attempted eviction (all but one because one person had to "squat-sit" at all times, since leaving the squat unattended meant losing all "squatter's rights" under Section 6). It usually did not take more than ten minutes for an "emergency crowd" of often masked and deliberately menacing-looking squatters to arrive to the rescue of the besieged, and more often than not this convinced owner or heavies that the legal route to eviction may be more promising after all. Exceptions were cases when squatters realized they had entered a property owned by organized crime (which happened surprisingly often), in which case it was thought more prudent to just move on. The same strategy sometimes worked with legal evictions: when an owner won possession in court, they would usually send a legal representative or a court bailiff, sometimes accompanied by police, to take possession of the property and make it inaccessible by changing the locks. The reason this was often prevented is that the police did not seem very motivated to enforce such possession orders—after all, they were a civil matter—and so it sometimes took as little as a conveniently staged "Christmas market" with a couple of stalls right in front of the squat's door to turn them away. Exceptions to this occurred when police suspected that known political activists were inside a squat, in which case evictions were sometimes enforced with dogs, pepper spray, and occasionally, a helicopter. In some cases, a squat would be abandoned, only to be resquatted hours later by means of a secret

entrance that had been prepared before the squatters left. One such case was the motorcycle shop across the road from the Smiling Chair, which served as an event space for gigs and parties and would often see up to a hundred people celebrating until the early hours of the morning. It was evicted and resquatted a total of four times in the space of a few weeks, since the roof proved just too easy to access, no matter how well the door was secured.

The system of eviction alerts illustrates how in squatting, the experience of shared vulnerability translated into ethical responsibility. The idea that "an attack on one is an attack on all" (an often cited squatter slogan) expressed, on the one hand, that the individual squatter was considered part of a larger social group who interpreted harm done to one of its members as harm done to its entirety. At the same time, the slogan was not just a veiled threat: it also expressed the idea that the vulnerability of one to attack was the vulnerability of all, that is to say, this vulnerability was what everybody shared in common. Few squatters were exempt from the threat of eviction, and even those who had been in long-term possession of their squats had no actual certainty that they would not be put out on the street on any given day. More commonly, crews were made to move on within the space of a few weeks, sometimes months. The stress of this enforced mobility, the occasional violence, and the reoccurring state of being without shelter let no one forget for long their dependency not just on the availability of a place to put their bodies but also on the requisite additional bodies to hold it down. One did not just turn up to an eviction because a landlord or the state had transgressed against a member of one's in-group and thus one's identity. One did so because one acknowledged that in his basic need for shelter, this member depended on another's protection, and the very same was true the other way around. The ethical imperative contained in "an attack on one . . ." was thus a practical affirmation of precisely the fundamental interpersonal dependency that for Butler underlies ethical responsibility (2004: 22).

SPELL

Section 6 Criminal Law Act 1977 As amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 TAKE NOTICE

THAT we live in this property, it is our home and we intend to stay here.

THAT at all times there is at least one person in this property.

THAT any entry or attempt to enter into this property without our permission is a criminal offence as any one of us who is in physical possession is opposed to entry without our permission.

THAT if you attempt to enter by violence or by threatening violence we will prosecute you. You may receive a sentence of up to six months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000.

THAT if you want to get us out you will have to take out a summons for possession in the County Court or in the High Court, or produce to us a written statement or certificate in terms of S.12A Criminal Law Act, 1977 (as inserted by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, 1994).

THAT it is an offence under S.12A (8) Criminal Law Act 1977 (as amended) to knowingly make a false statement to obtain a written statement for the purposes of S. 12A. A person guilty of such an offence may receive a sentence of up to six months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000.

Signed
The Occupiers
N.B. Signing this Legal warning is optional. It is equally valid whether or not it is signed

Hope

As feminist writer Andrea Dworkin notes, older dictionaries of the English language show under the entry "hope" a version of the following: "a piece of enclosed land, e.g., in the midst of marshes or wasteland"; "a small enclosed valley"; or "an inlet, small bay, haven" (2000: 1). Deriving from the Old English word "hop," "hope" is therefore part of the name of many places, such as "Stanhope," "Wollhope," or "Salershope," and contemporaries of the first Domesday book[1] remarked that in it, hope "signifyeth a vally" (Fenton 2006: 5). The historical connection between concepts of place and the anticipation of good things is not limited to the English language, as Dworkin notes: "in Hebrew, too…the words for hope and for a small enclosure derived from the same root" (Dworkin 2000: 1). Although this use of the word "hope" has become obsolete in modern language, the connection it invokes between belonging and optimism points to the fact that to have hope for the future, one must be securely located in the present. It therefore represents what scholars have called the idea of "home as a haven" (Mallett 2004: 70)—that is, a refuge and sanctuary, differentiated from

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1. The first Domesday book is a record, compiled in 1086 under William the Conqueror, documenting the structure of land ownership throughout the British Isles. It remained the only record of land ownership patterns in Britain until the nineteenth century, when the second Domesday was compiled, a record I will discuss at more length in chapter six.

the insecure and dangerous outside, and therefore, a place that allows for the sheltered self to project itself into a welcoming and inviting future.

This understanding of "home" as a safe haven or place longing is, of course, not uncontested. Critics have attacked the "idealized view of home perpetuated by such ideas" (Mallett 2004: 70), because home as "a secure, free, safe, or regenerative space . . . [or] as a romantic space is not the reality of most people" (Moore 2007: 148).[2] Dworkin herself, never given to euphemism when it comes to the oppression of women, sums it up thus: "Home may be the equivalent of a woman's prison: women may be locked inside or not permitted to egress or too injured to be able to leave; women may be tortured or burned alive there; women may be menial, brutalised, servants; legal chattel; sexual chattel; reproductive chattel" (2000: 9). Home is thus not only a contradictory concept, but one suspended between extremes, from the place of highest aspiration to that of the deepest despair. Home is imagined as a place where the continuous existence of body and mind is experienced as secure enough to warrant an optimistic outlook on the future, but it can just as well become a place of internment and existential threat, not only from violence, but also from the psychological removal of one's secure place in the present and thus, in the future. At the same time, the home cannot simply be abstained from: homeless charities as well as support groups for victims of domestic violence (the clue is in the name) regularly report that many women and some men remain in abusive households because their only alternative would be to sleep rough. The fact that these people would rather endure violence than forego the minimal protection of sleeping indoors thus shows the existential necessity of shelter: even those for whom "home" is a prison cannot easily forego its promise to ensure that, even if one's future lies in captivity, at least one has a future.

Gaston Bachelard—who, as an ex-postal-worker-gone-philosopher knew a thing or two about being an "outsider"—considers the "home" to be an a priori condition of the development of psychic structure: "Before he is 'cast into the world,' as claimed by certain hasty metaphysics, man is laid in the cradle of the house" (1994: 7)[3] and therefore, "a great many of our memories are housed . . . a psychoanalyst should, therefore, turn his attention to this simple localisation

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2.   See also Wardhaugh (2000); Massey (1992); Moore (2000); O'Mahony (2006).

3.   "Hasty metaphysics" is here a dig at French existentialism after Martin Heidegger, which insists on a state of "thrownness" into the world as a universal human condition.

of our memories" (8). Like most psychoanalysts, Bachelard believes that the social structure of the earliest "home" is indelibly imprinted in the psyche of the individual, but he goes a step further than traditional Freudians in arguing that its spatial properties—its very architecture—are no less significant for the emergence of embodied consciousness: "The house we were born in is physically inscribed in us. It is a group of organic habits" (1994: 14). His "topoanalysis" is thus the reading of the psyche through the structure of the spaces it remembers inhabiting, since memory is always spatially situated and the unconscious, therefore, "entrenched in primitive abodes" (1994: 9). Just like Thomas Metzinger's embodied self, Bachelard's subconscious is fundamentally spatial, and thus predisposes us to structure our experience of the world in spatial terms.

Bachelard firmly aligns himself with the "haven" school of thought about the "home," and sees the original state of being as a state of oneness and wholeness from which "man" is only reluctantly expelled in the process of maturation. He protests against a metaphysics of consciousness that privileges the state of being "cast into the world" before the state of being secure in the "cradle" of the "home," the very reason that "place" and "hope" were once so intimately connected. "Home" to him is not a state of affairs that confronts us in certain spaces but rather a remembered state of securely being-at-home that we ourselves project onto the spaces we traverse. In a similar vein Kimberley Dovey notes: "Yearning-for-home is 'about' being-at-home" (1985: 10); that is, the *is* and the *ought* are connected by a memory—even the faintest one—of what "being at home" could and should feel like. "Being at home" therefore recalls what R. D. Laing called "ontological security": "The sense that the stability of the world can be taken for granted. It is the emotional foundation that allows us to feel at ease in our environment and at home in our housing" (Marcuse and Madden 2016: 93). Between being and yearning, then, stands the experience of being cast out, not necessarily as the expression of a universal human condition but rather as the expression of specific social relations that make the ideal state of being-at-home impossible. For squatters, this experience was a common one, crystallized at times of eviction, when "being is cast out, that is to say, thrown out, outside the being of the house," so that the thus expelled wind up in "a circumstance in which the hostility of men and of the universe accumulates" (Bachelard 1994: 7).

The first eviction I was personally affected by occurred a few months after my arrival in Bristol, when the time for our squat in St Pauls was finally up. For the past several months, our door had been sporting the ubiquitous "Section 6,"

a photocopied piece of paper that informed the world at large of our legal right to possession of the space we inhabited (see "Spell"). Putting a physical Section 6 on the door was not a requirement for the legal possession of a squat, yet nearly every squat had one or several attached to its entries. The paper served several purposes, from warning the novice squat-landlord not to take the law in his or her own hands, to conveniently identifying the building as a squat to friendly passersby. Perhaps most importantly, the Section 6 served as a magical seal of sorts, a paper wall that separated and protected the squat's inside from its outside, banning the bureaucratic state apparatus by the power of its own legalese. The protective seal of the Section 6 could only be broken by two things: one was the police, armed with their own magic paper by the name of "warrant." The other manifested one cold, wet morning at our front door, as if served by an invisible hand: a summons to attend possession proceedings at Bristol Magistrates Court. The envelope was announced with the dreaded words: "We got papers!" It was also, as usual, addressed to "persons unknown." The fact that it was attached to the door, rather than inserted through the letterbox, did not bode well for our success in court. The serving of "papers" followed meticulously detailed regulations, and the slightest deviation—such as serving them not *on* but *through* the door—could give squatters a lever to have court adjourned; and could thus mean a few more weeks of safety for the squat (while causing considerably more cost for the owner). Whoever had served the papers appeared to be well aware of this and had made a point of putting them right over our Section 6 like a bureaucratic trump card. Inside the clear plastic was a letter informing us of the date and time we were to appear before a judge, who would decide whether we could stay in the building or had to move on. On the basis of experience of such court proceedings, chances that this event would turn out in our favor were estimated around zero.

The association between "home" and longing points to the fact that home is not so much a place as it is a process, the continuous approximation of something and thus an on-going project of becoming. Dovey (1985) contrasts the Heideggerian notion of "being-at-home" with a process of "becoming-at home," which to her means precisely the process of appropriation that distinguishes mere geographical space from the relational space of "home." In the case of squatting, this approximation did not always point to a harmonious trans-substantiation of the material world through human agency, as Dovey (and Heidegger) would have it. "Becoming-at-home" as a squatter implied a struggle, as the project of making oneself safe in the world required a confrontation with the social forces

that prevented this from happening. For squatters these forces thus, somewhat understandably, appeared like the incarnation of evil, as evidenced by frequent crude jokes about "hanging landlords from the lampposts" and similar. These jokes obscured the fact that at least in some cases, the landlord was not a faceless, powerful corporation but rather an ordinary citizen who had heeded the government's advice that in order to receive any kind of pension, they were well advised to become "investors" in property, and so had sunk whatever modest savings they had into a cheap building they were ill-equipped to manage (see also Desmond 2016). To acknowledge this would have required the ability—perhaps one should say, the luxury—of being able to look at one's own situation dispassionately from a distance, something that is considerably easier to do when one is not faced with an immediate threat to one's physical survival. As it was, the delivery of "papers," by which the institution of private property asserted itself, could not appear as anything other than a bureaucratic assault that breached the protective boundary of home, stripped away the temporary safety of the interior space, and put its inhabitants on the street: not, in the first instance, by putting them outside of the building, but by putting the unsafe, dangerous space of "the street" inside.[4]

   The immediate effect of "papers" was that even though the inevitable eviction was still weeks away, the social equilibrium of the house shifted. With the magic seal of the Section 6 broken, the outside had asserted its right to the inside space, and the resulting change in atmosphere manifested itself in a peculiar kind of carelessness. Cleaning and tidying became a thing of the past, and the house began to increasingly resemble the kind of desolate hovel that the tabloid press likes to make squats out to be. On the one hand, this was due to the fact that all energy now had to go into finding a new space, but the sudden drop in cleanliness seemed to point to more than just a lack of time. People spent less and less time in the house, dropping their things where they stood, and there were no longer nice roast dinners and film nights. I later came to think of this phase as "last-days-of-squat-mood," as I observed the same phenomenon in most other squats when eviction was inevitable. It was as if people severed

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4.   The image of "the street" is often evoked as code for racist or classist descriptions of the kinds of people who are assumed to hang out there (see, for example, the controversy around Elijah Anderson's "code of the street" in the next chapter). I therefore want to emphasize that I do not refer to the "street" as code for anything, but am talking about the actual street—that is, publicly accessible urban space—which as I have discussed above, for the homeless is quite a dangerous place.

their emotional connection with the building, shrinking back into their physical bodies after they had briefly extended their selves to encompass the space they were inside of. As Robert Desjarlais remarks, the built environment can have a "contagious effect" on the people who in it, "especially when they spent a lot of time in the same place and came to feel as if they were 'part' of a building" (1997: 58). Losing the space therefore meant more than just having to change one's location—it implied an act of separation, of the self becoming "other" to the place it had just been part of, and the place thus being discarded as irrelevant to the self, little different from a random public place.

The arrival of court papers thus marked the precise point when the common theoretical distinction between a "house" and a "home" became practical for us. As mentioned previously, squatters did not generally think of themselves as homeless, while at the same time insisting that squatting was a form of political action by the homeless. In part, as was already said, this was due to the perception that to take action and appropriate a space is in and of itself a remedy for homelessness, since in turning empty houses into homes it practically enacted the distinction between the house as property and the "home" as appropriated space (see also Dovey 1985). In squatting, the transformation of a house into a home thus occurs at the precise same moment that a homeless person turns into a squatter, and ensuring access to a building was only the first step in this process. As I will discuss below, once the space was taken, its transformation into a "home" entailed a number of different practices through which the formerly homeless came to think of themselves as no longer so. Conversely, there was a reverse process, one by which a squatter could be turned into a homeless person, and physically removing his/her body from the building was equally only the last step in this conversion. While we were still physically resident in the building, "papers" therefore marked the beginning of homelessness for us, not only in a legal sense—in this sense we were homeless all along—but in terms of the emotional and social quality of "home" as "the non-I that protects the I" (Bachelard 1994: 5).

A "home," as opposed to a mere house, consists of many layers and can thus refer to "not only a physical place but also . . . a center of activities, source of identity, belonging from the past, a goal for personal and social development, an abstract state of being, and a legal concept" (Moore 2007: 145).[5] A squat could

5.   For a comprehensive literature review of these debates, see for example, Mallett (2004).

be a home in all of these senses, but insofar as it was considered an alternative to homelessness, its primary function was to protect vulnerable bodies from harm. From the perspective of a homeless person, the dichotomy of "inside" and "outside" that guides much of the theoretical discussion of the "home" (Dovey 1985: 16) can make all the difference between life and death, as illustrated by a study conducted by the University of Sheffield in collaboration with the charity Crisis:

> It is . . . shocking comparing homeless people's chance of dying compared to the general population. At the ages of 16–24, homeless people are at least twice, and possibly nearly three times (depending on scenario), as likely to die as their housed contemporaries; for 25–34 year olds the ratio increases to four to five times, and at ages 35–44, to five to six times. Even though the ratio falls back as the population reaches middle age, 45–54 year olds are still three to four times more likely to die than the general population, and 55–64 year olds one and a half to nearly three times. . . . As these findings clearly indicate, being homeless is incredibly difficult both physically and mentally and has significant impacts on people's health and wellbeing. Homelessness leads to very premature mortality and increased mortality rates. Ultimately, homelessness kills. (Thomas 2012: 8ff.)

Homeless charities thus routinely advise their clients not to sleep rough if at all possible because it is "dangerous and traumatising," as homelessness charity Shelter's webpage phrases it. This is not just due to exposure to the elements; the homeless are at a disproportionate risk of suffering all kinds of violent assault. In a survey of homeless people in England, "52% had experienced violence in the past year, in contrast to 4% of the general population" (Newburn and Rock 2004: 6; see also Luhrmann 2008; Bourgois 1998). An "alarming amount" of these attacks was found to be committed by the "general public," especially against rough sleepers, whose presence in public space makes them vulnerable to "unexpected and disturbing" (Newburn and Rock 2004: 6) levels of violence. In addition, 67% of the homeless had suffered theft compared to only 1.4% of the general population, and 43% encountered damage to property compared to a general population rate of 7%. The authors therefore conclude:

> Homeless people are often seen as a cause of crime, but the research suggests that in fact they are far more likely to be victims than they are perpetrators. Our findings paint a portrait of ongoing abuse and harassment creating situations

of extreme vulnerability for homeless people, particularly in public settings. Almost two-thirds reported having been insulted publicly whilst sleeping rough and distressingly one tenth said that someone had urinated on them. (Newburn and Rock 2004: 7)

In addition to physical violence, homeless women are at a disproportionate risk of sexual assault. In one study, 9% of homeless women reported being raped within the last month (Wenzel, Koegel, and Gelberg 2000), another found an incidence of 13% within one year (Wenzel, Leake, and Gelberg 2000), and yet another puts the lifetime risk of violent abuse for homeless women with a mental illness "so high (97%) that rape and physical battery are normative experiences" (Goodman, Dutton, and Harris 1995). In part, this extremely high incidence stems from the fact that for women, entering into an unwanted sexual relationship is often the only alternative to rough sleeping (J. Watson 2011), which comes with an even higher risk of sexual assault. As housing costs are rising, adverts on online message boards by men targeting vulnerable women with offers of rent-free accommodation in exchange for sexual services have become increasingly normalized, as anyone can verify by visiting Craigslist. It is therefore no surprise that "homeless people are over 9 times more likely to commit suicide than the general population" (Crisis 2011: 2). To break it down by gender, 56% of homeless men and 78% of homeless women report suicidal ideation, and 28% of men and 57% of women have attempted to follow through (Eynan et al. 2002). While homelessness therefore shortens the average lifespan to 47 years (compared to 77 years in the general population), for women this figure is even lower: only 43 years (Crisis 2011: 2). Although "homelessness" can therefore indicate a lack of "home" in many of its dimensions—as a source of personal identity, for example, or as the legal entitlement to occupy space—the lack of a space that is relatively free from the constant risk of being beaten up, raped, insulted, mugged, or urinated upon, or of dying from cold, illness, or suicide, is arguably the most pressing problem homeless persons are faced with. Home as a place of longing, for them, thus has less to do with romanticized ideas of belonging but rather with the persistent hope of survival.

Mary Douglas has called the home a "memory machine," in that it allows for past experience to be translated into future planning—for example, through enabling the storage of resources (1991: 294–95). "Papers" threw a wrench into this machine, not just by cutting short the expectation of physical shelter but also by removing the possibility to plan ahead by accumulating things for future

use. For our crew this meant that while our house still sheltered us from the elements, this physical shelter did not fully translate into an experience of safe containment anymore, since the future had become impossible to anticipate. Although there was little conversation about it, this uncertainty had immediate effects. Life in our ex-home took on a new quality of urgency, almost militancy, as if we were collectively bracing ourselves for the confrontation with the outdoors that lay ahead. During the day, we scouted the city for empty properties via the internet. Google Street View helped us to spot long-term empties in the streets, and the Land Registry, the contemporary online version of the Domesday book, provided insight into who might be the possible owner. The Land Registry webpage cost a few pounds to use and was thus only consulted when a property had come into closer consideration, but at least some of the time it gave clues as to the potential success of a squatting endeavor. Council-owned property was to be preferred, as it lowered the odds of illegal eviction and promised a slow progress of the case through the Magistrate's court. Foreign ownership bode well too. A property developer in the Philippines, for example, could be counted on to take a while to catch up with the legal process. Properties that were not registered were a gamble; the owner might have been (oh luckiest of possibilities!) dead, missing, abroad, or in prison, but equally as likely might have been among the sort who brought in the dreaded Crown Court Bailiffs, a kind of super-bailiff that wielded special powers of immediate eviction at Her Majesty's pleasure. Some properties had a prominent history, such as Bracken Hill House, an imposing mansion surrounded by the former botanical gardens of Bristol University, latter-day gated community, and in-between home—true story—to a raggedy crew of squatters. However, properties like this mansion were difficult to hold down. Too much financial interest was involved, and so the search concentrated mainly on the bottom end of the market, where the ruins lay.

At night, we went out in person, wrapped in thick layers against the cold, to scout eligible empties discovered online and find possible points of entry. After some reshuffling of crew members, a new group of seven people from the St Pauls squat had emerged, committed to taking on a new space together. Among the seven, fierce competition began to ensue as members tried to ascertain that they were an asset to the group rather than, to use Ralph's favorite term, "a liability." On the face of things, we were a leaderless and nonhierarchical crew, but there was nevertheless an unacknowledged hierarchy in terms of what and how individuals contributed to the group. The reason for this was not

so much existential—no crew member would be left out cold just for being lazy—but could perhaps be seen as a need for recognition of a higher order than merely the basic fact of one's needy embodiment. The question of who would make the crucial contribution that resulted in a new home for us held implications for this person's future status in the group. By virtue of resolving the urgent problem of shelter, the successful "hunter" would prove beyond a doubt that his or her skills and experience were supremely matched to the requirements of squatter life, and thus the indisputable fact of success would give their opinion a greater weight in future decisions. As a result, several crew members proposed specific empties and plans to take them, and refused to consider other options, lest someone else take all the glory. The competitive atmosphere was contagious, and before long I found myself just as eager to prove myself an asset as the others. Competition had begun to crystallize around two of the men, each favoring a different empty, and their personal rather than practical refusal to agree on a course of action was starting to stall the entire operation. There were at this point only two women left in the squat—me and a young woman named Katy—and one night we decided to prove that we could take care of the crew just as well as the men could or better. In a meticulously planned action involving a truck, several yards of carpet roll, and a temporarily distracted CCTV camera, we took our own building, sliding from the back of the vehicle through a one-foot gap in the broken glass of the front door, using the carpet rolls as padding. Our pride at the fact that none of the men could have accomplished this feat (due to their sheer size) was, however, short-lived. Unbeknownst to us, and to each other, two other breaking crews had set out the same night, and when the sun came up it became apparent that our crew was holed up in three different empties, each group refusing to give up the space they had conquered to join the others. All three of these occupations failed eventually (our "girl's squat" turned out to be unheatable), but bragging about who had *technically* gotten us a squat that night continued for months after.

The crown eventually fell to Drew. He had found an empty property in the north of the city, a former nursery now scheduled for demolition, easily accessed via a low roof and an open door that led from the inside yard into the building. With only two weeks to go until the court date—and thus potentially immediate eviction—any alternative buildings were eventually ruled out as much more difficult to access. The nursery was taken one night in time-honored fashion: get in, secure all entrances with deadbolts from the inside, stick a Section 6 on

the door and, as they say, "Bob's yer uncle"[6]—at least that is what I am willing to admit. One intricacy of "squatter's rights" was that the only part of squatting practice that was actually illegal before "Weatherley's law" was breaking into a vacant property by force. When asked in court how they had first gained access to a squat, the official answer squatters gave was therefore most often that a door or window had been ajar (this was followed by hilarity: The door. Was a jar. A jar, geddit?). Of course, all the squats I am talking about in this book were accessed by entirely legal means; there was, however, a reason that one of the most emblematic symbols of squatting was the crowbar. Besides locks and shutters, squatters were also involved in an ongoing battle with a special kind of building material, a type of steel screen called Sitex that could be placed over the doors and windows of a vacant building and promised to make access impossible without special equipment. How quickly one could get through Sitex *without* special equipment became a considerable source of pride for some.

BECOMING AT HOME

As soon as the phone call came to inform the rest of the crew the house was secure, we shouldered our essential belongings and joined the breaking crew. Over the next few days, the transformation of our squat into a home began to take shape. The first step consisted in ensuring that there were no immediate reprisals to be expected in the form of an illegal eviction attempt. For the first forty-eight hours or so, this meant that instead of just one person "squat-sitting," at least three or four were present at all times to deal with any potential attacks. Once it had become sufficiently clear that an attack was unlikely, we gradually began to move in the rest of our stuff (we collectively owned, among other things, seven double mattresses, a small oven with two cooktops, an electric shower, a washing machine, and an assortment of power tools) and claimed our individual spaces. The latter was done by putting one's bag down in the middle of the room one wanted to occupy, and subsequently making the case for one's entitlement to this space in more or less lengthy debates with other squatmates. As Mary Douglas notes, since the home is considered a collective asset, within it, individual claims to resources have to be presented with reference to the common good (1991: 299). The question of who had contributed what to the

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6.   British colloquialism, roughly: "and then you're done."

opening of the space therefore translated directly into claims to the nicest rooms in the house, morally and in terms of the factual benefits of early arrival.

Douglas refers to the home as "an organization of space over time" (1991: 294) that "allocates space time and resources over the long term" (296). The management of resources leads to the necessity of establishing internal order and setting the inhabitants in relation to one another in terms of their respective entitlements, also and especially entitlements to specific places within it. Pierre Bourdieu makes a similar observation in his description of this principle in his discussion of the Berber house. Different parts of the house, he argues, are not only allocated to men and women respectively, but also represent those parts of the world through which masculinity and femininity are constituted.

> There is a limitless number of rites performed within the house which appear to be domestic rites but which in fact aim at ensuring at one and the same time the fertility of the field and the fertility of the house, neither of which can be dissociated from the other. In order for the field to be full, the house must be full and woman contributes to the prosperity of the field by dedicating herself, amongst other things, to accumulating, to saving and to conserving all the goods produced by man and to keeping within the house all the riches that may enter into it. (Bourdieu 1970: 162)

For Douglas, this function of the house as a container means that "home" is also "a model for kinds of distributive justice" (1991: 297) and therefore contains a moral element that distinguishes its mode of resource allocation from the pure cost-benefit analysis that characterizes, for example, a hotel. Questions of fairness become supremely important within the home, since its primary aim, "to establish enough solidarity to protect the collective good" (1991: 299) depends on the unequivocal acceptance of the internal social order. This acceptance is achieved by what Douglas refers to as "co-ordination and synchrony"; that is, the spatial and temporal assignation of bodies to their proper place, and the assignation of resources to the proper bodies. The home thus assigns people different roles within its space—for example, through a sexual division of labor—and in this way, produces spatially defined categories of people. Home therefore, in one sense, "exerts a tyrannous control over mind and body" (1991: 303) by circumscribing individual expression, "it is not authoritarian, but it has authority. It is hierarchical, but it is not centralized. The best name for this type of organisation is a protohierarchy" (306). The crux of Douglas's argument is

thus the suggestion that a recurring pattern in the spatial and temporal or-
ganization of a specific type of space (here, a "home") can produce recurring,
morally loaded categories of people. In this way, the structure of the home and
the structure of social categories it produces can be transposed onto different
material structures—that is to say, we can make a space a "home" by applying to
it the very socio-spatial ordering pattern that produces a home and its inhabit-
ants. Bourdieu makes a similar point when he describes the house as essentially
a cultural library:

> In a social formation in which the absence of the symbolic-product-conserving
> techniques associated with literacy retards the objectification of symbolic and
> particularly cultural capital, inhabited space—and above all the house—is the
> principal locus for the objectification of the generative schemes; and, through
> the intermediary of the divisions and hierarchies it sets up between things, per-
> sons, and practices, this tangible classifying system continuously inculcates and
> reinforces the taxonomic principles underlying all the arbitrary provisions of this
> culture. (Bourdieu 1977: 89)

The structure of different spaces thus reflects what kinds of people are ex-
pected to inhabit them, and simultaneously works in more or less obvious ways
to produce these kinds of people by compelling them to particular kinds of bod-
ily practice. "The house, an *opus operatum*, lends itself as such to a deciphering,
but only to a deciphering which does not forget that the 'book' from which the
children learn their vision of the world is read with the body, in and through
the movements and displacements which make the space within which they are
enacted as much as they are made by it" (Bourdieu 1977: 89). The "book" of the
nursery was quite literally designed to be read by children, and was thus struc-
tured in a way that could be taken as either fostering a sense of protection or a
sense of internment, depending on how one chose to look at it. It was a strange
place for adults to inhabit: the building was made to accommodate four-year-
olds, and moving through it made one feel like a giant in a dwarf's house. The
ceilings were low, the chairs and tables miniature, the cheerful animal wallpaper
stood in stark contrast to the damp and bitter cold air that hung in the rooms.
Yet, our fierce crew of invaders could not help but be swept away by the nostal-
gia the space invited—abandoned toys were pulled out of corners, colorful little
tents were pitched, and one squatter decided to install himself in a playhouse
the size of a cupboard. If spaces invite us to imbue them with our memory, then

the nursery certainly had a way of bringing out the children in us, unfortunately without assigning anyone the role of responsible adult.

This was the winter of 2010, and, like most winters I have ever lived through in England, it was heralded by the media as the "worst winter in living memory." In this particular case the media were not far off the mark: temperatures had dropped to -15ºC, cold even by Austrian standards, and a thin, persistent layer of ice had covered the city for weeks. Our previous squat had benefitted from central heating, which the previous occupants had kindly not bothered to turn off. In the nursery, we had to resort to portable electrical space heaters and physical proximity to keep warm. The cold drew the psychological demarcation lines between inside and outside more decisively than a legal warning on the door could. Heat was precious, and our bodies reacted by instinctively limiting the expenditure of precious calories on ventures outside of the house. Our nutrition was dubious at best, as we lived mainly on food "skipped"[7] from the bins of local supermarkets. Skipping had its limits, as much of the food that was thrown out was of the "gack"[8] variety: sugar and cheap carbohydrates in the shape of chocolate bars and biscuits. Vegetables and fruit were rare, as was the cooking of actual meals in the small nursery kitchen. Some of us, me included, had money to buy food, but the implicit logic of the space required something akin to a "solidarity of the smallest common denominator"; in other words, as long as some of us had no money, the others were careful not to flaunt theirs too openly. Despite the fact that some items of food were considered indispensable, and whoever had money would buy them (coffee was top of the list, followed by milk for the coffee), on the whole, a somewhat self-defeating logic of "we" had begun to override a logic of individual self-preservation. In this, our crew was different from others I have known, since some squats were blessed with members who could make fantastic collective meals out of the humblest of ingredients. Our crew, however, seemed to contain a disproportionate amount of people who, for one reason or another, had trouble feeding themselves. As a consequence, we all ate too little and of the wrong kind, and to run around in the cold weather began to seem increasingly frivolous.

Instead, we began to "make ourselves at home" in a number of different ways. After making the space safe in terms of physical survival—which is not an exaggerated word choice for the homeless in winter—our next step consisted

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7.   Retrieved from waste bins; also known as "dumpster-diving."

8.   A particular type of junk food high in fat and sugars and low in nutrients, such as potato chips or biscuits.

in symbolically appropriating it by means of decorating. As Bachelard observes, "an entire past comes to dwell in a new house. The old saying 'we bring our *lares*[9] with us' has many variations" (1994: 5). Most squatters then also had a limited amount of personal objects that represented their personal space, and in every new squat these were carefully distributed and arranged to produce the coherence that this person recognized as "their room." The objects could be pictures or posters, small pieces of furniture, musical instruments, or objects the person associated with their role as a squatter, such as tools, climbing gear, and other signifiers of "outdoorsiness." Their particular arrangement varied from move to move, but their collective presence served to identify personal space as an extension of the identity of its inhabitant. It has been said that "home" is

> a way of relating to the environment that may be transposed from place to place, and in this way the meanings of home may be re-evoked if the patterns are recreated. For instance the !Kung bushmen of the Kalahari Desert create a new home every night with just a fire to mark the center and a small windbreak or symbolic entry. These are enough to evoke a complex schema of spatial meanings that orients everyone in relation to the fire. (Dovey 1985: 5)

Similarly, a squatter's "home" could be easily transposed from one building to another, by projecting the psychic space of "home" onto different architectural structures. The arrangement of objects helped to produce a sense of continuity of personhood, by giving the same symbolic meaning to a (often quick) succession of different architectures.[10] Bachelard sees in this a particular kind of projection,

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9.   Latin: *Lar*, plural *M*, in Roman religion, any of numerous tutelary deities. They were originally gods of the cultivated fields, worshipped by each household at the crossroads where its allotment joined those of others. Later the *Lares* were worshipped in the houses in association with the Penates, the gods of the storeroom (*penus*) and thus of the family's prosperity; the household Lar (*Familiaris*) was conceived as the center of the family and of the family cult (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*).

10. Martin, a Traveller activist we will meet in chapter eight, pointed out to me that the same logic underlies the setting up of Gypsy sites. When people pull up at a new site, they arrange the vehicles in a specific pattern (tow end of the caravans facing inward), creating a symbolic boundary between "inside space" of the Travellers and the "outside space" of the *gorja* (non-Traveller). As Martin put it, one of the first things people do on a new site is "put the flowerpots out"; that is, arrange material objects in a way that structures the space and represents the identity of the dweller (see also Olwig 1999).

intimately connected to the function of the "home" as a remembered place of safety: "After we are in the new house, when memories of other places we have lived in come back to us, we travel to the land of Motionless Childhood . . . we live fixations, fixations of happiness. We comfort ourselves by reliving memories of protection" (1994: 6). But like the shell of a mollusk, Bachelard's favorite metaphor for the housed creature, this home is not merely a psychological phenomenon. As a material space, it is intertwined with the body, like a shell is a bodily part of the creature that inhabits it. Some scholars of consciousness have proposed that the human mind does not end at the boundaries of the brain, and therefore the artifacts humans use to aid their cognitive processes, like notepads or computers, should be considered part of an "extended mind" (Clark and Chalmers 1998). But if there is no meaningful line to be drawn between "mind" and "body," we would have to ask if there should not be an analogous "extended body hypothesis," for those material structures that immediately support and thus form a "survival system" with the organic body. Like a mollusk, a human is, on average, fairly useless without a shell—too soft, too vulnerable, and too little prepared to battle the elements: "We build the intimate shell of our lives by the organization and furnishing of the space in which we live. How we function as persons is linked to how we make ourselves at home" (Ginsberg 1999: 31). For the mind to safely inhabit the body, the body must therefore inhabit a safe space, and the absence of one begins to eat into the self from the outside to the core.

It is therefore no surprise that the mythical character of the ideal "home" has sometimes taken on religious dimensions for those deprived of it. Squatters sometimes trace their heritage back to the seventeenth-century movement known as the Diggers or True Levellers, a radical Protestant group who began to occupy and cultivate common land in several English provinces in 1649. They were led by Gerrard Winstanley, a bankrupted merchant tailor turned Puritan prophet, who argued that since the Bible failed to mention God's determination that humans should rule over one another, any such rulership was by definition illegitimate. In Winstanley's view, any hierarchy among humans was the product of "selfish imaginations" of separateness, which had to be overcome through the renunciation of wage labor and private property, and the sharing of all resources according to need alone. The Diggers' aim was thus nothing short of a manifestation of God's original will upon earth: a recreation of the Garden of Eden, where no artificial separateness existed. They were evicted from the land they occupied only a year later—somewhat setting a precedent for future generations of squatters—but Winstanley kept on publicizing his view that man

has to overcome his impulse to "covet" things outside of himself, in order to return to his "inner kingdom" and a state of unbroken wholeness and unity with the divine (Hill 2006). Winstanley used the Christian metaphor of the Fall to describe the predicament of a self that is "cast out of itself" by the force of the "imagination" that builds a "hedge" or "dam" through the domain it inhabits, separating it from its rightful dwelling place (Brace 1997: 138). The "Garden" or "Kingdom" here can be seen as a religious metaphor for the quality of "home" as a place of hope. Like in Bachelard, it is simultaneously remembered and aspired to, at the same time a place in the world and a state of being. Ostensibly metaphors of return and restoration, Garden and Kingdom are thus at the same time metaphors for becoming; they imply a kind of backward utopianism that seeks to approximate a future through invoking images of an idealized past; just like squatters would invoke a longed-for state of being sheltered through recreating the spatial arrangements of past dwelling places.

Winstanley's version of the self as the peaceful inhabitant of a domain of original unity sharply contrasts with the views of some of his contemporaries, first and foremost Thomas Hobbes, who was considerably more pessimistic about the human capacity to realize such an ambitious vision of social cohesion. Hobbes, as is well known, imagined the "state of nature" as a violent and deeply unpleasant affair, in which every self—individual or collective—has to assume that every other is out to get it. As a result, the self has to establish a kind of sovereignty that "encloses the self, trying to create a fortress from within which to resist invasion from the outside" (Brace 1997: 139). Laura Brace describes this self as a "territorial self": on the one hand it relies on strictly policed boundaries and seeks to "banish, exclude and marginalise" (1997: 141) whatever does not belong; on the other hand, it subjects those dwelling within its territory—including, in the absence of others, its own non-rational parts—to despotic control. This defensive structure necessarily relies on force, both in terms of absolute control of the inside, and in terms of defending the boundary. The Hobbesian self thus becomes characterized by "a rational inside coping with problems on the outside" (Bartelson 1995: 42), striving not for of a return to unbroken wholeness but rather for sovereignty in the sense of "despotic dominion" over its territory (Brace 2004: 1).

Squatters were not unfamiliar with this point of view, not so much because they embraced it but because everybody else appeared to. Like any squat, the nursery therefore needed to be fortified against possible intrusion. This involved, at the minimum, making sure that only one entrance was accessible, and thus

access to the house could be strictly controlled. In the nursery this was not dif-
ficult, given that the building had been designed to keep four-year-olds from
escaping. Other times, squats used different types of fortification, from stick-
ing newspaper over ground-floor windows to avoid being recognized from the
outside, to elaborately booby-trapped staircases designed for days-long eviction
sieges. The level of effort that went into such contraptions increased with the
likelihood of a police raid or eviction attempt, to the point where squatters
would occasionally barricade a building they had decided to abandon, only to
watch with great hilarity from the outside as police or security forces worked for
hours to get in. Normally, however, fortifications were simply driven by neces-
sity; the risk of illegal eviction, police raids, racist attacks, or theft meant that a
space had to some extent be seen from the perspective of a possible intruder, and
all opportunities for trespass had to be eliminated (squatters, of course, knew
a thing or two about trespass, and so it was not surprising that in some cases
nothing short of armored riot police could breach the perimeter). While squat-
ting was thus in many ways informed by the more optimistic vision of a home
as a place of community and safe containment, it also contained an element of
bordering and territorial defense.

Just as there appear to be two versions of the "home"—one a haven and one
a prison—so it would seem there also are two versions of the dwelling self: one
that is "endowed with a sense of refuge, huddles up to itself, takes to cover, hides
away, lies snug, concealed" (Bachelard 1994: 91); and one that is "preoccupied
with breakdown, with invasion and with identifying the risk the other poses"
(Brace 1997: 142), and thus barricades itself into a fortress. Moreover, there ap-
pears to be a strange correspondence between them, as if the two selves had each
designed their ideal dwelling place. The spatial self of Winstanley's imagination
may thus construct a home resembling a communal garden (which, as it were,
was exactly what the Digggers did), reflecting the idea of home as a place of
original unity as well as the anticipation of future abundance. Like this version
of the self, this home is not necessarily bounded, its character lies in its internal
order or pattern, which may or may not involve a boundary. Internally, this
home is concerned with community, fairness, and equality and it thus contains
rules designed to maximize solidarity and commitment to the whole, reflect-
ing the internal unbroken wholeness of Winstanely's self. If the Hobbesian self
was a builder, on the other hand, it would be seen to construct itself a fortress
reflecting its own preoccupation with defense and internal control, thus impos-
ing its own internal structure on the space it inhabits. The home that Dworkin

so forcefully denounced, as a place of violent internment of women, may be the handiwork of just such as self, and indeed, as we will see in the next chapter, there is a traditional association between the territorial self and a particular version of aggressive masculinity. In such a home, what Douglas calls a "protohierarchy" has finally become a full-blown hierarchy, in which some actors control and exploit others.

I want to suggest that this correspondence is not coincidental. Indeed, each pair of home-and-self describes a particular, recurring ideal type of socio-spatial order, characterized by a specific set of rules that structures and subdivides the space, and thereby produces particular recurring social categories standing in particular recurring relations to one another. This involves a process of what Douglas called "patterning"—namely, the imposition of a symbolic order "whose keystone, boundaries, margins and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation" (Douglas 1966: 51). Moreover, these socio-spatial patterns also contain a normative element. In proposing rules for ordering space, they also propose rules as to how the categories of people this spatial order produces should relate to one another. Where one pattern orders space in such a way that it remains open at the boundary and undermines internal hierarchies, the other does the opposite; instead of participants in a communal endeavor, it produces insiders and outsiders, as well as establishing a hierarchy between those who are in control and those who are being controlled.

In the following chapters, I will refer to such socio-spatial rule sets as *spatial configurations*. By this term I mean a recurring abstract ordering pattern that structures different types of space, and thereby produces recurring categories of people—one could also call it a socio-spatial ordering mechanism or algorithm (see also Parsons 2011). Like the pattern of Douglas's home, spatial configurations are also and especially about resource distribution. However, the resource here is not something contained within the space; rather, it is the space itself, or more precisely, the right to occupy it, which I will call *spatial entitlement*. For this reason, the social categories produced by a spatial configuration are morally loaded: they contain assumptions about the respective spatial entitlement that attaches to each social category; in other words, they specify how space should be distributed between different kinds of people. The production of "insiders" and "outsiders" through the practice of bordering, for example, implies assumptions about their relative position in terms of their entitlement to occupy the inside space, and thus specifies their position not just in the spatial order but also in the moral order. In this sense, Winstanley's and Hobbes's respective

conceptions of the self can be seen as not just descriptive, but *pre*scriptive: they each contain the blueprint of a particular moral order, expressed in a spatial imaginary that can structure the internal ordering of the self as well as that of the social and material space the self inhabits. Moreover, as I will argue in the following chapters, Winstanley's home-as-a-Garden and Hobbes's home-as-a-fortress are not just two possible configurations among many. They can be seen to represent two distinct ethical paradigms, which can be identified across a range of times, settings, and scales, also and especially in the context of squatting and the moral order it saw itself confronted with.

Codes of honor and protection

Sharing a space with others inevitably involves the explicit or implicit creation of, and adherence to, some kind of mutually accepted normative framework. For our crew this meant that while life in the previous squat had been relatively harmonious, in a new building the rules had to be renegotiated. On the one hand, a new squat meant a "clean slate" in terms of seniority for all who moved in simultaneously. In our previous house, people had moved in one after another: Drew was the longest-standing inhabitant and I was the last arrival. This temporal difference translated into a difference in degree of authority—the person who lived there longest was considered to have the highest investment in the space, and thus their voice was given more weight when decisions had to be made. At least in our crew, this construction of "authority" was bound up not so much with a belief in leaders but rather with a peculiar understanding of being considerate toward the connection of personal identity and place; the person who lived in the house longest was seen to be most strongly entangled with the space, it was his or her "home" in the sense of an extension of his personhood, all the more so than for whoever came later. Implicit in this understanding was the idea that whoever was thus most invested in the space was most vulnerable to its loss, and therefore, should have all the more say in how it was run and/or kept. Once we had moved into the nursery, however, the differences that had structured the group along these lines were wiped out: we were now all "equal"

regarding the duration of our connection with the place, and each had as much to lose as any other person.

On the other hand, we had decided that we wanted to be an explicitly "political" squat. There were two ways in which squatters considered their squats to be "political": in one sense, the act of squatting in itself was considered a political act, and thus a squat was a "political" space in that it was simply contested territory; in the other sense (the one our crew had in mind), squats could be "political"[1] in that their inhabitants adhered to specific political principles, most often of the anarchist (and as such by implication at least vaguely feminist) persuasion. Squats of the latter type were those that explicitly referred to the concept of "Safe Space" as a guide for conduct, and often operated with a type of written policy that set out that discrimination of any kind on the basis of gender, race, sexuality, age, disability, and a number of other identity categories was prohibited. These sets of rules were generally referred to as "Safe Space policy" (or, acknowledging the impossibility of a totally safe space, "Safe[r] Space policy") and could often be found printed out and displayed publicly within a squat. But also where such systems of rules were not explicitly displayed, "political" squats usually involved an expectation that anyone who used the space adhere, at minimum, to the proscription of "sexism," "racism," and other such forms of discrimination based on identity.

The concept of "Safe Space" has come to a certain notoriety among academics in recent years, largely owed to its adoption by various student groups on university campuses. Campus Safe Spaces have come under fire because, as their critics claim, they have come to be used as a means to silence political dissent and curb free speech. The controversy has produced curious alliances between feminists critical of the concept of gender and of the sex industry, conservatives and religious right-wingers of different stripes, and self-proclaimed "free-thinkers" worried about the suppression of science and reason. Tracing these debates would require a book of its own; however, it is important to note

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1. I use the term "political" here in a different sense than Hans Prujit (2013, see chapter one), who uses it to refer to squats whose inhabitants have the ulterior motive of opposing the state. While this motive was certainly present for some squatters, it was not, in their own understanding, what made them "political." Rather, "being political" consisted in first and foremost adopting what one considered an appropriate way of relating to other people, *followed* by the realization that the state was one of the social structures that prevented one from consistently doing so. Therefore, fighting the state was a consequence of squatting, not its purpose.

that despite the widespread moral outrage and ridicule campus Safe Spaces have recently attracted, the concept itself is much older and, for most of its history, was relatively uncontroversial among those committed to social equality. Vaughan Bell, a neuroscientist and psychologist, traces its history to the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany who went on to become director of the Center for Group Dynamics at MIT. Lewin—inventor of now ubiquitous concepts such as "social dynamics" and "feedback"—developed a range of self-technologies for corporate managers, including a form of group discussion called "sensitivity training" (Bell 2015). It was designed to enable managers to address their own shortcomings through structured feedback, and therefore required an atmosphere in which concerns and criticism could be freely expressed to the boss's face (not a common occurrence in the 1940s). It was therefore necessary to establish a set of shared rules that enabled every participant to express themselves without fear of repercussions. One could thus say that the first "Safe Space" was created to facilitate speaking truth to power. It was only during the 1960s that feminist and gay and lesbian groups adopted the concept to refer to a space in which normally marginalized standpoints could be expressed free from political repression, and Safe Spaces did not become ubiquitous on university campuses until the second decade of the twenty-first century.

Squatters on the whole subscribed to the 1960s view that "Safe Spaces" were not primarily intended as safeguards against unwanted ideologies, but simply to prevent forms of violence many were all too familiar with. Bristol Housing Action Movement (BHAM), whom we met in chapter two, state on their flyer: "We operate a safe space policy at our meetings, this means we do not allow racist, sexist, homophobic or any type of discriminatory behaviour." In this negative formulation, "Safe Space" refers to a set of behaviors that are forbidden on the basis that they are seen as common forms of structural oppression. Other spaces chose a positive formulation: Kebele Social Centre in Easton saw its purpose, among other things, in "providing a space that is equally welcoming to everyone (except cops, fascists etc) irrespective of age, race, gender, background, sexuality and (dis)ability." This somewhat convoluted formulation points toward the contradictory nature of "Safe Spaces"—while on the one hand intended for "everyone," it was also assumed that some (here, "cops and fascists") had to be excluded so that "everyone" could feel welcome. At the same time, while "everyone" would appear to be as inclusive as one could be, "Safe Space" policies usually also explicitly included a sometimes impressively high number of different identity categories. To an extent, this was due to the fact that some areas

of presumed discrimination were not as clear-cut as others, and "Safe Space" policies therefore also implicitly communicated a group's position of specific issues. For example, Occupy Bristol included "race, gender, sexuality, age, ability, religion" in its list of supported categories, while "religion" was notably absent in both BHAM and Kebele's versions. Within anarchist politics, religion is often regarded with suspicion, as it is seen as one form of social domination among many (as the saying goes: "No Gods, No Masters"). The fact that some people experience discrimination *because of* their religious beliefs made this a complex and often contentious issue.

On the other hand, the listing of individual "modes of oppression" can be understood as a political statement that each of these social struggles was recognized and supported in its particularity, while at the same time, they all had something in common—namely, the very fact that they warranted protection. "Safe Space" policies were thus also codified versions of the ethics of mutual protection I have discussed in chapter two. The fact that ostensibly disparate groups such as gays and lesbians, people of color, the disabled, and Muslims were "protected" under the same policy pointed toward the underlying assumption that what they shared in common was precisely a vulnerability to the sort of thing the policy protected them from. As the Bristol Anarchist Federation put it: "Gender, sexuality, age, physical ability, social class, skin colour and being part of a specific ethnic group are all used as excuses for society undertaking and accepting a catalogue of abuses against people."[2] Inherent in this view is an understanding of social power that acknowledges particular identity categories not as an essential feature of the oppressed but as "excuses" in the eye of the oppressor. "Safe Spaces" were thus designed not so much to protect particular identities but rather as a practical critique of the binary logic of domination that produced them in the first place. One could call it an "intersectional" approach in that it acknowledged that domination functioned along multiple axes. It remained, however, firmly situated at the point of intersection, where all axes of oppression came down to the same principle. It was, in this sense, anarchist ethics in its purest form—instead of a formal application of the theories of anarchist thinkers like Stirner or Kropotkin, this was, at least in principle, a radical ethics of direct action against any and all forms of institutionalized social power of people over one another. In contrast to what is (perhaps unfairly) claimed of

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2.   "The Fundamental Requirement for Organised Safer Space," *Floaker*, March 31, 2013. http://floaker.net/2013/03/31/organised-safer-space-2/.

campus "Safe Spaces," the logic of these spaces was therefore only superficially related to "identity politics" in the sense of the partisan interests of specific groups. Underlying the acknowledgement of these interests was a peculiar form of moral universalism, based on a shared vulnerability to the harmful effects of social power.

In practice, "Safe Space" policies were most often invoked in the context of gender relations: more precisely, in instances of sexual assault. Women were by far the largest recognized subordinate group within the squatting "scene," while other groups (such as people of color) were relatively underrepresented. For this reason, as the anonymous Anarchist Federation writer puts it, "While [discriminatory] cultural norms can be seen wherever oppression takes place . . . the most pervasive and widespread of these affecting all our radical spaces today are carried over from our dominant culture's acceptance of rape and sexual violence." Preventing such violence—and where it could not be prevented, at least retrospectively keeping the victim safe from repeatedly having to face the perpetrator—thus was the most frequent reason "Safe Space" policies were enacted in practice. In these instances, the moral order implied in Safe Spaces most clearly appeared in its specifically spatial dimension: it was assumed that the power the perpetrator held over the victim also and especially consisted in him occupying space that was, for this reason, not accessible to the victim. The ethical imperative in this situation was thus to rectify this situation by affirming the victim's right to occupy space and removing the threat. In one instance, the following statement was publicly issued by a number of radical groups:

> Following notification from [a social centre] that X. has been banned from the centre and its activities due to allegations of a serious sexual assault, an emergency meeting of individuals and radical groups in Bristol was held. As individuals and networks opposed to domination and oppression, including but not exclusive to misogyny, sexual violence, bullying and intimidation, it was agreed that X. would be excluded from involvement with the projects, organisations and groups named below. These groups will also, where they are able, take steps to exclude him from public events and actions in which they take part.

There was some criticism raised against this course of action, mainly driven by the observation that in creating a "Safe Space" for the victim within the "scene," the perpetrator would be driven to go elsewhere to possibly target other people. In part, this was due to the fact that involving the police in any matter

was controversial. As "cops" were, for the most part, considered morally on a par with "fascists," it normally went without saying that they were not consulted even in matters that arguably fell within their responsibility. For women affected by male violence this could become a considerable dilemma, as at least in some cases gentle pressure was applied to "keep things in the community" and resolve problems through vigilante justice up to and including beatings. At the same time, it was well known among squatters that reported sexual violence is only rarely actually punished (according to Rape Crisis England, the conviction rate is at about 6 percent; see also Kelly, Lovett, and Regan 2005), and so it was equally as often assumed that self-inflicted justice was more effective and more reliable than that of the state.

The principle of "Safe Space" can thus be seen as what in the previous chapter I have referred to as a *spatial configuration*. Ostensibly a set of rules about how to behave, the concept also implied a particular spatial order, which in turn produced moral categories of people: the "oppressors" and the "oppressed" as well as those called to solidarity with the latter. These moral categories had spatial properties: the "oppressed" were also and especially so because their entitlement to occupy space was contested. Invoking a "Safe Space" therefore meant to invoke a spatial/moral order that affirmed and defended this entitlement by removing whoever stood in the way of it. One could call it a principle of solidarity not just with the most vulnerable actor but specifically with whoever in a given context was the most *spatially* vulnerable. On the one hand, a "Safe Space" configuration reflected the ethical imperative of solidarity with vulnerability discussed in chapter two; on the other hand, it spatialized this imperative by understanding vulnerability specifically as spatial vulnerability, and addressing it through a redistribution of spatial entitlement. "Safe Space" thus resembles the structure of the socio-spatial order implied in Gerrard Winstanley's Garden or Mary Douglas's communitarian home—maximally permeable boundaries (open to "everyone" except those who threatened precisely this openness) are here again combined with an internal rule set designed to minimize hierarchy and maximize fairness in resource distribution, with the resource being the space itself. As in Douglas's home, there was a "protohierarchy" implied here, a distinction between those who needed protection and those doing the protecting, but this distinction was fluid and situational in contrast to the fixed hierarchies the practice was intended to counter. At the same time, "Safe Space" as a spatial order was almost by definition contested, and thus had to be constantly reenacted and reaffirmed.

For example, in as far as "Safe Space" policies were formulated—and most of the time practically applied to—gender relations, they had to contend with a certain ambiguous relationship with traditional masculinity. On the one hand, the state of material threat that squatters found themselves in, both in terms of their living arrangements and of their wider political activities, meant that a certain form of reactive macho behavior was common within the "scene." The image of the tough, tool-carrying, wall-scaling, police-fighting "manarchist" was simultaneously an ideal and a source of ridicule, and while women (myself included) criticized this type of behavior, they were at the same time no less apt to exhibit it. Where women did not compete with men was in terms of physical aggression; although many were perfectly capable of fighting, they were notably less inclined to do so. Gendered socialization poses strong prohibitions against physical fighting among girls, and at least some squatter women saw in this a deliberate strategy by the patriarchy to keep women unable to defend themselves. One woman I squatted with told me that as an adolescent, she had trained herself to be able to respond aggressively to a threat: "This guy said he'd teach me to throw a punch, so I punched him. It took a few tries before I could even do it. It was like there was this (invisible) rubber band holding my hand back." Consequently, self-defense trainings especially for women were common features of many social centers; however, I never observed an act of deliberate violence on part of a female squatter.

Where masculine swagger escalated, it would occasionally tip over into serious trouble. There was a small but prominent minority of men whose behavior was characterized by a convergence of a general propensity for violence and objectifying behavior toward women. Most of them had first-hand experience of institutions where this form of aggressive masculinity was fostered, such as the military or the prison system, and the resulting habitus may well have been acquired as a survival strategy. One such man was once described to me as "the human equivalent of a hand grenade: very useful to have around in some cases, but dangerous when you get too close." Implied in this statement is the idea that while these men were certainly valuable assets when it came to defending the boundaries of spaces from attack, they simultaneously made these spaces considerably less safe on the inside. Gavin, for example, went to great lengths to avoid one particular man who had once beat him up in a rage, and was ostensibly relieved when this man eventually went to prison. On another occasion, he explicitly warned me against spending a night in a squat in the presence of a man who had committed a string of sexual assaults. In some squats, men like

this established veritable reigns of terror, by aggressively dominating other men and women alike. Nazima Kadir makes a similar observation about squatters she studied in the Netherlands:

> Presented with a clear enemy, a determinate external Other such as the state, squatters can easily unite to work together using a well-rehearsed repertoire of tactics to reach their goals. But an internal problem, such as [a violent incident], involving members of this community who make their own claims for inclusion, support and justice, upsets an underlying logic. It proves impossible for squatters to perform "backstage" as the articulate, assertive "front stage" activist who unwaveringly proclaims and acts on one's ideals. The example points to a persistent contradiction between the two faces of squatting, and an unresolved problem in the heart of the squatters' movement for the past forty years. (Kadir 2016: 3)

I certainly agree with this assessment, although I would not necessarily lay the blame for this contradiction solely at the door of the squatters, as if the solution was simply a better implementation of one's proclaimed principles on the "inside" of the movement. The dilemma that violent men posed for the "scene" in some ways echoed the paradoxical nature of the home touched on in chapter three, which reflects a fundamental tension between an idealized haven and a fortress or prison. Squatters had to constantly negotiate this tension, as they were on attempting to build a "home" in the sense of a safe haven, but for precisely this reason, also had to defend themselves against the imposition of the outside world. The presence of violent men in squats was, to a degree, a symptom of this tension. They helped to protect the space, but simultaneously turned it into a little less of a Garden of Eden, and a little more of an internment camp for anyone less physically aggressive than them. While squats were thus ostensibly constructed as "Safe Spaces," they could not entirely escape the opposite of this particular moral order—namely, the spatial-moral order implied in the Hobbesian territorial self. In some cases, these two spatial configurations came into direct conflict.

OF APES AND ANARCHISTS

"Territory" is most often considered a "juridico-political" (Foucault 2007) concept, with links to theories of the state and of political and military power. At its

most basic, however, just like "Safe Space," "territory" can be seen as a spatially enacted configuration of social relationships, (re)producing particular social categories according their own internal logic. As I hope to show in the remainder of this chapter, when a "home" (or a squat) becomes a territory, it therefore begins to act strangely like more familiar renditions of this spatial configuration, such as the gated community or the nation state. The specific spatial order implied in "territory," which I examine below, can thus apply on a number of different scales, reproducing the same type of social categorization across a range of settings. Feminists and postcolonial theorists have emphasized, for example, that the "home" produces gendered and racialized identities by employing a double strategy of internment and exclusion. Feminist critiques tend to focus more strongly on the aspect of internment: on the one hand, the exploitation of women as free domestic labor; on the other hand, the outright domination of some women through intimate partner violence and imprisonment (Young 1997). Postcolonial critiques, on the other hand, have emphasized the aspect of exclusion: here it is a dehumanized and objectified racial "Other" who has to be kept out at all cost (although, should he breach the perimeter, this other as well faces internment). Read together, these two theoretical strands point towards a construction of "home" as the realm of a "territorial self" who exerts "despotic dominion" over those on the inside, while at the same time defending itself against intrusion from the outside. In this way, "territory," like "Safe Space," becomes intelligible as a culturally scripted pattern of symbolically and materially ordering space, which can be transposed across a range of settings.

In the most basic sense, territoriality means "the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area. . . . This delimitation becomes a territory only when its boundaries are used to affect behaviour by controlling access" (Sack 1986: 19). What distinguishes the notion of territory from that of mere space is therefore on the one hand the element of bordering, which involves the interruption of the continuity of space in the shape of a strict demarcation of inside and outside, and the subdivision and rational ordering of the inside. On the other hand, "territory" is an active social form—its maintenance involves effort in the exercise of control over boundaries and internal structure, as territory is always potentially contested. Most importantly, as implied in Robert Sack's definition, "territory" is space delimited for a particular purpose: that of exercising control over others. Territory thus implies social power, not just in the sense of the "tyranny" of Douglas's protohierarchical

collectivism but quite overtly in the sense of hierarchy. The social categories it produces are, on the one hand, "insiders" and "outsiders"; on the other hand, those who control the territory and those who are being controlled. These categories reflect the dual categories of internment and exclusion: insofar as it produces outsiders, it excludes; insofar as it establishes internal hierarchy, it interns the "insiders" under the control of the territorial actor. As a mechanism to distribute spatial entitlement, territory thus works to concentrate this entitlement in the hands of those who control both access as well as internal power relations.

As Sack argues, territorial behavior can be designed to benefit those controlled (for example, a parent limiting the spatial range of a child to keep it safe), or to harm them (such as an abusive spouse locking in their victim). But whether benign or malevolent, by turning on the factor of control over access, territoriality crucially involves the production of space as a scarce resource, and thus has the potential to engender competition between territorial actors. In nonhuman animals, this is fairly uncontroversial. Rank in many species is crucially negotiated through controlling access to territory. In chimpanzees, for example, dominant individuals not only pick the most favorable feeding and resting spots (and hold onto them), they also control the spatial position of subordinates through body language, vocalization, and, where territorial claims are challenged, physical aggression, thus banishing lower-ranking animals to the social and spatial periphery of the group (Murray, Mane, and Pusey 2007). But territorial control not only means limiting access to specific places, it also means controlling others' ways of traversing space. Where a dominant individual's chosen trajectory from A to B intersects with that of a subordinate, the dominant will claim his right to keep moving in a straight line, while it falls upon the subordinate to negotiate a detour in order to avoid a collision followed by chastisement. The lower the rank, therefore, the more an animal must adapt the position of his body in space relative to that of more powerful individuals, which also involves anticipating their future movements to plan his own. Dominant animals thus function somewhat like black holes of social power: their very presence warps and bends the spatial and temporal trajectories of subordinates, like centers of gravity in the fabric of social space-time.

Human primates, in contrast, are entangled in complex symbolic systems that appear to have far removed them from the physically enacted dominance hierarchies of other species. It would certainly be a mistake to reduce human territoriality to mere animal instinct, or to imply that underneath the cultural "fluff," we are just apes jockeying for rank (some of us are opposed to hierarchy,

after all). As anthropologists have remarked, however, our capacity to produce "culture" as a transcendental system of meaning should also not be taken to imply that we have entirely left these forms of interaction behind (Bloch 2008). Maurice Bloch argues that in humans, the remnants of dominance hierarchies (what he calls the "transactional social") coexist with enduring cultural "superstructures" (the "transcendental social") and there is no reason to assume that one takes precedence over the other. There is equally no reason to assume, however, that these domains should be entirely separate, and that recurring patterns of dominance and subordination would therefore not also find expression on a symbolic level, or conversely, that symbolic power relations would not also impact the relationship between individual bodies. This is especially true when it comes to the ordering of space according to status. It is, for example, widely accepted among *Homo sapiens* that the highest-ranking individual in any social context should be assigned the most favorable sitting spot. A human towering over others on a throne, or in the executive chair at the head of the boardroom table, affirms social status as effectively as any chimpanzee's insistence on occupying the tallest rock around.

Human ways of negotiating such spatial assignments among themselves are, at a basic bodily level, equally similar to those of nonhuman animals: eye contact oftentimes establishes whether or not a claim to control over space will be made or contested (for example, two drivers gauging each other's willingness to give way at a crossing), and where it is, bodily posturing and vocalization ("get out of my way") are used to pull rank. If one went out in Bristol city center on a Friday or Saturday night one could observe a ritual that can be found in similar form in many places: mostly young men, under the influence of copious amounts of alcohol, wander around looking for a physical confrontation. One very effective strategy of finding it consists in picking a potential opponent, walking into his path, and then keep walking as if his body was not there, so that they bump into each other. This ritual has the function of establishing rank by challenging the opponent's spatial position. It drives home the message that the opponent better watch where he puts his body since a more dominant male demands the right of way. As with all self-respecting primates, the gesture is reliably understood as a challenge, and if accepted, the combatants would keep pounding at each other until the police arrived.

These territorial displays on a bodily level are not coincidentally also rituals of masculinity on a symbolic level, and they therefore illustrate how gendered bodies are, in one sense, constructed in terms of territoriality. In so far as

territoriality establishes rank, and men, on the whole, socially rank higher than women, cultural ideas of masculinity have often involved elements of territorial dominance. The ritual of "walking into" another man also worked as an insult because it rested on the assumption that a "real man" should be capable of defending his turf, first and foremost that of his own body. As Laura Brace (1997: 144) notes, masculinity is inherently bound up with the idea of sovereign control over the territory of the body, and male anxiety about boundary loss and invasion therefore finds its expression in homophobic fears of potential penetration. Women, on the other hand, were traditionally seen not so much as territorial actors than as territories—their bodies are constructed as uninhabited spaces, hollow and quite literally full of holes, and thus fit to be penetrated, invaded, and colonized. While men occupy space, women thus are occupied, and quite frequently, they have to defend their inhabitation of their bodies against the "rights" of other residents, such as unborn fetuses. Bloch's cavalier assertion that "we" go "in and out of each other's bodies . . . like in birth and sex" (Bloch 2013) therefore only tells half the truth: it is *women's* bodies that are here frequented like hotels, and it is precisely this presumed permeability and hollowness that makes a body feminized. Gay males, then, are demeaned because of the suspicion that the boundaries of their bodies might be equally permeable, putting them closer to women than to "real men," and thus assigning them a lower social status.

At the same time, men determine women's position in, and trajectory through, space in myriads of different ways, and their culturally scripted way of spatial relating is designed to not only establish but also reinforce dominance hierarchies. This concerns the already discussed fixation of female bodies within the space of the "home," but also the gendering of bodies through their positioning in public spaces. Many of the forms of "everyday sexism" that have become the subject of public debate in recent years affect women's spatial existence; the neologism "manspreading," for example, refers to the phenomenon of men routinely taking up more space on public transport than their bodies require, thus limiting women's access to seats. Another neologism, "manslamming," has been coined to describe the observation that once women deliberately stop moving out of men's way in public, inevitable collisions ensue. Just as the dominant individuals among other primates expect to move from A to B in a straight line, so too do human men, and women must therefore adjust their trajectory or "slam" into them. Finally, ubiquitous forms of gendered violence such as street harassment and the ever-present threat of sexual assault mean that women must plan their movements through space according to the presence of

potentially dangerous male bodies. Men thus become "centers of social gravity" warping women's experience of space and time, not so much because "space is gendered" as has often been said (see, for example, Massey 2013) but because gender, as a social hierarchy, is also and especially spatially produced.

Gendered identities are thus spatially constructed in a double sense: in the sense of gendered bodies being constructed *as* particular kinds of spaces, and in the sense of the kind of position and trajectory assigned to them *within* larger spatial configurations. What goes for gender equally goes for "race," although ideologically speaking a very different figure. A central element of racializing bodies is not only to spatially segregate them from the dominant group but to simultaneously assign them a less desirable and thus subordinate spatial position, be it at the back of the bus or in the "ghetto." In gendering and racializing bodies, physically enacted dominance hierarchies therefore coincide with cultural narratives of unequal symbolic value, and both work to reinforce one another. Gender and "race" as particular instances of social categorization here point to an underlying principle: our cultural forms are never wholly divorced from our existence as embodied animals, also and especially when it comes to the fundamental need of humans for space. Space is thus intimately connected to power precisely because in controlling access, territorial actors also control a resource essential to physical survival. This becomes especially apparent in situations where the transcendental layer of culture recedes and leaves the body physically and symbolically exposed, such as in the case of homeless people.

Tanya Luhrmann (2008) observes that in the widespread absence of protection through the state, the homeless often adopt a certain aggressive style of interaction in order to protect themselves from assault. She compares this to

> the "code of honour" commonly found among nomadic peoples, pastoralists and ranchers . . . [who], because they are isolated . . . have few others to help to defend them. In such poorly policed settings, physical survival may depend upon an ability to defend one's turf so aggressively . . . that the trouble slinks away. (Lurhmann 2008: 3)

She therefore argues that homeless people employ the strategy Elijah Anderson (1999, 2002) has notoriously called the "code of the street"[3]—that

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3. Anderson's concept of a "code of the street" has been widely criticized, notably by Loïc Wacquant, since it at least in part appears to attribute the emergence of violent

is, a pattern of behavior that is designed to command respect by aggressively intimidating anyone who could potentially pose a threat. Crucially, this behavior is necessitated in large part by the absence of social institutions designed to intervene on behalf of the attacked, such as the state, the police, or the legal system, be it because such institutions do not exist, as for the pastoralist, or because individuals have no access to them, as for Anderson's inner city dwellers, or for the homeless. Luhrmann frames this behavior in somewhat individualistic terms, as she locates these interactions on the level Bloch would call the "transcendental social." This does not mean, however, that transcendental categories—such as being a stranger or being a woman—do not play a part in whose territory is assumed to be invadable. What is noteworthy about this imagery is its striking hostility that leaves no room for hospitality or a joining of forces.

Robert Desjarlais (1997) makes a similar observation, quoting one of his homeless respondents as saying: "Nobody gives a damn about me, so I don't give a damn about nobody." Desjarlais adds, "so the conduct of the streets was generally conditioned by persistent secondness and a dyadic, unsympathetic, 'me-against-the world' morality" (1997: 132). "Secondness" here refers to Charles Peirce's suggestion of three ontological categories, termed "firstness, secondness, and thirdness." Firstness "signifies a quality in itself, in its original state, before it is thought of, differentiated, verbalized, or defined in contrast to something else" (Desjarlais 1997: 129). Secondness refers to a relation between two categories, characterized by a "dyadic tension and opposition, of brute and factual contrast, of seconds striking against the senses" (1997: 129). Thirdness, then, is the quality of relationality, of in-betweenness, of mediation. As Dejarlais argues, the lives of homeless people are characterized primarily by secondness, as the brute-force facts of life without shelter—the cold, violence, chaos—impose themselves on their experience, and the homeless shelter itself lends only insufficient protection. Some residents therefore develop strategies to escape this state into scarce experiences of firstness, such as religious practice or simple flights of fancy. What they remain deprived of is the quality of thirdness or mediation, which would allow them to experience themselves as in interaction and relationship with their surroundings. This sphere of relationality, however,

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interactions among poor, black residents of a US inner city area to essentially a moral failure on their part (see Wacquant 2002: 1486). Anderson replies that the "moral failure" is not of his own judgment, but of that of his respondents, and the "code" therefore is a relevant category of their own understanding (E. Anderson 2002).

for Peirce, is precisely the realm of the moral, as "thirdness is moral per se" (1997: 130). Peirce himself admits to being influenced by Hegel (Peirce 2012), and so—to close a wide circle—one could ultimately say that what Desjarlais is describing is the breakdown of the integrative process of mediation between self and other that Axel Honneth calls "recognition." The homeless subject is misrecognized—nobody gives a damn about him—and so to him, to misrecognize in turn seems only fair.

In the absence of recognition, "the street" thus becomes shorthand for the Hobbesian "existential nightmare" (Prokhovnik 1996: 171) that puts the territorial self into a position of such precarity that it "cannot distinguish between the wicked and the righteous" (Brace 1997: 140) since every mistake might come at a cost to life and limb. It must therefore assume that all others are possessed of a "will to hurt" (1997: 142) and in order to preempt attack, must prominently exhibit such a will itself. Thomas Hobbes himself emphasizes the importance of hierarchy for this conception, as the self "has to legitimate itself in relation to others through notions of honour and glory which consist in comparison" (1994: 141) and thus it "will challenge others to acknowledge his superiority and require them to honour and respect him" (1994: 142). But while in Anderson, this type of territoriality is clearly bound up with dominant ideas of masculinity, Luhrmann shows that in the context of street homelessness, women are no less likely to engage in aggressive territorial posturing to signal that literal or figurative invasion will be met with violence. The association of this behavior with "honor" again points to the association of territoriality and social status: honorable is he who successfully defends his turf, and dishonored is he whose territory—his land or his body—has been invaded and taken over. It should therefore be no surprise that homeless women, in the absence of "Safe Spaces," aspire to a social reputation of impenetrability akin to that of men.

The construction of "Safe Spaces" in the squatting scene was, in a number of ways, a response to this "existential nightmare." First and foremost, it replaced the absent protection of the state with protection through a "community of value," based on a moral notion of solidarity in the light of shared vulnerability. In enforcing rules that essentially prohibited the establishment of physical or symbolic dominance hierarchies (not always successfully, but *qua* intention), they preempted the necessity for individuals to assert themselves against territorial challenge by establishing a *collective* territorial regime of an orderly inside and defensible boundaries. In this sense, "Safe Space" policies paradoxically had the effect of turning squats into something like diminutive versions of the territorial

state—they bundled individual territorial claims into a collective venture, and thus channeled aggressive energy away from competition on the inside, and into the defense against the outside. The difference lay mostly in the nature of the internal ordering mechanism: where squats actively worked to undermine the emergence of internal hierarchies, the state most often does the opposite.

The state, of course, consists of a multitude of complex layers of social relations, of which the basic logic of territoriality is just one. In as far as the state involves a collective form of territorial practice, however, one of its central legitimizing claims is that it serves as the idealized expression of the collective territorial interests of its citizens. In the same way as it ensures individual claims to property, it also works to assure individual entitlements to space through mutual contractual obligation, on the understanding that all participants must take part in defending the outer boundary. Seen from the outside, such states can thus often be observed to behave much like individual territorial selves, defending their turf through aggressive posturing (one need only consider the current global trend of building fortified walls to keep immigrants out), while on the inside, a more or less functional ordering regime ensures that every body is in its proper place.[4] Just as the space of the "home" produces hierarchically organized social identities though territorial practices, so too does the space of the state, by categorically delimiting the "insiders" from the "outsiders," and keeping the inside in order and the outside at bay.

For our crew, this became a practical problem when Tariq, our previous (presumed undocumented) squatmate, turned up at the door of the nursery one evening, claiming to have nowhere to go. Since the nursery was spacious enough, he was invited to move in, but it soon emerged that he had since developed a cocaine habit, and the drug caused him (or gave him license to) systematically mistreat those around him. To the particular chagrin of the female squatters, he appeared to have decided that it was women's role to keep the house clean, cook for him, and generally wait on his whim, which he noisily and aggressively demanded. This situation persisted for a few weeks, until one day Tariq crossed the line with a female squatter by transgressing on the space of her body without consent, and the "Safe Space" policy was officially invoked.

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4.   In most European countries (but not the United Kingdom) the state for example insists on being informed of its inhabitants' precise whereabouts at all times, enforced through the obligation to register one's address with the police or another agency.

Tariq was summoned to a house meeting (a full assembly, reflecting the gravity of the situation), confronted with his behavior, and, since no promise of betterment was forthcoming, was asked to remove himself from the squat while being offered an alternative place to sleep.

Tariq did not take well to this (in his view) unjust and despotic decision. He stomped back to his room in a flurry of anger, locked himself in, and as the afternoon progressed, drank himself into a rage and periodically stepped outside his door to shout abuse at everyone present. As it had become fairly obvious that he would not leave voluntarily, squatters from nearby houses were summoned to assist with the eviction. Around nightfall, the situation had escalated to Tariq angrily pacing up and down the corridor, brandishing an axe, and threatening to kill anyone who dared come near him. At the other end of the building, a small mob of twenty squatters armed with assorted blunt objects huddled in a corner, trying to summon the courage to disarm him. Once in a while, one of the group would venture across the yard to try and talk sense into Tariq, only to come back unharmed but without result.

The standoff lasted until finally Joe, more sensitive to the threat of violence than others, lost his nerve and phoned for the police. As he announced their imminent arrival, a shower of abuse rained on him from both sides of the battlefield. "You fucking idiot," someone shouted, "Tariq is illegal." In an instant, the weapons vanished on both sides, and when the police rang the doorbell a few minutes later, they encountered a scene of blissful tranquility as squatters sat around a table drinking tea. The police in general had no particular interest in squatter's internal conflicts, and so just grumbled something about wasting their time and climbed back into their vehicle. During their short appearance, someone had thankfully hidden Tariq's axe out of sight, and thus disarmed, he realized his battle was lost. Presumably both placated and intimidated by his narrow escape from the law, he packed his things and was eventually assisted in carrying his belongings to a friend's house nearby.

This incident illustrates how different spatial configurations can overlay each other in a single physical space, and how they can quickly change register from the enactment of a "Safe Space" to that of a "territory," and back again. Here, the first to emerge as a territorial actor was Tariq: his attempts to control those inside the space so they would comply with his demands coincided with his bid to exert control over the spaces of women's bodies. This resulted in the invocation of a "Safe Space" pattern and the moral order implied in it: in order to ensure equal access to the space of the squat for all, and to protect those

who were most spatially vulnerable (in this case, women), the person who challenged this order had to be removed. Inherent in this collective decision was a moment of what Honneth calls "recognition"—the acknowledgment of the women's vulnerability to an assault on their physical and psychic integrity—and "solidarity," as the lived affirmation that this vulnerability should be protected. Paradoxically, however, by invoking the principles of "Safe Space" the remainder of the crew simultaneously constituted itself as another territorial actor, enforcing its entitlement to the space over Tariq's. By violating the terms of the "Safe Space," Tariq had thus turned into a "spatial undesirable" and was therefore first brought under the control of those who controlled the territory (interned) and then thrown out (excluded).

At the same time, the situation shows how spatial configurations can simultaneously exist and interact on a number of scales. The territorial conflict inside the nursery was interrupted by the arrival of a more powerful territorial actor—namely, the state in the shape of the police. The squatters immediately understood that the state here operated on the basis of a territorial moral order, and that Tariq's undocumented status would therefore result in him being interned and then expelled as a territorial outsider to the nation state. Spontaneously and without much debate, the squat therefore reverted to "Safe Space" mode, and sided with the one who in this configuration was the most spatially vulnerable, only this time it was Tariq who was thus in need of protection vis-à-vis the state. Again, this can be framed in terms of recognition and solidarity, but recognition was not awarded at random: it extended to whoever in the moment was at risk of being misrecognized—that is to say, of having their embodied personhood violated. Finally, once the police were gone, the squat effortlessly switched register once again, to reestablish the original "Safe Space" and remove Tariq to protect the women.

In this interaction, the logic of "Safe Space" and the logic of territory thus came into direct conflict, as both patterns were alternately imposed on the space of the squat in short order. Depending on which paradigm dominated, individual actors such as Tariq thus occupied different and contradictory moral categories: from a territorial aggressor threatening the spatial entitlement of others, he transformed into the spatially vulnerable party in need of protection, and back again. At the same time, these pattern switches involved jumps in scale. Depending on how the relevant space was defined, the pattern was scaled up to include the territory of the state, or down to only include the inside of the squat. Moreover, the enactment of the pattern was strangely hybrid: in order

to establish the moral order of a "Safe Space," squatters had to paradoxically act in a territorial fashion. This paradox reflects the same contradiction that plagued squats more generally: despite their egalitarian and open principles, they were still surrounded by a hostile outside that made defense a de facto necessity, and were thus always suspended in a precarious balance between the two types of symbolic order. It should therefore not particularly surprise that, as Kadir writes: "the squatter's movement, which defines itself primarily as anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian, is profoundly structured by the unresolved and perpetual contradiction between both public disavowal and simultaneous maintenance of hierarchy and authority within the movement" (2016: 4). What is more surprising is that on numerous occasions, the movement actually managed, albeit temporarily, to transcend this state of affairs. Kadir certainly mounts her critique from the perspective of one who, with the appropriate fury, calls upon her associates to walk their grandiose talk, and to aim as high as possible in overcoming the immanent contradictions plaguing their movement. In my view, however, while the transcendent goal of overcoming hierarchy once and for all is certainly worthwhile, we should not lose sight of the partial, fleeting, and ephemeral moments of transcendence emerging from necessarily immanent relations. It is in these fleeting moments, rather than in fixed and durable social structures, that the promise of an ethics of solidarity is made into a world.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

"You have got to be kidding me."

I have just walked through the door of the HUB for the first time, turning a corner to the right and stepping into the large front room that until recently used to serve as a drop-in center for the homeless. In the far corner, behind the bulwark of desks that separated the service providers from the service users, is a group of squatters crowding around a screen. On it I can see my own face.

"Check this out!" Tom spins around on his swivel chair and points to the camera in the ceiling that transmits my image. "We have CCTV!"

"So I see," I say, not wholly sharing his enthusiasm, "why is it still on?"

"We were going to turn it off, but look, it is pretty cool."

Joe pushes a button on the switchboard below the screen and instead of me it now shows a picture of the street outside at an awkward angle. At the push of a joystick, the camera swings around to display a 180-degree panorama view of the outside world.

"No one's gonna creep up on us now!" Tom announces. He seems unusually pleased.

"Can anyone else see us?"

"Don't think so. If we can turn off the inside cameras, we can keep the outside one for security."

"Starting right now," Joe grins. He has homed in on two figures leisurely strolling down the road, giving the house a once-over and coming to a halt at our front door. The camera follows them, and with the push of a button Joe zooms in on two familiar faces. They belong to Pete and Jim, two squatters from across town, presumably here to check out our new premises.

Sam is already at the door and opens it before they have an opportunity to knock. The befuddlement on their faces causes hilarity inside. Every squatter knows to never, ever open the door without asking who is outside—after all, if it is the landlord, all he has to do is to walk through the door to make the squatter's temporary claim to posses-sion null and void. The confusion clears as the two walk into the room and get a look at our technology.

"What the fuck!" Pete exclaims "Turn that thing off! It's evil."

"But fun." Tom has taken the controller again and switched to inside view. On the screen is a close-up of Pete's outraged face.

Pete pulls up his hood and tries to disappear into his clothing, while Tom is doing his best to follow him with the camera. Suddenly shouts of "car, car, car!!" prompt him to switch back to outside. A silver BMW—a potential landlord car—has pulled up, and for a minute there is mayhem in the HUB. But the car only waits for the metal

doors to the next property to swing open; it disappears into a parking garage while the camera follows. False alarm.

"Can I have a go?" asks Pete.

Ten minutes later he is perched in the swivel chair, trying to focus the camera on passersby at the far end of the cul-de-sac, and engaged in lively speculation with the others as to what said pedestrians might be up to: "That one is selling"; "Naah, he's just hanging out"; "Bollocks, look at him, definitely selling!"

Tom strolls over and hands me a beer. "Oh shit," he says with a grin, "looks like we've created a monster."

I'm not sure I'm going to argue.

Total places

The building sat nestled in the far corner of a quiet cul-de-sac in St Pauls, sporting a handsome red brick façade with a purple shop front such as one would expect of the premises of a solicitor or architect. Historically known as "Schooner House," the place had until the winter of 2010 accommodated the "HUB," a drop-in service for homeless people, guided, per its own assessment, by a "holistic" approach that considered the numerous problems homeless people experience, in addition to their mere homelessness.[1] Just after Christmas, word on the street was that the imminent closure of the center constituted only the first step in the wave of government cuts to welfare that the newly elected coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats[2] had announced the previous year. Reducing the budget deficit had already been on the agenda of the previous New Labour government, but the financial crash of 2008 meant that the Coalition had a considerably easier discursive field to play in justifying more, faster, and harsher cuts. Squatters, who were on the whole

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1. "A multi-agency advice centre / one-stop-shop and outreach project for single homeless people that coordinates service provision and planning concerning housing, employment, social benefits, social services, health, training agencies and departments from public, voluntary and private sector agencies" (former HUB website; Accessed October 2013, now offline).

2. It was called a coalition, although in many ways "hostage situation" would have been a more appropriate term, as the Liberal Democrats were to discover at the next general election.

more avid consumers of news media than most university students I have met, were keenly aware that the combination of a global financial crisis with a Tory government could only mean trouble for people such as themselves. It was no secret that, as the Institute for Fiscal Studies put it, the proposed cuts would "on average . . . hit the poorest households more than those in the upper-middle of the income distribution in cash, let alone percentage, terms" (Hodkinson and Robbins 2013: 58). For the squatters, the closure of the HUB represented the first tangible sign that "the cuts" had indeed arrived in Bristol. Although the council officially cited a series of violent attacks on staff as the reason to shut down the center, previous employees indicated that this was merely a guise for the enormous restructuring process of the social services landscape that was under way. The real reason for the closure was never established beyond all doubt,[3] but if the HUB's end was not a direct result of the cuts, then it certainly became a symbol of the resistance against them. In the early weeks of 2011, the following press release landed on the desks of local journalists:

The Hub Drop-In centre re-opened by Squatters

The Hub Drop-In Centre for the Homeless, in Brunswick Square, Stokes Croft, has been re-opened by a group of squatters this week. The group are providing advice on housing and squatting, hot drinks and free English classes for the homeless.

The drop-in centre closed down three weeks ago due to funding cuts to services for the homeless, though the Council cite problems with violence and threats to staff as the official reason. Disgruntled ex-employees contacted local housing action group BHAM (Bristol Housing Action Movement) regarding the closure and helped the group to enter the building last week. The group of formerly homeless men and women took up residence on the top floor of the building and decided to re-open the centre in protest against the massive cuts to service for the homeless.

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3.   A consultation document by Bristol City Council from October 2011 states that "the council needs to save 20%" in the commissioning of Homelessness Prevention High Support Services. The same report states that the number of accommodation spaces has had to be reduced through the consultation from 521 to 436 due to the low standard of existing accommodation; see part 4 of this chapter.

Housing benefit has been cut by £1.8 billion, affecting over 83,180 households in the South West and leaving 200 families homeless over the Christmas period. Bristol City Council is cutting funding to sheltered housing and homeless services by 20%. The result is that thousands of vulnerable Bristolians will be left without access to emergency accommodation or advice on how to cope with homelessness, and its relation with debt, unemployment, poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation and other social problems.

Homeless figures have grown by 10% in the West in the last year and house repossessions have tripled in the last three year. The figures are forecast to rise as recession deepens and many newly homeless are left with nowhere to turn but criminal gangs and fundamentalist groups such as the Evangelical Crisis Ministries. Those most at risk are single young people without children and council tenants who may now be evicted from homes they thought they would be able to keep for life.

The squatters maintain that politicians have chosen an easy target who may be slow to react to attacks on welfare. However, like the students, the homeless and those threatened with repossession and rising rents will fight back. This is just the beginning.

The drop-in centre is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Anyone is welcome for advice, support or a cup of tea.

http://www.crisis.org.uk/pressreleases.php/411/housing-benefit-cuts-will-cause-homelessness-surge-in-south-west
http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bristol/hi/people_and_places/newsid_9148000/9148921.stm
http://www.bristolwired.co.uk/news.php/92641-Homelessness-figures-on-the-rise-in-Wales
http://www.jackbristol.com/newscentre/bristols-news/two-hundred-bristol-families-homeless-this-christmas--5286

I first walked into Schooner House the morning after it was occupied, to encounter the somewhat bizarre situation documented at the beginning of this chapter. The architectural arrangement of the building was a striking example of how the territorial logic of "security" has been taken up by architects and planners to structure the built environment, epitomized in what Oscar Newman (1972) has popularized under the title "Defensible Space." Newman argues that particular ways of organizing the material environment can serve to enhance security for residents and "design out crime,"[4] making explicit reference to "territoriality" in order to argue that a sense of territorial ownership is at the root of people's willingness to take responsibility for their "patch" (Minton 2009, 2012). Architectural design, according to this view, can not only serve to produce such a sense of ownership, it can also help to stop crime by enabling surveillance and social control, and by visibly excluding undesirable others through both aesthetics and security features such as gates and fences. Defensible Space can thus be seen as another instance of what I have called a territorial spatial configuration—a hierarchically ordered and strictly controlled inside here once again corresponds with a strict delimiting from a "dangerous" outside, thus producing spatially organized, morally loaded categories of people. Had the Hobbesian "territorial self" commissioned an architect, Newman would have been the candidate of choice.

The HUB was arranged in a way that reflected all the key features of a Defensible Space architecture. The open plan ground floor area was cut in two halves by a wall of desks, which had once formed the material "front line" on which the representatives of the welfare system had encountered their charges. The notion of a "front line" (as implied in the term "frontline worker") invokes an imagery of war, in which servants of the state throw themselves into deadly trenches to defend the boundary between the safe hinterland and enemy territory. As if to emphasize this reading, the desks that divided the battlefield were set up in little compartments, and on the social service worker's side, each was fitted with a panic button that was directly wired up to the police. On one side of the room, there was a row of small cell-like rooms with secure doors, presumably for private conversations, and all doors had heavy code locks. The entire inside of the space was fitted with cameras, and the CCTV system was, as we have seen, fully operational. In addition to giving those who were in control of

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4.   In the United Kingdom, this approach has become popular under the title "Secured by Design" (Minton 2009: 72).

this space full control over access, it thus also ordered the inside in a way that produced a moral hierarchy, which coincided with the degree of control over the space.

Territorial architectures such as this have frequently been discussed in terms of Foucauldian "technologies of power," serving to produce docile bodies through discipline, control, and surveillance (Desjarlais 1997: 30). This production involves both a social element, that of observation, and a material element, that of producing physical structures that position bodies in such a way that they become observable. Jean Calterone Williams argues, for example, that the spatial structure of homeless shelters is produced in a way that allows social workers to intimately "know" their clients through a range of surveillance techniques, and thus serves to construct the homeless person not as somebody who has a problem, but somebody who *is* a problem (1996: 81).[5] Williams argues that the institutional task of "repairing" the homeless person (as opposed to changing the social order) is designed to engender individualizing and blaming attitudes among social workers. These find their material reflection in architectural arrangements that attempt to fix the homeless in space, and remove their personal shortcomings by means of an ever tighter mesh of social control. Inherent in this view is the notion of constructing territorial hierarchy through controlling access to space; in literally and figuratively granting the homeless person no place to hide, the social worker (or more precisely, the disciplinary apparatus the social worker represents) has simultaneously affirmed their subordinate position

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5.   As a former social services worker, I am all too familiar with the notorious "double mandate" that makes the "helping profession" equally accountable to its clients and to the state (or, increasingly, to the market), which in practice demands a level of double-think that I have found myself unable to sustain. At the same time, however, I am somewhat sympathetic to a profession that, by and large, is sent to the trenches of class warfare without any adequate means of addressing the problems that it is supposed to solve. Social workers are called upon to administrate the most desperate and destitute, to hand out or deny subsistence levels of material help, grant physical shelter or not, and generally give or withhold necessary means of survival from parts of the population whose physical and psychological survival is not guaranteed. As a result, it is often these workers who are first to feel the rage that desperation lends, when rules and regulations not of their own making compel them to deny access to essential services. While architectures such as that of the HUB certainly reflect an impetus to control and contain the poor, they equally reflect the fear of a profession that (despite its continuous and futile effort at playing by its own rules) knows full well that no amount of control can prevent it from occasionally bearing the brunt of client's discontent with the system it represents.

in the social order. Surveillance technologies are among the chief weapons in this disciplinary war, not only in social service institutions, but also in public space:

> Practices which restrict the use of urban space are targeted at a variety of street users, which are considered "undesirable" in public space. Their presence, or their activity, is seen as constituting a danger, or a disturbance of the normal activities for which public spaces are intended, or they are seen as contradicting the images and symbols of those spaces. (Tosi 2007: 226)

Such "disturbances" can include busking, sleeping, cooking, or begging, or any other aspect of personal life that the street homeless are forced to conduct in public, such as attending to personal hygiene.[6] In addition, control and regulation of public space have contributed to the development of a social service sector that is designed to contain the homeless so that they do not "disturb" the dominant vision of the city, rather than to combat homelessness. This has led to an increase in measures to remove the homeless from public space and subject them to the "normalization regimes" of social services (Tosi 2007: 226; see also Susser 1996), or increasingly, to simply round them up and ship them out of town (see, for example, Beier and Ocobock 2008).[7] While homeless persons are thus on the one hand denied a legitimate claim to occupy space, on the other hand, their spatial whereabouts are tightly controlled and policed, legitimized by their construction as alien and "dangerous" elements. Public space, just like the space of the home, can thus be organized as a territorial spatial configuration: the homeless are construed as outsiders who have to be excluded, and simultaneously as insiders who occupy a subordinate position in the internal hierarchy and thus have to be subjected to control and potentially internment.

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6.   While, as Wacquant notes, the penalizaton of poverty that characterizes the US context is not as strongly developed in Europe (Wacquant 2001: 409), restrictions on the use of public space through regulation and policing nevertheless affect the homeless in more and different ways than the settled population.

7.   Housing charity Shelter notes that in recent years, a growing number of homeless people in temporary accommodation through the state have been forced to move out of their area—in some cases to the other end of the country—since the level of housing benefit did not cover the "social" rent in the area they had previously lived. http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1176457/2015_07_16_Briefing_Note_-_Nzolameso_vs_Westminster.pdf.

CCTV plays a central role in this construction of a territorial public space. The street homeless cannot, like settled people, escape the continuous presence of an anonymous gaze into the private space of the home, and it thus constitutes an even greater infringement on their privacy.[8] At the same time, as politically literate people, most squatters hated CCTV with a passion simply because for them it represented the all-seeing eye of capital and the state, the very power structures that their struggles were set up against. Consequently, the scene at the beginning of this chapter—squatters reacting with horror and repulsion to the CCTV equipment—repeated itself regularly over the first few days of the HUB occupation whenever new visitors first caught sight of the technology. Almost without fail, however, this rejection quickly turned into its opposite when they realized that the equipment was now in their hands. Michel Foucault's saying— "visibility is a trap"—here worked in reverse; the squatters were entrapped by the fascination of a vision of the world from behind a camera that was usually pointed at them in a hostile manner. They had gone from being the observed to being the observers, and while it would be too much to say that they participated in disciplinary power (seeing as they usually hoped the public would misbehave to make their viewing more interesting), some seemed to thoroughly enjoy the possibilities of watching others without their knowledge. The amount of public life in the cul-de-sac was limited, but in time, regularities were observed: who lived where, who visited, who dumped their trash, who hid their drugs, and who picked them up. Stories were spun about the locals based on the flimsiest of observations, and speculation about people's relationships ensued. As an anthropologist, I was in a very bad position to raise moral objections.

When the fascination with the CCTV finally faded, work began on restructuring the inner space of Schooner House. The desks were dismantled and from their parts, the squatters constructed small benches and tables, arranged in a number of circles across the room. A few donated sofas complemented the café-like arrangement, and the walls had been painted a bright red color that somewhat clashed with the turquoise linoleum floor. In front of the little kitchen was

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8.   As for other users of public space, surveillance has the effect of causing the homeless to at all times behave as if they were being watched and thus enforces certain types of self-regulation: "A real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation. . . . He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribed in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (Foucault 1977: 202).

a long bar that served tea and coffee, and there was a table with brochures of other services, political literature, flyers, and the ubiquitous "Squatters Handbook," a booklet published by the London-based Advisory Service for Squatters (2009), which contained a comprehensive collection of legal and practical tips for new arrivals to the "scene." The result of the refurbishment resembled a very badly decorated living room, but the difference to the initial institutional architecture was immediately obvious. The way the space was ordered encouraged sitting comfortably in small circles without barriers, and although there were signs on the wall saying "no drugs, no alcohol, no abuse," these were consensually decided rules that applied to the occupiers as much as any visitors. In reordering the space, the squatters had thus materially created the conditions of possibility for people to encounter one another not as opponents in an institutional war but as equal allies in a struggle against displacement. It was not surprising that the order they established resembled what was implied in "Safe Spaces" as well as in Mary Douglas's communitarian home and Gerrard Winstanley's Garden: in ordering the space in such a way that it was maximally accessible by all and removing internal structures promoting a hierarchy of spatial entitlements, they had once again asserted the implicit ethical principles of squatting against the previous territorial order.

Authors such as Richard Titmuss (1950) and Anna Minton (2009) have pointed out that there is an observable connection between the absence of "social disparagement" and interpersonal trust: where people conceive of each other as equals, or at least aspire to, they also report lower levels of anxiety in public or fear of strangers. Minton points out that "less disparagement" is another word for "respect," not in the sense of deference but rather in the sense of Axel Honneth's "recognition." Conversely, the more social relations are characterized by misrecognition, the greater social mistrust and subjective feelings of danger. Minton argues that this finding may provide an important clue as to the increasing "securitization" of public space in spite of the fact that the actual number of crimes is falling. According to Minton, it is not so much actual violence, but the *potential* violence inherent in unequal social relationships that motivates the building of "gated communities" and the surveillance of public space. It is not difficult to recognize in this again the paranoia of the Hobbesian self who is preoccupied with keeping the "outsiders" out at all costs, in this case, however, reinforced by the fact that the territorial self knows all too well that those outsiders really do have something to complain about. Their demand for equal access to space must therefore somehow be delegitimized. In the case of

homeless people, this is achieved in part by ascribing to them characteristics—"personality disorders," a lack of work ethic, addictions, et cetera—that mark them out as fundamentally different and thus both "explain" and legitimize their exclusion. In the context of capitalist relations, this argumentative figure has the added effect of casting the homeless as so "other" that the settled person can suppress all fear that, but for the grace of the market, it could be them huddling in a doorway next.

In reconstructing physical space to enable less polarized social relations, the occupiers thus also deliberately defied the division that sets the homeless apart from "normal" society. The "formerly homeless men and women" the press release refers to—"formerly," because, in the previously mentioned logic, they had now turned into squatters—countered the previous institutional order of the "front line" by constructing a material spatial arrangement that emphasized that the space belonged to all its occupants equally. Like "Safe Spaces," the internal ordering mechanism of the space thus reflected an anarchist social ontology that divides the world roughly into those who rule and those who are ruled, and commits to a collective practice designed to remedy this imbalance. In terms of the occupier's own understanding, this moral position involved not only the reordering of the internal space but also, at the boundary, a confrontation with power in the shape of who they referred to as the "ruling class." Although many squatters were familiar with both sociological and Marxist understandings of class, "ruling class" here referred not so much to a model of complex social stratification or economic exploitation (although these figured into it), but explicitly to an analysis of social domination. The "ruling class" was constructed in opposition to a subjugated class, which the occupiers saw both themselves and other poor and homeless people belonging to. Who exactly the "ruling class" consisted of in sociological terms was decidedly secondary in this view: the "ruling class" was simply whoever happened to be in power, and in the case of the HUB occupation, this turned out to be the Tories.

THE BIG SOCIETY STRIKES BACK

As a result of the HUB's first press release, news media were calling the local government for a response, and the council therefore saw itself forced to reluctantly engage with the occupation. Utilizing news media as a platform for their campaign thus put the occupiers in a position that is rarely available to

homeless people: that of having a voice in a public discourse. The homeless are not normally asked their opinions on social policy. Their role consists in putting their bodies in the locations assigned to them by social service agencies or police and security, and to show appropriate gratitude that a place is assigned to them at all. For them to ostensibly take up space of their own accord and then write press releases about it was unusual, to say the least. The ensuing confusion on the part of the press and council is reminiscent of the words of political scientist Corey Robin:

> Every once in a while . . . the subordinates of this world contest their fates. They protest their conditions, write letters and petitions, join movements, and make demands. Their goals may be minimal and discrete—better safety guards on factory machines, an end to marital rape—but in voicing them, they raise the specter of a more fundamental change in power. They cease to be servants or supplicants and become agents, speaking and acting on their own behalf. More than the reforms themselves, it is this assertion of agency by the subject class—the appearance of an insistent and independent voice of demand—that vexes their superiors. (Robin 2011: 5)

The council appeared particularly vexed by the fact that despite its quick assurances that the closure of the HUB had nothing to do with spending cuts and everything to do with "saving taxpayers' money,"[9] the squatters had decidedly hit a nerve. Their intervention was situated within a public discourse that at the time was dominated by the figure of the "Big Society," the guiding concept behind the Conservative Party's pre-election campaign, and in 2010, the main ideological vehicle for the coalition's restructuring of the public sector.[10] The Big Society has long since ceased to make headlines under that title, but insofar as it served as packaging for the delivery of the government's radical politically motivated austerity program, its ideological structure can reveal some

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9. *Bristol Post*, February 2, 2011.

10. In specifically discussing Conservative ideology in the following pages, it is not my intention to endorse a different political party, or to imply that the ideological figures I describe are solely limited to Tory politics. However, as the HUB occupation was, on the one hand, a direct response to Tory austerity, and on the other hand actively engaged with the ideological program of the Big Society, the following chapters will specifically focus on British Conservatism as a de-facto actor in the here described ethnographic field.

aspects of what drove this move. The agenda was based on the juxtaposition of a paternalistic Big State with a bottom-up, community-based Big Society, implying an inherent antagonism between the two. The temporal proximity of the campaign to the announcement of severe local government funding cuts caused critics to accuse the government of "cynically attempting to dignify its cuts agenda, by dressing up the withdrawal of support with the language of reinvigorating civic society" (Ed Miliband, quoted in the *Guardian*).[11] But as some commentators have noted, the Big Society was not merely superficial PR icing on a bitter austerity cake. Wrapped in a rhetoric of localism, self-help, and social entrepreneurship, it appeared to be grounded in a peculiar combination of a conservative understanding of "place" and "community" on the one hand, and (neo)liberal market radicalism on the other. In this way, it combined ideas about the organization of space with ideas about morality in a way typical for conservative ideology, and it can thus illuminate the way in which this ideology contained, at its core, the moral structure of a territorial spatial order.

The agenda was framed in emotive language that invoked images of community, local autonomy, and belonging (in the sense of knowing one's place), delivered with a moralistic undertone. In July 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron described his vision in the following words:

> For a long time, the way government has worked—top down, top-heavy, controlling— has frequently had the effect of sapping responsibility, local innovation and civic action. . . . It has turned able, capable individuals into passive recipients of state help with little hope for a better future. It has turned lively communities into dull, soulless clones of one another. So we need to turn government completely on its head. The rule of this government should be this: if it unleashes community engagement, we should do it; if it crushes it, we shouldn't. (Cameron, cited in Kisby 2010)

On the face of things, "unleashing community engagement" and "turning government on its head" was exactly what the HUB occupiers were doing. The irony was not lost on the press, who gave the occupation a fair amount of airtime. I can relate that the squatters were genuinely not planning to stage a satire:

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11. Nicholas Watt, "Cameron promises power for the 'man and woman on the street,'" *Guardian*, July 19, 2010. http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/jul/19/david-cameron-big-society-cuts.

some had real hopes that the ubiquitous Big Society rhetoric would help to sway public opinion in their favor. As a number of commentators have pointed out, the language of "community organizing" and grassroots solidarity the agenda was framed in was designed to invoke associations of traditional working-class solidarity and emancipatory politics (Levitas 2012; North 2011), and the squatters could therefore be forgiven for believing that it was addressed to them. However, the HUB instead became a material example of the ideological nature of the Big Society concept, exemplified in a number of familiar tropes contained in Cameron's above statement. Conservatism as a political ideology frequently plays on an opposition between a state that is generally suspected of a tendency toward authoritarianism, and civil society that is set up as a vital line of defense against it. "The danger of limiting the autonomy of civil society and allowing the state to determine the public good is obvious to conservatives, who emphasise individuals as the source of property and power" (Brace 2004: 150), and in order for the state to not suffocate civic engagement and individual enterprise, intervention therefore has to be kept to a minimum. This translates into "'roll[ing] back the frontiers of the state,' stressing the values of personal responsibility, force of character and independence . . . [since] . . . the agencies of civil society needed to be strengthened so that charity, philanthropy, entrepreneurship and benevolence could flourish" (2004: 153). This, as Cameron's statement sums up, is also essentially the political program the Big Society stood for, thus providing a contemporary repackaging of traditional conservative values, with the added twist that a redefinition of "philanthropy" as "venture philanthropy" (Buckland, Hehenberger, and Hay 2013) now explicitly promised the charitable a return on investment.

The agenda combined two at-first-glance contradictory elements: first, a rhetoric of "localism" that invoked an idealized past; and second, a program of increased marketization of those social services that the political left usually sees as the domain of the welfare state (Teasdale, Alcock, and Smith 2012). This dual character can be seen to reflect a tension between the two major currents within conservatism: its "paternalistic" and its "libertarian" branch (Brace 2004: 152f), or as Simon Teasdale, Pete Alcock, and Graham Smith frame it, between traditional communitarianism (in its current incarnation of "Red Toryism," see also Blond 2010) and market liberalism.[12] What unites the two perspectives is

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12. Other commentators see it as an expression of the necessity to reconcile Conservative and Liberal Democrat agendas within the coalition government (Hodkinson and Robbins 2013: 64).

a convergence of class interests that identifies conservatism—not only that of the British Tories, but of conservative politics in general—as first and foremost an ideology of power:

> These ideas, which occupy the right side of the political spectrum, are forged in battle. They always have been, at least since they first emerged as formal ideologies during the French Revolution, battles between social groups rather than nations; roughly speaking, between those with more power and those with less. . . . For that is what conservatism is: a meditation on—and theoretical rendition of—the felt experience of having power, seeing it threatened, and trying to win it back. (Robin 2011: 4)

For this reason, conservatism in general is strongly associated with members of the traditionally dominant "race" and class groups (Boston 1988) and its "primary fetish"—namely, property—"is firmly attached to inequalities of power and is always about hierarchy" (Brace 2004: 140), also and especially moral hierarchy.

British Conservatism has taken a somewhat different historical trajectory from its Continental counterparts since the transformation from feudalism to modern capitalism. While on the continent, this transition led to protracted confrontations between the bourgeoisie and the ancient regime, resulting in two largely incommensurable ideological positions, in post–civil war England the new elites were gradually incorporated into existing structures of power: "New ideological expressions were consequently grafted on to a set of pre-modern values, permitting an aristocratic ethos to persist in conjunction with the articulation of newer, bourgeois ideas . . . [blending] . . . traditional and modern ideological strands into a coherent and robust defence of class inequality" (Eccleshall 1980: 4). What pulls these two strands together is the combined class interest of propertied (that is, also and especially land-owning) groups, defended by an ideology of morality and virtue that serves to obscure the classed nature of its discourse. In uniting capitalists and the aristocracy, the development of British Conservatism therefore depended on the collaboration of two propertied groups vis-à-vis those that would challenge their respective power: in case of the bourgeois, the working class; and in case of the aristocrat, the peasant. The maintenance of these hierarchies has traditionally been legitimized through a paternalistic view of the poor as morally corrupted and thus unable to govern themselves. As David Cameron phrased it:

Irresponsibility. Selfishness. Behaving as if your choices have no consequences. Children without fathers. Schools without discipline. Reward without effort. Crime without punishment. Rights without responsibilities. Communities without control. Some of the worst aspects of human nature tolerated, indulged—sometimes even incentivized—by a state and its agencies that in parts have become literally de-moralised. (Cameron, cited in Kisby 2010)

These admonishments echo the aristocratic motif within conservatism, which bases its justification of inequality on the prerogative—if not duty—of the morally superior to govern the morally weak. The conservative mind-set equates excellence, also and especially the moral excellence of an "aristocracy of virtue," with a natural right to rule. Conservative discourse has thus traditionally justified government by elites with an otherwise inevitable decline in public morals, assumed to directly lead to the destruction of society (Robin 2011: 12ff.). In its aristocratic current, conservatism is therefore based on a notion of organically grown hierarchy as "natural order," recalling romanticized notions of feudal society, where the lord of the manor is obliged by noblesse to protect and discipline his subjects.[13] This idea of "natural" authority can be traced through the intellectual history of the Big Society back to Edmund Burke, widely held to be the "father of modern conservatism."

Burke's direct influence on Tory policy of the time is far from obscure—he was hailed the "hottest thinker of 2010"[14] and "patron saint of the Big Society"[15] by the media, and the designers of the agenda made liberal use of his terminology.[16] Phillip Blond—whose book *Red Tory* (2010) is a core text of the Big

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13. A romanticized version of this kind of society can be found in the popular British TV series *Downton Abbey*, which was screened from 2010 onward.

14. "Edmund Burke: How did a long-dead Irishman become the hottest thinker of 2010?"
    The Independent, October 1, 2010. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/edmund-burke-how-did-a-long-dead-irishman-become-the-hottest-thinker-of-2010-2094434.html

15. David Marquand in *Prospect* magazine, October 5, 2010. https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/edmund-burke-big-society.

16. Some commentators have attributed the revival of Burke's ideas in the Big Society debate to a "rebranding" of the Conservative Party, who, as a result of the Thatcherite dogma that "there is no such thing as society," had come to be seen as the "nasty party" (see, for example, Jacobs and Manzi 2013; Bale 2008).

Society—adopted the notion of "little platoons" as the smallest units of society, which is a direct citation of Burke. This enthusiasm on part of the architects of the agenda is somewhat curious, insofar as "bottom up government" was certainly the last thing the ardent royalist Burke would have endorsed. Well known for his diatribes against the French Revolution, he warned that the overthrow of the feudal order would create "a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and at the same time, poor and sordid barbarians, destitute of religion, honour, or manly pride" (Burke [1790] 2015). In particular, this danger lay in the fact that a disruption in one set of power relations—here, those between the aristocracy and the rest of the population—would inevitably cause a ripple effect that upset others, thereby overthrowing an entire social order based on social deference and subordination to authority. The revolution would thus

> break all those connexions, natural and civil, that regulate and hold together the community by a chain of subordination; to raise soldiers against their officers; servants against their masters; tradesmen against their customers; artificers against their employers; tenants against their landlords; curates against their bishops; and children against their parents. (Burke [1790] 2015: 22)

Burke thus appears to agree with the anarchist view that all hierarchical social relations share something in common. To him, however, the point was to maintain them. He was particularly troubled by the potential spillover of insurrection from the public to the private realm, because, as Robin notes, conservatism conceives of power relations fundamentally as personal obligations: "The priority of conservative political argument has been the maintenance of private regimes of power—even at the cost of the strength and integrity of the state," and therefore, "no matter how democratic the state, it was imperative that society remain a federation of private dominions, where husbands ruled over wives, masters governed apprentices, and each should know his place and be made to keep it" (2011: 15). This view quite frankly speaks of the need to hierarchically order the territory of the state through the territorial microcosm of "home" and workshop, thereby reproducing hierarchical social categories such as "gender" and "class." As Melinda Cooper (2017) notes, the notion that "neoliberalism" as a conservative ideology is inherently opposed to "family values" is therefore not entirely correct; in fact, the conservative aversion to the state and solidary understandings of "society" is founded on a belief in the inalienable right of men

to rule over the members of their households, unimpinged by the "meddling" of mediating social institutions.

The architects of the Big Society could not have taken their "patron saint's" concerns more seriously, and their austerity program was thus designed to firmly put gendered and classed bodies in their place. On the one hand, as Ruth Levitas (2012) and others have argued, austerity hit women disproportionately harder than men. Cuts to employment in socially necessary care work in favor of "voluntary" care, for example, had a stronger effect on women who held the majority of these jobs. Accompanying cuts to social services for children, the elderly, and the disabled meant that much of the unpaid care work traditionally done by women once again became their responsibility. In combination with the reduction in welfare, especially benefits related to housing and child care,[17] this worked to make women increasingly dependent on a male income, also and especially to put a roof over their head. At the same time, "the cuts" had begun to severely decimate the domestic violence sector, and the remaining women's shelters and charities struggled to continue to provide services, despite the fact that in times of economic crisis, violence against women and girls normally rises (McRobie 2012). In this light, the moral agenda for "broken" Britain distilled from Cameron's speech—fathers, discipline, effort, punishment, responsibilities, control—echoes a return to an authoritarian patriarchal order in which women risk being fettered to male partners they have no option of escaping should they deem it necessary to establish some "discipline." As discussed in chapter three, domestic violence is among the leading causes of homelessness in women, and limiting their options of independent survival often leaves them only the choice between imprisonment in the "home" and the "Hobbesian nightmare" of the street.

On the other hand, the localism of the Big Society fundamentally aimed at the reproduction of class relations (here understood in the anarchist sense of relations between rulers and ruled), epitomized in its aptly titled forerunner program, "Total Place." On the surface a call for a shift of power from central government to local authorities, it was underpinned by the notion

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17. The independent Women's Budged Group calculated that women "face cuts during the period 2010–15 of more than 10% of their disposable income, with single mothers losing 15.6%. Couples with children were shown to be losing 9.7%, while couples without children are losing 4.1%. Women pensioners are losing 12.5% compared with men, who lose 9.5%, and couples, who lose 8.6%." http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/sep/21/spending-cuts-women-report.

that, as David Cameron put it: "The once natural bonds that existed between people, of duty and responsibility, have been replaced with the synthetic bonds of the state: regulation and bureaucracy."[18] This juxtaposition between the "synthetic" state and "natural" bonds cites Burke's view that social institutions first and foremost have to be brought in conformity with the demands of "organic" hierarchy. Society, for him, grows out of the "inns and resting places" (Burke [1790] 2015) of local communities because they are the sites of the reproduction of these "natural" relations (see also Davies and Pill 2012). Dominant and subordinate social categories are thus here produced at a local level through imposing the same symbolic order that governs the space of the state: private territorial regimes can so become "little images of the great country" (Davies and Pill 2012), since both are organized according to the same set of rules.

The modern democratic state is "synthetic" in this view because its (at least ideal) principle of inclusiveness undermines this natural order, by distributing wealth and political power in general, and spatial entitlement in particular, more equally. Society, for the conservative, "exists through authority, and the recognition on this authority require(s) the allegiance to a bond that is not contractual but transcendent" (Scruton 2000: 45). This implies therefore "the rejection of the social contract as a way of understanding the constitution of the state" (Brace 2004: 148) and its replacement with essentially premodern "chains of subordination" in which only the heads of each chain have the moral fortitude to engage in government. In this view, the general democratic participation of workers, women, or people of color (also and especially through the welfare state) can therefore only appear as a temporary aberration (Levitas 2012). The "hottest thinker of 2010" thus also leaves little doubt that democracy can ultimately "only change and pervert the natural order of things," since some parts of society can simply not be trusted in sharing "power, authority, and direction in the management of the state" (Burke [1790] 2015):

> The occupation of an [*sic*] hair-dresser, or of a working tallow- chandler, cannot
> be a matter of honour to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more
> servile employments. Such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression

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18. Owen Bowcott and Patrick Butler, "Localism good, big state bad: Is David Cameron right?" *Guardian*, November 11, 2009. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2009/nov/11/david-cameron-state-localism-society.

from the state; but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted to rule. (Burke [1790] 2015: 51)

Hidden within the localism of the Big Society was therefore an ideological assault not just on the welfare state but also on the democratic and universal principle of the state as such. Faithful to conservative doctrine, it saw the state as overly authoritarian, not so much because it was at risk of descending into fascism, as conservatives have sometimes claimed (for example, Pipes 1999), but because it put artificial fetters on the "natural" dominance of the morally fittest. In relocalizing power from collective democratic participation toward a "federation of private dominions," the Big Society thus placed authoritarianism firmly back where conservatives have always believed it belonged.

Observers have noted that in thus privatizing social power, the agenda simultaneously privatized responsibility for social problems, since in the absence of the mediating facilities of the state, commonly recognized collective issues such as poverty and homelessness must appear as disparate, local phenomena, ultimately owed to personal deficiency or amorality on the part of the poor (Jacobs and Manzi 2013). In shifting responsibility for social problems from the abstract collective of the state to an unaccountable elite of "venture philanthropists" or even the poor themselves, it thus replaced the universal rights principle of the welfare state with a binary moral order of those whose liquidity entitled them to moral judgment in matters of welfare provision, and those whose moral flaws put them in a position to become recipients of the same. We can see in this once again a conflict between two different spatialized moral orders: where the ideal of the welfare state resembles the collectivist ethos of Mary Douglas's home (and in some ways also its "tyrannical" suppression of individual claims to resources), the Big Society and conservatism more generally replaces this order with a territorial pattern that hierarchically orders the inside while producing specific forms of exclusion.

It did so by firmly "localizing" this moral order by means of a spatial order in which bodies are bound to their "inns and resting places" through personal ties, thus creating a categorical distinction between those who belonged within these local communities and those who didn't, creating "natural" insiders and outsiders. By virtue of its hierarchical inner order and strictly demarcated boundaries, the "local community" as defined by the Big Society thus contained the very principle of a territorial spatial configuration. The localism of the Big Society

was designed to do the exact opposite of anarchist "Safe Space" policies, or, for that matter, the ideal welfare state with its principle of redistributive justice: where the latter enacted a spatial order designed to minimize inequality, the Big Society sought to maximize it through the localized enactment of moral hierarchy. If the HUB occupiers were therefore convinced that they were involved in a war of principle with a nemesis called the "ruling class," it would appear that those who fulfilled this role at that point in time saw things in a very similar light.

The enemy within

When the HUB finally opened its doors to the public, the influx of people seeking help and advice was slow at first. But within a couple of days, word had got around, and a number of people dropped by to see what the place had to offer. The eagerness of the occupiers to provide support may have been slightly intimidating to the first few visitors, who were all but picked up, wrapped in a blanket, and forced to drink multiple cups of tea while discussing their problems. The clientele consisted in people who were either at acute risk of becoming homeless, or had already done so and were now trying to find out what options were available to them. The HUB crew had a good understanding of tenancy law and court proceedings regarding evictions—the members had gone through this procedure more times than most people move house in their lives—and in some cases, evictions could be stalled or prevented until the tenant had found new accommodation. In other cases, persons who had not been able to prevent eviction were referred to agencies providing emergency accommodation, and were made aware of places they could get food, clothes, or showers.

Although issues could be discussed in private (in the "cells"), the open plan layout of the main service area facilitated spontaneous group sessions that permitted people to vent to their heart's content. Political debate was always a central aspect of the squatting scene, and the minutiae of welfare reform were

discussed as intensely as any other matters of great personal importance. For the newly homeless, however, these conversations also had the important function of integrating their personal experience of exclusion into a wider social narrative. It is widely recognized in the literature that while previous psychological trauma is one of the main risk factors associated with homelessness (see, for example, Hopper, Bassuk, and Olivet 2010), the experience of homelessness is also in and of itself traumatic: "Like other traumas, [it] may produce a psychological sense of isolation or distrust as well as the actual disruption of social bonds . . . [because] . . . becoming homeless strips people of most of their accustomed social roles" (Goodman, Saxe, and Harvey 1991: 1220). Homelessness has been described as a form of "social death" (Patterson 1982), pointing to the fact that a breakdown of the social affiliations that inform a person's sense of identity is in itself a traumatic experience.[1] For the people who visited the HUB, the opportunity to find that there were others in the same situation, indeed that they could become members of a different section of society rather than being left to their individual struggle for survival, was as least as important as practical help.

An integral part of the advice the HUB offered was, of course, related to squatting. Many newly homeless people were not aware that squatting was, at the time, entirely legal, and they had no idea how to go about it. More experienced squatters from the social environment of the occupation therefore regularly ran information sessions and provided practical support in the form of information about current empties and the lending of tools and muscle power for the new squatter's acquisition of living space. One of the central criticisms the occupiers leveled against the council was that regular homeless services did not make people aware of the possibility of squatting, or actively discouraged them from doing so. From the perspective of housing services, to advocate squatting would presumably have been tantamount to telling people to just go sleep under a bridge. For the squatters, however, pointing out this option was a matter of duty, which they did not hesitate to publicly advertise:

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1.   I will discuss the concept of "social death" at more length in chapter eight.

Squatters: Council understates homeless problem

The squatters occupying the former "HUB" drop in centre for the homeless reject claims that their protest against council spending cuts is unjustified. "We accept that the Council are doing their best to protect frontline services. But there can be no doubt that cutting housing benefit by 80%, combined with smaller housing budgets and the aftershock of the recession that is still causing people to lose their homes, is bound to cause a massive surge in Homelessness." says the group's spokesman XXXXXXXXXXX.

The group also claims that the Council is massively understating the number of rough sleepers in Bristol: "We have been told that there are about 6 or 7 people sleeping rough in Bristol. Anyone who has worked with the homeless in this city can tell you it's at least ten times as many, people the council just pretends don't exist."

The first opening week of the former HUB has been a success, the squatters claim. "Within the first three days, we've had about 20 people come in, most with housing related problems. We have been able to advise them on various options, such as council run services and self-help alternatives, which the council does not make people aware of as a policy," XXXXX says.

Meanwhile, the group are preparing for legal proceedings to evict them from the unused building. "We are providing a vital service to Bristol's most vulnerable in an area that the Council does not even acknowledge exist," says XXXXX.

This and similar press releases were published in a protracted back-and-forth with a council determined to disprove the occupier's claims. This eagerness may be due to the fact that in starting this public debate, the squatters were also drawing attention to the sensitive topic of welfare reform more generally, and thus potentially stirring up public discontent. In early 2011, many of the details of the proposed reform were only theoretically formulated, but several notable institutions—among them the Institute for Fiscal Studies—had already issued warnings that the poor would be disproportionally affected by austerity. The threat of social unrest had already begun to loom large in the press, invoked by the police among others, who argued against cuts to their own budget by predicting widespread disorder. It would seem plausible that under these circumstances, the council had little interest in initiatives that highlighted the coming cuts and in particular the council's role in administrating them. According to

the council's 2011 consultation paper, the budget for High Support homelessness prevention services was to be reduced by 23 percent, and an additional 85 supported accommodation spaces were to go for this client group. This was only the first of a wave of further reductions over the following years, exacerbated by reductions in housing benefit and rising rents. Although the "Spending Review" was ostensibly driven by the government, the new "local autonomy" promoted by the Big Society also meant that the implementation of the cuts became the responsibility of local councils, and whatever local resistance would form could be expected to express their displeasure at the point of delivery. Charities were already warning that a storm was brewing all over the United Kingdom, and the squatters were reminding the public of this.

Meanwhile, the legal owner of Schooner House—a London-based property firm named Daejan Holdings Plc—had become aware of the occupation, and had taken the usual measures to remove the squatters. Normally, this would have involved making a claim to possession at the local magistrate's court and, if possession was granted (which it nearly always was), to wait until bailiffs employed by the court performed the eviction. Daejan, however, was not a landlord like any other. With investment property assets of, at the time, around GBP 1.5 billion,[2] Daejan was part of the Freshwater Group, one of the country's largest private landlords (Kincaid 1972). In 2002, the *Evening Standard* placed its director at number sixteen on its list of "who owns London," with a total of thirty-five acres of land ownership. Daejan Holdings was part of the Freshwater "empire," a complex network of over a hundred companies and subsidiaries, originally founded in 1939 in order to acquire several rubber and coffee plantations in what was then the Dutch West Indies. The insurgencies in the region from 1949, which subsequently led to the formation of modern Indonesia, had seen a large share of the plantation business destroyed and the rest sold due to inoperability. The company was dormant until 1957, when it was turned into a property business via a reverse merger, and quickly expanded.

Daejan had not drawn much public attention, but as a quick internet search on the part of the squatters showed, they had a longstanding reputation as "slumlords," and had therefore come to the attention of various activist groups. In 1971–72 several members of the Angry Brigade, a militant organization sometimes referred to as the "British Baader Meinhof," were accused and convicted

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2.   Unaudited Preliminary Results Announcement for the year ended March 31, 2014: http://www.daejanholdings.com. Numbers in the following section reflect the publicly reported finances of the company at the time of fieldwork.

of a number of bombings aimed at Tory politicians as well as government and corporate targets. The attacks only led to one instance of a minor injury, but they were seen as a provocation of and embarrassment for the government. They were therefore investigated and prosecuted with great zeal, resulting in ten-year prison terms for the convicted. Among other offenses, they were accused of a plan to target the Freshwater Group because of its lobbying activities for the 1972 Housing Finance Act, which undermined tenant rights and promised higher profit margins to landlords (Carr 2010: 137, 162). The company has also been involved in several high-profile tenant disputes, most prominently the landmark Daejan Investments vs. Benson (March 2013), in which the Supreme Court ruled against several tenants who claimed they had been forced to pay extortionate maintenance charges. In 2012, Daejan subsidiary Mayfair Charities Ltd was fined by Wellingborough council for failing to maintain one of its numerous empty properties to the point of it falling into abject disrepair.[3]

In the case of Schooner House, however, Daejan did not hesitate to take action. Just two weeks after the HUB officially reopened, court papers were served and the clock for eviction began to tick. This, however, was not going to be a "normal" eviction. Instead of waiting for several weeks for the magistrate court bailiffs to enforce its claim, Daejan had hired its own private army in the form of bailiff company Constant & Co, which specialized in "Investigation and Enforcement Services," including the eviction of Travellers and squatters, as well as debt recovery and repossessions. Since 2008, Constant also operated as High Court Enforcement Officers, authorized by the Lord Chancellor to enforce High Court writs, a position previously known under the name of sheriff. "C*nts & Co," as they were frequently referred to by the squatters, had been involved in several high-profile evictions, among them the Twin Oaks Traveller site in 2004, and the Bristol Eco Village land occupation in 2010, and, as it was widely known, were scheduled to execute the clearing of a Traveller site at Dale Farm later in 2011. Both previous evictions had been brutal, with property and dwellings purposely destroyed or burned, and several persons seriously injured: one man told me how his leg had been broken when a Constant bailiff had purposefully driven a bulldozer at him. Constant's reputation, in short, was enough to make this eviction a higher threat to the HUB occupiers than that of "normal" squats. Mobilization for the eviction thus began immediately after papers had been served:

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3. "Charity fined over restoration work to former hotel in Northamptonshire," *BBC*, January 11, 2012. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-164 87181.

The Hub Homeless centre facing eviction

The Squatters who have reopened the former Hub Homeless Drop-in Centre are facing eviction this week after a court hearing is to take place on Friday. If possession is granted, the Squatters are expecting immediate eviction by notorious bailiffs Constant & Co. The group claims that evicting the homeless from a closed down homeless centre is strongly contradicting the government's recent line:

"This is quite ironic in the light of Mr Cameron's recent commitment to self-organised community services," says the group's spokesman XXXXXX. He claims that the Hub's situation highlights the problems inherent in the idea of a "Big Society": "If people are to organize their own services, they need resources such as buildings. Despite there being plenty of empty properties, some of them unused for years, groups such as ours are regularly evicted when trying to set up volunteer projects."

The former Hub building is owned by Daejan Holdings Ltd, one of the UK's biggest property developers and landlords. "They are currently spending thousands of pounds on evicting homeless people from an adjacent building that has been empty for nine years. This is just one example of how the interests of property speculation are regularly put above those of people trying to organize themselves."

Constant & Co, the bailiffs that will evict the Squatters if their court case is lost, have a track record of brutality and unlawful conduct. They have been under investigation by the Health and Safety Executive following evictions of Traveller sites across the country and were responsible for the bulldozing of the Bristol Eco village last year.

"We do not expect to get any notice before they remove us," says XXXXXXX. "We are basically prepared to be made homeless again by the weekend." Still, the group are determined to keep up their work: "We simply hold that people are more important than empty buildings."

Contact: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

The HUB went to court a total of three times within one month, and was adjourned on each occasion. Despite the relatively clear-cut legal situation of most squatting cases, there was often considerable time to be gained by identifying any and all formal errors that could be made during the proceedings, and using them to demand an adjournment. The HUB occupiers showed remarkable aptitude at mounting a legal defense purely from looking up paragraphs on the internet, and their case was aptly supported by the plaintiff's legal representatives, whose incompetence astonished even the judge. The court dates were tense affairs, since theoretically, an eviction could take place within hours of a decision in favor of the landlord, and Constant & Co were not expected to be generous in granting the squatters time to pack. For every court day, all occupants of the HUB therefore had to be at the ready to move out all their belongings within minutes, only to unpack again after each adjournment. It was a nerve-wracking situation, and outside of opening times, tensions in the HUB mounted to the extent that sometimes tempers flared. Imminent eviction was of course not a new situation for most, but what distinguished the HUB from other squats was that the occupants genuinely wished to contribute something useful to the city at large, only to discover that their contribution was not needed or wanted. The more cynical activists saw this as no big surprise—after all, many squatted community projects have suffered the same fate—but for some, this was the first experience of the fact that society regarded them as useless even when they were actively and without compensation trying to contribute. As one occupier expressed his frustration: "We're doing their work for free here . . . for a place to sleep, no money, nothing. We get evicted, [which means] it's more homeless, [which means] we go back in the system, it cost them money and they let this building rot. What sense does that make?"

As the press release documents, the squatters were well aware that on the face of it, they were embroiled in a dispute with an individual property developer; however, they also realized that this conflict was embedded in a decades-old political struggle over housing that had gone into a new round with the advent of the Big Society agenda. The coalition government's approach to property (here in the sense of "real estate") was the continuation of a conservative housing policy that has, since the Thatcher government, pushed for the privatization of space as a central theme (Saunders 1990). This policy was part of a wider strategy of privatization, founded in a belief that state involvement in anything

at all could only be detrimental to the beneficial effects of market forces: "For believers in the meddling state, housing policy is an unbroken chain of failure. From this perspective, a fully private, minimally regulated market will produce the best of all possible housing outcomes" (Marcuse and Madden 2016: 189). Thatcher certainly was such a believer, and a large part of her objective to minimize state influence therefore was the selling off of public assets. David Harvey (2003) argues that market radicalism of this sort is essentially an attempt to solve the problem of the overaccumulation of capital that plagues developed economies by opening up new markets for private investment. In this, he is echoing Henri Lefebvre, who attested as early as 1970:

> Real-estate speculation becomes the principal source for the formation of capital, that is, the realization of surplus value. As the percentage of overall surplus value formed and realized by industry begins to decline, the percentage created and realized by real-estate speculation and construction increases . . . as economists are accustomed to saying, this is an unhealthy situation. (Lefebvre 2003: 160)

This translated into the rapid privatization of public housing stock, accompanied by an ideological push toward promoting and normalizing private home ownership as a fundamental aspect of full citizenship. Harvey notes that "at first blush . . . [this] . . . appeared as a gift to the lower classes, who could now convert from rental to ownership at a relatively low cost, gain control over a valuable asset, and augment their wealth" (2003: 158). At second blush, however, it soon became apparent that there was only a limited supply of this cheap commodity to go around. What appeared as a gift to one generation of the working class meant that subsidized housing became less and less available for subsequent generations.

What Harvey refers to as "the cutting edge of accumulation through dispossession" (2003: 157) on an economic level was accompanied by a reimagining of good citizenship in terms of a "property owning democracy" on an ideological level. There is a discussion to be had as to whether ideology is a post-hoc mystification of economic realities, as most Marxists would agree, or whether conversely, economic arrangements reflect dominant ideological currents, as implied in an interpretation of "neoliberalism" as not so "neo" after all but rather a new incarnation of old feudal power relations (Shearing 1983, 2001). What is mostly uncontested, however, is that in the United Kingdom but also the United States, different waves of the "hyper-commodification" (Marcuse and

Madden 2016) and financialization of housing since the 1980s went along with conservative governments. Whether the marketization of housing was an economic necessity, as conservatives claimed, or increased conservative leanings were a predictable response to economic insecurity, as some research indicates, is a question I cannot answer here. What is certain, however, is that the conservative response to economic uncertainty is never merely economic but rather seeks to affect change in the population on a moral level, also and especially when it comes to habitable space.

John Campbell (2011b) notes that Thatcher's insistence on the selling off of council housing was also and especially intended to wean the poor off "socialism," and encourage individual responsibility by giving them a stake in society through the ownership of assets. Thatcher's programmatic slogan "Economics are the method; the object is to change . . . the heart and soul of the nation"[4] points toward a fundamentally pedagogical objective: like the inventor of Defensible Space, Thatcher believed that in order to take responsibility for their "patch," people must have a sense of territorial ownership, here underwritten by a legal contract. Whoever did not own a "patch" thus automatically came under suspicion of not being fully capable of taking responsibility within the civic order—a failure to "get on the property ladder" thus meant that one had not only failed economically but also (and especially) morally. How successful this "change of heart and soul" was implemented became apparent in the wake of the 2008 crisis, when the media bemoaned in unison that young people were being denied the opportunity to "grow up" and "start a life" because they were unable to earn or save enough to buy a house. Being part of a "generation of renters"—on the continent a perfectly acceptable thing to be—was quite literally seen as denying people access to full adult personhood, and thus keeping them in a position of childlike dependency on other people's assets.

Anna Jefferson (2013) describes a similar dynamic in moral narratives of US homeowners experiencing foreclosure in the wake of the 2008 crisis. Jefferson attributes the public expressions of disgust leveled at homeowners who sought to modify the terms of their loans due to unemployment to "observers' discomfort with the evident challenge they pose to the American moral order of homeownership, upward mobility, and middle class sensibilities. . . . More than renters in a majority owner-occupied neighborhood, owners facing foreclosure

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4. http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104475.

threaten the stability of the ownership category for all. They present a visible and real danger of slipping back against the culturally sanctioned progression from renting to owning" (2013: 99). Homeownership in Britain spoke of a similar moral order, modified by a feudalistic undercurrent that meant that owning one's home was not only a sign of one's independent success—as in the American understanding—but also held the whispered promise of power over others. Jefferson does not compare her homeowners to renters, and so it is difficult to know whether her finding that "(suicide) was also discussed as a poignant link between home and self, suggesting that the loss of the home is tantamount to the loss of life" (2013: 102) is attributable to the loss of shelter or the loss of property. It does appear, however, that the invocation of suicide was an expression of one's shame at having turned out to be vulnerable to loss and dependent on others: "In suicide stories, it is often implied that the victims are middle class or of the stable working class, individuals who are 'not accustomed to asking for help'" (2013: 103). Jefferson's respondents had apparently internalized so well the idea that the only life worth living is one of insularity that the only alternative was (at least rhetorical) death.

The communitarian allocation of spatial entitlement according to vulnerability or need, as implied in the idea of social housing, was thus thoroughly delegitimized as fostering morally reprehensible interdependency, and replaced with a moral order in which entitlement was the result of individual market success and at the same time the sole indicator of moral worth. The Big Society agenda picked up on this notion by responding to the ongoing housing crisis with a discourse that painted the unavailability of home ownership as primarily *caused* by subsidized housing: council housing, in this view, trapped people in "welfare dependency" and so effectively prevented—instead of enabled—social mobility. At the same time, the allegedly rampant "feckless" abuse of the social housing system was described as abuse first and foremost in the sense that tenants who could afford to access property at market price preferred to remain in cheaper council accommodation, which was therefore not available to those in "real need." This argument, of course, has to be taken with a grain of salt in light of the fact that the government was simultaneously selling off the remaining council house stock at record speed. In ideological terms, however, the refusal to buy property if one was in a position to do so was framed as a failure to perform a moral duty, and cast as further evidence of the moral corruption of social housing tenants. This rhetoric reached its peak in the aftermath of the 2011 riots, in which council housing was used as a direct way of disciplining

suspected rioters[5] and even their uninvolved relatives[6] on the one hand, and as a further opportunity to incriminate council tenants as a "feral" underclass out of control on the other.[7] In this sense, the Big Society rhetoric served quite overtly to construct morally loaded social categories through the unequal assignment of territorial entitlement.

The fact that this was dressed up as a discourse about private property (in the sense of a politico-legal entitlement) should not obscure the fact that it was at its core about controlling access to space. "Property" in this context served as the symbolic legitimization for control over parcellated and "hyper-commodified" (Marcuse and Madden 2016) patches of territory. In this sense, "property" is somewhat of a red herring (Marx would say a "fetish category"): it is not in and of itself a way of socially constructing space but rather a post hoc mystification, describing the abstract, symbolic mechanism that mediates territorial claims between members of a larger polity. "Property" is thus the symbolic dimension (in Maurice Bloch's terms, the "transcendental") of what basic territorial dominance is on the level of the physical body (the "transactional"), simultaneously describing, legitimizing, and institutionalizing territorial power relations through a reified quasi-natural category. In this sense, the conservative push for property ownership can also be seen as a continuation of the program of relocalizing power: in turning dwellers into property owners, it assigned each of them control over their own piece of territory and thus created a multitude of private dominions in which the landlord as territorial actor ruled supreme. The pedagogical impetus inherent in Thatcherite housing policy can therefore be seen to be aimed at further undermining the state by turning it from a communal space into a confederation of private domains. At the same time, however, it involved not just a "neoliberal" privileging of market forces over the state: it specifically aimed at changing the spatially enacted moral order of society by replacing an old paradigm with . . . well, an even older one.

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5.   Kate McCann, "Westminster vows to evict social tenants involved in riots," *Guardian*, August 10, 2011. https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2011/aug/10/council-seeks-eviction-for-looters.

6.   Alexandra Topping and Patrick Wintour, "London riots: Wandsworth council moves to evict mother of charged boy," *Guardian*, August 12, 2011. https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/aug/12/london-riots-wandsworth-council-eviction.

7.   Polly Curtis, "Reality check: were estates to blame for the riots?" *Guardian*, September 15, 2011. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/reality-check-with-polly-curtis/2011/sep/15/reality-check-estates-riots.

THE RETURN OF THE SAVAGE NOBLE

Thatcher's motto—that economics was only "the method" but the goal was to affect a "change of heart and soul"—points to the fact that the purpose of the privatization of space was not just to turn a profit but also to change how people perceived of themselves and their relationships with others. In joining Oscar Newman in the pedagogical mission to engender territoriality, the attitude Thatcher's politics sought to effect was explicitly that of a legally and politically legitimized territorial self, exercising "despotic dominion" over its patch and those within it. This may appear somewhat curious insofar as conservative ideology (as discussed in the previous chapter) holds that not everybody is "naturally" born to rule, and leadership, both locally and translocally, should therefore fall only to the morally worthy. In this light, the drive to "democratize" territorial ownership at first glance appears paradoxical, as it could be seen to undermine this "natural" order. The notion of property as the "primary fetish" of conservatism equally does not fully explain why British conservatives thought it necessary to promote mass home ownership—after all, their predecessors, the feudal lords of old, were perfectly content that they should shoulder this burden on behalf of their subjects. In order to understand the Tory strategy of "trickle down territorialism," it is therefore helpful to consider some of the peculiarities of land ownership in Britain.

In trying to research exactly *Who owns Britain*, Kevin Cahill (2001) notes that the greatest difficulty in doing so is the lack of records. The previously mentioned land registry (see chapter three), which since 1925 requires all land transactions to be recorded by law, has been rolled out as late as the 1990s in some areas, and for older land holdings there consequently exists no record at all. Those property transactions it does record are mostly for urban dwellings and other small property holdings. For about 50 percent of agricultural land in Britain there exists no documentation at all, simply because this land has not been transferred since the inception of the Registry. The only complete record of agricultural land ownership in Britain is thus a 1872 book by the name of *The return of owners of land*,[8] which for the first and only time gave a complete picture of who owns the entire landmass of the United Kingdom. According to Cahill, the volume "has been airbrushed out of the historic and administrative

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8.   Also called the *Second Domesday Book*; see chapter three.

record of the UK" (2001: 5), and remains virtually unknown among the wider population.

Cahill painstakingly reconstructs what has happened to ownership of the land holdings documented in the 1872 volume by the turn of the millennium, and concludes that very little has changed.[9] Of the 60 million acres that comprise the United Kingdom between 4.4 and 6 million are taken up by residential dwellings of the general population, and approximately 12 million acres are uninhabitable. The remaining roughly 40 million acres are owned by just 189,000 families. In other words, 0.3 percent of the population own two-thirds of the land, while 77 percent of the population own 5.8 percent. Moreover, the number and size of the large estates that comprise the landholdings of these families has hardly changed at all since 1872, meaning that the same people who owned most of the land 150 years ago still own the very same land today. "The vast majority of these large estates are held by just three classes of people: aristocrats, who would, until November 1999, have sat in the House of Lords, baronets and finally the residual landed gentry" (Cahill 2001: 10ff.). These landowners have not only been able to enjoy tax breaks intended for farmers, they also receive publicly funded agricultural subsidies, while the majority population are subject to a land tax: the council tax. According to Cahill, landowners therefore have an abiding interest to handle the issue of who owns the land with the greatest discretion, fearing that exposure may lead the landless to revolt.

Britain's history, Cahill continues, involved as a series of "Great Land Grabs," which refers to not only the history of enclosure and dispossession of the commons by the aspiring capitalist class but also the process by which the crown and aristocratic elites since the eleventh century have stolen and conquered each other's land, until patterns of ownership emerged, which last until the present day. These territorial conflicts were characterized by mass displacement of the rural population through resettlement into urban areas, transport to

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9.   The largest private landowners in Britain are, according to Cahill, the Duke of Buccleuch (270,000 acres), the Duke of Atholl's trust (148,000 acres), the Duke of Westminster (140,000 acres), and finally the Royal family (comprised of the Crown Estate, the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, and lands at Balmoral and Sandringham). The Crown Estate is not technically the private property of the Windsors, but as long as she is Queen, Elizabeth II is—by virtue of her ascendancy—freeholder of the Estate. While the Estate turns all of its surplus over to the Treasury, the Queen receives a yearly allowance for personal expenses out of this revenue. The payment, formerly called the Civil List, was restructured under the new title Sovereign Grant in 2013.

the colonies, or slaughter, prompting Marx to declare that "the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire" (1867, vol. 1: chap. 6). These massive processes of displacement were accompanied by an emergent political system that "focused the most active form of economic development, manufacturing, into areas of marginal Parliamentary representation with a consequent lack of capacity to influence the law" (Cahill 2001: 26). The resulting power imbalance between urban and rural areas persists to this day, and maintains a strong connection between wealth, territorial entitlement, and political power in the United Kingdom.[10]

Crucially, this structure of landownership stands in direct relation to what we now call the "housing crisis": since building land is the most expensive component of new house building, the availability of developable land is a key factor in planning. However, the lack of documentation, and thus valuation, of large swathes of the British countryside means that there is a perceived scarcity of development land, driving up prices: "[Land] is perceived as scarce when not only is it not scarce but is being kept from dereliction by huge public subsidy" (Cahill 2011: 16). This inflation of land values through artificial scarcity leads to an inflation of property values in the cities (due to a lack of possibility for expansion), and thus the property structure of the countryside is in part responsible for the lack of available housing in urban areas. As a result, urban space becomes an extremely interesting market for domestic and foreign investors, as exemplified in the inflation in house prices in London, which produces billions in revenue for companies like Daejan. But it is not only corporations that profit: thousands of small investors who own only one or two properties *also* have a vested interest in keeping property values high, and thus in financially and politically shoring up the power structure. In a situation in which the political interests of

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10. In order to maintain these ownership patterns, Kevin Cahill writes, the landed aristocracy effectively controlled both houses of parliament at least until World War II, limiting democratic representation for urban and metropolitan areas. While postwar labor governments attempted to limit the number of landowners in cabinet, conservative governments and especially Thatcher gave them "another lease on life" (2001: 25), and large landowning families can be seen to send representatives to the European Parliament. "The inner elite . . . have maintained their influence at the heart of government no matter the agenda of the party elected at the ballot box," concludes Cahill (2001: 8). After New Labour removed the majority of hereditary peers from the House of Lords in 1999, the picture has only changed superficially: "Today that inner elite still owns the country, both by operating the inner levers of power, often at board level in banks and financial institutions" (2001: 8).

landowners, investors, and individual homeowners converge on high property values, the only people who could therefore have an interest in a devaluation of land are those who do not own any and cannot afford any—in other words, the very people that Conservatism since Thatcher has set out to stigmatize.

In this light, the push to give individuals a "stake" in society by promoting private property in space specifically implies making them stakeholders in land value. Admitting them to the inner circle of property owners aligns their economic interest with that of the elite, while leaving the underlying huge imbalance in wealth and political power intact. But Thatcher was well aware that mere economic redistribution was not enough to achieve this alignment—in order to successfully enlist the masses in support of the ruling class, a change in outlook also had to be affected. As Corey Robin puts it, since conservative ideology in its basic ideological structure is somewhat of a hard sell when it comes to the dispossessed, mass compliance can only be ensured by a "trickle down," not so much of assets but of attitude:

> The masses must either be able to locate themselves symbolically in the ruling class or be provided with real opportunities to become faux aristocrats themselves in the family, the factory, and the field. The former path makes for an upside-down populism, in which the lowest of the low see themselves projected in the highest of the high; the latter makes for a democratic feudalism, in which the husband or supervisor plays the part of a lord. (Robin 2011: 35)

A "change of heart and soul" can therefore be achieved on a transcendental level through identification with the ruling class (as the Big Society agenda proclaimed, "We Are All in This Together"); and on a transactional level, as previously discussed, through a "trickle down" approach to political power that gives certain individuals a limited amount of territorial control, and thus a "stake" in upholding the general architecture of power. In both cases, it must be made plausible that joining the elite is open to anyone (but not everyone), and individual success stories help to keep the myth alive. This involves situating oneself within particular type of transcendental narrative: "Populations will serve power if they believe in the concept or myth propagated by power" (Cahill 2001: 26). Identification therefore crucially rests on whether the "masses" can locate themselves in the *mythology* of the ruling class—that is, whether they can identify with the ideal model of the self and its social relations that this narrative promotes.

What, then, constitutes this mythology? According to the "patron saint of the Big Society," one of the hallmarks of political power is that it is obtained through struggle: "I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation . . . [since] . . . virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle" (Burke [1790] 2015). Only through adversity, therefore, does true excellence reveal itself, and is both political power and thus property earned. Edmund Burke here repeats a theme that permeates conservative thought more generally: privilege is earned not through labor but through the heroic overcoming of resistance, clad in an imagery and language of war. On the one hand, as Robin (2011) notes, to prove the superiority of one's class or race on the battlefield has been the traditional path to establishing excellence for the aristocracy. On the other hand, the convergence of class interest implied in British Conservatism has led to a transfer of this symbolism onto the battlefield of the marketplace:

> Though most early conservatives were ambivalent about capitalism, their successors will come to believe that warriors of a different kind can prove their mettle in the manufacture and trade of commodities. Such men wrestle the earth's resources to and from the ground, taking for themselves what they want and thereby establishing their superiority over others. (Robin 2011: 30)

The capitalist, as the aristocrat before him, thus comes to appear as a conquering warrior, a military leader in an economic war. His superiority is not granted merely by heritage, it is proven in battle, evidence of his excellence as commander of others. Accumulated private property, then, is tangible proof that the warrior is worth his salt: "The primal act of transgression—requiring daring, vision, and an aptitude for violence and violation—is what makes the capitalist a warrior, entitling him not only to great wealth but also, ultimately, to command" (Robin 2011: 30). Property, in this view, is thus first and foremost the product of a transgression of boundaries, of a violation, and therefore, if it is indeed a fetish category in the Marxist sense, then the social relation it both describes and mystifies is that between a plunderer and his victim. Ludwig von Mises also pragmatically sums up the conservative approach to property as: "All ownership derives from occupation and violence . . . that all rights derive from violence, all ownership from appropriation or robbery, we

may freely admit" (Mises 1981: 42ff.). It would thus appear that while conservatives and anarchists agree that property is theft, only one side finds this objectionable.

This mythical figure of the warrior, exemplified in both aristocratic and bourgeois versions of conservatism, can therefore be seen to lie at the core of the conservative mythology of property. The warrior is at the same time an invader and a thief, although theft is here justified by the fact that the original owner of the stolen goods was not "honorable" enough to defend his turf, and thus robbery is morally legitimized as heroic acquisition. The origin of this myth is somewhat obscure—it stands to reason that in Britain, it is connected to a long history of territorial invasion that is etched deeply into the collective consciousness. The patterns of land ownership Cahill describes, for example, are a direct result of the Norman invasion of William the Conqueror (or "the Bastard," depending on who one asks) in 1066 AD (Wood 2001). After declaring himself King William I, this particular invader decreed all land in Britain property of the monarch, and subsequently distributed it among his fellow raiders, creating by and large the very structure of land ownership that still exists today (Garnett 2007).[11] The Norman land-grab therefore laid the foundation for British feudalism,[12] and for a class system characterized by the rule of the conquerors over the defeated indigenous population. Around 20,000 Normans came to rule over 1.5 million Anglo-Saxons in a system that has been referred to as "a medieval forerunner of apartheid"[13] and strongly discouraged intermarriage between the two groups (Keats-Rohan 1999). The Normans established a regime of heavy taxation, familiar from popular myths such as *Robin Hood* (Singman 1998), and in the following centuries, exported this model to other places they annexed in the course of territorial expansion, such as Ireland,

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11. The word "ownership" is here not entirely correct: William's granddaughter by twenty-two generations, Queen Elizabeth II, still legally owns the entire landmass of the United Kingdom, as well as a whopping sixth of the entire earth's surface (Cahill 2006), making Her Majesty the world's number one landlady and everyone else her tenant.

12. "Feudalism" is here used in the sense of Marx as describing a relation between lords and peasants, not to describe relationships between members of the elite, as in some British accounts (see H. Thomas 2008: 71ff.).

13. Katharine Keats-Rohan in interview with the *Independent*, March 13, 1999. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/normans-practised-apartheid-on-english-1080175.html.

Scotland, and Wales. The previously mentioned first Domesday book was thus originally compiled as a tax register (Littrell 2009).

As a result of this conquest, parts of the modern British elite—precisely the people who, according to Cahill, own the majority of the land—are the descendants of these very invaders. Historian Gregory Clark discovered in a 2010 statistical survey of social mobility in Britain that certain surnames associated with the conquerors have persistently remained at the top of British society. This puzzles the statistician, due to the fact that

> individual family histories such as that of the Stanley Earls of Derby, at the top of the income distribution for 29 generations, are statistically of extreme improbability. Their success over 900 years implies that at least at the very top of traditional English society there must be some limitation on regression to the mean. (Clark 2010)

Clark concludes that in Britain and beyond, social mobility is limited by the fact that wealth begets wealth through the principle of inheritance, more specifically primogeniture (Clark 2014).[14] As Laura Brace (2004) notes, it is a core feature of conservative ideology that the principle of inheritance must be protected, and the conservative insistence that property is naturally unequal is inextricably linked to the idea that accumulated wealth must be preserved for future generations rather than squandered on redistributive justice (2004: 138ff). The conservative dislike of the state as a redistributive institution therefore also stems from the motivation of maintaining structures of property ownership, also and especially in the sense of "property" as land and dwellings.

It is therefore possible that the warrior myth originates in this history of colonial conquest, which quite literally split Britain into a ruling class and a subjugated class for almost a millennium. To be sure, the mythical warrior has gone through numerous permutations in the centuries since, not least the abovementioned one from feudal ruler to boardroom-warlord. What remains, however, is

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14. Gregory Clark researches class by examining the distribution of surnames over several centuries, concluding in *The son also rises* (2014) that class inequalities especially in Britain are a matter "of lineage." Therefore, unless society takes active measures to balance these tendencies, the British class system perpetuates a "winner-takes-all" model of the social in which class barriers have become increasingly difficult to cross (since the middle ages, which according to Clark were more permissive in terms of social mobility than the modern day United Kingdom) (Clark 2014).

the is the mythological gestalt of a territorial invader, who is legitimized in his claim to power by an essentially premodern ideology of heroic belligerence and property as the spoils of war. Inscribed in this myth is a particular construction of moral categories associated with spatial position: the highest moral worth is ascribed to those who are in a position to conquer and control territory, the lowest to the conquered and controlled. The conservative promotion of property ownership can therefore be seen, in one sense, as a pedagogical strategy to diffuse this territorial ethos into the population, by persuading "the masses" to identify with the interests of landowners specifically through a symbolic identification with the moral superiority of an aggressive territorial self. The spatial production of moral categories in Thatcherite discourse, in this light, involved not only the overt association of property ownership with moral status through the notion of citizenship, but also the promotion of identification with a particular position in a spatial configuration: the strongest territorial actor who controls both access to, and movement within, the territory. Thatcher's project was thus at its core a moral project: to replace the communitarian spatial order implied in the welfare state with the territorial order that underlies conservative ethics, and thus, to change the way that British people thought about space, power, and morality.

This ethics constituted the exact opposite of the anarchist ethics that demanded identification and practical solidarity with the *weakest* territorial actor or the most spatially vulnerable. Insofar as there is a clear continuity between the territorial moral order of Thatcherite politics and the Big Society agenda, we could therefore say that the squatter's assumption that they were involved in a conflictual binary relation with a so-called ruling class was not at all inaccurate: when it came to the moral construction of space, they had indeed chosen two opposing principles. The warrior ethos of conservative discourse, watered down to the conquests of the capitalist subject in the property market, saw entitlement to space as the result of moral worthiness evidenced by wealth—here, entitlement comes from strength. The squatter ethos of protecting the territorially challenged, on the other hand, saw entitlement as a moral response to need, and need as the result of vulnerability—here, entitlement stems from weakness. In this sense, the conflict was thus not just one between two classes of people, but between two different symbolic patterns of ordering space, and thus, two different visions of the social and moral order. While the HUB became one skirmish in this conflict, the conflict itself is at least as old as Gerrard Winstanley's and Thomas Hobbes's respective constructions of the self and the social order that

is implied in its spatial structure. But just as Winstanley's utopian project had soon fallen victim to the defensive impulses of his Hobbesian contemporaries, so too did the HUB eventually lose its ground to the territorial order. After roughly two months of operation and a protracted court- and media battle, it was eventually evicted. On the day possession was granted—the judge, although apparently sympathetic, had exhausted his options of adjournment—a large crowd had gathered around the building and determined to defend it as long as possible, expecting an army of bailiffs to march on the HUB. An initial attempt to turn away the sheriff was successful—the operation involved no less than eight police vans, a helicopter, a cherry picker, and a fire engine, but only a single bailiff—but Constant & Co had chosen, in this instance, to take their time with a repossession they knew would eventually come to pass. Although the HUB was not physically conquered that day, the project in it came to an end, since it proved impossible to run a service under daily threat of physical removal. Soon after, a lone Constant bailiff discreetly crept around to change the locks.

The occupiers lost not only their project but also the roof over their heads, and spent several weeks piled seven to a room in the Smiling Chair bookshop, before moving into a squat that was so damp that algae were growing on the walls (it was dubbed "the aquarium"). While for Daejan and the council the matter was thus resolved, at least for some of the occupiers it constituted a turning point, as they finally had to realize that they were not needed or wanted as part of society, Big or small. While the more disillusioned squatters saw in this further proof that political promises are there to be broken, others were deeply hurt by the "conveyor-belt justice" meted out by a judge whose own morals in this case appeared to clash with the law he had to enforce. The occupier's opinion that "people are more important than empty buildings" simply had no representation in a legal system that is designed to protect the interests of property and those who own it, aided and abetted by thousands of miniature "faux aristocrats" who rarely recognize the self-defeating nature of their allegiances until they themselves end up on the street. Some of the occupiers came to realize that what they had in common with the Gypsies and Travellers of Dale Farm was not merely an enemy in the shape of Constant & Co. There are deeper connections between those cast as territorial "others," and as the HUB's last press release (see below) shows, translated this into a continuity of resistance (see also chapter eight). Schooner House, meanwhile, still sits empty and boarded up at the time of writing this book, a full five years after its conquest.

Residents of the Hub Drop-in Centre resist eviction

Residents of the Hub Drop-in Centre successfully resisted eviction on Friday by notorious bailiffs Constant & Co. The Drop-in centre closed in December due to cuts in funding. In January, it was re-opened by a group of squatters in protest at the massive cuts to services for the homeless. The adjacent building, which has been empty for nine years and is owned by the same London property company has been and continues to be used as emergency housing for the homeless.

The bailiff company contracted to carry out the eviction, Constant & Co., are under investigation by the Health and Safety Executive following evictions of Traveller sites across the country and were responsible for the bulldozing of the Bristol Eco village last year. Constant & Co. have also been contracted to evict Europe's biggest Traveller site, Dale Farm, home to around 1000 people who own the land they live on.

On Friday morning the building appeared heavily barricaded. A pirate flag flew from the chimney and banners hung from the windows: "80% cuts to sheltered housing," "Less posh flats, more social housing" and "Mr. Constant you will receive a warm welcome at Dale Farm."

At around 2pm, a bailiff arrived to post papers on the building and carry out a first inspection. He was met with a group of around 15 persons dressed in black, who surrounded him and prevented him from posting the eviction notice. The bailiff then retreated to his car. He was, however, unable to leave as the road had been barricaded with two lines of skips and bins. A line of petrol had been spilt between these two lines. The street was also blocked by neighbouring builders who had accidentally left their cherry picker blocking the exit during tea break.

Three vans of policemen arrived shortly after, along with a fire engine and helicopter. Onlookers were filmed and photographed by Police, who removed the bins and the bailiff from his vehicle. They then appear to have taken him to their van to breathalyse him while fire teams cleared the spilt petrol. After negotiations with the masked persons defending the Hub, Police gave assurances that the eviction would not be allowed today and the builders returned from tea break to remove their cherry picker.

The squatters, who prefer to describe themselves as "the empowered homeless" have called out for support as the centre remains under "Constant threat."

Contact:
XXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX

CLASH

Drew is in a lousy mood. It has been building all afternoon, and by the time I step out of the caravan to join the rest of the crew in the yard of our squat in Bedminster, it is about to escalate into a full-blown fit.

We've known, of course, that Drew has a temper, the stories were going round. But until the eviction of the HUB, he's never been like that with any of us. He was one of the people who most strongly believed in what the HUB was trying to do, and when it went, like it was always going to, it did something to him. The moods got worse.

It always starts subtly, unnoticeably for outsiders, but those who know Drew well know what is about to happen when his voice goes very quiet, quieter even than usual, and takes on an acidic tone of resentment. It is always some small thing—a careless remark, a window left open—that starts it, but by the time his voice has gone from a sharp whisper to a deep, threatening rumble, everything and everyone is fair game.

When I step out into the yard he has reached almost full momentum. The other guys—Ralph, Joe, Caz—are standing around staring at their feet, while Drew is giving them a good dressing-down. Plunking down on a chair in the middle of the yard I establish that the point of contention is the lit barbecue, smoldering in anticipation of a good dinner. The lads have apparently decided to put the barricading of the new place on hold to enjoy themselves in the first rays of the spring sun. Drew is livid.

"You just don't get, it, do you!" an accusatory finger pointed at the boys. "We got the cops and bailiffs barging in here any minute. We're soon gonna be criminals. You know what that means, it means we go to prison for this. We got all the shit in the world about to hit the fan AND YOU BUNCH OF CUNTS THROW A PARTY!!!"

The last words are shouted and to give them some extra weight, Drew spins around and gives the barbecue a good kick. It tumbles to the ground with an almighty rattle, and the puppy, who has been sniffing contently in a corner, startles. With a high-pitched squeal of terror, he dives under my chair and huddles under my feet.

Like everyone else, I have learned to stay out of Drew's way when he gets like that, but this day, something is different. Maybe it is the puppy, maybe I just feel more obstinate than usual, I don't know.

"Oi there, keep it sweet." My voice has no tone at all. It sounds flat and strange.

Drew turns around and with two quick strides is standing right in front of me. The boys are inspecting their shoes even more intently. Drew stares at me.

"What?" he hisses

"I said calm down. This isn't going to help now, is it?"

Drew just stands there but I can see every muscle in his body vibrating with tension. His fists and teeth are clenched, holding back a wave of force that is about to come down on my head. The moment stretches in a peculiar way, giving me time to consider my options. I am still sitting, and getting up would bring me face-to-face with Drew, in a gesture he could read as aggressive. I could move sideways and bail, but deep down I know that if I give in now, I lose more than just face. So I decide to do nothing at all. I stay motionless in the exact same sitting position, body relaxed, breathing deep. In the same toneless voice I say:

"Get. Out. Of. My. Face."

I am sure he is going to pounce now, but he just stares. His gaze is unreadable. After what seems like another eternity, he turns away and stomps off into the house in silence. It takes a few moments until we all breathe again, the boys scratching their heads, laughing embarrassedly. A few hours later, this will be their victory.

I pick up the puppy, go inside the caravan, and phone Jon to come round with the truck first thing in the morning and tow me out. I was lucky this time, but I'm not going to push it. Weeks later, I will learn that Drew went inside the squat and proceeded to trash the communal kitchen with such force that he broke his own foot in the process, but by the time I hear that part of the story, the wheels of my home are on the road.

Fragments

I will never know for sure why Drew did not hit me that day. Judging from other occasions when he had no such reservations about other people, it certainly was not that his rage was merely bluster. Maybe it was because I am a woman, maybe it was more personal than that. He did have a soft spot for me, and he later made several attempts at reconciliation, one of which consisted in inviting me to see a puppet play about Hitler's last days in the bunker. Drew was, for all intents and purposes, not a bad person. I had grown quite fond of him over the first months of my stay in Bristol, and the hardships of spending the winter moving from squat to squat (each one colder, damper, and dingier than the last), plus the spectacular occupation of the HUB had forged a bond of general camaraderie and friendship between us. Nevertheless, it had become obvious not just to me but to our entire crew that Drew had a problem. He liked to drink, which was not at all unusual for a squatter, but while in others the alcohol produced merriness or bravado, in Drew it brought out a dark side that stood in stark contrast to his usual gentle and thoughtful demeanor. Like the proverbial Jekyll and Hyde, Drew reacted to alcohol in a manner that seemed to turn him into a different person: he became first quietly acidic, then openly hostile, and finally, on occasion, physically violent. The altercation at the beginning of this chapter marked the end of a process of gradual decline in our friendship, as it marked the point at which I realized it was no longer safe to inhabit the same

space as him. It also technically marked the end of my squatting career, since after moving out of the yard, I began to live in vehicles until I eventually moved back into rented accommodation.

The deterioration of Drew's social skills happened over the course of a winter of evictions, accompanied by lively debate among squatters about austerity and the change to the "squatting law" that was beginning to take shape. Many squatters, and especially those who were particularly socioeconomically excluded, awaited these developments with a sense of dread. Discussions more and more often turned to the fact that in the near future, squats would have to be massively fortified against police and bailiffs, and that residents would have to live with a constant expectation of attack. Drew was among those who were most strongly affected by this rising pressure; perhaps due to experience acquired under pressure, he was the one among our crew who most keenly perceived of bad things ahead. We had moved into the yard after a string of impossibly dilapidated squats, and after spending several weeks living in the Smiling Chair bookshop—moving out in the daytime so normal "business" could resume—we had finally found a compound consisting of a fenced yard and a building big enough for our crew. I had, at that point, acquired not only a car—a fairly ludicrous black Land Rover with alloy plating and a roof rack that held five double mattresses at once—but also an eighteen-foot Buccaneer Clipper caravan.[1] The car was intended mainly as an asset for the entire crew, in the same sense that, for example, the washing machine was technically Ralph's but was effectively collectivized, at least until he would leave the group. It came in handy in evictions and was the main reason we all held on to our meagre possessions during our frequent moves. The caravan, however, bought several months later, was to be my own space. Perhaps I was beginning to get somewhat tired of having absolutely no privacy, or perhaps I was beginning to sense that our group was not as harmonious as it used to be, but by the early spring of 2011, the prospect of having a moderate amount of space to myself had begun to look increasingly appealing. When we moved into "the yard," I parked up in the open concrete space on the back of the building, while the rest of the crew moved into the house. The caravan functioned much like an extra room, and as the days

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1.   A "caravan," as it is called in British English, is the kind of vehicle known as a "travel trailer" in US English. The caravans used in Bristol were considerably smaller than the vehicles commonly used in US "trailer parks." At 15–20 feet in length, these were recreational vehicles intended for holidaying rather than continuous occupation.

grew warmer, our communal life increasingly took place outdoors. A few tattered sofas and chairs formed the open-air lounge that was at the center of our squat, where my altercation with Drew took place.

The yard came prestructured in an architectural arrangement that lent itself supremely to the establishment of a territorial spatial order. It was entirely surrounded by a ten-foot metal fence through which one could look out but not in, interrupted only by a gate with a robust chain and a huge padlock. Visitors had to rattle the bars, which triggered the puppy into manic barking, and sooner or later alerted someone inside to come out with the keys. The building itself was secured by another metal gate and a lockable door on the inside. The house-dwellers locked these doors at night so that in the morning, I had to wait for them to open up if I wanted to use the bathroom. On top of the building was a platform from which the entire compound could be seen in a 180-degree view, and the roofs of neighboring buildings were cut off by partition walls secured with rolls of barbed wire. Most windows on the lower floors had bars, and the door out to the street on the other side of the yard was permanently barricaded. If one did not yet feel paranoid, this environment could, in a paradoxical sense, induce one to do so—all the obstacles and barriers just underscored the idea that someone or something dangerous was trying to get in.

Drew had decided that this was where our crew was going to make its last stand against the forces of reaction. From the day we moved in, he began to make "improvements" to the space by securing it against the outside. He had a never-ending reservoir of suspicions of how others could come to intrude on us, and every morning handed out construction tasks he felt were necessary for our safety. Since the house included a cellar full of old and unused objects (tools, building materials, presumably stolen bicycles), he also had a never-ending supply of fortifications, which we began to distribute around our "vulnerable spots" until the squat visually resembled a prison complex. To do him justice, Drew really did believe at that point that we were in acute danger, and he had considerable reason to do so: only days after we moved into the yard, Bristol saw what has come to be known as the Tesco Riot of 2011, and the heightened police presence across the area in the weeks that followed put the entire squatting scene on constant eviction alert. The moniker "Tesco Riot" is somewhat misleading. There certainly was a riot, and in the course of it, the newly built Tesco branch on Stokes Croft—subject to an ongoing fierce conflict between local residents and the corporation—was damaged and partly looted. However, the Tesco was not the reason for the rioting, nor was it the primary target. It just

happened to sit right in the middle of a confrontation between protesters and the police, and since due to its controversial status it did not enjoy the same degree of consideration as local businesses, it ended up as collateral damage. What actually caused the scenes, however, was an incident that took place across the road from the contentious shop, and began when around 160 police officers, in full riot gear, stormed the famous landmark squat Telepathic Heights.[2]

The squat lay on the upper end of Stokes Croft, a stone's throw away from the Tesco, which in the past had been the target of some paint attacks and other expressions of discontent. In the minds of the police, this strategic location made it inherently suspicious of harboring the perpetrators of the criminal damage. As it emerged in the aftermath of the riot, the police were working on the assumption (based on unclear evidence) that somebody had been fabricating petrol bombs on the roof of Telepathic Heights, with the intention of throwing them across the street and setting Tesco on fire. Whether or not this was actually true was never fully established, but it certainly seems unlikely that anyone planning such an attack would do so from a well-known squat only yards away from the target. What is certain, however, is that the police took the suspicion of petrol-bomb-making as a welcome excuse to illegally evict. When they broke down the front door, they caught the four current residents in the act of creating order—as one of the squatters later told the *Guardian*: "We were working on tidying the place up, as you do—it's a house, so it's got to be tidy."[3] This objective was thwarted when armored riot cops stormed into their living room, rudely pushed them out of the way, and began to tip over furniture, rip open cushions, and empty the rubbish bins on the floor. The same squatter recalls: "One of the officers barged me in the face with his shield and pushed me across the room and told me to sit down on the floor. Whilst he was pushing me I said, 'Leave me alone, I'm not doing anything to you.' Then he started shouting, 'Sit there, don't move.'"

While the house was being searched top to bottom, word of the raid spread across the "scene." Within minutes, the first bystanders were beginning to gather

2. Unless otherwise specified, all citations in the following section are taken from the public sphere, such as the interviews given to the *Guardian* cited here, or eyewitness accounts deliberately and knowingly published elsewhere by their authors, in order to protect the identities of those who may have been at the scene.

3. These quotations are taken from Shiv Malik, "Bristol squatters deny Tesco attack and petrol bomb claims," *Guardian*, March 23, 2011. http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/apr/23/bristol-squatters-tesco-attack-petrol-claims.

outside, demanding to know what was going on. Over the following hours the raid carried on at a snail's pace, and the crowd outside grew steadily in size, some present in solidarity and some for the spectacle, until finally the first minor scuffles ensued. The police were effectively surrounded, and Cheltenham Road, the extension of Stokes Croft toward Montpellier, was soon blocked off by quickly erected barricades. By midnight, the scene resembled an actual riot, with bottles flying, bins on fire, and the Tesco meeting its fate as a source of supplies. Police were reported to baton-charge the protester's lines, while protestors initially responded with sit-down blockades but quickly reconsidered this tactic. An anonymous eyewitness recalls: "The police began storming forwards, shouting out orders to one another as if in a military operation. I began running away to safety, but some people tripped over the barricades only to feel the full force of the law cracking their faces with batons and riot shields. The police refused to help anyone that was injured. Anyone who tried to help the fallen met with a similar punishment."[4]

Things finally came to a head when the police made a crucial tactical mistake in picking their battleground. In order to conduct the massive raid, Bristol police brought in reinforcements in form of their colleagues from the Welsh riot police. The Welsh, not as familiar with the local cultural geography as their Bristol counterparts, decided to push the protesters out of Stokes Croft. But instead of pushing downhill toward the city center or uphill into Montpellier, they pushed southeast—right into the area of St Pauls that had been the site of the St Pauls riot of 1980. This riot had started on a very similar note: police had then raided the Black and White Café on Grosvenor Road, not even half a mile away from Telepathic Heights. The café had a longstanding reputation as a "drug den" and according to unverified reports, has been raided more often than any other premises in the country. Then as now, the population of this area was predominantly African-Caribbean, and in the 1970s had been severely affected by high unemployment, "racial tensions" (that is, structural racism) and the "development" of the area in form of the construction of the M32 motorway. The 1980 riot was as much a response to a specific act of police aggression as it was a more generalized outcry against forms of institutionalized racism such as the "sus law,"[5] the rise of Far Right groups such as the National Front, and the

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4. "Observing the Stokes Croft Riot," *Open Democracy*, April 22, 2011. https://www. opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/local-boy/observing-stokes-croft-riot.

5. "Sus" is short for "suspicious person" and refers to a set of laws allowing police to stop and search any person they suspected of possibly planning to commit a

disproportionate affectedness of minority ethnic persons by economic hardship (Dresser and Fleming 2007). In the wake of the unrest, local authorities had reassessed some of their policies—notably, by abolishing police powers to systematically harass nonwhites—and St Pauls had begun to enjoy a reputation of not being a place to mess about in if you were white and wore a uniform. Bristol police, on the whole, knew better than to look for confrontations there, to the extent that "ran into St Pauls" constituted a sufficient explanation among squatters as to how one had escaped being chased by the cops.

The Welsh police, however, lacked this local knowledge and kept pushing the protest into St Pauls. As a result, protesters were soon joined by a large contingent of local youth, who, although mostly indifferent to the original incident, were now determined to drive the militarized police force out of their area. Eyewitness Oleg Resin reported online: "Many locals got out from their houses, some with support and some shouting 'get lost from my street, who the fuck will clean this mess?!.' I spoke to some people who remembered the riots in the 80s and they were up for it. One older woman sceptically said that the area has been gentrified and the new posh population will never join this."[6] What came to be painted as "local people standing up against the opening of a Tesco in their area"[7] as local Labour MP Kerry McCarthy framed the events in hindsight (in unison with the majority of the established press), would therefore more correctly be called local resistance against territorial invasion. While initially sparked by the state invading the space of a specific squat—considered by the residents, as most squats were, their home—the ensuing violence had

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criminal offense (sanctioned by Section 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824). The sus law was disproportionally used against nonwhites and is generally assumed to have played a large role in the 1980 Bristol riot and other "race riots" in the subsequent years in Brixton, London, and other British cities. The law was subsequently hastily repealed in 1981, although black and minority ethnic persons (particularly young men) continue to be disproportionally targeted by police "stop and search" powers. This fact was widely discussed in public discourse as being a significant cause of the riots that ensued in several major British cities in 2011 after the shooting of a black man, Mark Duggan, by Metropolitan Police.

6.   Oleg Resin, "The first funky riot in Bristol," *The Commune*, April 22, 2011. https://thecommune.wordpress.com/2011/04/22/the-first-funky-riot-in-bristol/#more-6734.

7.   Kerry McCarthy, "An eye witness account of the Bristol Stokes Croft/Tesco riot," *Louder Than War*, April 24, 2011. http://louderthanwar.com/an-eye-witness-account-of-the-bristol-stokes-crofttescos-riot-from-kerry-mccarthy-mp/.

brought out deeper issues regarding unequal access to space. The displacement of poor and nonwhite populations from their areas, the hostile takeover of these areas by the "new posh population"—that is, richer, "whiter," more powerful groups—and the role of the state in facilitating this process by specifically targeting particular groups of "spatial undesirables" were all contributing factors. Most of all, however, the riot was an outcry against "race" and class-based territorial aggression. As Resin's report—representative of most accounts I heard over the following days—continues:

> When, on my way home, I spoke to a bunch of local black kids and asked "Have you heard that the new Tesco got smashed?" they looked at me with confusion and asked "No, and this is bad isn't it?" My impression is that people joined the riot for different reasons: the harassment of squatters, ethical/political issue with Tesco, the commodification of Stokes Croft, the anti-cuts sentiment. And the black kids from St. Pauls probably have their own accounts they need to settle with police.

The riot resulted in numerous injuries and hospitalizations on the side of the protesters, eight injured police officers, and eighty-five arrests. In the following days, police released CCTV images of suspected rioters and urged the population to come forward and report anyone who may be connected to the clashes. Violence—although on a smaller scale—again flared a week later, and a week after that, while other parts of the country were similarly erupting. For a considerable length of time, the city was thus in a surreal state of semiemergency, as police aggressively patrolled the Stokes Croft and St Pauls areas from the air, arrested known activists on mere suspicion of possible involvement, and raided squats and paid-for dwellings alike. Our "high-security" squat was permanently surrounded by screaming sirens, the noise of helicopters flying low, and the intrusive finger of the police searchlight shining into the yard at all hours of night. Following the eviction of Telepathic Heights, attack was a very real possibility for all squatted spaces, and if Drew's militaristic approach to keeping our crew safe was socially counterproductive, it certainly was not unjustified. Faced with a threatening outside, he had gone from being one of the driving forces in creating a "Safe Space" for homeless people in the HUB, to a small-scale territorial overlord in our own compound, just as everyone from Hobbes to Oscar Newman had predicted.

The raid on Telepathic Heights took place in a political climate that saw squatters and political activists in Bristol actively harassed by the police, not

only due to their perceived status as illegitimate occupiers of space but also and especially because of their political beliefs more generally. Shortly before the riot, a nationwide string of undercover police operations within left-leaning activist circles had come to public attention. Police had been discovered to have placed agents like the notorious Mark Kennedy within activist groups, who had assumed elaborate false identities and lived complex double lives, sometimes for a considerable number of years. These infiltrators had not only fully participated in (and sometimes instigated) political actions, but also formed deep friendships and collaborations with the activists they were spying on. In a number of cases, they had had ongoing sexual relationships with unsuspecting women activists, some of which resulted in the birth of children. This literal infiltration of women's bodies as a way of infiltrating their community raises the question of whether a person can meaningfully consent to sexual relations with someone about whose identity and intentions they are being gravely and intentionally misled, not just by that person themselves but also by the state.[8] As one of the women put it: "We are psychologically damaged; it is like being raped by the state. We feel that we were sexually abused because none of us gave consent."[9] However, these invasions of female bodies were only the tip of the iceberg in what quickly emerged to be widespread and systematic surveillance of political groups. Its scope, and the fact that the infiltrators had managed to go unnoticed for such a long time, was perceived as extremely disturbing by activists all over the country. One could not help but wonder who in one's own social circle would be the cop, if there was one. Specifically in the context of squatting, it was also not unreasonable to assume that the police would anticipate resistance to the new law and attempt to gather information beforehand, and so infiltration of the "scene" was a likely prospect. Some more optimistic squatters proposed that the widespread unease was a deliberately created effect—to plant the seed of mistrust in activist circles was almost as good (read: destructive) as infiltrating them—and that true to the anarchist adage that you must "kill the

8.   Seven of these women received an apology as well as compensation from the Metropolitan Police for these acts in an out-of-court settlement in 2015. No criminal charges were brought as case law did not provide sufficient grounds to class the officers' conduct as "rape" in the sense of the law. http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/latest_news/charging_decision_concerning_mps_special_demonstration_squad/.

9.   Paul Lewis, Rob Evans, and Sorcha Pollack, "Trauma of spy's girlfriend: 'Like being raped by the state,'" *Guardian*, June 24, 2013. https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/jun/24/undercover-police-spy-girlfriend-child.

cop inside your head" (Shantz and Williams 2013: 133), we should not let this tactic undermine our ability to trust one another. But despite such calls to unity, suspicion added to the growing pressure on squatters, and what had once been a relaxed and highly social lifestyle became increasingly fragmented and tense.

The suspicious atmosphere also made it more difficult for me to engage in the activities commonly recognized as "research"—that is, asking questions and taking notes. The rampant distrust of any intelligence-gathering made it necessary to curb any such activity first and foremost in order to demonstrate that one understood what was at stake. Not asking questions—even otherwise innocuous ones, such as where somebody had spent the previous evening—thus became a way of demonstrating one's allegiance to the "scene." After a while, I found myself developing a strange kind of reverse paranoia, becoming increasingly concerned people would believe *I* was out to get *them* (I was, in fact, accused of being a cop a handful of times, once because apparently I was "too clean" for a squatter). In this situation, journalists from recognizable media outlets fared comparatively better than I did as an ethnographer, since their interest required no justification. Thus it fell to the magazine *Vice* to run an astonishingly candid article on the growing police repression against anarchists, which I will use here in lieu of original interviews in order to protect my respondents, and to cite only what people have deliberately chosen to put into the public sphere. Although it was written several years after the riot, the statements made can be seen as representative of ongoing police repression from 2011 onward.

Vice writes: "Activists from across the anarchist community say the police have been targeting them arbitrarily and indiscriminately. They say individual activists have been harassed, houses raided, work places visited and arrests made without charges," and cites "Jon" (certainly an alias), a member of an anarchist union:

> One morning he [Jon] arrived at his workplace to an email from his boss asking for a meeting. When he turned up, he was told the police had visited the office with a dossier of "evidence" citing him as a domestic extremist, and someone that "might not be suitable to work with children." As a person whose job involves helping young people with emotional difficulties, the suggestion was that he should be fired.[10]

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10. Philip Kleinfeld, "Bristol's Anarchists Are Being Caught Up in a Police Crack Down," *Vice*, January 13, 2015. http://www.vice.com/en_uk/read/the-police-are-cracking-down-on-bristols-anarchists-833.

Jon explains further:

> The stuff they provided as evidence was articles I'd written anonymously, on whether prison was an effective form of rehabilitation and whether underachievement in working class communities was down to the education system. No connection between me and any group was alleged or mentioned. It really seemed that their main concern was that I held anarchist views.[11]

Other activists, according to the article, found that police had tapped their phones or read their email, and some woke up in the middle of the night to having their house raided. An activist named Alan (another alias) recounts:

> I woke up and found my house full of police . . . and when I say full I mean literally—it was hard to move around. They took away a friend that was staying at my house and went through all the communal areas for hours. As well as taking electronic stuff like a hard drive and laptop, they seemed to be bagging anything that looked political. The arrested guy came back two hours later released without charge on police bail. They had no evidence at all. The whole point was to intimidate people and build up a sense that you are being watched the whole time.[12]

Sometime after the riot, Bristol anarchist groups published a statement, summarizing the view that these tactics were intended to create fear and division:

> These home visits, arrests, searches and requests to snitch are not just about information and evidence gathering. They have as much to do with a concerted effort to intimidate and divide us all. A big part of their plan is to scare people into inaction and to create divisions between us. They hope to get us blaming each other for increased surveillance to the point where someone falls for their lies and starts talking to the bad guys. These are tactics that have been used against social movements in countless places and times.[13]

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11. Kleinfeld, *Vice*.

12. Kleinfeld, *Vice*.

13. "Statement against Police Harassment," *Bristol Anarchist Black Cross*, October 15, 2014. https://bristolabc.wordpress.com/2014/10/15/statement-against-police-harassment/.

Introducing fear of each other—also known as a "divide and conquer" approach—is a well-known technique of power. A single successful infiltration can leave long-lasting scars on a community, as regardless of what kind of information has been procured, the very fact of infiltration itself destroys social coherence by introducing suspicion and secrecy. A related tactic is the cooption of some members of the opponent's community through alternating reward and punishment. The police employ this strategy by rewarding "snitching," and simultaneously by singling out particular individuals for harassment in order to separate them from the flock. In order to apply pressure to a person, it is extremely effective to target their social environment. Where connections are not strong enough to counter the move, others around the targeted person may decide that the best way to rid themselves of the police is to rid themselves of the person the police are after. The social isolation following police harassment added additional psychological pressure, and suicide among political activists was not uncommon.

DEATH AND SANCTIONS

Deliberate pressure on the part of the police was not the only thing weighing on activist's minds. Beyond the sites of physical struggle, another struggle was raging, less visible but no less serious. For most squatters, access to money was intermittent and uncertain, and while squatting itself removed some of the resulting pressure, other things—food, equipment, transport—needed to be sourced. To an extent, the need for monetary income ran counter to the collectivist economics of squatting. As much as squatters emphasized their disdain for private property and the communitarian nature of their practice, when it came to money, collectivism quickly gave way to individualization. Although space and material resources were most often pooled, there were few efforts to pool cash outside of the most intimate relationships, and thus the circulation of money became somewhat of the Achilles' heel of the community's egalitarian spirit. When it came to cash, it was more or less every person to themselves, and thus earning potential—through labor or by other means—became a tacit but omnipresent mark of distinction even within the most closely entwined groups.

Squatting complicated access to wage labor—few employers considered applicants with no fixed address, and the constant time-intensive process of eviction and moving on put an impossible strain on most conventional

working arrangements. Squatters who worked thus focused on a number of specific lines of employment, particularly seasonal labor on the "festival circuit" or on farms that provided accommodation for the duration of employment, which provided a financial cushion over the work-free winter months. Spring regularly saw a small exodus from Bristol's squats and sites, as residents made their annual pilgrimage to jobs as litter- and fruit pickers, security guards, and van drivers. In our crew, Ralph was the most successful in finding employment of this kind. Equipped with a truck license and a security qualification, he would secure work early in the year, drive from festival to festival during the season, and then "retire" to a squat on his earnings over the winter. Litter picking, in particular, was backbreaking work, but it was sought-after since in addition to modest wages, one could usually find all manner of useful things more affluent festival-goers had lost or carelessly thrown away among the rubbish. Ralph, whose career had progressed from simple picker to team leader, often proudly presented me with treasures that had come into his possession, as the original owner either could not be identified or would not have wanted to. The latter concerned the previous owners of drugs—amphetamine, cocaine, cannabis—which could be picked up in abundance after music festivals, and weapons such as knives and pepper spray, all of which reliably remained unclaimed. But there was also less conspicuous fare, such as camping equipment, phones, cameras, tools, and expensive clothing to be claimed among the waste, and the fact that the owners of such items seldom bothered to search for them confirmed picker's view that keeping the stuff constituted legitimate redistribution of wealth.

Apart from seasonal labor, work was intermittent and precarious. A few squatters ran small informal businesses—repair work, deliveries, jewelry-making, or collecting scrap metal—while a handful could rely on family for emergency support. One squatter had famously received an inheritance of one hundred thousand pounds, an almost unimaginable fortune for those who could not expect to make that much money within the next decade. For the less privileged, however, the chief way of obtaining monetary income outside of casual labor was welfare, known in Britain as "benefits." Benefits were claimed in the form of tax credits for those in low-paid employment, unemployment benefits ("Job Seekers Allowance" or JSA), or disability and sickness payments. Most squatters on work-related benefits did not "sign on" (claim) continuously, but if and when money was needed for specific expenses, while for the sick or disabled—including the mentally ill—their benefits were often

the only source of money at all. Following the coalition government's public sector cuts, however, access to benefits was becoming increasingly more difficult.

Since 2010, the coalition had targeted not only the civil service but specifically the welfare budget for savings, with further cuts announced on an almost weekly basis by then chancellor George Osborne. The "cuts" agenda was clad in a rhetoric that framed the welfare state as both overly generous and rife with fraud and exploitation: "The welfare system is broken," Osborne programmatically announced on the BBC, "we have to accept that the welfare bill has got completely out of control and that there are five million people living on permanent out-of-work benefits. That is a tragedy for them and fiscally unsustainable for us."[14] His turn of phrase was carefully chosen: "they," the benefit recipients, were cast as an entirely separate group from "us" who had to pay for them, implying that none of "us" would ever find ourselves in their position. Osborne left no doubt that this division was not simply an economic but rather a moral one: the "tragedy" he was referring to was not just the putative creation of "welfare dependency"—a staple specter of the conservative imagination—but even more insidiously, the habit of welfare recipients to deliberately "sponge" off the taxpaying populace to fund a life of *dolce far niente*: "People who think it is a lifestyle to sit on out-of-work benefits . . . that lifestyle choice is going to come to an end. The money will not be there for that lifestyle choice."[15] Regardless of the fact that the government's own research put the actual incidence of benefit fraud consistently around 0.7 percent of total benefit expenditure,[16] the coalition's strategy of selling the "cuts" to the populace turned on the narrative that benefit fraud was rife, premeditated, and highly damaging to the fiscal health of the nation and their own.

This narrative, of course, was neither new nor particularly original. It was another rendition of the age-old distinction between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor (see Cullen 1994; Fassin 2005; Kingfisher 2001; Schneider 1999; Susser 1996; Vincent 1993), a well-trodden theme. What was new—at

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14. Patrick Wintour, "George Osborne to cut £4bn more from benefits," *Guardian*, September 9, 2010. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/sep/09/george-osborne-cut-4bn-benefits-welfare.

15. Osborne, cited in Wintour, *Guardian*.

16. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/benefit-fraud-and-error-hard-work-must-continue-to-cut-35bn-loss.

least from the perspective of those members of the squatting scene who relied on benefits—were the media-driven strategies the government employed to anchor this distinction in the minds of the populace. The "undeserving" poor were not merely portrayed as bedraggled unfortunates in need of bourgeois reform, but rather more malignantly, as deliberate criminals who stole honest working people's taxes to fund lavish lifestyles. The tabloid press garnished this narrative with lurid tales of purportedly disabled people playing golf, and single mothers of twelve spending thousands on lavish foreign holidays. A poster campaign by the DWP encouraged citizens to anonymously report anyone they suspected of illicit welfare receipt to the National Benefit Fraud Hotline, with the words "We're closing in on benefit thieves with the help of hundreds of calls to our hotline" printed above the picture of a person in the crosshairs of a spy glass. A host of television shows with names like *Britain on the Fiddle* and *Saints and Scroungers* turned the surveillance of suspected fraudsters by covert detection teams into entertainment. It was a carefully engineered national witch hunt, designed to avert mass opposition to the cuts by entirely obscuring them. The persecution of supposed "thieves" made the rolling-back of the welfare state appear as a form of criminal justice.

At the same time, conditions for the unemployed (recast as "job seekers") were tightened, increasingly relying on "sanctions" (temporary withdrawal of welfare payments) for noncompliance with the demands of the Jobcentre (unemployment office) of between four weeks and three years. While sanctions had long been possible, the coalition strongly expanded their use. Shortly after, stories began to emerge of unemployed people being sanctioned for the tiniest of infractions, like being a few minutes late for an appointment at the Jobcentre because of traffic disruptions, or failing to apply for jobs on Christmas Day. In theory, the government provided so-called "hardship grants" to those sanctioned, but in practice, Jobcentre staff were directed not to mention these unless directly asked, leaving those not informed enough to ask without any monetary income at all for extended periods of time. The resulting situation is aptly depicted in Ken Loach's 2016 film *I, Daniel Blake*, which shows the eponymous protagonist, a middle-aged British man who after long years of employment finds himself unable to work for health reasons, trying and failing to navigate the Kafkaesque bureaucracy of the Jobcentre. In order to access benefits, Blake has to undergo an assessment of his health by a private government contractor known as a "Work Capability Assessment" (WCA). WCAs were introduced in 2008 under a Labour government, but the coalition significantly

overhauled them, with new eligibility criteria coming into force in 2011. The changes meant that millions of people on sickness benefits were moved to a new regime, which grouped them according to their "fitness for work." The assessments were administered by Atos, a French-based IT services company, and Capita, a multinational outsourcer,[17] who quickly gained a reputation for staggering incompetence. The assessments consisted of a short interview with more-or-less medically trained staff, a box-ticking exercise that soon proved to be wholly inadequate to assess particularly invisible illnesses and mental health difficulties. If a person was found to be "fit for work," they were summarily informed that they no longer had any claim to sickness benefits, and pointed toward the Jobcentre, where they were liable to sanctions.

It did not take long for the devastating consequences of these assessments to emerge. Disability campaigners and support workers pointed toward the ludicrousness of assessment criteria:

the test rests on questions like "Can you raise your hands above your shoulders?" As end of life care professionals know, even people who are dying—who may have to answer just such a question—can often do this; (We Are Spartacus 2012: 4)

the rigid mode of assessment coupled with flat-out fabrications:

Clients are still saying the assessor barely looked at them but focussed on the computer—still getting cases where the assessor has said the client did something ie picked up a handbag, got onto the couch without difficulty, takes the dog for a walk every day—when they didn't have a handbag, didn't get onto the couch and don't have a dog; (We Are Spartacus 2012: 8)

the seemingly willful refusal of assessors to acknowledge the nature of certain kinds of impairment:

My client has had brain damage since a massive haemorrhage/coma at the age of 22. This has left him with a short term memory of 20 minutes. He doesn't remember me, or my voice, and keeps extensive diaries of daily events so he can record what he has to do. He has been found capable of work 3 times, and on one occasion he lost his home, because he couldn't remember what he had

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17. Later to be replaced by Maximus, a similar company, after a public outcry.

to do to appeal. (IS [Income Support] stopped, so I presume HB [Hosing Benefit] stopped, although we will never know as he doesn't remember); (We Are Spartacus 2012: 7)

and on more than one occasion, the DWP's apparent complete detachment from reality:

Client's husband is in hospital in a coma. He was sent ESA50 [form]. Client contacted DWP to explain situation and was asked to obtain letter from hospital confirming he is in a coma. Did so. . . . Husband has now received decision letter—yep, as he has failed to return the ESA50 without good cause and is therefore capable of work and no longer entitled to ESA [Employment and Support Allowance]. You couldn't make it up. (We Are Spartacus 2012: 9)

The reforms were ostensibly designed to reduce the welfare budget by bringing more people into work, but the simultaneous campaign to associate welfare with criminality meant that anyone in receipt of benefits—whether they were able to work or not—came under suspicion of "faking it." The Black Triangle Campaign, a group of disability activists named after the infamous symbol the Nazis forced upon those they deemed "work-shy," pointed to an "unprecedented rise in disability hate crime" as a result of the government's "if a man will not work he shall not eat"[18] policy.[19] Those found "fit for work" struggled under the regime of sanctions, which left thousands without any form of income for prolonged periods of time. The stress of navigating this system led to the health of many recipients deteriorating; and for some, there were lethal consequences. When the Scottish writer Paul Reekie took his own life in 2010 at the age of 48, a letter confirming that his benefits would be stopped was found close to his body.[20] His suicide was the first recorded by Calum's List, a website devoted to documenting welfare reform related deaths, which since has collected sixty detailed case studies.[21]

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18. Margaret Thatcher quoting St. Paul, 1988. https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107246.

19. http://blacktrianglecampaign.org.

20. "Author's suicide 'due to slash in benefits,'" *The Scotsman*, July 24, 2010. https://www.scotsman.com/news/author-s-suicide-due-to-slash-in-benefits-1-1367963.

21. http://calumslist.org/.

As China Mills (2017) points out, it is difficult to estimate the precise number of welfare-reform related suicides, because while the DWP collects mortality statistics (according to which, 2,380 people died after being found "fit for work" between December 2011 and February 2014), these numbers do not specify the cause of death. At the same time, Mills argues, news coverage of suicides has followed a common sense narrative of individual pathology, linking suicide to preexisting "mental illness" rather than the wider social and political context of austerity. Mills contrasts this stance with Frantz Fanon's (1967) discussion of the psychopolitics of colonialism, and the ways that persecution and exploitation "get under people's skin" to produce what psychology narrowly defines as individualized symptoms. "For Fanon, this is a process of 'epidermalisation,' where anxiety and inferiority as a product of hierarchies is made flesh and lived through the body" (Mills 2017: 9). In much the same way, Mills argues, the negative attributions utilized to "sell" welfare reform to the public become internalized, until those accused of lack of "fitness" and social value come to think of themselves as worthless. "Austerity is lived and felt as affective force and atmospheric fear, a pervasive psychological and bodily anxiety, shame, and anger, differing in intensity at different times, and fatiguing the body—physically and psychologically wearing it out" (2017: 12). Mills therefore suggests that the language of individual pathology obscures the role of culture in producing individual states of mind, which become intelligible only if read in parallel with the social conditions under which they arise: "People are killing themselves because they feel exactly the way the government is telling them they should feel—a burden" (2017: 14).

That this is not merely a manner of speaking becomes apparent when once again considering Tanya Luhrmann's (2007) discussion of "social defeat" and its link to psychosis, specifically schizophrenia. Luhrmann asks why it is that a low class status, being a member of a subordinate ethnic group, and being an immigrant all significantly raise a person's risk of being diagnosed with psychotic illness. While racial bias on the part of clinicians can account for some of this discrepancy—people of color are more likely to be diagnosed with a "low status" mental illness like schizophrenia than whites, who are more likely to be diagnosed as bipolar—the effect is too pronounced and ubiquitous to be merely a diagnostic artifact. Luhrmann points to research by psychiatrist Jean Paul Selten, who showed that in animals, actual physical defeat leads to an activation of dopaminergic pathways in the brain, the very same pathways that are also implicated in the genesis of psychosis. Selten therefore speculates that in humans,

chronic and long-term experiences of powerlessness and disparagement have a similar effect, accounting for the prevalence of psychosis especially in groups with a low social status. These results are interesting, Luhrmann argues, because they provide a framing of schizophrenia that avoids past excesses in attributing the illness either solely to socialization (primarily the "schizophrenogenic mother") or to coincidental individual pathology. Instead, they acknowledge the culture-bound dimension of mental illness: "You would expect individuals to experience social defeat when they have an encounter with another person who demeans them, humiliates them, subordinates them. . . . Social defeat is not so much an idea that someone holds but a human encounter" (2007: 151). This rendition of the social genesis of mental illness is decidedly un-Foucauldian in that it aims not so much at the "social construction" of the categories of sanity and madness but rather at the physical effect of social power on embodied cognition.

Luhrmann's argument perhaps warrants a caveat: while animal models can be immensely helpful in establishing the neurobiological correlates of social encounters, when applied to humans, they also carry the risk of naturalizing particular forms of social interaction, thus placing them outside the realm of cultural critique or intervention. While it is plausible that some experiences of denigration, humiliation, and subordination are an inescapable part of human sociality—Maurice Bloch's concept of the "transactional social" would certainly suggest so—the examples of "social defeat" Luhrmann cites from the ethnographic literature are not limited to such direct personal interactions. Whether patients in psychiatric care (Estroff 1981), the homeless (Desjarlais 1997; Hopper 1988, 2003; Lovell 1997), or the rural Irish respondents of Nancy-Scheper Hughes's ethnography (1979), experiences of denigration in personal interactions are always also embedded in broader social and cultural contexts. This becomes even more obvious in research that links the risk of schizophrenia to class (Harrison et al. 2001), ethnicity (Halpern 1993; Boydell et al. 2001), immigration status (Selten and Cantor-Graae 2005; Selten et al. 2002; Bhugra et al. 1997; Bhugra 2004; Harrison et al. 1997; King et al. 1994; McGrath et al. 2004; Van Os et al. 1996; Wessely et al. 1991), and urban upbringing (Harrison et al. 2003). While these broader categories are continually enacted in personal relationships, these enactments only become intelligible within the context of enduring social categorizations, or what Bloch would call the "transcendental social." In order to understand how experiences of "social defeat" on the grounds of class or "race" relate to mental illness, it is therefore necessary to look beyond

individual power differentials to the cultural "superstructure" that produces classed or racialized bodies in a hierarchical relation to one another, and thus, to make these cultural categories amenable to deliberate change.

That said, the concept of "social defeat" provides an interesting backdrop to Fanon's "epidermalization" as the internalization of the negative attributions of a more powerful other. In the same way that suicide can be seen as the internalized wish to annihilate the "unfit," so schizophrenia, which is commonly associated with paranoia or the hearing of persecutory voices, can be interpreted as the internalization of the persecution the chronically "socially defeated" actually experience. I came to this conclusion through my relationship with one of my long-term informants, a man named Arthur who, although not a squatter, hung around the fringes of the "scene." Arthur was certainly an unusual character: he was the only genuinely "posh" (as in, "to the manor born") person I met during my fieldwork, and I only owed this encounter to the fact that a long and complex history of mental illness had effectively left him destitute and relying on benefits. Exactly what had led to Arthur's downfall was never fully established, but in addition to his own troubles, there seemed to be a complicated family history, several lost fortunes, and a fair amount of politics involved. These misfortunes notwithstanding, Arthur reveled in the habitus of a splendidly camp English gentleman of the colonial era, which stood in stark contrast to his pitiful economic status. He lived in a decrepit basement flat funded by housing benefit, which he managed to hold on to despite always being in several months of arrears (a fact that taught me the importance of accent for getting away with things in Britain). Afflicted by a limp, the result of a failed suicide attempt years earlier, he carried a walking cane with a genuine silver knob, wore flamboyant velvet jackets, and visibly flinched at "lower class" expletives. He was private-school educated and exceptionally erudite, and over the years, imparted on me a wealth of knowledge about British history, literature, and politics, as well as enough of a faux "upper" habitus to get away with one or two things myself (and make a number of working-class people instinctively hate my guts).

Over long periods of time, Arthur was also what he himself referred to as "bonkers." His madness had begun merely as a tendency for colorful narration. He was known to spin a good yarn after a few drinks, and initially, I suspected he occasionally just got carried away. Gradually, however, his stories became more and more implausible, and eventually, entirely left the realm of the physically possible. He began to see spies following him around, was convinced the

police and MI5 were watching him, and eventually arrived at a complex con-
spiracy theory that was as fantastic as it was internally coherent. According to
him, certain members of the British elite held a grudge against him due to some
kind of unforgivable faux pas he had committed, and had therefore set secret
government agencies upon him who would not rest until they had gruesomely
and publicly tortured him to death. His florid descriptions of the gory torture
the British establishment allegedly planned to inflict upon him was enough to
finally convince me he had lost touch with reality, along with the fact that all
this was supposed to involve vigorous sword fighting. Alas, my protestations
that surely one would read about such bestial practices in the papers fell on deaf
ears. As implausible as Arthur's beliefs appeared to everyone else, for him, the
possibility of imminent torture and death was a terrifying reality, and he spent
his days in a state of genuine paralyzing fear for his life that was difficult to
witness. He eventually received psychiatric treatment, but since he also drank
to cope with the intense anxiety, mental health services categorized him as an
alcoholic rather than a schizophrenic. This meant that in order to access any
specific treatment for his beliefs, he had to consent to detox from alcohol first,
which he—perhaps realistically—assumed he would not be able to cope with.
He thus remained unmedicated apart from drink and whatever tranquilizers
he could talk the doctor into prescribing, until years later he would finally be
diagnosed with schizophrenia.

In a psychiatric paradigm, which is prone to casting the suffering as "charac-
ters" defined by a fixed set of symptoms (Desjarlais 1997: 108), Arthur suffered
from a textbook case of paranoid delusions. Most of his associates therefore
dismissed him as stark raving mad, even if occasionally entertainingly so, and
stopped paying attention to the content of his beliefs. If one looked past the
medieval imagery and outlandish claims of occult sacrifice, however, one could
gain the impression that while disproportionate, Arthur's anxieties were not en-
tirely unfounded. The onset of his illness had coincided with the government's
campaign against "scroungers," and as a disabled person on Incapacity Benefit,
he was among those who, in the course of welfare reform, had to undergo a
Work Capability Assessment administered by Atos. This resulted in a barrage
of letters threatening him with loss of his benefits, and a drawn-out process to
convince the DWP that he was indeed entirely unfit for work. Arthur did not
own a computer or have internet access, but spending his nights—and most
of his days—at the pub, he had his ear firmly to the ground when it came to
the details of the approaching welfare reforms. He was aware of the grotesque

nature of assessment and the wretched destitution inflicted on the disabled who failed to prove their disability, and being closely familiar with the nuances of British politics, correctly placed these developments within a general lurch to the political Right long before most of us others did. He was aware of the cuts-related evictions, sanctions, and suicides, and he knew that prone to depression and anxiety as he was at the best of times, he would not be able to cope with this for very long.

As someone who had grown up occupying a high social status, it must also have been glaringly obvious to him how low he had sunk in social esteem on account of being poor and disabled. It was therefore not entirely untrue that he had, in a way, violated the etiquette of the British elite by joining the ranks of the lower classes, and given the close entanglement of this elite with current politics, it was also not completely false to say that it had put the government onto punishing Arthur for his crime. He could also have been forgiven for believing that he was being watched—the DWP itself was making a point of informing the populace that this was exactly what was taking place. One of its posters, prominently displayed in public, read "Benefit Thieves! Do you know who's following you? Undercover fraud investigators are operating in this area," above the picture of a man anxiously looking over his shoulder. "Benefit Thieves! Our technology is tracking you!" read another. The DWP also made no secret of its intention to inflict suffering on those affected by sanctions. Its own guidance documents admitted that "it would be usual for a normal healthy adult to suffer some deterioration in their health if they were without 1. essential items, such as food, clothing, heating and Accommodation or 2. sufficient money to buy essential items for a period of two weeks" (DWP 2017). The lowest possible sanction lasted four weeks. Moreover, the DWP was quite candid about the fact that it considered some damage to claimant's health par for the course, and only in exceptional cases took it as a reason not to sanction: "The DM [decision maker] must determine if a person with a medical condition would suffer a *greater* decline in health than a normal healthy adult and would suffer hardship" (DWP 2017; emphasis in original). Compare this to Article 1.1. of the United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT):

> The term "torture" means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as . . . intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on

discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.[22]

UNCAT explicitly excludes from this definition "pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in, or incidental to, lawful sanctions," although from the perspective of the suffering, it arguably makes little difference if their pain is inflicted in a lawful manner or not. It was even undeniably true that the establishment forces behind welfare reform were making a public spectacle of "torturing" Arthur, at least in as far as the persecution of "benefit thieves" was broadcast on all channels as entertainment. Not even his belief that the final aim of all this was his demise was easily brushed off. In addition to the suicides, welfare reform had been found to lead to the deaths of claimants in a number of ways, such as in the case of David Clapson, 59, a military veteran who died alone, starving, and destitute after a benefit sanction left him unable to maintain his medication regime for diabetes.[23]

Looking past Arthur's fantastic imagery, one could therefore say that on some level, everything he said was entirely accurate. He had indeed fallen from grace socially, he was indeed being persecuted with the intention of inflicting pain and suffering on him, and the government was indeed pursuing a strategy pertinent to making a public spectacle of killing him—just not in the literal way he believed. The old adage, "just because I'm paranoid doesn't mean that they're not out to get me" certainly seemed to apply here. If anything, Arthur suffered from an overabundance of metaphor, a narratively distorted, personalized account of a really existing terror that rendered his experience difficult to interpret for both himself and others. Robert Desjarlais makes a similar observation about one of his homeless respondents, who speaks in "metaphors, similes, and other poetic tropes . . . constantly spinning a web of significances that linked words and feelings and matter through a contiguity of qualities whose most essential features were often colored by the defining aspects of his life; a sense of failure, despondency, and marginality" (1997: 161). But where Desjarlais finds these metaphors "often too dissimilar for their own good," once one made the effort

22.   https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/39/a39r046.htm.

23.   James Lyons, "Killed by benefits cuts: Starving soldier died 'as result of Iain Duncan Smith's welfare reform,'" *Mirror*, July 27, 2014. https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/killed-benefits-cuts-starving-soldier-3923771.

to learn the iconography of Arthur's beliefs, it turned out that his metaphors had factual bones, and that his appreciation of the grand scheme of things was surprisingly astute. To speak with Fanon, it was as if he had taken the "struggle to the death" implicit in welfare reform under his skin, and clad it in an imagery of a chivalrous combat of good against evil. The inner world he had created in the process was not inherently madder than that of the author J. R. R. Tolkien, who is said to have dealt with the trauma of WWII by rendering it a fantastic epic in which elves, trolls, and orcs battle for a place called Middle Earth. The difference between Arthur and Tolkien was that Arthur was no longer capable of reflecting on the fact that he was doing this; he remained trapped in his terrifying parallel universe, ready to draw blades at any point.

To read Arthur's experience as happenstance individual pathology misses the mark, but so does explaining it in terms of a theory of "social defeat" that remains at the level of transactional interactions. Compared to most of his associates, Arthur had a wealth of social capital to draw on, and his demeanor ensured that in everyday interactions, he was more often than not treated with respect. His chronic experience of "defeat" was not inflicted by individual others so much as by the impersonal institutional power of the state, and accordingly, the conspiracies he saw against him were vast, hidden, and shrouded in mystery. Perhaps the slightly grandiose nature of his beliefs—he was being persecuted, after all, because he was a high-born person of importance—was his way of sealing his skin against another, even deadlier epidermalization. If sanction-related suicides speak of the internalization of the message that one is no longer considered worth keeping alive, then perhaps Arthur was taking refuge from this fact in a world where at least his suffering had meaning. In any case, we cannot make sense of what is going on here if we interpret "social defeat" as merely a matter of direct dominance relations. In order to talk about "social defeat" in terms of culture, we need to consider the transcendental level on which groups like "the disabled," "immigrants," and others are constructed in relation to other groups and experience denigration qua their membership in their particular social group. It is therefore helpful here to once again turn to Axel Honneth and interpret this transcendental social as the sphere of human relations that goes beyond immediate embodied encounters, to incorporate legal and political aspects of sociality. Honneth's description of "misrecognition" on a personal level are not so different from those of "social defeat." Attacks on the integrity of the embodied person surely share some features in common with physical defeat among nonhuman animals. Beyond that, however, misrecognition can

also constitute an assault on a person's legal status—for example, in removing disability rights from some people and turning them into "job seekers"—and importantly, on their political status as per their membership of certain social groups, such as the disabled. These forms of misrecognition do not occur instead of, but in concert with, and mediated through the more basic, personalized form. Political denigration impacts the embodied self as much as personal denigration as the transcendental gets under the skin.

The opposite of this kind of "social defeat" is not "social victory" but rather solidarity, which according to Honneth is another term for mutual recognition on a political level. The fact that within the squatting scene, psychotic illness was relatively rare (certainly rarer than in street homelessness) could be in part due to the fact that political organizing provided this kind of recognition for its members. It certainly did a better job of recognizing their embodied subjectivity than the welfare system did, although the bar in this case was set depressingly low. At the same time, however, the movement had to contend with the fact that it was embedded in a social context that did its best to undermine solidarity at every turn, be it by sowing mistrust, by scapegoating, or by turning survival into an isolated, individualized struggle against a vast and indifferent bureaucracy. Perhaps it should be no surprise that under these circumstances some, like Drew and Arthur, "cracked." Perhaps it is more surprising that so few people did, as state pressure in all its many guises increasingly chipped away at their ability to recognize themselves and others.

DISPATCH

The note is written in all capitals, in black marker on the back of an insurance certifi-cate. I find it attached to the door of my caravan, no sender, no signature, no response expected.

> *ST WERBURGHS ROAD IS NOT A CARAVAN PARK!*
> *IT IS A COMMUNITY AND LOVE OUR AREA.*
> *YOUR CARAVAN IS OBSTRUCTING.*
> *IT IS UNLAWFUL TO LEAVE CARAVANS UNATTACHED TO A VEHI-CLE. THERE ARE SPECIAL CARAVAN PARKS TO STORE CARAVANS OUR STREET IS NOT ONE.*
> *WE ARE REPRTING TO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND BE YOUR CARAVAN MAY BE TOWED AWAY IN THE NEAR FUTURE.*
> *THE POLICE HAVE BEEN INFORMED TOO.*
> *OUR COMMUNITY IS ON THE CASE.*

I'm not particularly surprised to find it there, although I was expecting to get a lit-tle more time out of the spot. I've been parked up there for two days. Jon chose the spot. After a decade of roadside parking, he knows every alleyway in and around Bristol. "Outside the scout home no one can say a thing," he said. "You're not on anyone's door-step." Judging from the note, somebody's doorstep extends across the road.

My caravan is the last of three, neatly lined up at the end of a cul-de-sac border-ing on allotments. Two of them—mine and the one at the end—have their metal legs down, a sign to the attentive observer that they are inhabited. If a caravan is just parked, one would not bother with the legs. But a caravan that's in use must be stabilized so it does not rock back and forth on its middle axis. I wonder for a minute if the letter writer realizes this.

While I undo the assortment of bolts and padlocks that lock the barn door, I feel a *kind of defiant exhilaration about the note.* This is great material, *I say to myself,* I can stick that I my thesis, as evidence. *For a minute, I fantasize about the day my adventures will be published in book form, and how embarrassed the note writer will feel when he realizes he has not been targeting just a roadside parker but an actual an-thropologist.* I wasn't really there you know. I was doing research. I was exposing

you and your intolerant middle-class ways and repulsive grammar, you bastard. Now feel bad about yourself.

Then I realize how utterly ridiculous I am being. No one around here gives a flying fuck about whether or not I consider myself an anthropologist: not my friends and certainly not my foes. For all intents and purposes, I am living in a caravan by the roadside because I have nowhere else to live and no money. This is not a game.

Circle the wagons

After moving my vehicles out of the yard, I relied heavily on my friend Jon, a seasoned vehicle dweller, to introduce me to the rules of roadside parking. Jon had "parked up" throughout the West Country for decades and knew every hidden, safe spot in Bristol; as I soon learned, there were many of them. Once I could spot the signs that a vehicle was inhabited—a caravan with its metal "feet" down, a van with a discreetly placed chimney—I realized that there was a whole hidden layer of habitation to the city. Vans and caravans congregated in backstreets, around green squares, and on designated sites throughout Bristol and the surrounding areas. In 2011, there were three large sites[1] in the city: one of them was "legitimate" (that is, tolerated) and situated on a piece of land adjacent to a large, multistory abandoned building near Stokes Croft; the other two were not sites as much as they were mobile groups of vehicle dwellers, who moved from property to property in the same way that pedestrian squatters did: finding a way in, pulling up, securing the place, waiting for eviction. Although there was a large degree of social interaction between squatters and

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1. The term "site" was generally used by vehicle-dwellers to refer to an area where one was individually or collectively parked up. Groups of vehicle-dwellers were occasionally referred to as a "site," even when in transit, in the same way as groups of squatters were referred to as "a squat" even when between actual houses. The term was also used as an adjective: one was "sited" in a specific location, or "sited" as opposed to in transit.

site-dwellers, the two groups were nevertheless distinct and followed their own rules and agendas. Vehicle dwellers had a particular set of problems of their own. The vans, lorries, and caravans they were using were usually old and required constant maintenance, and keeping up a supply of basic amenities such as water and electricity required a great amount of effort and technical skill. Although the use of "classic" cars (that is, cars more than fifteen years old) helped to reduce the normally prohibitive cost of compulsory insurance, the old vehicles also frequently broke down and required costly repair. Site evictions were thus more dramatic than squat evictions. While squatters could often simply pile into an existing squat until a new building was found, site evictions meant that up to thirty large, partly immobile, partly uninsured vehicles had to be driven or towed off and parked somewhere secure, which was often extremely difficult due to parking restrictions. Generators and communal equipment such as kitchens could not be used unless safely sited, and since every property could normally only be used once until it was evicted, sufficient space was hard to come by. Site dwellers therefore formed relatively closed communities, and joining a site was more difficult than joining a squatting crew. Since group size was a crucial factor in finding suitable sites, the number of newcomers had to be well considered, and to be invited to park up required connections and recommendations.

Those who did not have access to a site therefore simply parked wherever they could find a suitable space in the city, and throughout St Pauls, St Werburghs, and Easton, mobile mini-sites dotted the streets. My first park-up was located in a cul-de-sac in St Werburghs, a relatively affluent area populated by people who frequented the local organic foods shop, cultivated nearby allotments, and took pride in a generally "alternative" lifestyle. At night, sitting in the caravan by the light of a gas lamp, I could hear them singing pagan chants amid the vegetables while the people parked on their doorstep were trying to sleep. By daylight, some of them made calls to the local Community Support Officers (CSOs), who came around to read us the letter of the law. It was not illegal to *be* inside a vehicle by the roadside, but it was illegal to *sleep* in one, a notoriously difficult to prove offence, since by the time one answered the knock on the door, one was usually awake. CSOs do not have actual police powers, but one would not know this by their uniform and demeanor. After their first visit, a fellow street parker pointed out to me that I "didn't have to listen to them," but they pinned notices with intimidating legal warnings on my door regardless. Asked why people complained, they explained that the caravans were considered "eyesores"; the vehicle dwellers

themselves, however, thought that the caravans were unwelcome because of their symbolic association with Gypsies and Travellers.

This interpretation seems plausible in the light of the government campaign to criminalize squatting, which by this time was well underway. The efforts by Mike Weatherley and other MPs to push the "squatting ban" through parliament were accompanied by a sustained tabloid media outrage, which portrayed squatters as violent, antisocial quasi-burglars who stole people's homes from under their noses, and most importantly, were mostly foreigners. "FAMILY SHUT OUT OF THEIR DREAM HOME BY ROMANIAN SQUATTERS WHO MOVED IN OVER CHRISTMAS,"[2] one headline went; "HOTELIER LEAVES HOME FOR A WEEK SO IT CAN BE REDECORATED . . . THEN 15 JOBLESS ITALIAN SQUATTERS MOVE IN,"[3] went another. The headlines were designed to elicit fear ("SQUATTERS WRECKED MY HOUSE!")[4] and moral outrage that nothing was being done about the "problem" ("WHERE MY WIFE COMES FROM THEY SHOOT SQUATTERS").[5] Crucially, a point had to be made either of the foreign-born identity of the squatters ("KNIFE-WIELDING LITHUANIANS" lurked in every corner),[6] or to explicitly identify them as Gypsies, as in "GANGS OF ROMANIAN GYPSY SQUATTERS!"[7] and "GIPSY SQUATTER GANG TARGETING EMPTY HOMES AND MOVING IN."[8] One

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2.   "Family shut out of their 'dream home' by Romanian squatters who moved in over Christmas," *Daily Mail*, January 12, 2010. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1242682/Family-shut-dream-home-gang-gipsies-moved-Christmas.html.

3.   "Hotelier leaves home for a week so it can be decorated . . . then 15 jobless Italian squatters move in," *Daily Mail*, October 21, 2010. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1322246/Man-leaves-home-week-decorated-15-squatters-in.html.

4.   "Squatters wrecked my house," *Express*, August 17, 2011. http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/265459/Squatters-wrecked-my-house.

5.   "Where my wife comes from, they SHOOT squatters: Doctor whose £1m home was taken over by spongers hits out at the law," *Daily Mail*, September 9, 2011. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2035699/Squatters-shot-wife-comes-Doctor-1m-home-taken-spongers-hits-law.html.

6.   "Knife-wielding Lithuanian squatters who move in when residents go out," *Daily Mail*, September 24, 2010. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1314526/Knife-wielding-Lithuanian-squatters-residents-out.html.

7.   "Gang of Romanian gipsy squatters 'targeted several houses,'" *Telegraph*, August 17, 2011. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/8707490/Gang-of-Romanian-gipsy-squatters-targeted-several-houses.html.

8.   "Gipsy squatter gang 'targeting empty homes and moving in,'" *Evening Standard*, August 17, 2011. http://www.standard.co.uk/news/gipsy-squatter-gang-targeting-empty-homes-and-moving-in-6433811.html.

squatter alone—a Latvian man named Jason Ruddick who reportedly had a penchant for Highgate mansions—was the subject of no fewer than seventeen tabloid articles decrying the fact he had traveled "1500 miles to scrounge in 'soft-touch' Britain" and allegedly invited scores more unemployed Latvians to join him: Ruddick was "depicted as a folk-devil, 'the monster within'. . . coming from the 'wild outside' (Eastern Europe)" (Dadusc and Dee 2014: 114).

Deanna Dadusc and E. T. C. Dee describe these headlines as part of a "moral panic" (2014: 109) designed to politically pave the way for the criminalization of squatting. This stringently orchestrated campaign utilized several distinct but related discursive moves: in a first one, the government went to great lengths to categorically split squatters into the deserving "vulnerable homeless" (who, it was argued, should not be squatting but making use of homelessness services, the very services that were being closed down due to cuts) and undeserving "lifestyle squatters" who merely wished to avoid rent. A next step consisted in constructing a moral community comprising property owners and those aspiring to become property owners (that is, in terms of Tory ideology, all "decent" people), and setting the figure of the "lifestyle squatter" as its immoral other. This crucially involved utilizing the concept of home as a rallying point for the interests of the moral community. Squatters, according to the propagated myth, were not poor people attempting to secure shelter in the absence of any kind of spatial entitlement; conversely, they were arrogant rich people from abroad, maliciously "stealing" shelter from those who had worked hard to obtain it. This narrative of invaded "homes" concealed the fact that squatters, in the overwhelming majority of cases, targeted *vacant* properties, since squatting in an occupied building was already a criminal offence under Sections 6 and 7 of the Criminal Law Act 1977. Nevertheless, government and tabloids in unison focused on sensationalized (and often inaccurate) stories of "displaced occupiers" made homeless by squatters, recalling Margaret Thatcher's view: "Unfortunately, there was a persistent tendency in polite circles to consider all the 'roofless' as victims of middle-class society, rather than middle-class society as victim of the 'roofless'" (Thatcher, cited in Campbell 2011b: 395). Audiences were thus encouraged to identify with the horror and helplessness of homeowners at having their most intimate spaces violated by squatters who were "sleeping in people's beds, watching their TV and eating their food" (Mike Weatherley cited in Middleton 2014: 97), leaving them feeling "desecrated and dirty" (David Ward MP, cited in Middleton 2014: 97). In "taking somebody's home" squatters had thus "stolen from them one of the most important things for any of us" (Crispin

Blunt, then Justice Minister, cited in Middleton 2014: 97), making them not only spatial but also moral outsiders.

The disingenuous rhetorical conflation of "homes" and vacant properties was designed to produce a moral coalition of those who have "homes" and those who own properties—that is to say, anyone who has any kind of spatial entitlement. At the same time, it more or less subtly hinted at violence by using a vocabulary of "invasion" and "takeover," "battle" and "fight" (Middleton 2014: 99), which suggested that this spatial entitlement was threatened. Theodora Middleton points out that this type of discourse is geared toward constructing a "war-like conflict" between squatters and the "property owning democracy" that results from a fundamental moral difference: in "getting something for nothing," it was argued, squatters contravene the basic rule of fairness, which demands that in order to secure shelter, one must obey the laws of private property and the market (2014: 101). This discourse therefore drew on the principle of home as a place of fairness and distributive justice in order to legitimize a spatial regime of territorial dominions mediated by the market, in a fairly spectacular reversal. While reinforcing the conservative ideology of "trickle-down territorialism" by encouraging the public to defend its territory from intrusion, this discourse also specifically constructed a set of binary, hierarchical moral categories: the audience was flattered as "virtuously hard-working and law-abiding," and set it against the inferior "something for nothing" morality of the squatter. Non-participation in property ownership (or at least lawful occupation of somebody else's property) was here quite overtly presented as not only a moral failure, but by virtue of its purported character as a deliberate choice, an active and malicious moral transgression. This transgression, then, was caused not by any kind of circumstance but rather by the squatter's own nature: they "display 'arrogant behavior,' believing themselves to be superior to the rest of society, and in particular . . . 'above the law.' They are 'web-savvy,' they have a predilection for high-value properties, they deceive us with their 'guile and tenacity,' and they are carefree, continuing on 'their merry way' when they are evicted" (2014: 103).

This discursive construction of "the squatter" as powerful, deceptive, and immoral not coincidentally echoes motifs familiar from the construction of other groups cast as "spatial outsiders": on the one hand Gypsies and Travellers, and on the other hand, Jews. As Moishe Postone (1980) argues, the usual hallmarks of anti-Semitic propaganda—the figure of the greedy, powerful internationalist Jewish elite that exploits and controls "honest working people"—has in recent decades become detached from its original racial context, and applied to

non-Jewish groups who are seen to exhibit the same traits: bankers and financial speculators or, more recently, simply the "cosmopolitan elites." Postone uses the term "structural anti-Semitism" to describe the abstract logic of this argument: whether explicitly racialized or not, the idea is that there exists a hidden, powerful group in society who is not attached to any "inns and resting places" with their accompanying hierarchical moral order, and thus precisely by virtue of being spatially mobile, stands outside of the "community of value." Postone interprets this projection of the structural logic of modern anti-Semitism onto other groups as rooted in a "truncated" critique of capitalism; instead of addressing the immanent contradictions of the capitalist order that cause poverty and hardship for the masses, a group is singled out, blamed, and punished in order to keep the system going.

In a similar vein, the German theorist Roswitha Scholz (2007) speaks of "anti-Ziganism" (anti-Gypsy sentiment) as only partially racialized—apart from its overtly racist component, it involves two distinct but related stereotypes. On the one hand, "the Gypsy" is seen as lazy, shiftless, and work-shy, and therefore given to thieving and trickery, all in the pursuit of avoiding "honest" work. In this sense, "the Gypsy" is constructed as the opposite of the Protestant work ethic, as the lazy, happy-go-lucky idler who will work exactly as much as necessary and lift not a finger more. On the other hand, he is also construed as an idealized nomad, a merry traveler who sings and dances all day long, and lives a life unfettered by the demands of property and responsibility. While the former stereotype tends to carry negative connotations while the latter is often positively romanticized, Scholz argues that the two constructions describe the same figure: the split off and projected "other" of the capitalist subject. Under capitalism, both "work-shyness" and the imagined pleasures of "the simple life" have to be repressed by the self in order accept the discipline of wage labor and the modest accumulation of property. "The Gypsy" therefore embodies the laziness and idleness that the capitalist subject has to exorcise from the self in order to succeed, and at the same time stands in for a longed-for freedom from the demands of work, self-discipline, and the sole responsibility for one's own fate. Emptied of their specific racial components, anti-Semitism and anti-Ziganism share in common the construction of a moral other who is identified first and foremost by being a *spatial* other: "cosmopolitanism" and mobility are seen as evidence of a lack of spatial belonging and thus a lack of a "stake" in the toils and tribulations of the place-bound. This perceived lack of belonging also frees the spatial

"other" from submission to local territorial hierarchy, and thus accounts for his dangerous position "above the law." Defying the territorial order, he also and especially defies the moral order implied in it, and thus becomes a potentially threatening corrosive influence on the settled.

The conflation of squatters with foreigners in general and Gypsies in particular can thus be seen as a new rendition of a familiar theme—it was not so much a racist discourse than a discourse that enlisted racism as a tool for the moral excommunication of those who were seen to undermine the territorial moral order—here, specifically, the commodification of space and the ideological connection between access to shelter and wage labor. This is not to say that the association of moral status and spatial entitlement is a specifically capitalist phenomenon; rather, discourses about property and rent are the historically specific form that the larger issue of the spatial construction of moral categories takes under capitalism. At its core, however, lies the age-old association of spatial entitlement and power, which assigns the highest social and thus moral status to those who control the most territory. The fact of territorial entitlement—via commodity consumption and wage labor or via war and colonialism—in a distinctly Protestant fashion becomes proof of moral worthiness. Further, whoever controls no territory at all is inherently suspect of being not only immoral but *anti*-moral. It is therefore not surprising that the citizens of St Werburghs made a connection between street-parkers and Travellers—the caravans, these symbols of travel, identified both groups as "mobile" and thus potentially morally dangerous.

I use "mobile" here in scare quotes because, despite the fact that the concept of "mobility" (or with a postmodern slant, "mobilities") has become quite popular with both conservative and progressive scholars, it is at least in some cases an attribution error: a condition that is externally imposed on some groups is here turned into an essential property of these groups. Gypsies, in this view, live in caravans because they are "mobile" people. The question is then how settled society should deal with the fact of their inherent mobility. What becomes obscured in this mode of thinking is the fact that for some groups, mobility is neither individual choice nor "authentic" cultural form: it is simply the result of being the sort of people that is not wanted wherever it attempts to occupy space. The passive-voice phrase "being moved on," familiar to Travellers as much as squatters and the homeless, points toward the fact that mobility for these groups most often is not actively chosen but suffered at the hands of others. As my friend Martin, an English Romany activist, puts it: "It's not up to me if I move,

I'm being made to."[9] "Being moved on" is such a central experience for Travellers that it has found its way into stories and folk songs, like this one, popular with squatters and street parkers:

Born in the middle of the afternoon
In a horse drawn wagon on the old A5
The big twelve wheeler shook my bed
"You can't stop here," the policeman said,
"You'd better get born in someplace else

Move along, get along, move along, get along
Go, move, shift!"

Born at the back of a building site
Where the ground was rutted by the trailer's wheels
The local people said to me,
"You'll lower the price of property
You'd better get born in someplace else

Move along, get along, move along, get along
Go, move, shift!"
—Ewan MacColl (1968)

Martin suggests that the main reason people choose to live in caravans is so that they can get away if they have to whenever staying becomes too dangerous. "It's not about moving so much as knowing that you *can* move." (He was surprised to hear that this was precisely the reason I lived in a vehicle too). He also believes that the word "Traveller" originally did not refer to a person who constantly moves so much as to somebody who has travelled "here" from another place—that is, an outsider. Like that of his imaginary colleague, the "Wandering Jew," the nomadism of "the Gypsy" is therefore perhaps more of a collective projection, another way of expressing the view that these people categorically belong somewhere else. "Mobility" in this context then means first and foremost the ability to be (re)moved, a condition shared by "ethnic" Travellers as well as

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9.   Similarly, Robert Desjarlais describes the homeless as those "who, by definition, have many places to go but seldom can find a place to stay" (1997: 103).

so-called "New Age Travellers,"[10] the label most often attached to the kind of vehicle dwellers I encountered on my forays into street-parking.

In the United Kingdom, this group is assumed to have emerged out of the hippie movement of the 1970s, and experienced substantial growth in numbers in the 1980s when Thatcherite housing policy forced more and more people onto the road. Soon, these travelers found themselves targeted by similar repression as "ethnic" Travellers, often perpetrated by the very same institutions (for example, bailiff companies like Constant & Co). As a result, some New Age Travellers have come to identify strongly with the culture and traditions of "ethnic" Travellers—a sympathy that is not always reciprocated—adopting their songs and stories and, not unreasonably, demanding some of the same hard-won rights that award some "ethnic" Travellers a modicum of protection. It is not without irony that this protection—for example, the duty of local authorities to provide legal pitches—is bound to a commitment on the part of Gypsies and Travellers to an "ethnic identity," implying that it is only legitimate to live in a caravan or mobile home if one's "ethnicity" (that hybrid of nature and culture) forces one to move around. Martin sees one advantage of defining one's group in terms of "ethnicity" in the fact that "people are more racist when they think you *should* be living by their rules," meaning that he sees more potential for tolerance when the dominant group assumes that a minority cannot help breaking the rules because of an innate compulsion. While it would therefore be mistaken to hold against "ethnic" Gypsies and Travellers that they have, in this case, turned a racist stereotype into a strategy for protection, it also serves to reinforce the idea of "mobility" as an essential property of racialized bodies.

Attempts on the part of Gypsies and Travellers to "settle"—that is, to remain in one place—are frequently thwarted by bureaucratic obstacles and hostile locals. The eviction of the site at Dale Farm in 2011 was a case in point. Dale Farm, the largest site of its kind in Europe, was then home to about 1,000 families who—contrary to popular images of Travellers as illegitimate occupiers—legally owned the land they were living on near the Essex town of Basildon. The Travellers had for a long time been the target of a campaign to remove them by the city council and local residents, ostensibly since some of their dwellings did

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10. I have never heard anyone actually applying this label to themselves, but academic discussion of vehicle-dwelling populations regularly uses it to refer to those parts of the movement (here: literally) who are not ethnic Gypsies and Travellers (e.g., Martin 1998, 2002; Davis 1997).

not have Planning Permission and were seen to inflict damage on "the green belt." On March 15, 2011, Basildon Council voted 28 to 10 to evict the Travellers, and after they refused to budge, on October 19, two hundred Constant & Co bailiffs, supported by over one hundred riot police, began to clear the site to the merry tune of a £2.2 million fee (£8 million including policing). The evicted families, who for the most part had nowhere to go, found themselves stranded by the roadside and were subsequently broken up and relocated to different places across the country. In one sense, this eviction was not remarkable; it was only the last in a long line of high-profile clearances of similar sites. What was remarkable in this case was the wide-spread solidarity those affected found from unexpected allies—squatters, anarchists, and assorted activists who flocked in by the hundreds to support the Travellers. This was unusual, since despite the fact that they are often mistaken for each other, "New Agers" and "ethnic" Gypsies and Travellers are not necessarily "natural" allies. For example, Martin points to the intricate practices around purity among Travellers, manifested in elaborate rules regarding hygiene, a cultural area in which the ideas of Gypsies and "New Agers" ostensibly clash. Nevertheless, the existence of a common enemy, and more importantly, the existence of a common position as spatial undesirables helped forge an alliance on this occasion. The resistance failed eventually. The alliance, however, left traces in the imagination. Some years later, I attended a history event with music performances and talks for and by Travellers where a young man performed a song one could have mistaken for a poetic ballad from a remote past; however, listening closely, I realized it was a beautiful and simple thank you note for those who had come to help defend Dale Farm.

EXTINCTION

Living in a caravan, I was confronted with problems I had never before considered—for example, those posed by the lack of a bathroom. While male vehicle dwellers usually did their business in the shelter of the nearest bush, I was reluctant to do so, and not purely out of prudishness. Having to leave my caravan in the middle of the night to go and squat down behind the last house on the street in the hope no one was looking out of their window became such a chore that, short of contracting a serious case of constipation, I invested in a chemical camping toilet, wedged inside the small bath cubicle inside the caravan. There was a shower too, but to regularly fill the water tank without access to a tap was,

as Jon phrased it "a mission," and so showers as well as clean clothes continued to involve trips to other people's squats. In all this, I remained domestic to a degree that amused my fellow street parkers—the Ikea curtains I equipped the caravan with were the source of great hilarity. I grew quite fond of the caravan, thinking of it as my "shell." Tucked in at night I felt like one of Bachelard's mollusks, neatly contained in my housing of aluminum and wood, yet constantly aware of every noise outside in a way I had not been even in the most contested of squats. Wedged in a halfway space between the houses of the settled and the road of the travelers, I was keenly aware of the fact that I was alone in a place I should not be.

I eventually fled St Werburghs and pulled up in Easton, outside my friend's squat in Co-operation Road (that was its actual name) by the old chocolate factory. Co-op Road was one of the longest-standing squats in Bristol, and on many an occasion I had found myself taking refuge on one of the dusty sofas in its windowless living room—the "Room of Gloom" as Jon had dubbed it. It was a leaking, ramshackle place, but it was also the safest space I knew about, and I naturally gravitated toward somewhere I was known. Ralph, eventually also exiled from the yard by Drew's unpredictable temper, had wound up camped out in the backyard in another caravan, and together with the five residents of the small house, we formed a kind of mini-site in the midst of Easton. The area was poor and considered dangerous by the residents of more up-market places such as Clifton, and we lived just adjacent to the infamous cycle path where, legend had it, muggers collected tolls from anyone who was reckless enough to walk after dark. At the same time, Easton provided a kind of safety more affluent areas did not. Only here could you find fly-posters reading "Muggers of Easton! Be a little more like Robin Hood and a little less like Margaret Thatcher!" Only here would residents call each other to order because after all, no one wanted the police in the area. Only here were street parkers not just treated like people but, in some cases, like neighbors.[11] Of course, a caravan still enjoyed less privilege than other forms of dwelling in terms of having one's space respected. The fact that my house had wheels appeared to pique people's curiosity, and I frequently encountered complete strangers sticking their noses through the windows to see if anyone was in. For the least bit of privacy, the curtains had to be permanently

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11. In other cases, not so, as evidenced by the torching of several vehicles later that year, luckily without their residents in them. The arson was thought to have been committed by local neo-Nazis, although this was never established for certain.

drawn, resulting in the Room of Gloom being complemented by the Caravan of Gloom. Some passersby skipped the peeping and just gave the vehicle a good kick to see if anything moved inside. In my case, the puppy took good care of such intrusion. He was already a huge dog at not even six months of age, and his bark sounded as if it belonged to a dog three times his size. German shepherds are renowned for their (purposely bred) territoriality and protectiveness, and the sense of safety the furry Hobbesian produced was well worth the inconvenience of sharing a 15 by 6 foot space with a 100-pound animal.

Living in a vehicle requires a lot of activity that in a house is automated: wheeling the heavy 12-volt batteries back and forth between the house and the caravan on a skateboard to charge them, replacing gas bottles, and lugging large canisters of water. One does not really appreciate one's consumption of resources until one has to carry every single volt, liter, or cubic centimeter of them, and so I soon gravitated toward minimizing the work involved by spending most of my waking hours over at the house. After a series of evictions across town, Co-op Road was already bursting at the seams. Apart from the Room of Gloom, the two-story building consisted of six bedrooms, most of which were inhabited by more than one person. The ground floor consisted of the Room of Gloom, two bedrooms facing the street, and the kitchen. A staircase led up to the first floor, which contained the bathroom and two bedrooms, and two more bedrooms were located on the second floor under the tilted roof. A small caravan wedged into the backyard provided overspill accommodation, and in emergencies, the sofas in the Room of Gloom could be used as beds as well. After the riots, a number of squatters from the city center and Stokes Croft areas had seen fit to keep a low profile for a while and sought accommodation further afield, and Co-op Road with its peripheral location appeared as an attractive choice. The house normally had a fairly slow rotation of inhabitants, because once one had secured a room in a relatively desirable property like this, one was reluctant to let it go. The house was desirable not so much because of its amenities—it did have water and electricity, but the roof was leaking to the extent that heavy rainfall produced small waterfalls coming down the stairs and pools several inches deep on the ground floor, the hot water was temperamental, and the windows were more of a suggestion than a serious attempt at insulation—but because due to unknown circumstances, it had turned out to be unexpectedly secure. Since it had been first squatted a few years earlier, the owner had not so much as bothered to find out who was living there, and general opinion was that they were either dead, in prison, or so rich they did not care. Co-op Road

therefore provided a degree of security and opportunity to plan ahead that most inner-city squats did not, and inhabitants therefore stayed on for six months to a year or longer. As a result, Co-op Road was socially stratified into long-term residents (the most senior being an Eastern European man named Alex who lived on the first floor) and newer arrivals. In order to secure a spot, it was necessary to be in good standing with the original crew.

The Room of Gloom was the social center of the house and a semipublic space, in that members of the scene were considered to have a right to hang out in it unless some infraction on their part made it necessary to ban them. Accessing it from the street required sustained vigorous banging on the door that could be heard even on the top floor. For every two people in the house, there was normally at least one dog, and the arrival of visitors therefore resulted in a pack of dogs breaking out in furious barking as soon as they heard the door. Visits were thus announced by a sudden outbreak of noise, movement, and chaos, as humans tried to push dogs out of the way to reach the door, shouting at the animals to shut up, which the dogs took as encouragement to keep shouting along with the humans. Once the people were inside and the dogs had calmed down, visitors could expect to be offered a cup of tea—this most English of all social gestures—and a space on the sofas in the Room of Gloom, unless those were still occupied by sleeping bodies grumbling curses in the direction of dogs and humans alike.

About half the space of the Room of Gloom was occupied by a mountain of "tat"[12] piling almost as high as the ceiling, which was overwhelmingly responsible for the "gloom" since it blocked out light from the windows. It consisted of things various squatters had temporarily left at the house while traveling or living in less secure arrangements, a visible testament to the dilemma that highly mobile lives meant that one either had to forego material possessions or find a safe place to store them. Such places were rare, at least without spending money on commercial self-storage, and due to its secure status Co-op Road was therefore a popular storage choice. The looming pile became a recurrent source of irritation. Various inhabitants at one point or another expressed a desire to "chuck it all out and set it on fire" for taking up too much space. It never was chucked out, however, and when once in a while the owner of some of the things returned they were usually found in good order. The rest of the room contained

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12. Roughly: junk. Also exists as verb: "tatting"—that is, picking up discarded items from the street.

sofas, a number of chairs, a table, and a TV rack with an antediluvian screen that was used to watch DVDs or play video games. On the walls were shelves with books that belonged to no one in particular—for the most part political literature and paperback novels—and on the walls hung squatting-related art, including a poster depicting a pit bull and the words, "Come on, Bailiffs, make my day!" The continual presence of dogs, the dilapidated state of the house, and the semipublic character of the room meant that most of the time it was so dirty that no one seriously considered taking their shoes off.

I would wake up in the caravan every morning and, after taking the dog for his business, head over to the house and make a first attempt at rousing somebody to let me in. Despite the fact that I was a semi-housemate, I was not given a key, since the longer-standing residents had learned from experience that once enough keys were in circulation, they would inevitably be copied again and again, until eventually nobody could be sure how many keys there were in existence. This necessitated the regular changing of locks, which cost money, and so the house had put a complete ban on giving out keys to anyone. I therefore had to bang on the door like everyone else, and if there was no answer, return as often as it took for someone to open. Once inside, I would make coffee and settle into the Room of Gloom, usually to be soon joined by others, and wait for the day to unfold. It rarely brought surprises. The main occupation in the room was doing nothing, to the point that getting up to prepare a cup of tea or coffee and drinking it, slowly and deliberately over the course of half an hour, gave one a sense of accomplishment. Once the necessities of life—eating, personal hygiene, perhaps some housekeeping—were taken care of, action in the house died down and a languid feeling descended on the Room of Gloom, like a blanket pressing the body into the sofa cushions. Occasionally, the quiet was interrupted by a sequence of door-banging, barking, and salutations, but as soon as the visitors had settled in, they too appeared to be gripped by the viscosity of the atmosphere, and soon movement died down and the dogs went to sleep.

The problem with the Room of Gloom, I came to think later, was not so much that there was nothing to do, but that there was everything to do. The fact that the house was secure granted a temporary respite from the immediate necessities of securing shelter, it provided relief from an anxious fixation on the immediate future and allowed the body to relax under a roof that was likely to still be there in the next week or month. In general, such a situation could be considered to allow the sheltered self to project itself further ahead, to think about the future in terms of months and years instead of days and

weeks, to make plans and formulate long-term goals. In the case of the inhabit-ants of Co-op Road, however, this luxury was not altogether welcome. Secure housing, from which position one could theoretically take further steps toward prosperity, only underscored how difficult this actually was to accomplish. It removed what George Orwell ironically called the "great redeeming feature of poverty"—namely, the fact that it precludes worrying about the future:

> When you are approaching poverty you make one discovery which outweighs some of the others. You discover boredom and mean complications and the be-ginnings of hunger, but you also discover the great redeeming feature of poverty: the fact that it annihilates the future. Within certain limits, it is actually true that the less money you have, the less you worry. When you have a 100 francs in the world you are liable to the most craven panics. When you have only 3 francs you are quite indifferent; for 3 francs will feed you till tomorrow, and you cannot think farther than that. (Orwell [1933] 1961, 20)

At this point in time, it had already become fairly clear that the govern-ment's plan to criminalize squatting would be successful, and since Co-op Road was a residential building, its occupation would then be illegal regardless of the landlord's actions. There was no particular sense of urgency yet, since there was at least another year to go before any law would come into force, but people did consider their options and most found them wanting. A few of the inhabitants embarked on a protracted and ultimately doomed mission to uncover the iden-tity of the landlord in order to persuade them to offer an official rental agree-ment, but most initially announced plans to move elsewhere, only to realize that they were not necessarily able to do so.

Monetary income to pay rent was one problem, but since at the time Hous-ing Benefit was still available—it would be made inaccessible to noncitizens in 2014—with a bit of luck, this could be resolved. Trickier were the other ob-stacles to renting: landlords routinely advertised their properties as "no DSS" (welfare claimants), they demanded large deposits, references from previous landlords, credit checks (which demanded a credit history), and valid ID, all things that squatters struggled to provide. Landlords' references could techni-cally be forged and deposits borrowed, but since Britain does not have compul-sory ID documents, many squatters had no ID at all. When Mark, one of the Co-op Road crew, attempted to obtain a passport, I was as surprised as him to learn that under UK legislation, a passport application has to be countersigned

by a passport-holding member of the public who has known the applicant for at least two years, is not a relative, and works in one of a long list of ostensibly middle-class professions such as law, medicine, or accountancy.[13] Since Mark did not know any middle-class professionals he could ask for a reference, he could not get a passport, and eventually gave up trying. This practice not only made the ability to travel contingent on class background, it also meant that poorer people like Mark often struggled to prove their identity at all, preventing access to the private rental market as well as impeding opening a bank account (which, in turn, was a barrier to regular employment).

Another issue of considerable concern to squatters was the phrase "no pets," which popped up in ads for rental property nearly as often as "no DSS." I would estimate that one in four squatters I met owned a dog, and like most pet owners, they were deeply emotionally attached to their animals to the extent that they would have slept rough before giving them up. This also meant, however, that a good portion of rental properties were off limits, or as we used to joke, "you can have a dog when you're very poor or when you're very rich, but not in between." Things like this meant that the luxury of projecting oneself into a prosperous future was curtailed by the realization that once immediate homelessness was addressed, progress beyond that point was contingent on trappings of a settled lifestyle that remained just out of reach. Squatters thus talked a lot about all the things they needed to "sort out," but like the mountain of objects occupying the Room of Gloom, these resolutions only piled up without ever being addressed, their looming bulk an oppressive reminder there was everything left to do.

Since everything was too much, we did nothing. We talked: about current politics, squatting, family matters, scene gossip, cars we would never buy. We observed people playing video games, extensively commenting on their every success and failure onscreen. Joints went around, and in the afternoon, excuses were being made for cracking open the first cans of lager. The next day, the routine repeated. Time seemed to stretch into eternity, only interspersed by people occasionally creating diversions in the form of heckling each other until objects were thrown around, people were shouting, and the dogs went mad. Others melted into the corners of the room until they appeared almost part of the furniture, so that on a few occasions I was startled to find that I had been in

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13. "Countersigning passport applications and photos," *Gov.uk*. https://www.gov.uk/countersigning-passport-applications/accepted-occupations-for-countersignatories.

the room for ten minutes or more without realizing that there was somebody else sitting there. The timeless vortex of the room tempted one to break out, to venture out of the perma-gloom onto the street and perhaps as far as the bustle of Stokes Croft, but then, the city center was far and the walk led through less hospitable areas of town. In a way, we were the squatter-equivalent of people who got the family and the house in the suburbs, only to discover that they are miserable because there no longer is a beyond.

Eventually, my caravan was broken into one night when I was over at the house and had the dog with me, and that was the final straw in my street-parking career. Anyone who has been burgled knows the feeling of having the safety of one's home stripped away by such intrusion. A caravan, though smaller, is no different. I did not have much worth stealing—two broken laptops and some tools—but I had to take the caravan off the road because it no longer felt safe, dog or no dog. There was not enough space in Co-op Road, and so I began to drift. I slept in the Land Rover, which, although cramped, was a little fortress on wheels. I spent a few weeks on a small and filthy but well-protected site inside a building opposite the railway station, which was filled by hundreds of old tires we had to remove by hand. There were about ten people there, all nice enough, but I had begun to withdraw into myself. Without realizing, I had slipped into depression—a common feature of homelessness—and my focus and perspective imperceptibly narrowed until day-to-day survival was all that mattered. After I abandoned the caravan, there were endless weeks of me and the dog living in the Smiling Chair, finally on our own and a tolerated inconvenience for the collective that tried to run the shop as a radical hub on Stokes Croft. When we got chucked out of there—the dog was not always selective in whom he regarded a threat to my safety, and terrified the patrons—I couch-surfed in squats. Squatting in a squat is probably as low as one can get short of sleeping rough, but I was nonetheless lucky to still have access to a network of open doors.

Finally, luck also came to my rescue, in a somewhat poetic way. Having sold the caravan, and not being entitled to any benefits due to my still existing student status, I had exactly enough money left to fill up the car, drive it back to Austria, and hope for my family to take me in, when I found a job. I had previously worked in marketing, and had half-heartedly responded to an ad by a London company hiring German speakers. No one was more surprised than me when I got an interview and, thanks to an immediately required start date, was hired on the spot. I remember sitting in an office in a shiny glass tower high up above the city of London, across a table from two pinstriped men who

seemed to belong in a parallel universe, trying to hide the fact that I had not had a shower in days and my clothes were still damp from washing them in the kitchen sink the night before. I found out, long after leaving this job, that the building in question, the Centre Point Tower at Tottenham Court Road, had been squatted by homeless campaigners in a protest against housing shortages in 1974.[14] The job saved my existence, if not my dignity, and the suits never learned that for the first four months I worked for them, I was commuting out of a squat in Bristol. They did not know this world even existed. The money they paid me eventually accumulated enough for a deposit on a room, and in the spring of 2012, I was no longer homeless. The previous year became nothing but a blur.

I thus got a taste, albeit a very fleeting one compared to many others, of why it is that while trauma is a frequent predictor of homelessness, the experience of homelessness in and of itself is also traumatic (Goodman, Saxe, and Harvey 1991). On the one hand, this can be attributed to the fact that trauma itself has been understood in spatial terms: "Trauma occurs . . . when one loses the sense of having a safe place to retreat within or outside oneself to deal with frightening emotions or experiences" (Van der Kolk 1987: 31). If homelessness means, by definition, to not be entitled to any safe personal space, thus putting the homeless body at risk of exposure and violation, then homelessness can be seen to embody the very essence of trauma. However, the state of "being without sanctuary in a world filled with malevolent forces" (Goodman, Saxe, and Harvey 1991: 1220) also results from the fact that "people often react to victims by rejecting them" (1991: 1220), either because they believe that the victimized person is responsible for their fate, or because they simply do not want to be associated with "losers" (1991: 1220). This means that in addition to the traumatizing experience of being at risk of death or injury from natural or human causes, homelessness also affects a person's sense of self through the severance of important social ties that have previously informed their sense of identity and selfhood.

My brief foray into street-parking made me realize that this social component of trauma does not merely constitute an absence: it is not only that sustaining social relations are withdrawn but that they are replaced with something else. As I recount in the ethnographic vignette before this chapter, my sudden inner insistence on my role as an anthropologist—which before this point had not

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14.   https://ianbone.wordpress.com/2007/11/07/centre-point-occupation-1974/.

significantly impacted my perception of my position in the "field"—occurred when I saw myself confronted with others who communicated with words, gestures, and the occasional spitting-attack that to their minds I was something altogether less glamorous. I realized at that point that for all its methodological quandaries, Pierre Bourdieu's distortion, the "placelessness" of the anthropologist in the field, also functions as a safety valve: if one is not a "real player" then one can ergo not actually be affected by such insult. It turned out, however, that in the perception of others, actual placelessness trumped the epistemological kind, and so I got a brief flavor of what it feels like to be regarded as "people out of place" or human dirt. I do not want to overdramatize my personal experience. I was still in a lot of ways more privileged than many others—for example, in being able to afford a vehicle, in having the social capital to eventually talk my way into a middle-class job, and certainly in being white, able-bodied, and an EU-citizen with (at the time) the right to be in the country. At the same time, however, Bourdieu's distortion became a safety net for me precisely because none of these things could prevent me from going into a downward spiral of the kind that is characteristic for homelessness, at the bottom of which waits a brush with "social death."

"Social death" refers to the idea that through a forcible severing of the social relations that make them a somebody among other somebodies, a person no longer inhabits the symbolic sphere of the living. Although it has been used in the context of homelessness (e.g., Liggett 1991; Ruddick 2002), this condition is not unique to the homeless. Scholars such as Orlando Patterson (1982) and Zygmunt Bauman (1992) invoke it to describe situations where, in general terms, certain people are demoted from their status as fully human and cast as something less than that. Patterson remarks of slavery:

> The slave is violently uprooted from his milieu. He is desocialized and depersonalized. This process of social negation constitutes the first, essentially external, phase of enslavement. The next phase involves the introduction of the slave into the community of his master, but it involves the paradox of introducing him as a nonbeing. (Patterson 1982: 38)

With this stripping-off of social status comes, importantly, a demotion in *moral* status: by virtue of his being a "nonbeing," the slave is simultaneously excluded from the moral order of society, also and especially where it concerns the prohibition to harm. Actions that are inadmissible among the "socially living"

(such as exploitation, torture, rape, and murder) are therefore permitted toward a slave, because he or she is seen not as a human subject but rather as an object, a mere thing to be owned and used by the master. A similar stripping-off of moral status underlies some forms of genocide, when crimes against a group are legitimized with the assertion that the subhuman other does not have to be regarded with the same moral consideration as "people." Social death can thus also be seen as the result of a strategy of power to circumvent the moral (or simply emotional) reservations humans may have against inflicting violence on others. Imagining these others as not actually human serves to contravene potential pangs of conscience, and thus paves the way for mass murder and en-slavement, or, in the case of homeless people, a passive indifference to their slow dying of exposure or by their own hand. The experience of "social death" has been found to increase thoughts of self-harm in those affected (Steele, Kidd, and Castano 2015), and so it is not surprising that social is often followed by physical death.

Social death is not usually regarded as a specifically *spatial* phenomenon but rather as a social relationship between a moral majority and those seen as its inferior other. However, as I have argued in the preceding chapters, insofar as humans cannot help but structure their social environment in spatial terms, this relationship is imagined and enacted through spatial patterning, specifically through the imposition of a territorial moral order. In the context of slavery, for example, Patterson speaks of two different ways of representing social death: in what he calls "the intrusive mode," the slave starts as an outsider—one whose "inns and resting places" and thus his ancestors, are elsewhere—who then be-comes interned within the territory of the master while always retaining his outsider status. Conversely,

> In sharp contrast with the intrusive conception of death was the extrusive repre-sentation. Here the dominant image of the slave was that of an insider who had fallen, one who ceased to belong and had been expelled from normal participa-tion in the community. . . . The destitute were included in this group, for while they perhaps had committed no overt crime their failure to survive on their own was taken as a sign of innate incompetence and of divine disfavor. (Patterson 1982: 41)

In this mode, the slave starts out as a failed insider, who because of his moral failure is identified as actually being an outsider and thus has to be symbolically

externalized.[15] This dual mode of producing socially dead bodies thus again exhibits the logic of a territorial spatial configuration, characterized by a hierarchically ordered inside (which pitches the virtuous master against the amoral slave) and a defensible boundary determining those outside as morally inferior and thus legitimizing their subjugation.

Some instances of widespread social death rely quite overtly on such a territorial construction: the social death of Jews and Gypsies in the Third Reich, which preceded their physical deaths, explicitly legitimized their murder through their lack of territorial belonging, or as the Nazi Martin Heidegger put it, their "worldlessness." I am choosing my words carefully, and I am mindful of the fact that many scholars who have found inspiration in Heidegger's work will balk at this epithet. There is an ongoing, passionate debate as to whether we should reconsider Heidegger's philosophy in the light of his incontrovertible fascism (for a meticulously evidenced argument that Heidegger's ontology was intentionally designed to be the foundational philosophy of the Third Reich, see Emmanuel Faye's *Heidegger: The introduction of Nazism into philosophy* [2009]). Heidegger's language is certainly abstract enough to make his concepts highly adaptable, and many scholars have therefore put them to good use across a wide range of different topics. It is certainly not my intention to diminish this work, nor to suggest that these scholars have any sympathies for Heidegger's real-life politics. Perhaps it is the very adaptability of these concepts, however, that enabled Heidegger himself to turn his "being-in-the-world" into an argument for genocide: "Jews for [Heidegger] are not just homeless but also 'worldless.' In this regard, they appear to figure even below animals, of which Heidegger said . . . they are 'world-poor.' The Jews therefore not only have no place in the world, they also never had one. The Heideggerian existential of being-in-the-world therefore has a prominent, discriminatory function. Who, like the Jews, has no world cannot be in the world" (see also Faye, Watson, and

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15. The destitute are explicitly covered in this explanation, since they have failed to demonstrate that they are able to survive "on their own," recalling Bridget Anderson's (2013) concept of the "failed citizen." Orlando Patterson admits that societies in which slavery is based exclusively on this mode are relatively rare, which may point to the fact that the "social death" of the domestic poor always also involves an element of othering—for example, when domestic groups such as the Roma come to be seen as "actually from India." Anderson (2013) makes a similar argument, when she asserts that the differences between "non-citizens" and "failed citizens" are not nearly as striking as the similarities.

Golsan 2006).[16] Whether Heidegger's philosophical work can be meaningfully separated from the intent of its author is a controversy that I cannot resolve in this book. If nothing else, however, then his actions certainly suggest that he held the territorial entitlement of some to be above the rights of others to inhabit the world.

In other cases, the reference to Blood and Soil is replaced by the construction of a territorialized community of value. The destitute, sick, or disabled suffer social death not because they are not of the soil but because in infringing against the dominant morality of autonomy and independence, they have identified themselves as alien elements within the moral space of the community. The most intriguing spatial feature of social death is, however, that the loss of moral status inherent in it is constructed through the same mode of spatial categorization that underlies Mary Douglas's conception of "dirt" as "matter out of place," not just in a metaphorical sense but also in a literal sense. MRI Studies by Susan Fiske and a other social neuroscientists show that when participants are shown images of homeless people (that is, stereotypically dirty, disheveled, and toothless), the following happens:

> Within a moment of seeing the photograph of an apparently homeless man . . . people's brains set off a sequence of reactions characteristic of disgust and avoidance. The activated areas included the insula, which is reliably associated with feelings of disgust toward objects such as garbage and human waste. Notably, the homeless people's photographs failed to stimulate areas of the brain that usually activate whenever people think about other people, or themselves. Toward the homeless (and drug addicts), these areas simply failed to light up, as if people had stumbled on a pile of trash. (Fiske 2008; see also 2010)

From a strictly cognitive perspective, human brains physically mistaking members of their own species as inanimate objects—"trash," no less—is a substantial category mistake of quite spectacular proportions, akin to the famous man who mistook his wife for a hat (Sacks 1985). However, Fiske's participants were considered completely healthy. They simply processed the photographs

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16. Emmanuel Faye, "Die Krönung der Gesamtausgabe," *Die Zeit*, December 27, 2013. https://www.zeit.de/2014/01/heidegger-schwarze-hefte-emmanuel-faye. Translation from German mine.

through a learned classification system that split the category "human" into "people" and "human waste," and their brains produced a habituated response of disgust to the latter. While according to Douglas "dirt" is offensive because it does not belong where it is, our brains apparently react with the same aversion to people who our culture constructs as having no place among the living. If ideas of hygiene, as the externalization of dirt, are therefore the result of a culturally conditioned disgust, then the assignment of some humans to the same category can equally be expected to produce behaviors designed to externalize them from inhabited space.

This need becomes apparent in the wide range of externalization rituals humans have invented over the course of history. In ancient Greece, for example, in times of crisis, a cripple, a beggar, or a criminal would be singled out and taken outside the space of the polis to be ritually punished or killed (Bremmer 1983). The body of the abject—called *pharmakos*, literally "poisoner"—represented all that was undesirable and polluting inside the space of the city, and its expulsion was seen to cure the "infection" and restore the purity of the inside space. In a related vein, Roman law knew the figure of Homo Sacer, a human life that was ritually banned from society and "included in the juridical order solely in the form of its exclusion" (Agamben 1998), a life that could be extinguished by anyone without punishment. Homo Sacer was not so much a scapegoat as he was a traitor. His state was seen as the result of his breaking an oath sworn to the gods, and thus he was in the hands of the gods who could punish him in any way they pleased, including by allowing others to kill him. He was thus reduced to what Giorgio Agamben calls "bare life," a kind of social death that acknowledges existence in the same breath as negating it. Modern homelessness is somewhat reminiscent of this, when a person who is seen to have offended against "God Market" is left to deal with the consequences, including "the market" putting them out on the street where they can be attacked without impunity. The related word "scapegoat" stems from the Jewish and old Testament traditions, and describes an ancient rite in which one goat was sacrificed and another—the "go away goat"—was symbolically burdened with the sins of the community and driven out of the city (Douglas 2002; Levy 1998). Douglas maintains that the *pharmakos* rite and the description of the "go away goat" in Leviticus 16 point to different ritual purposes, since in Leviticus the goat is not punished or killed (2002: 121). Although this is true, other Hebrew descriptions of the same rite do relate the goat finding

a gruesome end by being thrown off a cliff until "all his limbs are shattered."[17] The Mishnah rendition, however, also emphasizes that the death of this goat was not the primary purpose of the ritual: in order for those inside the sacred space to proceed with the rite, it merely had to be ensured beyond a doubt that it had been brought outside the boundary: killing it was simply a way to prevent it from returning. The commonality of the Greek rite and the "go away goat" is thus not sacrifice or ritual punishment, it is the symbolic externalization of the unacceptable.

These rituals of symbolic purification can therefore also be seen as enactments of a territorial configuration: their point was not the death of a sacrificial offering so much as a redrawing of the boundaries of the community and a reaffirmation of the internal ordering pattern, achieved by way of externalizing the impure from the physical and symbolic space of the collective. What is impure is not the *pharmakos* or the goat but that which they become symbolically burdened with: whatever the virtuous community considers "out of place" within itself. As Michael Jackson relates:

> If the paradigmatic scapegoats of Europe have been the gypsy and the jew, the scapegoat in West Africa has been the witch. As a neighbour, wife or mother, she is one of us. But in other ways she has never ceased to be a stranger. She retains ties of loyalty with her own people, and harbours intentions we cannot divine. She is the enemy within. (Jackson 2005: 45)

This type of ritual can therefore also be seen as an enactment of a territorial spatial ordering pattern, which reaffirms the internal hierarchies through symbolically banishing that which threatens them. However, the externalization of undesirable elements is not only a strategy of establishing social control; it is also and especially serves as a form of collective "psychological hygiene," in which the collective can rid itself of unwanted aspects by projecting them onto somebody or something else, and making them go away. As Douglas reminds us, "dirt" is not a natural kind: matter becomes "dirt" in a specific context, where nonbelonging is ascribed to it. In the same way, "people out of place" are not so because of their inherent attributes (even if that is what some political ideologies tell us) but because they become the target of a particular kind of

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17. Mishnah Yoma 6:2–6.

projection: attributes that the community regards as undesirable are projected onto their bodies and then misread as their "natural" character.

> Scapegoating does not, therefore, assume an a priori ontological difference between self and other; rather, it is a strategy in which some distinctive trait in the other's appearance, situation or behaviour is foregrounded and stigmatized—as bestial, antisocial or inhuman—while everything that makes the other resemble us is backgrounded, eclipsed and denied. (Jackson 2005: 46)

Postone's analysis of structural anti-Semitism and Scholz's work on Anti-Ziganism illustrate how under capitalism, these projected stereotypes express attributes that challenge the order of the market, and precisely because of this reason, must not be allowed to dwell within the symbolic space of capital.

In a closely related sense, Jarrett Zigon describes the situation of people living in the crossfire of the "war on drugs" as one that makes it impossible for them to "dwell in the world," leaving them "trapped in the world" instead (2014: 757). In an example of how Heideggerian terminology can be made productive for emancipatory purposes irrespective of its contested original connotations, Zigon here uses "dwelling" as a synonym for "dignity." He rejects the latter, because to him it points to an "a-priori humanness" which obscures that "dignity" is a property of "socio-politically configured space(s)": "When persons become a part of such assemblages, they, too, take on such dignity, not because it is a latent aspect of their natural essence, but because this particular assemblage provides certain conditions within which they can dwell" (2014: 754). I am not sure if it is necessary to interpret "dignity" in such a restrictive way; certainly for Axel Honneth, "dignity" is not an essential, presocial quality of individuals, but something that is awarded in an ongoing, intersubjective process of recognition, not entirely unlike Zigon's "assemblages." But whether one wants to use the term or not, Zigon's association is striking when applied to homelessness: just as one activist he cites experiences himself as "trespassing in [his] own neighbourhood" (2014: 756), so too the homeless are fundamentally trespassing in the world, since they have no place where they are allowed to dwell, literally or metaphorically. To them, the association of dwelling and dignity can thus become painfully immediate, as the street "diminishes their personhood" as Robert Desjarlais puts it (1997: 24).

"When worlds break down," Zigon continues, "dwelling is no longer possible. When this occurs, the demand of an ethics of dwelling is felt, and some respond to this demand" (2014: 758). Dwelling therefore is not only a moral concept, but also "an ethical imperative for human existence" (2014: 757). Squatters certainly heeded this imperative, not just by providing physical shelter to homeless people but also by reaffirming their status if not as full members of the "property owning democracy," then at least as members of humanity worthy of consideration. Squatting thus meant to "struggle to find a way to dwell" both in a literal sense, and in the more abstract sense Zigon has in mind: as a "politics of world-building" (2014: 759) that opens up new possibilities (or, as it were, any possibility) of being-in-the-world. The worlds squatters built—the material spaces as well as the social worlds—were transient and unstable, but for as long as they could be kept going, they could provide "the being and feeling at home, the sociality, and the openness of possibilities to become otherwise" (2014: 757) that "dwelling" entails. If "the streets could come close to effecting a civil death, in which people ceased to be fully social human beings" (Desjarlais 1997: 124), then the ethics of squatting was designed to build worlds that offered the possibility of "coming back to life" through the experience of solidarity and protection.

However, the challenge to the territorial order that squatting entailed could not go unopposed. As property is becoming an increasingly more important avenue for capital accumulation (Marcuse and Madden 2016), practices that oppose this accumulation are not only made illegal throughout the Western world but, importantly, also morally delegitimized. The moral panic surrounding the introduction of Section 144 therefore involved, also and especially, a concerted effort to destroy whatever positive cultural imagery was associated with squatting. Splitting squatters into the "desperate homeless" and "lifestyle squatters" meant that the latter could be "burdened" with the territorial rapaciousness of the property-owning democracy, and driven out like the proverbial scapegoat, while the former could be fixated in space under disciplinary control. On the ground, this affected the ability of the people we have met in this book to "dwell in the world." On a symbolic level, however, this narrative was also designed to evict a certain folk hero from the popular imagination: the figure of "the squatter" as a heroic protector, as embodied long ago by Harry Cowley, and with him, the legitimacy of need as the basis of a moral claim not just to welfare but also to solidarity among equals. Luckily, like all imaginary heroes, "the squatter" dies hard. Four years after the introduction of "Weatherley's law," the SQUASH Campaign reports: "While squatting has become tougher, all is

not doom and gloom. There have been many successful squats and occupations, including residential buildings, and squatting continues in commercial properties, albeit on a much smaller scale and less visibly than before."[18] Squatting has not disappeared, and with homelessness in Britain having more than doubled since 2010,[19] it is unlikely that it will. Future squatters may find themselves on the wrong side of the law, but as Harry Cowley once said: "Surely to God we are not asking too much. We have gone the right way about it. Now we have to go the wrong way."[20]

18. "Four Years since Residential Squatting Criminalised," *SQUASH*, September 2016. http://www.squashcampaign.org/2016/09/four-years-since-residential-squatting-criminalised/.

19. https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Homelessness.pdf.

20. https://thefedarchive.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/who-was-harry-cowley.pdf.

Epilogue

I did not hear from Gavin for over two years after I left Bristol. There had been some strong words, nothing that would break a friendship necessarily, but enough not to pick up the phone and ring each other for awhile. There was much catching up to do, and two weeks later I found myself in Gavin's living room in Bristol, reminiscing about the old days. He had moved to a flat in Montpellier with his new partner, situated in exactly the kind of building an ex-squatter would pick: thick, solid walls and double-glazing. I remembered Gavin's old home in Easton: the holes in the walls and ceilings were so big that somebody had stuck the entire leg of a mannequin through one of them, and the window in Gavin's bedroom had never shut. He seemed much happier now, having managed to get a job and some money, and calmer than I remembered him. Reminiscing about the old days, he pensively said, "we were not really part of society back then, were we?"

Gavin was amazed that I was still doing "that PhD," even when I told him that it was not the writing but the thinking that took so long. I told him about the part of my thesis in which he features, and summarized my thinking about the argument at the beginning of this book: "So my point is: you were pissed off because I was squatting when I didn't have to, whereas you had no choice." His face lit up and he nearly jumped out of his chair, shouting, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" and pointing his finger at me. Catching up with him, I learned what had happened in Bristol since my departure in early 2012. The Factory, the squat that in many ways had stood at the center of Bristol squatting activism, had fallen, but not

until a long and fiercely fought legal and physical battle with the new owner of the building, who was, as rumor had it, the Vatican. Co-op Road, too, was gone, its inhabitants scattered as far as the forests of Wales and the caravan sites of Exeter. The Free Shop was lost after an exceptionally long court case; the owner, a property development company based in Malaysia, had struggled to defend its claim that it actually had a commercial interest in the building it had ostensibly left to fall apart, but finally property had triumphed. Even Magpie, the colorful little shack at the top end of Stokes Croft, across from Telepathic Heights, was gone, displaced by the new owner's wish to open another café on the now completely gentrified street. At the time I am writing this, all of these spaces still sit empty, boarded up or secured with the favorite building material of the "property owning democracy," Sitex. But to occupy them now would mean that in addition to the normal vagaries of squatting, one would face a substantial fine or (in the likely case that one had no money) six months in prison.

Like many others, Gavin had read the writing on the wall and made an effort to get out of squatting while he could. He had been lucky to encounter a partner who was in a stable enough employment situation to be eligible for a rental contract. Those less lucky had, for the most part, escaped either into vehicle dwelling (which removed them from the city centers and pushed them toward the periphery), or lived in rural squatting communities on farms and in woodlands. Those who remained in urban squats were mainly the most troubled: those with substance abuse issues or mental illness, criminal convictions, or no documentation. In a sense, the moral rhetoric of the criminalization campaign had thus turned into a self-fulfilling prophecy: by splitting squatters into the vulnerable homeless and the lifestyle squatters, the government had created a situation in which only the most vulnerable homeless were left squatting.

In 2011, the government had launched a public consultation on the proposed criminalization, which had drawn responses from squatters organizations such as Squatters Action for Secure Houses (SQUASH), but also from homelessness charities Crisis, Shelter, Thames Reach, Homeless Link, Housing Justice, and St Mungo's, as well as the Metropolitan Police, High Court Enforcement Officers, the Criminal Bar Association, the Law Society, and a number of independent housing lawyers. Over 90 percent of the 2,000 individual submissions to the consultation were opposed to the criminalization (Cobb 2014; Dadusc and Dee 2014). As the SQUASH campaign had outlined, the full cost of impact, including housing benefit for the displaced squatters, would far exceed the government's narrow calculation of cost to the justice system. Alas, since the government had,

at the same time, been busy severely restricting housing benefits, this argument had been given little weight. The argument made by most lawyers—namely, that the existing law was enough to address the "problem" of accidental home invasions—had gone equally unheard. As for the homeless charities, since the government had categorically decided that squatters and the homeless were two entirely different species, their protestations had not even been seen as relevant to the issue. For a brief period, squatters had found some unlikely allies in the House of Lords, some of whose members appeared to lean toward a spatial ethics of solidarity with vulnerability. As Baroness Miller had put it: "In their hearts the government do not want to criminalise a section of the population who, very often through no fault of their own, are homeless. The clause is about squatters, but if you described them as 'vulnerable homeless,' most people's reaction would be different."[1] However, while the Baroness may have been right on the second count, she had most assuredly been wrong on the first: the House of Commons had passed Section 144 by 283 votes to 13 (Cobb 2014: 14).

When "Weatherley's law" came into force on September 1, 2012, the first people to be convicted were twenty-one-year old Alex Haigh[2] and a Bristol man only identified as "Henry." Both were sentenced to several months in prison. Just three weeks into September, the Squatters Legal Network had reported:

> There have definitely been arrests in Brighton and Bristol, but most other police interventions have ended either with the police being persuaded that no offence has taken place, or in the police persuading the occupiers that they should get out or else be nicked. In one case this happened despite the fact the occupiers were licensees, or at least licensees holding over, and the fact that some of the people threatened with arrest were not living at the property and so not committing any offence. The police then handed the property over to someone with no apparent right to the place, although he reckoned he did.[3]

In the first year of its existence, sixty-nine people had been arrested and charged under Section 144 (Cobb 2014: 14). Several of these had been acquitted

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1.   Hansard, HL debates, March 20, 2012, col 892 Baroness Miller.

2.   "London squatter first to be jailed under new law," *BBC*, September 27, 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-19753414.

3.   "The first 3 weeks of S144," *Squatters Legal Network*, September 23, 2012. https://network23.org/squatterslegalnetwork/2012/09/23/the-first-3-weeks-of-s144/.

or their convictions were overturned on appeal, since in practice, the wording of the law made the specific offence of "squatting" quite difficult to prove. Prosecutors had to show that a person was "living or intending to live" in a squat, which, as a squatter's organization remarked, is "difficult to prove . . . without a major surveillance operation."[4] The law had thus proved to be, to some extent, "unworkable and unenforceable,"[5] and squatters had been quick to develop a number of successful strategies to fight convictions. At the same time, however, in its first year, the law had already claimed at least one life: a thirty-five-year-old man named Daniel Gauntlett had frozen to death outside a vacant building after police reportedly threatened to arrest him should he attempt to get inside.[6] Since then, about 700 arrests have been made and at least 10 people were imprisoned.

In one sense, this book is thus something of a "salvage ethnography": the criminalization of squatting meant that the practices I have described in this book are now, for the most part, illegal. This does not mean that squatting has disappeared. It is still legal to squat in commercial properties, and even though a law banning this too is underway, the combination of austerity with Britain's perpetual housing crisis means that squatting is unlikely to go away any time soon. But while squatting still exists, its face has notably changed. Gone are the days of openly squatted social centers, public film nights, people's kitchens, free shops, and all the other innovative and subversive practices emerging from squats that can be found in these pages. What is left now to some degree resembles the darker visions of squatting as they have long been touted by homelessness charities, as only those desperate enough to have no other choice still risk arrest and imprisonment for occupying vacant properties. One of the last big squat evictions in Bristol, in September 2015, which saw about sixty people removed from the former probation office near Stokes Croft, showed a picture of desolation: drugs, violence, and mental illness among these squatters meant that despite the fact that the building was a commercial property, police saw it necessary to evict for reasons of sheer safety. In this sense, what happened to the Bristol squatting "scene" (and squatting in England and Wales

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4. "New squatting law starts to crumble—Keep squatting!" *Indymedia*, November 11, 2013. http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2013/11/513676.html.

5. "New squatting law starts to crumble," http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2013/11/513676.html.

6. SQUASH Campaign. http://www.squashcampaign.org/repeal-law/stories/ Real name of deceased.

more generally) resembles what has happened to the very indigenous tribes that the term "salvage ethnography" was coined for: stripped of their land and thus of their possibility to practice their traditions, these tribes often descended into abject poverty, drug dependency, and violent conflict. In documenting what squatting was like before British conservative ideology asserted its territorial claim over its spaces, I thus hope to contribute to preserving the memory of the cultural, political, and most importantly, the ethical understandings that were developed in the squatted spaces of better days.

In another sense, however, this book has also turned out to be something I did not originally intend for it to be: a testament to the way that in England, territorial ideology was deliberately infused into the "hearts and souls of the nation," until it boiled over into what some commentators have called "a bewildering act of self-harm."[7] If anyone had told me back in 2012 that only four years later, the United Kingdom would vote by 52 to 48 percent to leave the European Union, I would not have believed a word of it. Alas, in order to preserve the unity of the Tory party, David Cameron had applied the maxim "divide and rule" to the British public, splitting it in half in the kind of displacement maneuver that normally requires colonies. As I am writing this, the country is still in shock and political chaos following the vote, and what will happen next is still very difficult to predict. What is certain is that whatever path the United Kingdom takes from here, the referendum itself has already had a profound effect on the country: in a single day, the vote has split Britain into "Leavers" and "Remainers" who regard each other as essentially two different nations. Of course, to some degree, the divisions that have erupted have existed for a long time, and the referendum has only brought them to the surface. At the same time, however, the new frontline in many ways crosscuts old allegiances and feuds, such as those between the political Right and Left, and pitches family members, coworkers, and friends against each other in a new, deep rift that may well come to shape British society for years to come.

In this light, it appears almost prescient now when Deanna Dadusc and E. T. C. Dee (2014) analyze the moral fear of the squatter also and especially as a symptom of the fear of foreign labor migration. To stoke the fear of

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7. "Irish Times view: Brexit a bewildering act of self-harm," *Irish Times*, June 24, 2016. http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/editorial/irish-times-view-brexit-a-bewildering-act-of-self-harm-1.2698212.

immigrants, they argue, is a strategy of capital to distract the workers from their exploitation, and give them an outside enemy to direct their anger at.

> This is today most evident in the political classes' exploitation of fears around the free movement of EU workers (which unlike non-EU migration is less easily controlled from Westminster). These concerns have been exacerbated further by continuing public concerns over the lifting of the transitional ban on immigration by Romanian and Bulgarian workers. (Dadusc and Dee 2014: 34)

In the case of squatting, this worked also and especially by suggesting that migrants were "stealing" housing as an already scarce resource. Similar arguments were made by the "Leave" side during the referendum campaign about "too many foreigners" blocking access to healthcare, schools, and jobs. Just as in the case of housing, this happened simultaneously to the government's severe austerity program and the continues privatization of the NHS; however, the accurate perception that public assets were getting scarce was subsequently intentionally misdirected at "foreigners."

In this sense, the publicly enacted social death of the squatter as the ritual expulsion of the morally offensive foreigner foreshadowed the conservative government's campaign to blame the European Union, and especially European migrants, for the consequences of austerity. Of course, it would be difficult to claim a direct causal relation between the Section 144 campaign and "Brexit"—there are many complex reasons the vote turned out as it did, and the vilification of foreign squatters was only one element of the tabloid media's vilification of migrants more generally. There is, however, a logical relation between the vote and the government's strategy of deliberately stoking the flames not just of racism but specifically of a rabid territoriality, that is not so much about "race" (after all French or German people have not been seen as a different "race" since 1945) but about a real or perceived lack of spatial entitlement. The decades-long ideological push toward a localized territorial moral order here came together with austerity policies that made space even more artificially scarce than it already was, and a rhetoric that identified foreigners as causing the problem. Not unexpectedly, about half the British electorate was responsive to this thinking, and rallied under the banner of demanding to make Britain territorial again. The argumentative figures of the leave campaign had all the markings of a territorial configuration: from the demands for secure boundaries to the call for "sovereign" control of the inside, from the tabloid-fueled calls for externalization

of all Europeans to the murder of "socially dead" Polish migrants in the streets. Where the enemy could not easily be identified as a foreigner, he was nevertheless presumed to have something to do with "cosmopolitan elites" who, according to Prime Minister Theresa May, were simply "Citizens of Nowhere"[8] and thus just as "out of place" as any migrant. The internal moral hierarchy, in which "enemies of the people" were seen to corrupt the sacred space of democracy made the territorial configuration complete.

If one wanted to let the anthropological imagination fly (come on, it's the last paragraph), one could thus think of Eton-and-Oxford educated David Cameron, distinguished member of the Bullingdon Club, as the high priest of a territorial cult, who unintentionally came to preside over a great "purification ritual" on part of a considerable proportion of the electorate. Ostensibly about the EU, the referendum thus turned into a great territorial enactment, in which the internal divisions of the country were redrawn, the boundaries reaffirmed, and the "foreigner"—this mythical hybrid of cheap labor and benefit fraud—symbolically driven out. The consequences of this great ritual are still impossible to tell. I, for one, as an EU citizen, might end up getting evicted not just *in* England but also *from* England, which would be an interesting ethnographic development. One thing I am fairly sure about as an Austrian, however, is this: if territoriality is not met with resistance, it has a tendency to get out of hand.

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8.   "Theresa May's rejection of Enlightenment values," *Guardian*, October 9, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/oct/09/theresa-may-rejection-of-enlightenment-values.

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