ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	RUNNING WITH NEOLIBERALISM: THE PRACTICE AND POLITICS OF VOLUNTARISM, HOMELESSNESS, AND SWEAT IN URBAN BALTIMORE
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Shimmering as a spatial and temporal beacon of private capital investment, Baltimore is built testament to a three-decade transformation wrought upon much of United States. Within this time, Baltimore's city government has been refashioned and repurposed, from primarily focusing on managing the welfare of its citizenry, to becoming preoccupied with the entrepreneurial restructuring of the city as a motor of private capital accumulation (Harvey, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006). The pervasive spread of such reformation relied largely upon the uncritical adoption of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006), and resulted in virtually uncontested elimination of many public services and agencies, and the increased responsibilitization of individuals and communities for social welfare. Philanthropic and voluntarist contributions of private citizens and organizations have come to

address some, though certainly not all, of the shortfall in social welfare provision: This has been but one response to the palpable *crises* resultant of the continual shift to urban neoliberalism. Illustratively, Baltimore's sizeable homeless population becomes evermore dependent on the benevolence of private *corporate social responsibility*-directed capital and voluntarist physical labor. Through an empirically-anchored explication, this paper moves with the bodies of one private and voluntarist initiative: the Baltimore chapter of Back On My Feet. Back On My Feet is a non-profit organization that "promotes the self-sufficiency of homeless population by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem" (2010). Within this study, Baltimore's Back On My Feet population is engaged through ethnographically-based inquiry, in order to excavate how the bodies of volunteers and those recovering from addiction or homelessness are mobilized as meaningful and viable apparatuses of neoliberal governance. Understanding Back On My Feet and its participants as constituent and contextual elements, this interpretive analysis suggests: how within a neoliberal conjuncture this form of movement subjectifies particular bodies in service of dominant power relations; and how this movement also shapes bodies in tangential or lateral movements possessive of the potential for negotiating dominant power relations.

RUNNING WITH NEOLIBERALISM:
THE PRACTICE AND POLITICS OF VOLUNTARISM, HOMELESSNESS, AND
SWEAT IN URBAN BALTIMORE

By

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PREFACE

In 2009 I moved to the Washington, D.C. area. The move marked the first time my residency was located within a major metropolitan area. Throughout my last five years in DC and Baltimore, MD (one hour apart by automobile), the ubiquitous presence of 'street people' marked both cityscapes. Some held signs scrawled with words seeking money, food, or work; some were laying down or sleeping, wrapped tightly with blankets of assorted color, cloth, and pattern; some held out cups or hats for donations in their hands or resting next to the place they had chosen to sit or lay; some were walking and carrying or carting what appeared to be their only possessions; and, undoubtedly, some I could not identify as what has come to be more commonly regarded as 'homeless.' Troubled then, as I am in many ways still, I simply struggle to comprehend how within what is often reported to be the wealthiest nation on the Earth, and characterized at least partly by egalitarian and meritocratic principles, *we* allow such marked differences to persist.

Not long after moving to D.C. I followed my advisor's invitation to become more involved in his ongoing research agenda in Baltimore. More specifically, he pointed me toward a variety of programs, services, problems, conundrums, and ideas about Baltimore. Often these initial entries into Baltimore related in varying degrees

to physical culture. One of the organizations he suggested I read more about was Back On My Feet, which described itself in 2010 as "a non-profit organization that promotes the self-sufficiency of Baltimore's homeless population by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem." After exploring the organization's website and news coverage, and as a student in an Ethnography course offered by the American Studies department, I set out to learn more than what was electronically available.

At that time in early 2010, Back On My Feet was just beginning to take flight. The organization began in Philadelphia in 2007, expanded to Baltimore in 2009, and slowly began to expand across the Eastern Seaboard. The Baltimore chapter opened in March 2009, it was just one year old when I began participating in 2010. Living in DC, I traveled to Baltimore more than 30 times that first spring and summer of 2010 to attend the program's orientation, volunteer with a group at one of its five locations, and interview its organizers and several of its participants. After that first summer, I would spend my next two returning frequently to Baltimore for participation and interviews. The more time I spent with the group, the more complex my initially simplistic view became with respect to the participants, organization, welfare of the Baltimore's populace, and their relations the U.S. society.

My hope was that in the process of gaining understanding about this program, the context of its emergence, and the people participating, that I could shed some light on my past and current confusion about the oft invisible and marginalized people experiencing homeless within the U.S., and specifically Baltimore. As I began to learn about homelessness and extreme conditions of poverty, I was left unfulfilled in

the wake of recognizing the tremendous scale and scope necessary for an ethical

response that could remedy such glaringly pervasive iniquitous conditions. Such a

response evades even the most committed. From this recognition, I have come to

identify and in some ways appreciate confusion, discomfort, awkwardness, or the

myriad of anxieties accompanying suffrage, its sufferers, and its spectators as themes

important for analysis. As I learned more about and participated with Back On My

Feet, these themes manifested in my thinking, speaking, writing, behavior, and body.

In this project, I explore and put forth a sensibility about: the broader context out of

which Back On My Feet emerged and continues to shape and be shaped; how the

organization fits within the landscape of what has come to be known in

predominantly in academic discourse as neoliberalism; what it is like to participate in

Back On My Feet; and the varied perspectives and understandings its participants

embody in and through their involvement, including my own. As inequality between

the wealthiest and everyone else continues to grow in the United States, and

especially those in conditions of extreme poverty, disaffiliation, and

disenfranchisement, such as those experiencing homelessness, I sought to describe

and contextualize the experiences of the people choosing to participate in this group

in the hope that such a rendering could contribute to not just to academic literature,

but also potentially provoke analytical curiosity, prompt discussion and

thoughtfulness with the people of Back On My Feet, and contribute to the discourse

of homelessness in a more humanizing way.

Although those participants of Back On My Feet who might be labeled 'street

people' or 'homeless' in fact lived in a recovery facility while I conducted this

project, I have added to my abbreviated description of the marginalized urban Other,

some are running.

DEDICATION

This dissertation, a node and marker in my thinking, writing, and work, is dedicated

to the three most amazing women in my life:

Louise Clift, Renée T. Clift, and Sarah Brown

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In at least two ways, completing a dissertation and attaining a Doctoral Degree share affinities with training for and running a marathon. Many people *can* accomplish both; few attempt either, assuredly for sundry reasons. Always there will be rock stars that complete either seemingly effortlessly, but anyone who has accomplished one or the other knows full well the depth of *training* involved. Not a rock star in either, I am delighted to be one of the few who have completed both, using one in service of the other. Importantly, both require the support of numerous people, without whom either becomes an immensely more difficult and perhaps impossible task.

Acknowledging the various people that influenced my development is perhaps my favorite part of completing this project. Rarely do we allow others and ourselves the time and space to thank those around us for their support. If I have left anyone out, I apologize.

David L. Andrews: Thank you for your continual generosity and working so diligently to provide me opportunities to learn, write, and grow as you do. I am indebted to your continual encouragement, steadfast support, and the frequent and infrequent conversations and discussions.

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Sarah: Greatest companion on the journey thus far… Here we go…

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INTRODUCTION

A Morning with the Mayor

As part of celebrating her 40th birthday, Mayor of Baltimore, Maryland

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake went for an early morning run on March 17, 2010. Rather

than running alone, or with a peer, family member, or colleague, she ran with a group

of approximately 200 members of an organization called Back On My Feet (2010): A

not-for-profit organization that "promotes the self-sufficiency of homeless population

by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-

esteem." At the conclusion of their collective run through downtown Baltimore, the

Mayor presented Back On My Feet with a check for $3,186.92 and spoke briefly to

those in attendance. The check was donated by one Whole Foods store in Baltimore

that collected an undisclosed portion of purchases from the Wednesday the week

prior. In her words that morning, Mayor Rawlings-Blake spoke about: issues of

homelessness in Baltimore; the need for individual volunteerism and communal and

organizational efforts in addressing the social welfare of Baltimore's populace, and

homelessness specifically; and Back On My Feet as an organization demonstrating

the dedication necessary for addressing issues of homelessness (Rawlings-Blake,

2010). To many, the event, those involved, and the organizations they represent may seem at first somewhat commonplace, trivial, or even banal. Charity, donations, and the sponsoring of various causes are far from rare practices in the early 2000s. Yet, an analytical and critical consideration of this event and indeed the broader, every day practices and connections, of which they comprise and are produced, present compelling questions, thoughts, and understandings about the nature of inequalities within contemporary, United States cities such as Baltimore. Careful consideration also raises questions about the presence of, role of, and increasing dependence upon non-governmental entities addressing inequalities.

In the span of little more than an hour—the typical length of time required for a morning run with Back On My Feet—Mayor Rawlings-Blake confirmed the primacy of broader trends establishing creative and unique responses to urban-based social and economic inequality, of which Back On My Feet is one example. On the issue of homelessness, she remarked that, "Like many of the city's greatest challenges, homelessness is bigger than government. We cannot end homelessness with money alone – we need people in the community to help these individuals find dignity, respect, rejuvenation and the promise of a new life" (Rawlings-Blake, 2010). Back On My Feet, she continued, "is an organization powered by volunteers dedicated to helping their fellow man start their lives anew." The issues facing Baltimore and the cities within the United States are, as she framed them, beyond the sole scope of the state; they are issues for us all, and which can and should be addressed through private entities, philanthropy, charity, not-for-profit organizations, communities, and voluntarism.

Back On My Feet represents one of the most recent, emergent organizations and outgrowths emanating from the mutual imbrication of at least three interrelated shifts taking shape within the last 30 to 40 years: governmental retrenchment from social welfare provision; the rise of non-governmental entities filling the gaps left by that retrenchment; and the shifting, historically constituted understanding of the victims of poverty, of which homelessness is one expression. The **first** fundamental shift in the United States, taking formidable shape in the 1980s through the early 21st century, involved a repositioning of the role of government in contemporary society and the simultaneous reorientation of urban space (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Rather than occupying a presence as a major locus of social welfare provision and service, the state shifted responsibility on to non-governmental agencies, such as non-profit organizations, public-private partnerships, and private initiatives (Harvey, 2001; Levine, 2000; Silk & Andrews, 2006). Baltimore, according to David Harvey (2001) is a city representative of the processes and forces shaping cities within late-capitalism. The city presently stands as a built testament to a three-decade transformation wherein the city's form and function changed focus from managing the welfare of its populace to a preoccupation with the promotion and management as a motor of private capital accumulation (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2001; MacLeod, 2002; Silk, 2007; Silk & Andrews, 2006). As a result, gaps in social welfare and service provision widened, and the responsibility for social welfare provision and access shifted from public, governmental sources to individual, communal, local, and entrepreneurial modalities.

By refashioning urban space intended for the promotion of consumptive based capital accumulation, a **second** and inseparable shift from the first matured: the turn toward and increasing dependency upon private initiatives, private-public partnerships, philanthropy, charity, and voluntarism as modalities for addressing an array of social issues, problems, programs, and services (e.g. education, knowledge, leisure and entertainment, health, physical activity, and so forth). Stemming from cutbacks in social welfare during the Reagan administration, non-profit entities, public-private partnerships, and private initiatives were viewed as substitutes for government (Boris, 1999). Non-profit organizations, especially, evolved as important modalities for addressing social welfare for those with whom the marketplace was by-and-large out of reach. Their growth during the last 30 to 40 years was considerable: from 1970 to 1990 non-profit organizations tripled (Wiesbroad, 1998b) and from 1998 to 2009 registered non-profits increased 31% (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2010). To remain economically competitive and survive within the competitive marketplace, however, non-profit organizations necessarily became less dependent upon the retrenching government, more "lean, efficient, and effective" (Boris, 1999, p. 3), soon turning to corporations as sources of funding and market oriented dictates associated with the commercial and private sectors. An effect of this lead to the establishment of what Pitter and Andrews (1997) call the *social problems industry*, wherein public groups, non-profit organizations, communities, or individuals seek out private financial support for initiatives directed toward addressing and ameliorating social problems faced by the underserved living in U.S. urban environments. Effectively,

the realization of market-based philanthropy, non-profits, charity, and voluntarism, stitched together social problems, causes, welfare, and provision to the market place.

Concurrently, homelessness re-emerged as a national problem or crisis during the 1980s (Kusmer, 2002; Stern, 1984), rising steadily, and sharply at times, throughout the last 30 years. This marks out a **third** relevant shift useful for understanding and explaining Back On My Feet. Cuts to governmental social welfare provision during the 1970s and 80s resulted in the rise of homelessness, instances of extreme poverty, and a lack of both material and symbolic ways of addressing poverty and homelessness (see, for example: DePastino, 2003; Hopper, 2002; Kusmer, 2002; Marcus, 2006; Min, 1999; Rossi, 1989; Snow & Anderson, 1993; Wolch & Dear, 1994). With the shift in governance and concomitant rise of individual, non-governmental responsibility for social welfare, the meaning of homelessness within the United States shifted, too. Acknowledging that any attempt to locate the meaning of 'homeless' must be anchored within a persistent commitment to understand how actions, practices, or processes are (re)produced by various elements across and within particular moments in space and time (Snow & Anderson, 1993), popular understanding about those experiencing conditions of extreme poverty and/or homelessness hinged upon stereotypes positioning individuals as either *innocent* or *guilty* for their own plight. Discourses based on (im)morality and (in)dependency (Borchard, 2010) constructed in many ways how assistance of various forms and purposes might be conceived, evaluated, or provided by those with the ability to make decisions, which affected numerous people, actors, organizations, and institutions (from national Governmental policy, to state governments, to non-

profit organizations, and to local soup kitchens), and indeed accessed by those experiencing extreme poverty. The simultaneous calls for and promotion of non-governmental intervention focused on the amelioration of a variety of urban social issues fostered creative, unique, and individually inspired efforts, organizations, and modalities.

An exemplar using creative means to and for addressing social inequality broadly in urban environments, and homelessness and addiction recovery specifically, Back On My Feet undoubtedly seems a bit strange upon first learning or hearing of its existence. *Running with the homeless*, after all, presents conflicting bodily images of the able, fit, and healthy juxtaposed against the deprived and impoverished homeless body. Moreover, running with the organization is a practice most will not seek to learn more about or understand if even aware of its presence. Still fewer will partake. Recent success, however, suggests the organization carries resonance with and for volunteers, those recovering from addiction or homelessness, cities across the United States, and numerous funding sources.

Since its 2007 Philadelphian inception, and in defiance of the outwardly assumptions that running is a practice not associated with the homeless, Back On My Feet has steadily flourished. In the last six years the cultivation of the organization has been achieved through: substantial economic growth through private investment and sponsorship; increased organizational employment opportunities; expansion to ten additional United States cities after Philadelphia, with more planned expansion; and within those cities the production multiple satellite communities comprised primarily of volunteers and those in recovery. Considering that Back On My Feet was

established and sought to grow amidst the 2008 economic recession—which resulted

in sizable reductions in corporate and individual donation, and also yielded climbing

counts of people experiencing homelessness in urban areas, especially Baltimore—

the organization has actually thrived.

Research Questions

As a child and young adult in Urbana-Champaign, IL during the 1990s and

early 2000s, I learned from my parents, friends, and teachers in my communities and

cities that voluntarism was an important way to *give back* to those less fortunate. The

voluntary and charitable practices I engaged in on an infrequent basis included,

among others: painting buildings with social groups, participating in walk-a-thons to

raise money for various causes, and, with my parents, donating clothes and household

items to Goodwill. Initially, I understood these practices as inherently positive,

altruistic, and necessary. As I matured, I rarely experienced other practices that were

explicitly recognized, named, and understood as "appropriate," "necessary," or even

"vital" characterized at levels beyond one's self and socially significant than charity

and voluntarism. This left me wondering, and which eventually became an interest of

my scholarship: If these acts of voluntarism and charity are so important, then why

are they *additives* of daily lives and not *foci*? Who is doing the "charity," who is

receiving it, and why? Instead of doing charity work, why not address the very *things*

leading to conditions productive of the need for charity work? I was confused then, as

I was before beginning this project, and to some degree still am. How does inequality,

in its numerous and various forms, continue to exist? How do charitable acts, despite their benevolent and altruistic intent, potentially contribute to the very inequalities they often seek to address? Undoubtedly, economic inequality is one of the more prevalent and persistent forms in the early 21st century.

Trends during the last five years in the United States indicate growing gaps between the wealthiest and everyone else. Warren Buffet (2007) framed this economic reality in remarking that the average American has "been on a treadmill while the super rich have been on a spaceship." Since the 2008 recession, economic gaps have widened in virtually every statistical marker. Along lines of race and class, inequality continues to rise: Currently, according to the 2010 U.S. Census white Americans have 22 times more wealth than black Americans, a gap that has nearly doubled since the 2008 recession. Increasing economic gaps between the wealthiest and everyone else, and the economic gaps along racial lines are also evident within the homeless population, especially in the State of Maryland and city of Baltimore. The homeless population is over-represented by African-Americans at 80-85% compared to the State's racial composition of 29% and Baltimore's of 63% (U.S. Census, 2012; Olubi & Akers, 2011). From 2009 to 2011 the homeless population in Baltimore grew by almost 20% while the national homeless population increased 3% (Olubi & Akers, 2011). Economic inequality, its racial articulation, and increasing homelessness remain some of the defining paradoxical legacies of and for the United States, despite status as one of the wealthiest countries in the world and regularly espousing freedom and equal opportunity.

Even while such inequality persists and grows, political leadership continues to turn to non-governmental sources of welfare provision by emphasizing the role of non-profit organizations, voluntarism, and charitable contributions as defining features of how the United States approaches social issues and inequality; indeed, as Wagner (2000) noted, the United States sees itself as exceptional in this regard. Following in the footsteps of Presidents Reagan, both Bushes, and Clinton, President Obama recently framed a U.S. way of life through voluntarism and charity as ways of "giving back." He spoke just prior to his second inauguration during and about the National Day of Service on January 13, 2013:

> This is really what America is about. This is what we celebrate. This Inauguration … it's a symbol of how our democracy works and how we peacefully transfer power, but it should also be an affirmation that we're all in this together and that we've got to look out for each other and work hard on behalf of each other. (Office of the Press Secretary, 2013)

Non-profit scholarship likewise considers philanthropy, non-profits, charity, and voluntarism as unique to the United States, stressing their vital roles figuring in the fabric of U.S. society. Similar to my personal experiences, charitable discourse, the scholarly literature on non-profits and the "third sector," and here President Obama, philanthropy, non-profits, charity, and voluntarism are characterized as *additives*; that is, supplemental to daily life, a-political, free of and from conflict and struggle, outside or beyond the purview of the state, and both non- or bi-partisan. Doing so extricates giving acts from daily life and broader structures, processes, and power

relations, and in contradiction to President Obama's sentiment that giving back facilitates the transfer of power, ignores or obscures power and power relations.

Framed as a prominent feature of U.S. society, a vital and potent strategy for addressing social issues and inequality, and beyond political reproach, suggests a *guaranteed* presence of *giving*. The effects of the 2008 recession, however, tell a different tale; corporate donation, non-profit employment, and the number of volunteers have all decreased (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2010). Clearly, giving in its multifarious forms cannot be guaranteed in advance. Moreover, the iniquitous trends occurring during the last five years, which should be considered alarming, cannot be understood as inseparable from their historical and contemporary relations. Cuts to social welfare during the 1980s, the subsequent emergence of the marketplace as *The* medium for accessing basic welfare needs and services, and the rise of charitable discourse and non-profit organizations and scholarship have all contoured one another. Further, they have contributed to shaping a present that valorizes charitable and voluntarist acts, devoid of substantive alternatives, and dampened political activism (Berlant, 1997; Wagner, 2000; King, 2003). In contrast to understandings of giving as additive, part of this project aims to politicize and conextualize philanthropy, non-profits, charity, and voluntarism in order to illustrate their interconnectedness with broader structures and processes, inequality, governance, experiences, and power.

I do not intend to appear as negative or dismissive toward philanthropy, voluntarism, charity, or non-profit organizations. In fact, I think many of those engaged in projects seeking to address social ills are owed a debt of insurmountable

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gratitude. Typically, at least was the case with Back On My Feet, these are people—especially its employees, instrumental organizers, and many volunteers—who have the ability to choose amongst several options of what to do with their time, money, energy, and (physical) abilities. That they should seek to address social ills as part of their lives and identities, if not definitive, should be commended. From education to health care, civil rights leaders, soup kitchen workers, and volunteers, history is replete with shining examples of people who care. Some of these people operate within formally defined systems, such as law or the non-profit sector, while others form coalitions for progressive political action. However, what I am either unable or unwilling to do is consider these organizations, practices, and people, as isolated from broader contextual understanding. How do such people and acts link (or not) to broader systems of power? What do they address? What do they not? How are those decisions made? How do such decisions create solutions as well as problems? How are these groups and people related to *our* history? Who is "our" and "us" (and not)? Many of these questions are beyond the scope of this project, but undoubtedly they also inform part of the process and politics of the project itself as well as my thinking, writing, and behavior. Contextuality and criticality would seem to go hand in hand. This project aims to make one contribution to understanding the inter-connectedness of giving acts.

To begin responding and thinking through questions such as those above, I immersed myself within the Back On My Feet community. As an ethnographically and community based project, I strove to do more than write about "what is going on." Where appropriate and possible, I anchored my reading, writing, and thoughts to

and with people's experiences and self-narrativizations. By focusing on the lived experiences of Back On My Feet participants within Baltimore City—those in recovery, volunteers, and organizers—this project importantly focuses on an "at-risk" population, volunteers seeking to "do good," in their words, and how that population is engaged and approached amid the increasing trends of which Back On My Feet is an exemplar; that is, emerging programs and services devoted to the U.S. and Baltimore's populace sponsored and promoted by non-governmental entities. Communally embedded, this project provides an opportunity to contribute to both academic literature and importantly to the very people upon which the study is partly based, Back On My Feet participants and the organizers of the non-profit organization in Baltimore.

In my engagement with the people of Back On My Feet, and drawing upon qualitative research practices, the body occupied a central position within this research, my personal experiences, and indeed within the organization itself. Running, after all, is the primary practice of Back On My Feet, and the body resides firmly at the nucleus of its daily practices and long-term goals. As such, I understood and write about the body, its very flesh, as socially constructed. In this way, this project also serves as an exemplar of qualitative analysis more commonly found in the humanities than in predominantly quantitatively driven fields such as the "Hard Sciences" or Kinesiology. One feature of this analysis understands the body as a socially and culturally understood entity, and specifically the active body and physical activity. Mobilizing a qualitative approach, the project further develops a sociologically grounded understanding of the differential access to, experience of, and

effects of physical activity among Baltimore's socially, economically, racially, and ethnically complex and diverse urban (homeless) populace. It therefore contributes to the growing field of Kinesiology, its relation to Physical Cultural Studies, and the less recognized but equally important and burgeoning approach to understanding the body, health, and physical activity in diverse, interdisciplinary, and qualitative ways.

A central preoccupation of this dissertation, therefore, is to locate peoples' experiences and bodies with Back On My Feet within the context of their emergence. With respect to understanding the historically constituted and contemporary context, I sketch out three shifting patterns discussed previously and briefly: governmental retrenchment from social welfare provision; the rise of non-governmental entities filling the gaps left by that retrenchment; and the shifting, historically constituted understanding of the victims of poverty, of which homelessness is one expression. Utilizing qualitative, and specifically ethnographic methodological techniques, I sought to engage with, experience with, and understand the people of the Baltimore Chapter of Back On My Feet. Then, I sought to suture together my experiences, participants' self-narrativizations, and my understandings with academic literature to render an experientially based contextual sensibility about *neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda*, or how bodies are sought out for incorporation into and service to the logics of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006).

As such, the following question provided the overarching guide for this project:

- **What are the relationships between the practices and politics of physical culture, the expanding social problems industry, and the context of neoliberal urban governance?**

The following subsidiary questions relate to the overarching question by speaking to the various dimensions of how the central question is unpacked:

- **What is the relationship between Back On My Feet and the historically constituted and contemporary context of which it is constitutive and constituted?**

- **How is the contemporary relationship between Back On My Feet and urban governance and Baltimore represented, experienced, and negotiated in and through its practices?**

- **What subjectivities are produced and negotiated in and through participation in Back On My Feet?**

- **How does participation in Back On My Feet contribute to the constructions and understandings of recovery, citizenship, community, and social well-being?**

In the remaining sections of this chapter I provide further detail about the organization, operation, and practices of Back On My Feet, both nationally and specifically within its Baltimore Chapter; explain my theoretical proclivities; discuss my methodological approach for this project; and outline each of the chapters in this text.

Back On My Feet

Founded by avid runner Anne Mahlum in the Frost-Belt city of Philadelphia in 2007, Back On My Feet's (2010) mission statement initially read as follows: "Back On My Feet is a non-profit organization that promotes the self-sufficiency of Baltimore's homeless population by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem." Since its initial inception and creation in 2007, Back On My Feet has transformed from a local practice and organization into a nationally based non-profit organization. In 2012, the organization's mission statement changed to the following: "Back On My Feet is a national for-purpose 501(c)3 organization that uses running to help those experiencing homelessness transform their own lives and achieve employment and independent living." Nationally, in the last six years the organization has expanded considerably across the United States. Suggestive of Back On My Feet's relevance for and response to homelessness in the urban environment, chapters have since opened in several cities. In addition to Philadelphia and Baltimore, the organization currently running in Austin, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC; a total of eleven U.S. cities.

Back On My Feet considers each city a "Chapter" and part of the broader nationally based organization. Within each city, or chapter, the organization strives to bring together volunteers with those experiencing homelessness. Each local chapter proposes, arranges, and manages partnerships with recovery facilities for those experiencing homelessness or recovering from addiction. Within those partnerships,

those housed in a facility and volunteers, both of whom who choose to participate, form running teams and gather together to run regularly. Each partnership constitutes a "team" within a chapter. As of early 2014, the number of partnerships, or teams, ranged from three to six within each city. For example, the Boston chapter has six teams whereas the Austin and Atlanta teams each have three teams. In 2012, the Baltimore Chapter merged two teams together as a result of low Resident participation rates at one of its locations, which means the Baltimore Chapter now has four teams instead of five. Unlike most running teams, groups, clubs, or organizations, Back On My Feet's teams are comprised of two organizationally imposed categories of people: *Residents* and *Non-Residents*.

Back On My Feet considers *Resident* members people whom are housed in recovery facilities for those experiencing homelessness or recovering from substance abuse. To recruit Residential members, Back On My Feet staff presents the organization to those at a specific facility. Once approved for joining by their counselors, and in coordination with Back On My Feet staff, Residents can begin running. Residents are expected to run every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Other runs, activities, and races are optional, though staff and Non-Residents regularly encourage those able and interested to participate beyond three days per week. As Residents demonstrate their commitment and intention to continue running for two to four weeks then they receive from Back On My Feet running shoes and attire, which includes: a pair of running shoes, running specific socks, shorts, and t-shirts.

The organization considers its *Non-Resident* members to be the people whom volunteer and generally live within walking, running, or short driving distance from

the team with which they participate. For the purposes of this project, I account for the three main staff of Back On My Feet Baltimore Chapter predominantly as Non-Residents, too, but who also fulfill additional roles within the organization. Non-Residents contact the organization to join they must first attend an orientation meeting with Back On My Feet staff that before running. At the orientation meeting, Non-Residents can choose which team they would like to join. Although Non-Residents are not mandated an attendance policy for continued participation, as do the Residents, they are asked to maintain with some regularity the days on which they run. Typically, Non-Residents begin by running one day per week and either maintains, reduces, or adds to the number of days that they run. Non-Residents do not receive benefits for their participation. For those that wish to commit further they can take on additional roles with the team in consultation with Back On My Feet staff. These roles range in responsibility level. A team leader, for example, is expected to attend every day and contribute to the overall organization of the team, whereas a running coach or social coordinator, in another example, have more specific roles: The running coach plans running routes and distances for the group, and the social coordinator is responsible for organizing and planning social events.

Running regularly together, Residents and Non-Residents form the foundation of Back On My Feet's daily practices. Each team, chapter, and the organization in its entirety from the service delivery side of its operation, are oriented around two components: running team activities, which include running and social activities, complimented by services designed to assist those experiencing homelessness, which are housed by Back On My Feet within a program called *Next Steps*. Both Non-

Residents and Residents participate in the team-based activities; however, the *Next Steps* program and direct benefits to participants are available only for Residential members.

Team based activities include regular and irregular running practices as well as social events independent of running wherein staff, teams, and members gather together. For running activities, teams meet at or near a recovery facility to run three to five days per week. Although each city has particular times at which teams and participants meet, runs typically take place on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings with optional runs on Saturday mornings. Typically, Baltimore's teams meet at 5:30AM on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 7AM on Saturday. Some participants, in addition to weekly runs, prepare for races that may or may not take place on days other than regular meetings. Races in which Back On My Feet members might participate may take place on days other than regular meetings. Morning runs range in typical distance from two to four miles. For those that choose to participate in race events, training during the week can include additional mileage in preparation. Both Resident and Non-Resident Back On My Feet members take part in races ranging in distances from five kilometers (5K) to full marathons or beyond. In addition to regularly, weekly running activities, team members can also participate in social events both inside and outside of the Back On My Feet communities that are scheduled irregularly. For example, the Baltimore chapter has attended Baltimore Orioles baseball games and attended dolphin shows at the city's aquarium. The Baltimore chapter has also organized team-based activities in and around the city, such as "Wipe-out"—wherein teams come together to have fun in friendly

competition based activities such as, tug-of-war, egg-tosses, or running games—or neighborhood cleanups. Although running is perhaps *the* central practice of each team, the Resident members of Back On My Feet have the option to become involved in additional opportunities facilitated by a chapter's employees and staff that are intended to assist them their recovery.

When Residential members join and begin running with the organization they are expected to participate regularly on each of the three running days throughout each week. As Residents accrue mileage over time they receive benefits of monetary value equivalent to corresponding distances. For example, after reaching 100 miles Residents receive a Back On My Feet running hat; at other distance markers, Residents receive other awards such as t-shirts or running watches. While Residents appreciate these awards, Back On My Feet considers its *Next Steps* program to be the central way it provides services and opportunities to Residential members. To participate in the Next Steps program, Residents must participate consistently for two to three months and maintain 90 percent attendance and a "good attitude" each month. Once involved in the program, and providing they maintain their attendance and attitude, Residents are eligible to access programs, services, and opportunities through Back On My Feet. These include, according to Back On My Feet, assistance for "educational and job training opportunities, financial literacy sessions, job partnerships and housing programs to help move their lives forward in a way that is self-sustainable." In addition to these programs, services, and opportunities, Residents are eligible to receive up to $1,250 in financial assistance made available for "moving lives forward." This financial assistance must be approved for use by Back On My

Feet's Chapter and National staff, often that is put toward educational, housing, or transportation costs. Essentially, the more residents run, the more awards, services, programs, opportunities, and financial support they receive.

As the second city in which Back On My Feet became established, after Philadelphia, Baltimore is unique from other expansion cities in at least one way; citizens of Baltimore requested the organization consider expanding, as opposed to Back On My Feet actively looking to expand to other cities. Brought by request to Baltimore by a select few of its citizenry who actively practice running, Back On My Feet's Baltimore chapter began in early 2009. Currently, four full time staff organize the Baltimore chapter: three of whom focus exclusively on Baltimore, and one who shares responsibilities across the Baltimore and Washington, DC chapter. Approximately 45 to 55 Resident members and 200 to 300 Non-Resident members comprise the Baltimore chapter. Amongst the five, now four teams located in Baltimore, I participated with *The House* team; five to eight Residents and fifteen to 25 Non-Residents run regularly on a given day.

The House, a pseudonym, is a 90-bed residential treatment facility for veterans and others transitioning through the cycle of poverty, addiction, and homelessness toward recovery. Unlike most institutional treatment programs in Baltimore, most of which are oriented around a 28-day program, The House emphasizes a speed of recovery appropriate for each person, who typically stay for six to 24 months. The treatment program focuses up: initially looking inward in relation to health issues, drugs, alcohol, and withdrawal symptoms; life skills, such as job readiness, education, and household responsibility during the second through

sixth months; and a transitional and less supervised period from months six to twelve that emphasizes applying life skills, saving money, repairing relationships, mentoring others, and creating relapse prevention strategies. After eighteen months, the program promotes independent living wherein those successful achieve gainful employment or enroll in college.

Initially, The House began in 1987 as group of three people volunteering to provide food and blankets to the homeless in South Baltimore. In 1989 their efforts expanded into a winter shelter and was incorporated as a non-profit organization. From the early 1990s, for fifteen years The House moved to two different buildings, expanding upon the second, in effort to provide more beds for those in recovery. In December of 2008, The House opened its current location and expanded its services to other sites. Currently, as an organization, The House provides 144 beds for those trying to turn their lives around, 90 of which are located at the central and primary location of The House. Within this project, when I refer to the house, I am referring to the primary and single facility location at which Back On My Feet met and ran in South Baltimore.

Theory

The first morning that I ran with Back On My Feet in late March 2010 I approached the program and its participants with a degree of skepticism. Seeking to understand more about how the program worked, who participated, and why they participated, I spoke with the three volunteers that I ran with that day about the

organization, The House group, and how they became involved and why. Maybe it was my apprehension about *how* running could *help* those experiencing homelessness, or a product of my unsettled disposition resulting from getting up early that morning, the distaste I have for the cold, or my exhaustion from the four-mile run, but while driving back to DC that morning three thoughts amongst the many recorded in my field notes resonated in and around my head. The first was a statement from one volunteer in response to asking about their involvement: "we're giving them a new addiction, a positive one that will help them get back on their feet." The second a remark from another volunteer during our run: "Anyone can run, all they have to do is just go out and do it." And third, that in struggling to finish the four-mile run— undoubtedly a result of my relatively lower fitness level at the time compared to those with whom I was running—I needed and appreciated their encouragement and support to struggle through my bodily fatigue and complete the run. Knowing that these were all important somehow, and indeed relevant to this project, I could not make initial connections amongst the thoughts and other ideas they generated. Together, these did not yet make sense to me; I did not know how to link them together coherently, nor did I *see* how they made sense within the context of Baltimore. Moreover, these were the expressions of my experiences and experiences of volunteers, only, and did not include those recovering from homelessness or addiction, the Residents.

To begin understanding these initial thoughts and their potential linkages, and for that matter all that eventually became woven into this project, theory provided me insight, ideas, organization, and further questions with which to work and frame this

project. According to Denzin (1989), "Theory is observation. It gives order and insight to what is, or can be observed" (p. 4). Over two-and-a-half years, I considered numerous theoretical constructs and attempted to understand how they might inform this project and where they might take my thinking, writing, body, behavior, and practices. Preferring to try out theory, or in the words of the late Stuart Hall (1992), to struggle with it, I slowly came to understand theory less as something that would perfectly fit (Slack, 1996), nor a means of garnering a pretentious degree of intellectual or academic merit or regard (Hall, 1988), and nor a means of speaking some universal truth (Grossberg, 1989). Rather, I came to understand theory as helping me to grasp, understand, and explain (Hall, 1988) the current moment and the people of Back On My Feet within it, all in an effort to try and move somewhere better (Grossberg, 1989; 1997b). In this way, theory evolved as more of a practice, guide, and detour (Slack, 1996).

Numerous theories, or theoretical perspectives, informed my analysis of Baltimore, homelessness, voluntarism, Back On My Feet as an organization, Back On My Feet's participants, and myself. As the title of this dissertation suggests, one of the more useful theoretical constructs I explored, examined, and drew upon was neoliberalism, which informed my thinking and writing across the aforementioned foci and all of the chapters herein, some more than others. Following Grossberg's sense of cultural studies as a responsive way of contextualizing and politicizing every day and intellectual practices (2010; 1997a), the city of Baltimore is perhaps chiefly understood as a neoliberal city, and Back On My Feet and its participants accordingly understood as existing within and contributing to the shaping of a neoliberal context.

Social geographer David Harvey (2001) referred to Baltimore in relation to issues of contemporary urbanism, writing: "What is the particular profile of Baltimore as an American city? In many ways, it is emblematic of the processes that have moulded cities under U.S. capitalism, offering a laboratory sample of contemporary urbanism" (p. 7). Rooted in the urban politics of neoliberalism, cities of the United States, such as Baltimore, have undergone a significant transformation during the last thirty to forty years. During this time, Baltimore's city government refashioned and repurposed its focus from one of managing the welfare of its citizenry to becoming preoccupied with restructuring and promoting the city as an entrepreneurial motor of private capital accumulation (Harvey, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006). The pervasive spread of this reformation relied largely upon the uncritical adoption of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006). As a result, social welfare provisions witnessed many public services and agencies eliminated, virtually uncontested. Attentive to the structures, processes, and effects of city transformation, neoliberalism enabled me to be mindful of the relationships between city governance, city space, and peoples' behaviors and practices within the city, especially as related to homelessness, voluntarism, and Back On My Feet. As such, neoliberalism represents a relevant and significant process and construct for understanding the city of Baltimore, Back On My Feet and its Baltimore Chapter, as well as the people participating in Back On My Feet, their practices, and their bodies within both the city and organization, within which I am included.

Neoliberalism, as Stuart Hall (2011) noted, "… is not *one thing*. It evolves and diversifies. …" (p. 12). By this, Hall suggests that neoliberalism has many variants, it

is not a ubiquitous concept, process, idea, policy, or strategy. Invoked by several scholars, neoliberalism's definition and usage varies across disciplines and contexts. For example, social geographers and political economists, such as David Harvey (2000; 2001), Peck and Tickell (2002), Brenner and Theodore (2002), conceptualize neoliberalism as more an ideological structure informing political economic processes. These processes specify, "open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 2) in order to enable optimal functioning of economic and entrepreneurial development. In another example, Lisa Duggan (2003) conceives of neoliberalism as a pro-corporate, free market, anti-big government rhetoric that has become a kind of non-politics, "a way of being reasonable, and of promoting universally desirable forms of economic expansion and democratic government around the globe" (p. 10). She writes that the rhetoric of neoliberalism shapes Western national policy and has dominated international financial institutions since the 1980s. Recognizing the multifarious ways in which neoliberalism can be mobilized as a conceptual framework, I specify my use of neoliberalism as both a process and as a technology of governance.

Aihwa Ong (2006) suggests that neoliberalism is often discussed as economic doctrine with a negative connotation of state power, a market ideology that attempts to limit the scope and activity of governing. In contrast, Ong brings together the work of Michel Foucault (1977; 1978; 1991) and Nikolas Rose (1999a; 1999b), amongst others, to imagine neoliberalism as a technique of governance; she suggests neoliberalism relies upon market knowledge and calculations for a politics of subjection and subject-making. Within her conception, the State plays a major role in

shaping citizen conduct, but not the only role. Instead, whole ranges and clusters of relations, activities, and practices figure in to the ways in which people are governed. As Nikolas Rose (1999a) asserts, technologies, or techniques of governance, are those discourses and practices that shape or govern human conduct (e.g. practical knowledge, perception, calculation, vocabulary, authority, judgment, architectural forms, and so on). This framing rethinks the relationship between politics, the social, and power, by making explicit the relationship between governance and the subject and by drawing together both micro and macro analyses of power (Bratich, Packer, & McCarthy, 2003; Gordon, 2000). As such, neoliberalism is reframed as informing policy making (governing acts), but also as informing, shaping, and shaped by every day practices, experiences, behaviors, and activities. Effectively, neoliberalism as a technology of governance reorganizes connections amongst the governing, the (self-) governed, knowledge, power, and the every day practices of human life. In this way, neoliberalism relies upon activating citizen-subjects that are self-managing, self-enterprising, and self-responsible (Rose, 1999b; Ong, 2006). Back On My Feet, within this framing, becomes a way of governing, a way of producing particular citizen-subjects that is intimately connected in creating connections between bodies, communities, groups, organizations, institutions, and forces and processes at the structural level within a specific historical moment.

In place of a lengthy theoretical discussion placed in one chapter, I instead provide within each chapter further details of several theoretical constructs informing my thinking and writing. My theoretical usage is also detailed more briefly in the chapter outlines concluding this introduction.

Lawrence Grossberg (1997b) affirmed that every day life must be considered beyond the institutional, organizational, and state; people live in the spaces where these fields intersect: "if one wants to move people, even a little bit, one must begin where people are, from where and how they actually live their lives" (p. 257). Although theory provided helpful, useful, and insightful tools with which I worked in this project, I sought to explore peoples' experiences, which required additional kinds of tools oriented around the methodological and methodical. Ultimately, my theoretical, methodological, and methodical tools informed each other.

Method

Propelled by a fluid conceptualization of power, wherein power flows in and through bodies (Foucault, 1977; 1978), and recognizing that the research act is never neutral (Lather, 1986), I strove to develop a flexible, analytical, careful, and attentive qualitative methodological approach. Throughout my experiences with the members of Back On My Feet, I strove to gain a better understanding about how participants understood their participation and in the process the associated meanings of themselves and others. Part of my effort involved immersing my own body into the research itself, or embodying the research act (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Hughson, 2008; Markula & Denison, 2005), in order to better grasp and experience individual and group participation, the practice of running and its corporeal effects, and in relation the politics of inclusion/exclusion.

Figure 1: Location of Baltimore within the continental United States (map from Geology.com, 2014).

Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, & Tincknell (2004) suggest that person-based research is important for ontological, political, and educational reasons. *Ontologically*, observation and participation methods (Wolcott, 2008) provide strategies for accessing "lived culture" and "informal traditions of meaning-making" (Willis, 2000). For example, through their practices, how do participants make sense of themselves, and how do they produce social and cultural logics of those involved? *Politically*, qualitative and ethnographic methods move beyond formal textual productions in effort to access the irreducible features of human expression, creativity, and bodily senses (Johnson et al., 2004; Willis, 2000). One possibility created through such methods enables working through the struggles of translating marginalized and 'sedimented' meanings into textual form for broader readerships. For example, how does the embodied experience of running contribute to creating a

sense of the self? *Educationally*, reflexive practices allow researchers to consider relations of power between the researcher and participants, ethical considerations, and the modes of knowledge production and evaluation. For example, how do my assumptions, sensibilities, experiences, and knowledge shape the theories, methods, and presence in the field? With a focus upon suturing together peoples' experiences and self-narrativizations with(in) the context of Baltimore, I drew from numerous methodological sources across the broad terrain of qualitative inquiry, and mostly from ethnographic literature and techniques, to inform my methodical approach.

Within an informed but flexible frame, method and methodology become less about following pre-determined procedures or protocol and more so additional thinking and practical tools for creating connections amongst the empirical, theoretical, and relevant literatures. As such, method and theory are taken together despite the more common understanding of methods, methodology, and theory as independent of one another (Gee, 1999). In a way, method like theory becomes a practice, a way of trying out (Slack, 1996). In another sense, this move renders literature, theory, and empirical sources of information all as 'data' with which to work to construct a coherent narrative. Patti Lather, in her reading feminist post-structuralism across post-positivist paradigms of inquiry, suggests researchers be wary of any prescribed methodological recipe. Instead, through a flexible methodological approach she seeks to "forge from a scattered testimony a methodology" (p. 214) by working from "spaces already in the making." That is, in place of a pre-determined path, framework, or procedure from which I began or adhered, I sought instead to "make productive use of the dilemma of being left to

work from traditions of research that appear no longer adequate to the task." As such, no pre-packaged or pre-determined source—be that a book, formalized methodology, or manual—determined my methodology or methods. Rather, and in addition to bearing in mind the process of articulation across theoretical, methodological, and methodical choices, I borrowed heavily from ethnographically derived techniques in effort to weave together a contextually specific history of the present (Grossberg, 2006) with the lived experiences of Back On My Feet's participants and myself.
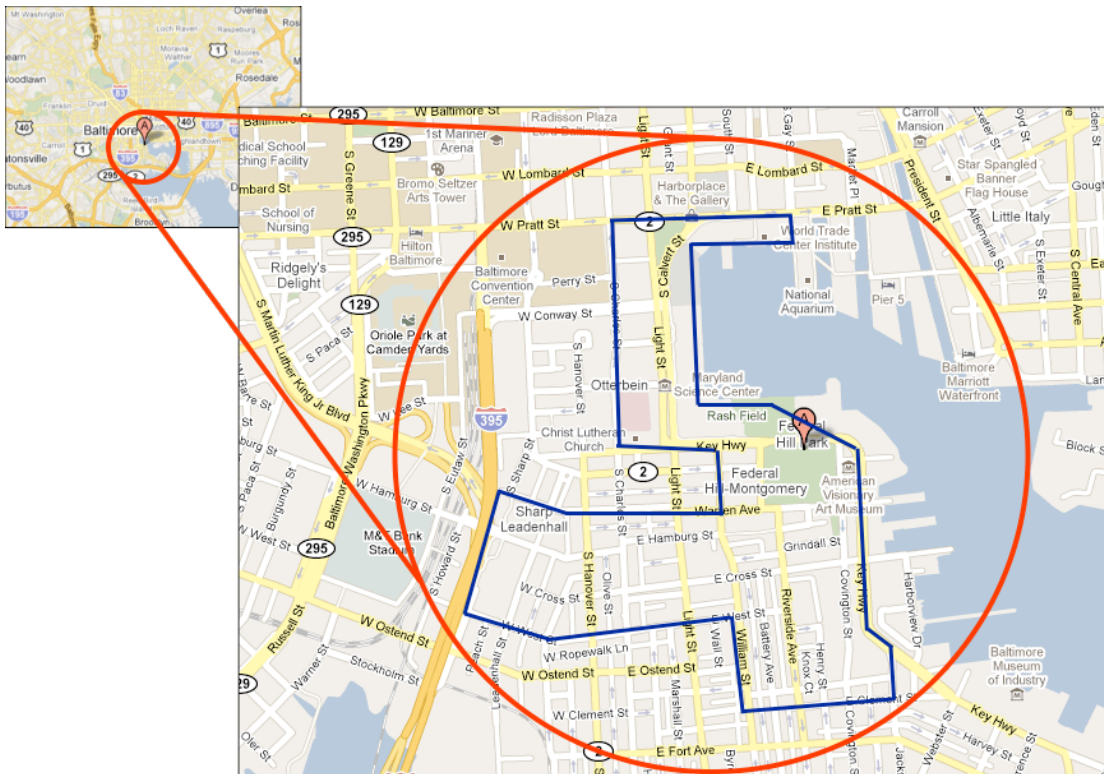
Figure 1: A Three-Mile 'Loop' through the heart of Baltimore City, the Inner Harbor, a common route amongst numerous of The House group in Back On My Feet, Baltimore (maps adapted from Google Maps, 2012).

Following Wolcott's (2008) ethnographic suggestions, I employed three methodological categories emanating from ethnographic inquiry: experiencing, inquiring, and examining, within which a combination of sampling strategies

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006) deployed their associated methods. *Experiencing*—comprised of participant observation and casual conversation during organizational activities, such as runs and socials (Willis, 2000; Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, & Tincknell, 2004; Wolcott, 2008)—achieved through opportunistic and random sampling allowed me to take advantage of the presence of different participants at Back On My Feet gatherings. I actively participated with The House (a pseudonym) group on a day-to-day basis for ten months over approximately two and a half years. During these ten months of immersion I participated in official Back On My Feet functions on two to four days per week. A transient grouping with ephemeral meeting periods—typically less than an hour and a half each morning—presented fewer opportunities for in-situ data collection. Although I was unable to immerse myself for days or weeks on end because the group comes together only briefly, I prolonged my fieldwork practices to accommodate for this limited group access. In total, I participated in approximately 60 runs, which in themselves ranged from as little as thirty minutes to those the length of the marathon I completed in four and a half hours.

Inquiring—semi-structured interviews, conversation while running, and email and phone correspondence—was achieved via opportunistic and random sampling (i.e. requesting interviews and future correspondence with those whom I met) and purposeful and snowball sampling procedures (Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The three Back On My Feet Baltimore organizers and the group leaders of The House group during the time period in which I was a volunteer and participated were selected through purposeful sampling. Additionally, snowball sampling was used for

recruiting additional members of The House team, which allowed me to expand my ability to arrange interviews. In total, I conducted 37 semi-structured interviews with 26 people amounting to 2938 minutes, just under 49 hours, of tape time. Each interview ranged from 30 minutes to three hours. Nine of those interviewed were Residents (those in recovery), 16 were Non-Residents (volunteers and Back On My staff), and one was the counseling director of The House. One of the interviews with Non-Residents was conducted with two people at the same time, a husband and wife who participated in the group together; and one interview was conducted with all three of Back On My Feet's organizers. All participants were given pseudonyms.

Examining—analysis of public information and historical and scholarly texts—provided a means to articulate social, cultural, historical, political, and economic developments with participant experiences. These include Back On My Feet documents such as: email correspondence, Back On My Feet materials, and publicly accessible information related to Back On My Feet such as information from news and internet coverage and sources. In addition to scholarly texts, information about homelessness in Baltimore was collected from the Marylandia archive on the University of Maryland, College Park campus. Utilizing a small sample, I strove to work with rich, detailed, and in-depth data, description (Geertz, 1973).

One of the limitations of this project was my focus upon the people involved with Back On My Feet, and I did not specifically incorporate those Residents not participating with Back On My Feet but living in The House. Part of this decision was based around the strategic decision to make the project more manageable. The other contributing factor to my decision not to seek interviews with non-Back On My Feet

participants or counselors at The House was based on my interactions with the lead counselor, Ryan, who was largely supportive of my and the project. When I sought to make connections with the staff at The House, leaving open the possibility of speaking with counselors and those living there not participating in Back On My Feet, Ryan was rightly protective of his staff and the Residents. As a gatekeeper (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), and although he did not overtly indicate I could not interview people further, he was wary of my presence. I surmise that this is to protect an already vulnerable organization and group of people, as well as the counselors. If I were to ask questions that may present different points of view from a staff that strives to be unified in its approach then I am a potential disruption. Without his permission, I decided not to pursue expanding the project beyond Back On My Feet participants. Although I would have enjoyed and valued speaking further with The House counselors and those not running, I understand and respect Ryan's position.

Together, experiencing, inquiring, and examining constitute the core of the ethnographic data collection. Ethnography, however, is more than just a series of data collection methods. As a way of "seeing," and echoing Lather's flexible approach, Wolcott (2008) puts forward ethnography as more than just how researchers go about fieldwork, or its techniques, by considering patterns of socially shared behavior. In its most traditional sense ethnography is conceived as a *by the numbers* approach that cloaks ethnographic research in objectivity (Wolcott, 2008). Dismissing its objectivist roots, Wolcott indicates that ethnography constitutes "more than a method" (p. 71), a recognition that researchers bring with them into their research particular conceptual frameworks and subjective sensibilities. Moreover, while recognizing that I bring my

own particularities into this project, it is also openly ideological (Lather, 1986). In Lather's terms, *methods* are techniques for gathering empirical evidence and *methodology* a "theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework that guide a particular research project" (2004, p. 208), both of which are inextricably linked to issues of power. Critical research design in Lather's frame directly connects meaning and the process of its generation, of which academic inquiry is implicated, to broader structures of social power, control, and history.

"Validity" and Reflexivity

In borrowing across theoretical constructs, most notably from postmodern, post-structural, and critical theory, I integrate my theoretical proclivities and personal sensibilities with *the way that I see* what's going on in the field and in the worlds of the participants of Back On My Feet. One of the more difficult tasks of qualitative researchers is to collect, analyze, and incorporate data from and with participants while balancing or negotiating one's own perspective, an informed theoretical knowledge base, all while striving not to diminish or even override the voices of participants. While I have no singular response to this rhetorical dilemma, I attempted to focus on the ways in which Back On My Feet participants shared or did not share a given frame of reference, how they viewed themselves and their world, and how their frames influenced their behavior (Caughey, 2008). In so doing, I linked individual, group, and organizational sensibilities to the broader context of which participants partially constitute.

For example, neoliberalism is a key conceptual apparatus within this project. Ethnography, according to Aihwa Ong (2006), is a key methodology for demonstrating neoliberal developments. In linking theory and methodology together, Ong not only acknowledges their mutual imbrication, she also suggests that an ethnographic approach reveals specific alignments of market rationality, sovereignty, and citizenship that mutually constitute distinctive milieus of labor and life at the edge of emergence. Within this project, I sought to understand how Back On My Feet and its participants were responding to the broader landscape of city and citizen governance, specific to its political, economic, spatial, and social historically situated constitution. How did the practices and meanings Back On My Feet and its participants produced resonate, recreate, reproduce, or challenge neoliberal assumptions? Or were these assumptions present at all? Did I impose these readings onto my thinking, organization, fieldwork, and data collection? Certainly, these questions point out that wrestling with one's own sensibilities, participants' frames of reference and voices, theoretical and academic literatures, and methodological decisions is far from simplistic.

One of the key tensions within ethnographic research is the relationship between the researcher and the researched with respective to what kind of knowledge, information, or stories are produced. Paul Willis (2000) acknowledges this tension, writing, "… the ambition, at least [for the researcher], is to tell 'my story' and 'their story' [the participants'] through the fullest conceptual bringing out of 'their story'" (pp. xi-xii). In seeking out participants' experiences and self-narrativizations, ethnographic techniques provided me thinking and practical tools to seek out what I

did not understand. In at least three ways, I strove to work within the space between the participants and myself throughout data collection processes, employing constructs of validity, and practicing reflexivity.

The first device I employed was to allow questions to develop in the field (Caughey, 2006). Doing so does not suggest some objective truth to participants' expressions of their experiences, and nor does this overcome these tensions. On the contrary, seeking out others' stories is an attempt to work with these tensions while understanding that they cannot fully be resolved.

Second, I conceptualize validity within this project as *careful*. Fusco (2008) understand qualitative approaches in terms of accuracy. For her, "accurate" is taken not in the sense of 'correct in all details' but rather in terms of sixteenth-century uses of the Latin word *accuratus*, which translates as 'done with care' (New Oxford Dictionary of English, 1998). Patti Lather, again, provides an pertinent discussion for establishing rigor and validity within qualitative research. In her seminal contributions to the field of qualitative inquiry, Lather (1986) contends that research cannot be neutral. Therefore, ideologically open research rests on a commitment of using research to change the status quo. From this perspective, Lather described four processes for establishing data trustworthiness within the then emerging post-positivist paradigms: triangulation, face validity, catalytic validity, and reflexive subjectivity. Since her early work, these concepts have undergone critical review, expansion, and contestation from the academic community. I incorporate both Lather's initial conceptualizations with augmentations from more recent literature. First, updating Lather's (1986) notion of triangulation—the inclusion of "multiple

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data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes" to seek out counter-patterns and convergences (p. 67)—Richardson (2000) discusses "crystallization" as an appropriate construct within postmodern methodologies. Within Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) ethnographies, which seek to accomplish research practices both creative and analytical, and in place of a "rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object" (p. 963), Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) propose crystallization as a process of acknowledging unfixed, refracting, and reflecting mode of inquiry. Seeking no single and unified truth, crystallization seeks to recognize how multifarious "texts "validate themselves." In this project, as previously discussed in the theoretical and methodological components of this proposal, combining the multiple data sources suggested by more traditional ethnographic convention with the diverse, supportive, and sometimes contentious theoretical frameworks submits a prismatic post-ethnographically informed understanding toward validation and trust.

Augmenting an approach that mobilizes multiple methods, data sources, and theoretical frameworks, Lather (1986) suggests that "face validity" as another criterion of validity. Face validity, she contends, should be recognized as more integral to the process of establishing data credibility. Adopting Guba and Lincoln's (1981) and Reason and Rowan's (1981) understanding of member checks, she claims that face validity vitally acknowledges at least the partial interest of research for participant benefit, a central aspect of emancipatory research designs. Within the current project, I employed four modes of face validity amongst participants and myself, when available. First, I distributed or attempted to distribute all transcripts of interviews prior to analysis. This allowed participants to remember what they said,

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check for errors on my part in the transcription processes, and ensure the data is acceptable for use. Of the 26 people who sat for an interview, I returned 24 transcripts; two Resident members either left The House or were asked to leave between the time of our interview and the completion of transcription, and I was unable to find a forwarding address or contact information for these two people.

Second, as part of the process of working with Back On My Feet organizers, in acts of reciprocity, I wrote narratives of participants' experiences for Back On My Feet's blog. Although this was not as successful as I had hoped in garnering attention or discussion, such reciprocal writing validates the ways in which I strove to represent the people within the organization. Third, upon completion of the dissertation I will share the entire project with the organizers and participants through a presentation. Having shared already one article based on this project, presents an opportunity for validating my work (or not) and promoting conversation about some of the issues and tensions within the project itself and the practices and people of Back On My Feet. All three of these practices speak to the intention and care with which I sought to conduct my body, self, and words throughout this project.

Third and final, one commonly used approach involves reflexive practice, often which takes the form of detailing one's cultural sensibilities with the goal of illuminating how the researcher brings himself or herself to bear on methodological and representational tensions (Caughey, 2006). Writing out one's cultural sensibilities includes detailing how one conceptualizes, frames, and represents a given project in relation to race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, sexuality, education, music, media, occupation, and sport, to name a few. Acknowledging these traditions

rejects notions of objectivity and provides a foundation for beginning to conceptualize my own presence within the project through data collection, analysis, thinking, writing, and representation. Clearly, maintaining awareness of my own presence within this project recognizes the ideologies and experiences that I bring to bear. While this is consistent within some critical modes of qualitative inquiry, and specifically ethnographic projects (Crotty, 1998; Caughey, 2006; Wolcott, 2008), linguistic and postmodern reflexive practice holds the possibility for radically deconstructing and reconstructing inquiring practices. If taken superficially, the relatively simplistic approach of listing off one's various sensibilities clings to notions of positivism and does not extend an analytical gaze back on to the researcher. Preliminarily writing out my own cultural sensibilities I found to be too simplistic and insufficient for my self in response to working with a group of people experiencing a large degree of marginality. Thus, in Chapter Five I turn my analytical gaze back on to myself (Davies, Browne, Gannon, Honan, Laws, Mueller-Rockstroh, & Peterson, 2004) in order to analyze my involvement, experiences, and understandings of Back On My Feet, its participants, and myself.

Following more recent post-structural qualitative research wherein writing becomes a method of inquiry in of itself (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005), reflexivity involves "turning one's reflexive gaze on discourse—turning language back on itself to see the work it does in constituting the world" (Davies et al., 2004, p. 361). Dedicating a chapter to reflexive practice and the negotiation of my self in relation to theory, literature, and the participants of Back On My Feet allowed me to achieve at

least five features. First, I honed in on language and discourse and constitutive forces linking subjectivity, social organization, and power within this project. Second, reflecting upon my methodological decisions and exploring alternative possibilities for knowing my self and others while recognizing these sensibilities as always in process enabled me to humanize both my self and participants. Third, I came to terms with and acknowledged the self-transformation occurring as a result of conducting this project, both as a human being interacting with other people every day and as a researcher learning how to write about and with others. Fourth, I may be prefacing a potential shift in my thinking and writing toward more emancipatory aspirations related to research and practice. Finally, because some of the people/participants within this project are experiencing a significant degree of social marginalization and inequality, it is important to and for me to extensively discuss my relationship to the project and the participants. Writing about those in positions of marginalization, as one who does not share nor experienced that form of marginalization, I run the risk of colonizing for my own purposes the very people about whom this project is focused. I strove to minimize as much as possible the degree to which this occurs in order to assist in creating a project that, even if it does not explicitly carry emancipatory goals, curtails dominating or subjugating research in practice.

Proceeding with a characteristic of the radically contextualist practice of cultural studies—that no singular theory or method is best, guaranteed, or appropriate in advance (Grossberg, 1997b)—this project mobilizes a diversity of theoretical, methodological, and methodical tools. In contrast to applying one theory or method to an object of study, I have assembled here what I consider the pertinent intellectual

tools for understanding the historically constituted, contemporary context specific to homelessness, voluntarism, Back On My Feet as an organization, and Back On My Feet's participants.

Summary and Organizational Structure

In summary, this project provides an empirically anchored exploration, explication, and contextualization of one voluntarist initiative responding to neoliberal urban governance, the Baltimore Chapter of Back On My Feet. This project is also about: the relationship of people to their context; how individuals, groups, communities respond to urban change; how the body and the practice of running become integral components in the context of a changing city; and the city and people of Baltimore, specifically volunteers and those in recovery. The text represents my preliminary engagement with *neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda*; that is, how bodies are sought out for incorporation into and service to the logics of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006). Drawing upon the understanding of neoliberalism as a technique of governance and qualitative methodological approaches, I explore and examine how the people of Back On My Feet's Baltimore Chapter embody, practice, perform, and refashion or negotiate dominant power relations within urban Baltimore. Each of the five chapters parses out significant forces, people, practices, behaviors, and ideas operating within a complex and rich context, all of which are intended to represent distinctive elements of that context. They are all, however, threaded together through a neoliberal urban

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corporeal agenda. I also recognize the impossibility of fully capturing or representing all power relations in operation, forces, people, practices behaviors, and ideas; nor would I suggest this written document includes a fully comprehensive and closed understanding of all at work within the focus of this project.

Chapters are organized hierarchically from the more structural processes and forces contextualized within the United States and focused on Baltimore in Chapter One; through to the specific people and practices of Back On My Feet in Chapters Two, Three, and Four; and finally my own body and subject position within this project in Chapter Five. Chapter One is influenced by a commitment to contextualizing the contemporary moment in Baltimore, and thus relies more heavily upon neoliberalism, the concept of articulation, and historical materials. While Chapter One is less grounded in the experiences of Back On My Feet's participants than the later chapters, the analysis of Baltimore and Back On My Feet remains empirically anchored. Derived from the experiences of Back On My Feet's people, Chapters Two, Three, and Four are dedicated to its two primary members, Non-Residents in chapter two and Residents in chapters three and four. Ethnographic data and experiences inform these chapters most, though each chapter incorporates elements of the others to varying extent in regard to theory, method, and data. Chapter Five serves as a reflection about and analysis of the process of conducting this project and my subject position. Although the larger scale and more contextual elements of the project are presented as somewhat disconnected they are indeed inter-related, interconnected, and mutually constitutive.

Chapter One: A Politics of Sweat, provides a critical and contextual analysis

of homelessness, the rise of the non-profit profit sector in the United States, and Back On My Feet's places within an ever-shifting, historically constituted social, political, economic, and spatial landscape. In outlining this context—wherein social welfare and services shifted from governmental responsibility to individuals, communities, non-profits, and private entities—I aim to demonstrate the rationalities and logics underpinning these techniques of governance, and illustrate some of their effects. To do so, I draw theoretically upon Ong's (2006) conception of neoliberalism as a technology of governance in relation to biopolitics. Ong draws heavily upon Michel Foucault and Nikolas Rose in her conception, and thus I draw on their works, too. Back On My Feet, a singular exemplar of the social problems industry, represents one outgrowth of these processes and techniques. On one hand, Back On My Feet—one organization within the social problems industry—(re)produces a kind citizen-subject stressing responsibility at communal and local levels, and individuals capable of governing themselves. On the other hand, rather than policing, criminalizing, or penalizing deviant *others*, it represents a pedagogical technique for producing behaviors appropriate to and for self-governance, and thereby relieving the state of responsibility.

Chapter Two: Neoliberalism's Urban Corporeal Agenda, explores one side of neoliberalism's corporeal urban agenda in and through the experiences, bodies and self-narrativizations of Back On My Feet's Non-Residents. Specifically, I explore how within and through Back On My Feet's practices volunteers' construct, express, and constitute an idealized corporeal neoliberal subject. Theoretically, I again draw on Ong's (2006) understanding of neoliberalism as a technology of governance, as

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well as Roger Keil's (2009) roll-with-it neoliberalism. Considering the body as a means of expressing moral worth and self-responsibility for one's health and bodily maintenance, volunteers act as pedagogues of neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda. Altruistic in intent, running as a unique and creative way of volunteering and giving produces *real*, humanizing encounters with the marginalized urban other as it fosters community. Doing so, however, is achieved through offering therapeutic services with minimal material welfare and leaving intact material, structural, and ideological productions of inequality and homelessness.

Chapter Three: The Uses of Running: Neoliberalism's *Other* Corporeal Agenda I, aims to accomplish two goals in two halves. In the first half, the chapter represents an attempt to portray the Residents of Back On My Feet, the marginalized urban other, or those experiencing homelessness, in ways that acknowledge them as human actors amidst predominantly hierarchical power and power relations. This section illustrates some of the Residents' uses of running. Representationally, this first half of the chapter specifically attempts to respond to the tendency for theory and academic literature to speak for or over-write people. While I acknowledge the impossibility of fully representing anyone and their terms, I strive to combat homeless stereotypes by illustrating the Resident members of Back On My Feet at least partly in their words and on their terms, as human beings making decisions in and with their lives amongst several possibilities and restrictions in the neoliberal city. Although running and participation in Back On My Feet may seem to many hardly important for those recovering from addiction or homelessness, the uses of running by Back On My Feet's Resident members include health improvements, the

creation and maintenance of social relationships, and solidarity amongst the group members. Arguably, this chapter is the least theoretically informed, although in the second half of the chapter I do incorporate Foucault's (1977; 1978; 1982) biopower and its two poles, biopolitics and discipline, as well as Nikolas Rose's work on biopolitics and governmentality (1999a; 1999b; 2001). Doing so, I illustrate how Back On My Feet's Resident members are disciplined into and eventually come to perform a neoliberal subjectivity. This section works from the frame that that those experiencing homelessness, recovering from addiction, or housed in recovery facilities represent the *marginalized*, *unfit*, and *abject* urban other who are burdens upon the State within neoliberal urban governance. As such, participation in Back On My Feet demonstrates one way in which Residents become objects of knowledge and power, subject to the moral corporeally based discourses about the body, productive practices, and behaviors.

Chapter Four: Negotiating and Refusing: Neoliberalism's *Other* Urban Corporeal Agenda II, like chapter two, explores an*Other* side of neoliberalism's corporeal agenda in and through the experiences, self-narrativizations, and bodies of Back On My Feet's Residents. However, in this chapter I focus on two people specifically, Edwin and Matthew, who demonstrate ways in which they negotiate and at times refuse the power and power relations embedded within neoliberalism's corporeal agenda. Theoretically, I mobilize more heavily Lisa Duggan's (2003) conceptions of Liberalism and neoliberalism, Omi and Winant's (1994) conceptualization of race and racial projects, George Lipsitz's (2006) discussions of white privilege, and again Foucault's understanding of discipline. Through their

practices and reflections expressed in my interactions with them both, each articulated ways in which they wrestled mediated the power embedded within Back On My Feet's positioning of them as Residents.

In **Chapter Five: Suspect of Smiles**, I perform and discuss two interrelated embodied tensions brought on by my experiences with the people of Back On My Feet: my uneasiness with charity and voluntarism, and my conflicted relationship with the practice of running. I detail, in particular, how these tensions problematize the desire to help others, challenge my sense of self, and challenge my own politics, all while trying not to undercut the positive effects of the organization, its people, and its practices. Drawing from performative and auto-ethnographic literatures (Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Denzin, 2003; Madison, 2012), as well as Lauren Berlant's (2004) writing on compassion, I piece together stories from my experience, memory, and notes writing to learn about and make known my own hesitancies, hypocrisies, and uncertainties as expressed through my body as part of my ever-unfolding search of urban social justice and to decolonize my inquiry.

To conclude, I provide an opportunity to speak back to the literature; identify future research implications; and address the successes, failures, and limits of this project.

CHAPTER ONE

A POLITICS OF SWEAT

Within the context of Baltimore, Back On My Feet represents an emergent organization that meshes with and extends neoliberal urban governance by presenting a mode of governance taken up by the populace itself, beyond the purview of the state. The groups of people involved with Back On My Feet and the primary practice of the organization, running, place governance firmly in the realm of the cultural. The two groups of people comprising Back On My Feet, its Residents and Non-Residents, by-and-large would not otherwise meet. These two groups of people within the city populace tend to align along the lines of race, class, and poles of margin/center and Other/normal. In bringing these two groupings together, the voluntarist grouping expresses a voluntarist imperative operating within neoliberal urban governance and their subsequent contribution to the management and governance of an urban Other. The expression of this voluntarist imperative is embodied by Back On My Feet's Founder and former President Anne Mahlum. Chapter Two expands upon the voluntarist imperative by focusing on the Non-Resident members of the organization. Those in positions of extreme poverty, marginality, or social and economic vulnerability embody through the disciplinary practice of running how to become

appropriate human subjects within the regimes of neoliberal urban governance. The Resident members of Back On My Feet are explored, discussed, and examined in Chapters Three and Four. The cultural practices and experiences of Back On My Feet establish and understand governing not solely as enacted through law, policy, and various institutions, but through the governing of peoples' conduct, or the conduct of conduct (Foucault, 1982).

As a way to govern a populace and individual bodies, Foucault conceptualized a formation of power he termed biopower, the deployment of the organization and investment in life, or a set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power. This formation of biopower developed along two technological poles, biopolitics and discipline. At one end of the pole, biopolitics is concerned with the political economic administration of life at the level of the population (1978; 2008); and the other end of the pole, discipline operates at the level of individual bodies. Biopower is a useful conception of power and power relations that illustrates how Back On My Feet emerges from governing social problems at the level of political economy and population dynamics through to individual and collective bodies.

Back On My Feet, within this historical context, represents an outgrowth and extension of neoliberal urban governance. I want to suggest that Back On My Feet is best understood—that is to say, how the organization is rendered intelligible—as a product and producer of neoliberal biopower; the agenda of which focuses upon two specific groups of people: volunteers and those recovering from homelessness, addiction, or other positions of extreme social and economic vulnerability.

Contextualized and conceptualized within biopower as neoliberal urban governance, I propose that Back On My Feet constitutes one expression of neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda. This chapter sets out to begin to conceptualize this agenda within the context of Baltimore. Further, the chapter begins to illustrate how Anne Mahlum embodies the voluntarist imperative produced by neoliberalism's agenda, and sets that agenda on its path of producing appropriate human subjects appropriate.

Within this chapter, I aim to accomplish four specific tasks. In the first section, I use the representation of a single *run* through Baltimore City as a methodological and empirical metaphor of and for the broader context of which Back On My Feet is a constituent element. This first section illustrates two primary points: to illustrate, historicize, and contextualize Baltimore City's spatial transformation amidst the broader U.S. shift to a post-welfare, post-industrial formation of capitalism, which I frame out as taking shape through neoliberal urban governance; and also offer the reader a brief sense of what it is like to move through the city spaces of Baltimore with Back On My Feet during a morning run. Through the moving representation, and acknowledging the partiality of such a rendering, I piece together the empirically and experientially based running practices of Back On My Feet with the multiple forms of data and literature.

The second section speaks to the emergence of Back On My Feet as part of the management of the homeless population within Baltimore's shift to neoliberal urban governance. By analyzing Baltimore City's current plan to address homelessness, I suggest that the plan sets out a biopolitical agenda wherein political economy and population dynamics converge. Out of this convergence, Back On My

Feet is illustrative of what Pitter and Andrews (1997) call the social problems industry, which in Baltimore is made manifest through the entrepreneurial ethos of neoliberal urban governance. Within this context and governing regime, Back On My Feet represents the discursive and physical manifestation and outgrowth of the social problems industry. The section concludes by setting up neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda.

The third section speaks to the rise of the voluntary sector within contemporary society and compliments the ways in which the social problems industry arose, as a non-profit organization. As governmental retrenchment shifted responsibility for welfare provision, the non-profit sector emerged. Increasingly, however, it was forced to compete on the marketplace and began incorporating the logics of the private sector, thus blurring lines between public/private and non-profit/commercial. This section concludes with a brief re-linking of the social problems industry within Baltimore.

The fourth and final section discusses how Back On My Feet's Founder and former President Anne Mahlum embodies the self-enterprising citizen-subject required for neoliberalism's urban governance to take shape and reproduce itself. Through the practices of Back On My Feet, and indeed the broader reliance upon voluntarism and non-governmental, creative sources of welfare provision and solutions to social problems, the organization contributes to shaping new citizen-subjects within urban Baltimore. Following Mahlum, volunteers as Non-Residents represent one grouping, and Resident members represent the Other grouping, through which neoliberalism expresses its agenda.

A brief conclusion summarizes the chapter and sets up its relation to the following three chapters, which focus upon how neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda plays out amongst Back On My Feet's participants. This chapter contributes to understanding the three following chapters by outlining the emergence of Back On My Feet within Baltimore's neoliberal urban governance. As an outgrowth of broader structures, processes, and forces, Back On My Feet brings together these two groups of people that individually and collectively embody two sides of neoliberalism's corporeal agenda. The three chapters proceeding from this one, which illustrate how neoliberalism's corporeal agenda plays out on the ground and through the bodies of its participants, focus specifically on the Non-Resident members (Chapter Two) and the Residents (Chapters Three and Four).

Running Through Baltimore: The Rise of Neoliberal Urban Governance

5.31AM. Allie brings the group in a bit tighter by motioning with her hands and bringing us together saying, 'Is this everyone today?' A few mumbles suggest we're ready to move while one person indicates one or two more people should be here. Wearing Nike shoes, black compression shorts, blue Nike shorts, a reflective track suit jacket and a blue headband that covers her ears, she looks a chipper late-20 year old, about 5'6" with brown straight hair and pale skin from the winter. She has noticeable darker shades on her forehead, nose, and the top of her cheeks just under her eyes, presumably because she regularly runs underneath the sun. As our group leader giving announcements, she reminds us of the runs coming up this month and

the pasta party planning for the weekend race event. 'Alright,' she says, 'We have two, three, and four-mile loops.' Group members look around, finding indications with one another about who might run what. This remains somewhat unclear as Allie begins stepping inward and opens her arms widely. Caught slightly off guard, I join the circle moments behind everyone else. Two arms come toward me, one from each side. *Oh, I gotta put my arms around them, too.* I reach my arm around a body on my left and another on my right. Their arms reach across my back and neck; not pressing but not brushing, their arms are not at complete rest. Nor are mine, with hands closed in loose fists I make sure not to let much more than my hands and wrists connect with their shoulder blades. Allie begins speaking: 'God…' and everyone chimes in, '…grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.' While everyone utters this, the opening of the Serenity Prayer, I can hear almost every individual speaking, some more coherently and loudly than others. I remain silent with my head down. *For two months I have been uncomfortable with this recitation every time.* After the prayer, we break and begin to walk to the end of the block about 40 feet away. Slowly we begin to move our feet… all of a sudden we are running. At 5:35 AM, as steam silently bellows from a rusted manhole cover into the morning-night air, and the quiet street is ours.

Begun in the frost-belt city of Philadelphia in 2007, Back On My Feet, "a not-for-profit organization that promotes the self-sufficiency of Baltimore's homeless population by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem" (2010), forms running teams by forging relationships with homeless and

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addiction recovery centers. Brought by request to Baltimore by a select few of its citizenry who actively practice running, Back On My Feet's Baltimore chapter began in early 2009. Nationally, programs have since opened in multiple cities indicating Back On My Feet's relevance for and response to the urban environment: Austin, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Dallas, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, and New York. Unlike most running groups, two organizationally imposed categories of people comprise the group, Residents and Non-Residents. Back On My Feet's Resident members are those housed in temporary group facilities and experiencing homelessness or recovering from substance abuse, and the organization's Non-Resident members are volunteers living in or around Baltimore City. Approximately 40 to 50 Residents and around 300 Non-Residents comprise the Baltimore Chapter. At The House—one of five Back On My Feet satellite locations in Baltimore and the site at which I run—five to eight Residents and fifteen to 25 Non-Residents regularly run on a given day.

As a loosely connected unit comprised of groups of two to four, we begin almost underneath Cal Ripken Way—the elevated Interstate 395 named for "The Iron Man"—which efficiently jettisons automobile drivers directly into and out of the glittery tourist bubble that is Inner Harbor without seeing or encountering the "rot beneath the glitter" (Harvey, 2001, p. 140); the physically, symbolically, and discursively transformed urban space largely neglected by the popular perception derived from the imagery and experience of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The creation of this ""fantasy city" (Hannigan, 1998), the unreal perception of city life represented by the Inner Harbor, shields both suburbanites and tourist from Baltimore's

continuing urban problems. Somewhere obscured or hidden within the harbor "tourist bubble" (Judd, 1999), between the harbor itself and Baltimore's major sporting stadia—M&T Bank Stadium and Oriole Park at Camden Yards—resides The House, a 90-plus-bed temporary residential treatment program for those attempting to transition through a cycle of poverty, addiction, or homelessness. The city street around The House in the Sharp Leadenhall neighborhood reads as a palimpsest of Baltimore City, rendering visible its past and present. On its surface, patches of smooth topical concrete or grainy asphalt give way to brick or cobblestones underneath; weeds grow intermittently near oft crumbled curbsides whose paint faded some time ago; and while running, between the cars lining the street, you're constantly looking down to be sure of your footing. The buildings surrounding us reveal the deindustrialized space now home to, among others, low-income housing, a box resale store, and a contract manufacturer. Typical seekers of quaint coffee shops, overpriced home sales offices, and urban chic clothing stores found in Federal Hill rarely venture into this interstitial edge-space. Unsurprisingly, Equality Maryland, a civil rights organization, is tucked away here, too.

The history of Baltimore City read into its space on a morning run offers a bleak glance into the problems facing contemporary cities in the United States. Initial and combined processes of depopulation and deindustrialization wreaked havoc on the structure, formation, and populace of Baltimore City, emanating from Post-WWII processes and carrying through to today. The movement of large portions of urban Baltimore's population expanding into surrounding suburban areas, counties, and communities, or depopulation, witnessed a loss of approximately one-third of the

city's populace from 1950 through 2000 (EIR, 2006). During this same period, the

manufacturing base that once resided at the heart of the city's economy entered a

steep decline, as did numerous other *rustbelt cities*. Baltimore's period of

deindustrialization began in the 1960s with the shrinkage or less of steel,

shipbuilding, auto, and other industrial producers, which at the time presented

possibilities of earning a living wage. At the same time that manufacturing jobs began

to evaporate, so did the city's population: changing from approximately 950,000 in

1950 to 650,000 in 2000 (EIR, 2006). Baltimore City's five surrounding counties

more than doubled in population throughout this period, drawing much of its growth

from middle class and white flight to the suburbs (Harvey, 2001; Levine, 2000; EIR,

2006; Arnold, 2002). In the span of fifty years, the percentage of black population

shifted from less than 25% of the populace in the city in 1950 to more than 64% in

2000 (EIR, 2006). Moreover, racially motivated discriminatory practices dictating

where investments, in the form of loans or other financial services, or redlining, and

the encouragement of white home ownership in historically segregated neighborhood

to sell at deflated prices, or Blockbusting, played an important role in racially

segregating Baltimore's urban space (Orser, 1994). Baltimore's depopulation and

related deindustrialization led to a steep decline in the city's tax base—the monies

derived from residents and businesses that account for and provide considerable

portions of the city's operation of services and programs.

The complexity and uneven articulation of these imbricated processes

manifests in Federal Hill, which we encounter only three or four blocks into our run.

While the population tended to decline across the city, in Federal Hill and slightly

further south young professionals working downtown began moving in to this area in order to be closer to their places of work during the 1970s and 1980s (Harvey, 2001). Unlike the out-city-migration, the effect of this in-city-migration witnessed the conversion of churches and schools into condominiums, drove home prices up ten-fold, and displaced an African-American community in their service (Harvey, 2001). Additionally, Federal Hill bespeaks of the rise tendency to privilege and focus upon the economically privileged as a means of and for social welfare, all of which is embedded with racial tones.

The tightness of the buildings are crowded by cars that would seem to hit one another on the other side of the street when trying to parallel park. The space is tight giving the appearance that the mostly residential buildings loom ominously above. In retrospect their height is minimal compared to the pristinely manicured HarborView Condominiums we approach from the south, an emblem of the "shadow government" of the Greater Baltimore Committee and other quasi-public entities, a descriptor of the use of public money while circumventing democratic processes and mobilizing public funds for private profit (Harvey, 2001, p. 155). A gated community with personal boat-docks that always seem empty, the brick lined pavement, well manicured lawns and flower beds, and water fountains offer a stark contrast to the streets around The House. As we move through the city, Harborview serves as a precursor and gateway into the Inner Harbor. Its pleasantness suggests as though we are in someone else's space, uninvited as we scamper through none-the-less.

As we round the smooth pavement passing out of HarborView, the Inner Harbor emerges for the first time; the built testament to decades of revanchist policy

and practices of Baltimore's governance. Once a major port of entry into Baltimore, now the harbor has come to materially and symbolically testify to the privileging of service, tourist, and entreprenurial based economies in the post-industrial United States. Begun as an endeavoring recovery effort from race riots and civil strife in the 1960s, the fairs located in the harbor during the early 1970s brought multiple neighborhoods and communities together (Harvey, 2001). These would be short lived reprieves; continued plant closures saw jobs move overseas (Harvey, 2001), and under the workings of Mayor William Donald Schaffer the harbor reformed and eroded into a touristic playground through pubic subsidized commercial, entertainment, and tourist projects designed to create a vibrant and economically productive post-industrial urban Baltimore (Harvey, 2001; EIR, 2006).

Once the center of industrial production, Baltimore City would transform into a center of cultural consumption, like many United States cities. Amidst deindustrialization and economic restructuring taking shape in the 1970s and 1980s cities in the United States focused upon crafting themselves as centers of shopping and entertainment, so much so that they were left to and began competing with one another (see Whitson & Macintosh, 1996). The historical city government and administration focused on and dedicated to providing services and programs for a city populace came under question as neoliberal techniques of governance infiltrated political economic decision making. Some of the assumption of these post-industrial and emerging neoliberal cities included: government retrenchment, and the view that public should not be "wasted" on social welfare or "social engineering" programs; the provision for a populace comes through lessening the tax burden and corresponding

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increase in individual's personal wallets; the promotion and development of corporate and business friendly climates through which economic growth would be stimulated, including anti-union sentiment and market de-regulation; the encouragement of commercial privatization of all aspects of society; the positioning of economic and social development through its regulation by the free market; and the production of productive individuals with increased freedom and opportunity to cultivate their own lives, and the lives of others should they choose. The style of this urban entrepreneurialism created as its objective the promotion and accumulation of capital and profit manifest within commercial spaces and services, owned and operated by non-governmental, private, and public-private sources.

Moving away from welfare to commercial oriented objectives, cities replaced the citizen with the consumer as the focal point of urban leadership. According to Fainstein and Judd (1999), whereas:

> Once cities prospered as places of industrial production, and in the industrial era they were engines of growth and prosperity. On the eve of the twenty first century, they are becoming spaces for consumption in a global economy where services provide the impetus for expansion. (p. 2)

The trickle-down philosophy through which the entrepreneurial city expands relies upon: the public funding of business subsidized and tax breaks to stimulate economic growth of the commercial sector within cities; thus providing the creation of jobs, growth in consumption, and increases in corporate and sales tax; with which contributions are made to personal incomes and the contribution to city finances and operations. At the heart of the post-industrial city, consumption spaces and

experiences serve as the motors and engines of and for growth. Through these tax-payer funded corporate subsidies and commercially focused initiatives, neoliberal city governments look to create spectacular tourist bubbles (Judd, 1999) designed to attract the discretionary leisure income of out of town tourists and suburban tourists. Privileging those with sufficient means to access not only access individual's discretionary income but also the programs and services important for social life effectively leaves out those without the means to mobilize discretionary income, most notably those in economically vulnerable positions or conditions of extreme poverty.

The spaces of Baltimore within its Inner Harbor bear witness to these processes. The major city investments in this space, made possible through public and private partnerships, lured major national and international investors by lowering their initial investments and nearly eliminating corporate risks (Levine, 2000). Baltimore City's political practice of enlisting investors, offering extremely low initial investment and virtually no risk, materialized in buildings such as the Maryland Science Center, Charles Center, Hyatt-Regency Hotel, Harbor Court, and Harborplace Pavilions (Harvey, 2001), all of which invitingly smile at us as we run past them regularly. As Mayor William Donald Schaffer's vision heralded the new era of urban development, large-scale reductions in federal spending by the Reagan administration preluded Baltimore's continued plight. From 1974 to 1984, Schaffer trimmed municipal spending by 20% while expenditure on "economic development" rose by 400% (City of Baltimore, 1974-84 as cited in Levine, 1987). When investments failed, the city was left with the burden; when projects succeeded, emerging national and transnational corporations benefitted most and yielded mostly

low-wage service jobs thereby giving little back to the populace of the city. Baltimore's "renaissance was a chimera for Baltimore's distressed neighborhoods" (Levine, 1987, p. 112). During the 1980s, despite decades of promised change for the citizens and residents of Baltimore City (Harvey, 2001; Levine, 2000), governance emphasized and focused upon businesses (Levine, 1987) and effectively neglected its citizenry. Lingering problems with Baltimore City include: unemployment, poverty, educational attainment, drug use, crime, health, and deteriorating housing (Harvey, 2001); these issues and concerns were impactive most upon Baltimore's black population,

Principally, Baltimore's historically situated racial and class inequality persisted, born out of and related to the processes of depopulation and deindustrialization. African-American migration from the rural South in the 1950s through the 1970s nearly doubled Baltimore City's black population concomitantly with middle class and white suburbanization, assuredly in part a racially and economically motivated response to black migration north. Baltimore's racial composition transformed, its economic base was stripped, and the inner city became a space of poverty unevenly and iniquitously levied on its black population.

Succeeding Schaffer and following his lead, Mayor Kurt L .Schmoke, the first African-American Mayor, though he demonstrated interest in broader social welfare exemplified in increased educational spending, continued the urban transformation of the harbor (Levine, 2000). Prolonged concentration on post-industrial spaces around the harbor neglected the fracturing of once closely tied communities and neighborhoods around Baltimore, which increasingly came to resemble "a patchwork

of vacant lots, abandoned housing, and boarded-up houses" (Levine, 2000, p. 138).

Littered with and by drugs, failing public health provision, social and spatial

exclusion, crime, joblessness, a faltering educational system, and plummeting

population, pockets of poverty manifested (Levine, 2000). By the end of the 1990s,

the core difficulties of the city had yet to addressed. Countering Schafer's notion of

Baltimore as a "Renaissance City" during his tenure from 1971 to 1987, in the 1990s

Mayor Kurt Schmoke remarked that "it is an unfortunate fact of life that we have in

certain parts of our city health problems, housing problems, that resemble those in

Third World countries" (Shane 1994; Levine, 2000). Mayor Schmoke was not wrong

in his regard, as demonstrated by the 1994 designation of Baltimore by the U.S.

Agency for International Development (AID) as "the first U.S. city to be targeted for

assistance by AID's 'Lessons without Borders' program, which applies 'Third World'

development techniques to American inner cities." (Levine, 2000, p. 124).

Baltimore City's form and function turned into a motor of and for capital

accumulation and monumental consumption (Friedman, Andrews, & Silk, 2004;

Harvey, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Wagner, 1996). Rising healthcare costs,

privatized education, fewer public spaces and recreation centers, and rising home

prices rendered welfare provision accessible predominantly through the market.

Effectively, people learned to exercise their choice and freedom as consumers (Dean,

2010).

Running this spectacularized urban space (Belanger, 2000), the rare wide and

flat pathways guide us through the harbor, and a few other runners out in the

morning, with ample room to run four or five people across without impeding others.

We check at the ESPN Zone and Barnes & Noble to head back the way we came, passing again through the space I have come to loath, the tourist bubble, a "theme park ... [with] standardized venues ... mass produced, almost as if they are made in a tourism infrastructure factory" (Judd, 1999, p. 39).

As we return through the Inner Harbor and work our way up Light Street the buildings get smaller again. Few people move around the street while some lights inside of the brick and formstone row-homes stir the morning dark. The rhythm and pace of the city is largely behind the pace of the morning runner, who by-and-large coordinates, frames, and orders (Amin & Thrift, 2002) their day around their run. Breathing steadily throughout the duration of the run my breath becomes deeper nearer the end. As a garbage truck rumbles past us traveling the same direction the raw stench floods my senses with the reminder of how this city feels, a potpourri of neglect, revitalization, decrepitude, spectacle, and gentrification.

My bodily senses dispute the various rhetorical strategies used to promote Baltimore's Harbor, which potently obscure other areas and people in need. Such is the guise of discursive strategies, assembling a kind of "symbolic warfare against deleterious perceptions of urban spaces and populations as being harbingers of disease and decay" (Silk & Andrews, 2006, p. 316; Gibson, 2005; Silk, 2010). Chiefly, the various turgid locutions mobilized by Baltimore's illustrious Mayors during the city's transformation into an entrepreneurial mode of governance have seen *Charm City*, *The West Has Zest*, *The Greatest City in America*, and *Digital Harbor*, amongst others. Recently and notably, the 2002 *Believe* launched by Mayor Martin O'Malley, offered a "powerful allegory, a neoliberal discourse that levies a

mantra of personal responsibility and accountability through individualizing social control and governance, thereby relieving city government from civic obligation" (p. 317). The most recent slogan continues the trend of branding cities in effort to construct popular perception.

Finishing back at The House, I high five seven or eight people, most of whom are now smiling and laughing with each other. Delighted that the run has been completed and in each other's delight, we wait for the last group to return before we stretch. Once everyone returns we circle up to stretch, and the echoes of everyone counting out the length of time we stretch our muscles and limbs rings in the city not yet awake. Here we are, running together, volunteers and those in recovery, and I try to think through yet again how I am making sense of the program and those participating within the context of Baltimore. An effect of this neoliberal revanchism has placed the population of people experiencing homelessness, those in conditions of extreme poverty, and those in vulnerable economic and social locations within precarious positions.

Baltimore, Homelessness, and the Social Problems Industry

Not unlike the Mayors before her, on December 5, 2011 Mayor Sheila Dixon expressed a new symbolic rebranding of the city. On a banner draping City Hall, her new slogan read: "Baltimore, a great place to grow." Yet, recent statistical evidence calls into question Baltimore's ability to foster growth, at least in terms the city, its people, and elected officials might regard positively. Amidst the period wherein the

Baltimore City government transitioned into a preoccupation with promoting urban space integral to and for private capital accumulation and monumental consumption, the city's racial and class inequality festered. The United States Census Bureau (2012) demonstrates Baltimore City as the poorest county in Maryland while the state is acknowledged as one of the wealthiest in the United States. It bears a poverty rate of 24.7%, and possesses one of the fastest growing income gaps in the United States. Along the historically constituted lines of class and race, the city and state's racial composition, 63% and 29% respectively, reveals a discomforting racial inequality and reality. Statistically, Baltimore has been regarded as one of the more racially and economically stratified cities in the United States (Levine, 2000; Harvey, 2001; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989; United States Census Bureau, 2012). Within the last forty years Baltimore has become a city marked by inequality. Those within positions of economic and social vulnerability or marginality, such as those experiencing homelessness, were impacted significantly.

Like any city in the United States, Baltimore cannot be disconnected from the broader structures and forces of which it is constitutive and constituted. In the 1980s homelessness emerged as a problem within the United States (Stern, 1984). Conservative reactions to homelessness contributed both to structural causes of homelessness and stereotyping the homeless. The Reagan administration, according to Stern (1984), took steps to reduce the federal government's role in several major social welfare programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Food Stamps, federal housing and education programs, and legal services, which wrought "devastating consequences on the structural causes of homelessness" (p. 296). In

Baltimore, during the 1970s and early 1980s, the bulk of responsibility for addressing homelessness—a multifarious issue related to unemployment, lack of adequate and affordable housing, inability to access aid from state and federal programs, poor education, victims of abuse or traumatic experience, or drug addiction, just to name a few—fell onto a variety of provisional sources. According to the 1983 Baltimore City Council Task Force for the Homeless, a "patchwork quilt of resources" (p. 17) developed for the homeless in Baltimore. Housing, for example, was provided not by federal or state agencies, but rather by "voluntary and religious organizations" that "assumed the bulk of responsibility for providing emergency shelter to homeless persons in Baltimore" (p. 17). Some scholars, to explain the processes related to the emergence of racial and class inequality, have invoked various kinds of language around neoliberalism.

Employing neoliberal conceptualizations concomitant with ethnographic fieldwork, Aihwa Ong (2006) understood the work of Michel Foucault and Nikolas Rose as integral for understanding neoliberalism not just as ideology or economic rationality, but as a technology of governance. She suggests that a neoliberal formation of biopower was "merely the most recent development that relies on market knowledge and calculations for a politics of subjection and subject-making that continually places in question the political existence of modern human beings" (p. 13). Baltimore City, in the most recent attempt it has sought to address homelessness, and to a degree racial and economic inequality, has mobilzed neoliberalism as a technology of governing.

In 2006, Mayor-Designate Sheila Dixon announced the launch of Baltimore

City's planning process for the creation of a 10 year plan to end homelessness, called: *The Journey Home: Baltimore City's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*. The effort was inspired by and derived from the initiatives set in motion by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2000). The 10-Year plan documentation represents the leading and a comprehensive mode through which homelessness is understood, conceived, and approached within Baltimore City. Analyzing the documentation associated with the plan provides insight into the logic, rationale, and assumptions guiding and underpinning the goal of eliminating homelessness in Baltimore. As this analysis suggests, and following Willse's (2010) suggestive analysis of chronic homelessness, Baltimore's plan represents a biopoliticization of the homeless population. That is, Baltimore's plan to address homelessness arises out of economic analysis of population dynamics" (p. 158). In at least five ways, Baltimore City's *10-Year Plan to End Homelessness* expresses a formation of biopolitics as neoliberal urban governance in its attempt to *solve* the issue of homelessness: a) the underpinning economic rationale used in making decisions; b) the perceived economic benefits; c) the various funding strategies and sources required to approach and address homelessness; d) the repositioning of those experiencing homelessness as consumers; and e) the multifarious types of organizations involved.

In its introduction, the plan outlines four major areas in which to address homelessness: housing, health care, prevention, and emergency services; and also sets out 14 goals and 48 specific action items to achieve each goal. The introduction discusses several statistics in the United States and Baltimore, one of which includes the acknowledgement of the disproportionate number of African-Americans

experiencing homelessness. Outlining several of the causes of homelessness, the plan

also suggests that homelessness is not solely a social or economic problem. It is,

accordingly, "also a public health crisis" (p. 8). Citing the National Health Care for

the Homeless Council, the report describes a number of serious health issues, such as

malnutrition, severe dental problems, AIDS, and tuberculosis. It continues to mention

alcoholism, mental illness, and other less visible issues that are exacerbated within the

experience of homelessness. Such issues were related to the dynamics of the

population within the frame of life and death: "In contrast to an average life

expectancy of close to 80 years in the United States, life expectancy on the streets is

between 42 and 52 years" (p. 8, as cited in Baltimore Homeless Services, 2007); and

that homeless persons are three to four times more likely to die than the general

population (as cited in O'Connell, 2005).

Yet, as the plan develops, and despite stating the issues associated with

homelessness are far more than economic, the problem of homelessness, whether

manifest in health related issues, mental illness, physical disability, or drug and

alcohol addition, economic rationale comes to frame out the primary rationale for

addressing homelessness. Moreover, this rationale is articulated with the city itself, as

well as the economically motivated rationale underpinning Baltimore City

Government's process for developing its 10-Year plan:

> Beyond damaging the lives of people who live on a city's streets and in its
>
> shelters, homelessness also impacts the economic well-being of cities as they
>
> struggle to address this problem. Specifically, there are many costs associated
>
> with the kinds of emergency care and triage that homeless people require. The

average chronically homeless person costs taxpayers an estimated $40,000 a year through the utilization of public resources – from Emergency Department visits to police time. These kinds of expenditures are proven to be relatively inefficient and ineffective when compared to the cost of providing housing. This finding points to the need for new interventions that do more than manage the problem of homelessness. (p. 8)

The issue, we are told, is not just about the people experiencing homelessness, but about the city, its well being, and the economic costs associated with addressing homelessness.

In framing the problem of homelessness predominantly within economic rationale, and despite its best intentions otherwise, the plan's goals are thus anchored within an economic framework. As the plan states: "The cost of maintaining the status quo is too great a price for individuals and communities to bear" (p. 11). While this statement remains somewhat unclear, just exactly to which costs the report may be referring (i.e. social, economic, symbolic, spatial, etc.), the five common themes developed throughout the planning process of creating the ten year plan provided more insight:

- The need to resolve rather than manage the realities of homelessness.

- Acknowledgement of the need for an increased supply of affordable housing.

- Recognition that, fundamentally, contemporary homelessness is a symptom of poverty.

- Growing understanding of the real-dollar societal costs of homelessness.

- Interest in innovative responses and "best practices" from other communities.

(p. 11)

What is relevant for the current economically focused discussion are items three and four. The fifth items is also relevant and will be discussed further on.

The third theme outlines homelessness specifically as a symptom of poverty, anchoring it to an economic understanding. This set up is important because it achieves the foundation for the fourth item: that homelessness has "real-dollar societal" costs. That is to say, homelessness is not an issue isolated to those experiencing homelessness, but one important for society at large. Although this seems like a positive remark at first glance, suggesting that everyone is implicated in the production of homelessness, and indeed that economic inequality contributes significantly to homelessness, framing homelessness around costs of maintaining and supporting the homeless positions the solution to homelessness solely within economic decision making. The interest that we should be concerned with, we are told, is how much it costs both public and private sources of support.

Facing a challenge to pay for new programs and services, and also containing some actionable items with little or no cost, requires significant resources. This involves creating several "different funding streams" (2008, p. 60), which are derived from access to mainstream funding from state and local government, as well as investments by philanthropic and business endeavors and entities: "Baltimore Homeless Services, in conjunction with the Advisory Board, worked closely with philanthropic and business communities to bring in initial investments." Such investments, however, do not come without costs. Thus, the plan develops a long-term strategy for capturing savings:

Because homelessness is so costly, a long-term strategy for funding the 10-year plan is to capture the savings realized in other systems. City and state systems that would be expected see reduced costs as homelessness decreases include: … Emergency medical systems… Hospitals… Criminal Justice." (p. 61)

Using a "series of compacts," the plan attempts to mitigate risk to the substantial amounts of resources at stake: "The compact is a model where if the savings are demonstrated, the relevant agencies will provide revenues that are saved back to homeless services to continue funding or expanding 10-year plan actions." The assumption here being that if homelessness decreases and various agencies save money, then those agencies will contribute back to homeless services in the form continued funding support. The motivation for ameliorating homelessness, again, is anchored to an economic rationale, a benefit to solving the issue of homelessness being the saving of money rather than having to spend it.

Unfortunately, this economic rationale has largely failed to yield the benefits and savings the plan laid out. As early as 2011, *The Journey Home Project* bore evidence of struggle. Since 2003, the number of people experiencing homelessness has risen steadily, from 2,681 to its current approximate count of 4,088 (Olubi & Akers, 2011). Taken every two years, the census in Baltimore tracking homelessness recorded an increase 19.6% from 2009 to 2011 (Olubi & Akers, 2011). Providing a perspective on this, from 2009 to 2011 the nation's homeless population increased only 3%, by 20,000 people. The 2011 count of 4,088 people experiencing a state of homelessness in Baltimore City disproportionately represents African-Americans

compared to the city's and state's racial composition. Whereas the racial composition of the City and State at are 63% black and 29%, respectively, the racial composition of the homeless population is represented disproportionately at 80% to 85% (Olubi & Akers, 2011). Undoubtedly, Baltimore marks a region of the nation wherein homelessness is an especially potent, sensitive, and pressing concern. While the statistical markers are suggestive of the racial and class based systems and institutionalization of oppression, what cannot be in doubt is that the prevalence of homeless in Baltimore is on the rise while the national increase in homelessness is less severe.

Perhaps most alarmingly, the plan begins to reposition those experiencing homelessness as consumers. One of the strategies the group working on the plan employed was a series of focus groups amongst some of those experiencing homelessness, including single women, single men, families, and youth. Positively, the plan stated that "People who have experience homelessness are seen as key partners in the amelioration of all goals and strategies." Without intending to undermine the importance of addressing the issues of homelessness, nor the commitment many people dedicate to addressing the issue, the plan referred to those experiencing homelessness involved in the focus groups as "consumers," wherein "consumer involvement" was considered integral. Referring to those experiencing homelessness firmly entrenches them and the services they might access into the domains of business inspired consumerism.

Finally, to return to the fifth and final themed-item permeating the process of developing the 10-Year plan, "Interest in innovative responses and "best practices"

from other communities," is also notable and relevant to Back On My Feet. While not officially part of the plan, Back On My Feet certainly represents an innovative approach to addressing homelessness. In traveling from Philadelphia to Baltimore, and officially commencing in 2009, the Baltimore City officials, such as Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, may not incorporate Back On My Feet into the official plans for ending homelessness, but they do, and she has, sanctioned its presence. As the introduction to this dissertation suggests, and to reiterate, Mayor Rawlings-Blake framed Back On My Feet in the following way:

> "Like many of the city's greatest challenges, homelessness is bigger than government. We cannot end homelessness with money alone – we need people in the community to help these individuals find dignity, respect, rejuvenation and the promise of a new life" (Rawlings-Blake, 2010). Back On My Feet, she continued, "is an organization powered by volunteers dedicated to helping their fellow man start their lives anew."

While the plans for managing and addressing homelessness can be located across a range of institutional actors, many of whom and which are encouraged by or in partnership with the state, the governance of social problems such as homelessness extend well beyond the purview of the state alone.

This analysis suggests that neoliberal techniques of governance actually contribute to increasing homelessness, rather than ameliorating the condition, despite the vested interests of the multifarious people, instututions, and organizations involved. The homeless population in Baltimore has continued to rise through the early 21st century. The biopoliticization of homelessness in Baltimore contribute to

the creation homelessness as a problem. As Willse notes by invoking Kusmer, neoliberal "economic and social transformations did not only increase the numbers of people living without shelter and intensify the racialized effects of housing insecurity" (Willse, 2010, p. 163), but in approaching "the end of the twentieth century a much enlarged homeless population was apparently on the way to becoming a permanent feature of postindustrial America" (Kusmer, 2003, p. 239)."

Willse (2010) goes as far as to say that neoliberal governing technologies do not depend upon the discipline of the human subject, but rather are superseded by economic analysis of population dynamics. While he does acknowledge that disciplinary technologies remain, I suggest that disciplinary mechanisms are important and prescient to connect to biopolitical techniques of neoliberal urban governance. Any frame of analysis focused upon a specific societal sector or a grouping of people, such as those experiencing homelessness, yields a particular reading. Willse's focus and analysis take shape at the biopolitical level. In this way, this project can be read as a compliment to Willse, partly working within and focusing at times upon the other pole of Foucault's notion of biopower, discipline. Back On My Feet is a useful exemplar through which to explore these connections.

The Rise of the Non-Profits

Inextricably linked to the processes of neoliberal revanchism productive of increases in social and economic marginality and inequality, the growth of the non-governmental sector throughout the last thirty years plays a pivotal role in the

structuring and experience of social welfare and its provision. Not only did social welfare cutbacks during the Reagan administration contribute to the production of homelessness, they also contributed to the swift growth of the non-profit sector. From 1970 to 1990 the non-profit sector tripled (Weisbroad, 1998b). Around the turn of the millennium, registered non-profits experienced a growth of 31% from 1998 to 2009 (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2010). Simultaneously, in its emerging neoliberal formation, the linkages between the non-profit sector and commercial and for-profit sector increased (Weisbrod, 1998a; Boris, 1999). Cutbacks during the Reagan administration shifted significantly responsibility for social welfare—such as health care, education, social and other services—from the state to private and non-profit sectors. Viewed as a substitute for government, "charities" were subsequently touted as more efficient and effective alternatives to the government, which became synonymous with wasteful, inefficient, and ineffective programs (Boris, 1999). As an alternative, non-profit organizations depend on the government for their status through lawful designation, as well as a significant source of funding through tax policy and direct subsidy. The third sector, as it is often referenced, is assumed to occupy a space between government and business. However, as the commercialization of the non-profit sector grew with an ascendant neoliberalism, the precise role, place, and practices of non-profits became less clear. The relationship between non-profits and the state, as well as non-profits and the private sphere became intertwined. Thus, at the same time non-profits became more relied upon for a variety of services, they came to occupy a precarious space tethered to government yet simultaneously incorporating logics and practices associated with the private

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sphere.

Seeking and expected to fill the gap left by the dismantling of the social

welfare state the non-profit sector was encouraged to adopt market-based strategies,

and thus incorporated increased fees for service, attention to profit-making capacity

and the bottom line, increased marketing and communications, improved fundraising

and telemarketing, sought joint ventures and mergers, and improved management

anchored in business principles (Boris, 1999; Dees, 1998; Skloot, 1988; Drucker,

1992; Oster, 1995). The growth of major universities, corporate and private

foundations, think tanks, journals, and periodicals supported the shift to a

management, business, and entrepreneurial based non-profit sector. While non-profits

never severed governmental ties and tend to be viewed as independent, they were

expected to become less dependent on government sources of support and revenue

and became more "lean, efficient, and effective" (Boris, 1999, p. 3). By incorporating

the market oriented dictates of the commercial and private sector, the distinction

between the two sectors became increasingly difficult to discern (Wiesbrod, 1998b).

As the non-profit sector and the private sector emerged as two mediums

through which to address social problems and general social welfare, they too

developed a symbiotic relationship: owed to governmental cutbacks during the 1980s

non-profits turned to corporations as sources of funding, and corporations turned to

non-profits to improve community relations through giving. For non-profits,

corporations became a vital financial resource; for corporations, non-profits became

viable investment organizations resulting in both higher profits and an opportunity to

project a socially responsible image. One effect of this relationship created new forms

of charity and non-profits: "cause related marketing," which takes shape when a corporation adopts a particular cause or package of causes while simultaneously expanding its market and profits while supporting these causes and worthy aims (Wagner, 2000); and the "social problems industry," wherein public groups, communities, or individuals seek out private financial support for initiatives directed toward addressing and ameliorating social problems faced by the underserved living in U.S. urban environments (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Effectively, the realization of market-based philanthropy, non-profits, charity, and voluntarism, stitched together social problems, causes, welfare, and provision to the market place.

Specific knowledge industries, such as those within academia, contributed to this broader shift. Predominantly, business-inspired non-profit scholarship focuses on, to name a few, business managerialism, entrepreneurialism, service delivery, organizational culture, marketing and communication strategies, and various funding models. Anchored in the rhetoric of business, this kind of scholarship, of which there has been considerable growth, tends to be objective, quantitative, applied, descriptive, or historical. Its purpose centers upon the continued promotion of non-profits as one *given* and primary means through which to address social welfare and services, communal and collective life, and the increased effectiveness in doing so. While acknowledging the ways in which non-profit scholarship has contributed to understanding and shaping non-profit organizations, charity, and voluntarism in the United States, much of it is connected to broader discourses on charity and voluntarism, explicitly connected to social welfare and services, and implicated in processes of subject-making. Scholarship and knowledge produced within the

academy constitutes a veritable truth regime that legitimates the non-profit industry's increasing presence and practice within social welfare and social life. For example, business-inspired scholarship presents and promotes non-profits, philanthropy, charity, and voluntarism as inherently exceptional to the United States (Wagner, 2000), thus naturalizing its presence framed through positivity or altruism.

At the same time that neoliberal urban governing techniques shift responsibility to non-governmental agencies as a way of relieving the state of economically *dead weight* social programs and services, the state supports and promotes entrepreneurial endeavors. The built space of Inner Harbor stands as a testament to this. It should not be wholly unsurprising, then, that creative solutions to social issues emerge. From 1999 to 2009 Maryland witnessed a 43% rise in all not-for-profit organizations but among those with civil or social welfare foci a slight decrease stands in stark contrast to increases in other areas such as business leagues or social and recreational clubs (N.A., 2010). Statistical data also indicated an estimated 3.9% decrease in charitable giving to not-for-profit organizations occurred while one trend amongst charitable contributions signals a shift in contributions: monetary contributions are down following the 2008 and current economic downturn but the amount of hours volunteers offer is on the rise despite fewer people volunteering (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2010). Thus, fewer volunteers are donating more time.

In Baltimore, Back On My Feet is not alone with regard to creative solutions to social problems, especially those related to physical culture. Other organizations include: *Midnight Basketball League*, which operate in numerous cities; *The HEAL*

Baltimore Project; *BMoreFit*; *Melo's H.O.O.D. Movement* in Baltimore; the *Coalition for a Healthy Maryland*; the *Y of Central Maryland*; and *Baltimore Livehealthy, Inc.* The range of practices emerging seeking to use physical cultural as a means of addressing social ills indicates they are not only accepted within contemporary understandings of how to alleviate a variety of social problems. They also suggest they are thriving, becoming the norm through which inequality *can* and *should* be approached, including Back On My Feet.

I want to suggest that Back On My Feet is best understood—that is to say, how the organization is rendered intelligible—as a product and producer of neoliberal biopower; the agenda of which focuses upon two specific groups of people: volunteers and those recovering from homelessness, addiction, or other positions of extreme social and economic vulnerability. Neoliberalism is dependent upon not just economic productivity and extracting productivity from societal Others, but also voluntarist initiatives that create spaces in which entrepreneurial, creative, and non-governmental actors cultivate solutions to societal ills. Contextualized and conceptualized within biopower as neoliberal urban governance, I propose that Back On My Feet constitutes one expression of neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda.

The invention of the social problems industry transforms social issues such as homelessness into productive sites for economic investment allowing for the smooth functioning of consumer/tourist economies and the proliferation of service and knowledge industries. As Willse notes, "As economic ventures, neo-liberal social programmes do not necessarily seek an end to social problems, but become ends themselves economic activities enabling more economic activity." Such initiatives are

founded upon the two groupings that enable the workings the social problems industry. One person exemplifying and embodying the emergence of this neoliberal urban corporeal agenda is Back On My Feet's founder, Anne Mahlum.

Embodying the Self-Enterprising Citizen-Subject

In her nomination as a CNN Hometown Hero in 2008 (CNN, 2008), Anne Mahlum and Back On My Feet were depicted at the presentation of the award through a video created by photographer and director Judy Starkman (2008). Overlaying the video images of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania coming into and out of focus—a street underpass lined with cars, the tops of short-story brick buildings visibly weather-marked locating them within the urban margin, telephone and electrical wires crossing over the street of which one has hung around it a pair of tied tennis shoes, a downhill shot of the city as if indicating the viewer lies outside of its center, and finally an individual presumed to be a man laying down at the doorstep of what appears to be a church with stone steps and wooden doors is wrapped in multiple layers of clothes and wiggling as if to find that one comfortable body position while sleeping—Darrin McNair tells the viewer that "A hero is somebody that does something good for no special gain, no pay, just because they believe in their heart that they can make a change." He is speaking of one person in particular, Anne Mahlum. The story in the short film discusses in brief the emergence and purpose of the not-for-profit organization Mahlum began in 2007, Back On My Feet, which when it began carried the following mission: "Back On My Feet promotes the self-

sufficiency of the homeless population by engaging them in running as a means to build confidence, strength and self-esteem" (2010). Alternating between McNair's and Mahlum's voices, words, and at times faces and moving bodies, the city of Philadelphia provides a backdrop for their interwoven stories. McNair details his understanding of Mahlum as a hero, his disbelief in how "a small, petite sized, Caucasian woman" was able to motivate many of "society's throw-a-ways," his destitute life with drugs, the relative social and personal importance of running his life, and suggests that without running he would "probably be dead." Mahlum speaks about how people all want to belong and be valued, her personal struggle with her father's addiction, her use of running's "primitive motion of moving forward" to work through "anything," her strong desire to help the "guys" in the homeless shelter she ran past regularly, Darrin's early life without love and support, running's capacity to guide individuals toward a "full of opportunity and hope," how running with Back On My Feet erases various statuses between people, and how for her there is nothing better than watching somebody "discover what they're capable of."

Mahlum's efforts as a "community crusader," a label applied during the CNN Hometown Hero award ceremony (2008), have not gone unnoticed. In the last six years, Mahlum's presence in the mainstream media beyond the award from CNN has included: an appearance on the National Broadcasting Company's *Today Show* in 2010 to accept $50,000 from Pepsi Refresh for the organization; an appearance on the Central Broadcasting Service's *Evening News* to promote and discuss the organization as well as its expansion to Austin, TX, participation in a "challenge" to "help three young people alone in the world… find a place to fit in" as part of Music

Television's 2012 documentary *The Break*; individual and organizational coverage in SELF Magazine, Runner's World, and several other news and information outlets, including city newspapers associated with the cities to which the organization spreads; and most recently in February 2013 on TED Talks she presented the organization.

In her TED Talk, Mahlum (2013) briefly described her experiences growing up and how running became an outlet through which she expressed negative emotional energy. This, she tells us, is the foundational inspiration of Back On My Feet. During high school she learned her father was a gambling, alcohol, and drug addict, and she described the impact this had upon her and her family:

He had spent the last years of his life magically living this double life: When he was with us, everything was great; when he wasn't he was at casinos. And as most addictions do, they hit rock bottom, and my dad owed a lot money to a lot of people and we didn't have it. And unfortunately, that wasn't my dad's first introduction with addiction. He went through drug and alcohol recovery as a kid. I'd never seen my dad drink or do drugs, and I've never even seen him be tempted. But my mom, for years, dealt with that addiction on the receiving end, which comes with deception, lies, and irresponsibility. Words that I would never use to describe my father. So for her, that was it. She kicked my dad out of the house that day, and for a sixteen year old girl who loves he dad more than life I was devastated, and I was really angry. Here was my broken dad who needs fixing and my mom doesn't wanna help him. So I spent the next three years of my life resenting my mom, and trying to fix my

dad. Why don't you just stop gambling? Why don't you just stop doing this and we can go back to being a family? I didn't get addiction, I didn't understand it. It was really hard to love somebody who had an active addiction.

It was at this point that Mahlum said she "became a runner."

Consumed by running through high school, college, and her early professional career, running became "the only constant" in her life. Living in Philadelphia, running was the "time" and "space" in which she "felt alive." Spring, summer, winter, and fall, every morning on Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday, she ran through the streets of Philadelphia. And then, one morning in May 2007 she ran by the homeless shelter less than a mile from her apartment and engaged in a sarcastic but friendly exchange: "they're asking me if all I do is run all day; I ask them if all they do is stand there all day." She found speaking to them "really easy" because they reminder her of her dad, "who is generous and friendly but a little rough around the edges." From there, she thought over a few days that she was "cheating these guys" in the sense the she runs by them, moving her life forward "emotionally, spiritually, and mentally and physically," and she was "leaving them on that corner." After speaking with the director of the shelter who doubted anyone would want to run, a week and a half later, Back On My Feet went for a run for the first time.

Since its inception in 2007, Back On My Feet has experienced considerable growth. The cultivation of the organization has been achieved through: substantial economic growth; increased organizational employment opportunities; expansion to ten additional United States cities after Philadelphia, with more planned expansion;

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and within those cities the production multiple satellite communities comprised primarily of volunteers and those in recovery. Even amidst the dubiously labeled Great Recession of 2008 resulting in the emaciation of corporate and individual monetary donations (Wing, Roeger, & Pollak, 2010), which also yielded climbing counts of people experiencing homelessness in Baltimore (Rawlings-Blake, 2010), Back On My Feet has flourished. As the founder of Back On My feet, Anne Mahlum embodies entrepreneurialism encouraged within neoliberal urban governance; she is an entrepreneur of herself (Rose, 1999a). Back On My Feet, as Willse (2010) notes, services the economy directly within the regimes of neoliberal urban governance: "social programmes become industries that serve the economy directly, not necessarily through investing in a labouring population, but through the production of service and knowledge industries" (p. 178).

At first, Back On My Feet's origination in Philadelphia would seem to suggest that Baltimore and the organization are not as intimately connected as the organization might be with its city of origin. However, one of the aspects of the Baltimore Chapter that sets it apart from other Chapters is that its resident populace requested the organization expand to Baltimore early after it began in Philadelphia. Establishing Baltimore as a site in which citizens take up the responsibility for creating and implementing creative solutions to some of Baltimore's and society's problems creates connections amongst the city, its populace, Back On My Feet, and neoliberal techniques of governance. Governance is thus reshaped, forming "a new relationship between government and knowledge through which governing activities are recast as nonpolitical and non-ideological problems that need technical solutions"

(Ong, 2006, p. 3). This analysis makes explicit the relationship between governance and the subject as a way of drawing together the micro and macro analyses of power (Gordon, 2000).

Intensifying earlier formations of neoliberalism, wherein "sport was used to legitimate social ideas about crime and punishment, race, and space" (Cole, 1996 from Pitter & Andrews, 1997, p. 96), this neoliberal urban corporeal agenda thrives on the affective positioning of volunteerism, whose morally based responsibilitization undergirds the neoliberal agenda. Following Samatha King's (2003) work on the politics of philanthropy, voluntarism, and breast cancer, she remarks that the philanthropic and voluntarist initiatives emerging out of the 1980s elicit notions of what it means to be proper American citizens. In the 1980s, a

> … constant flow of techniques, tools, and strategies designed to elicit self-responsibility and responsibility to others mediated not through the state, or through political agitation, but through the "freedom" of personal philanthropy and voluntarism. (p. 311)

Extending Foucault's conception of biopower, and its two poles of biopolitics and discipline, he later proposed the concept of governmentality, "the whole range of practices that constitute, define, organize and instrumentalize the strategies that individuals in their freedom can use in dealing with each other" (1994a: p. 300). As volunteers invest their time, energy, and bodies, Back On My Feet expresses the stressing of responsibility at communal levels and a responsibilitization at the individual level. Nikolas Rose (1999) suggested that this marks out this shift in governance, a

double movement of autonomization and reponsibilitization [in which] [p]opulations once under the tutelage of the social state are to be made responsible for their destiny and for that of society as a whole. Politics is to be returned to society itself, but no longer in a social form: in the form of individual morality, organizational responsibility, and ethical community. (p. 1400)

The bodies of volunteers and the impoverished bodies associated with those recovering from marginalized positions represent forms of moralized physical capital. The mutual goal of self-sufficiency—amongst biopolitical governing practices and the Back On My Feet organization—targets and thrusts together these otherwise disparate bodies, effectively fusing a body politic by producing citizens rather than policing them. Moreover, the investment in and production of and from those bodies benefit the entire population by rendering care through market-place based institutions; social welfare and the economy become stitched together.

Moving Toward the Street…

Amidst Baltimore's industrial to postindustrial transformation, its urban glamour zone presents an appealing unified expression (de Certeau, 1984) while masking the uneven stark lived realities of the marginalized and excluded (Harvey, 2001; Silk & Andrews, 2006). The growing homeless population represents one of the effects of increasing disparity that takes shapes across lines of race and class. Yet, within the shift to neoliberal urban governance, re-developed cities such as Baltimore,

according to Harvey (2001) must continually use public investment to perpetually

upgrade the tourist bubble's amenities and infrastructure in order to maintain market

competitiveness with other cities. Since 1970, Baltimore has invested two billion in

building and maintaining its tourist facilities, and hundreds of millions more in

subsidies to tourism-related businesses (EIR, 2006). To maintain itself as a tourist

destination, Baltimore must constantly renew itself. More than this, cities must also

create citizens that embody, manifest, perform, and circulate neoliberal logics,

governing others as they govern themselves.

Change within this environment becomes exceedingly difficult: If you want to

make a change, you must do so individually. This is the powerful and suggestive

discourse that anchors urban entrepreneurialism, and increasingly some of the ways in

which social issues and problems are addressed. In response to the retrenching

welfare state, individuals, private organizations, non-profit organizations, and various

partnerships have risen to fill the gaps once attended to by the state. Back On My Feet

represents one of these new, innovative, creative, and entrepreneurial modes of and

for addressing one problem in particular, homelessness. Such initiatives, what Pitter

and Andrews (1997) express as the social problems industry, on the surface attempt to

end social problems but end up becoming in and of themselves economic activities

productive of further economic activities. At the foot of Back On My Feet's creation

and expansion, is its Founder and former President Anne Mahlum, the embodied and

mediated expression of an emergent neoliberal subject.

Such a critique, however, yields little insight into the every day experiences of

people within Baltimore, the meanings generated by those people, and the people

participating in Back On My Feet, both individually and collectively. Aihwa Ong (1999) notes that accounts of "human agency and its production and negotiation of cultural meanings within the normative milieus of late capitalism" (p. 3) are missing from much of the literature employing neoliberalism of various kinds. Her conception of neoliberalism as a technology of governance, drawing from Foucault and Nikolas Rose, places human practices and cultural logics at the center of discussion. The running practices of Back On My Feet's participants embody and represent speak to the novel ways in which city inhabitants generate new ways of being together, new forms of collective life (Latham & McCormach, 2010). Representative of a novel form of social life, Back On My Feet's focus upon, use of, and deployment of bodies within and as neoliberal techniques of governance necessitate understanding not just the processes that swirl around the body (Harvey, 2001) but also how the body itself, as a site of analysis, contextually situated provides insight into the forging of subjectivities and the self. Exploring how human practices intersect with neoliberal logics, articulate with a specific context, and inform broader structures enables the location of what makes actions thinkable, practicable, and desirable (Ong, 1999). Thus, the following three chapters explore how neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda plays out within the lives, perceptions, identities, and experiences of its participants.

  This chapter set out to conceptualize neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda within the context of Baltimore. The chapter also illustrated Anne Mahlum as the embodiment of the voluntarist imperative produced within neoliberalism's agenda, and sets that agenda on its path of producing appropriate neoliberal human subjects.

Establishing this agenda as an outgrowth of neoliberal urban governance within Baltimore contributes to understanding the three following chapters. As an outgrowth of broader structures, processes, and forces, Back On My Feet brings together two groups of people that individually and collectively embody two sides of neoliberalism's corporeal agenda. The three chapters proceeding from this one, explore how neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda plays out on the ground and through the bodies of its participants by illustrating and examining participants' perceptions, identities, and experiences. Chapter Two focuses on the Non-Residents, and Chapters Three and Four focus on the Residents.

CHAPTER TWO

NEOLIBERALISM'S URBAN CORPOREAL AGENDA

Compassion and altruism, writes David Wagner (2000), are not always what they seem. The sentiments are often associated with voluntarism, its people, and its practices. In *What's love got to do with it?* Wagner demystifies the mythology of altruism and charity in the United States by exploring the dimensions of charity often over-looked or hidden. He calls into question the sanctity and efficacy of altruism, non-profit, and voluntary enterprises through historical and contemporary analyses.

Amongst the important distinctions, Wagner (2000) suggests any examination of charity, philanthropy, or voluntarism should acknowledge are those between material social welfare and therapeutic social services, and those between public and private assistance. Material social welfare benefits provide broad strategies for addressing human needs, such as adequate health care, income, housing, and so on. Those with leftist political leanings tend to favor social welfare as a tool of social justice for provision of income or material support. Social services, related but distinct, are oriented around character amelioration, or even punishment or repression, and are small subsets of social welfare programs that are typically associated with counseling and personal assistance. As he suggests, social welfare in the United States is being cut while social services are on the rise because they are

cheaper, provide no income redistribution, are less risky politically, and usually less subject to clear evaluation or benefit. Across the political spectrum, social services are more popular because they are vague and associate symbolism with charity. These distinctions, while not always clear-cut, are important because they suggest how some social issues are currently and increasingly being addressed.

Back On My Feet is a public non-profit organization, although the distinction between non-profits and the commercial sector are increasingly difficult to discern as non-profits have incorporated the market oriented dictates of the commercial and private sector (Wiesbrod, 1998b). Indeed, Back On My Feet is better characterized and representative of the social problems industry (Pitter and Andrews, 1997). Organizationally, as an emerging non-profit organization, Back On My Feet, like most non-profit organizations, financially competes for its economic survival within the marketplace. The organization has achieved financial success amid state, national, and global fiscal turmoil resulting from the 2007-2008 economic recession. The Baltimore Chapter created three full-time positions in the last three years. Clearly, despite its seemingly peculiar, misguided, or even ill-advised mission and intent, Back On My Feet resonates and corresponds with the motives, directives, and beliefs of corporate and individual hearts, minds, and wallets, as well as the feet, bodies, minds, and hearts of both volunteers and those in recovery.

Amongst the increasingly competitive non-profit sector of society and its limited distribution of material benefits, staff and Non-Residents regard Back On My Feet in different terms. First and foremost, Non-Residents describe the organization and their participation within it as a form of therapeutic social service, in Wagner's

(2000) language. Somewhat uniquely, Back On My Feet according to Non-Residents, represents a form of corporeally focused voluntarism that works with and between socially conceived binaries such as the margin and center, invisible and visible, abnormal and normal, and unhealthy and healthy.

This chapter explores and examines the multiple experiences and perceptions of Back On My Feet's Non-Residents in and through the practices of running and volunteering. The first three sections aim to provide space for the voices and experiences of Non-Residents, and as such are represented predominantly through the empirical. The fourth and final section takes on a more active, academic voice in an admittedly partial and subjective reading in order to critically analyze and contextualize Non-Residents' perceptions and expressions.

The first section of the chapter discusses how Non-Residents make sense of Back On My Feet's form of voluntarism. They suggest that their voluntarist acts and practices represent a different type from more typical acts of charity or voluntarism wherein distinct givers and receivers are evident in a one directional service delivery. Through their physical engagements and story telling exchanges, they characterize a kind of voluntarism that is more dialogical than one-way in that one of main effects is the establishment of relationships and community. The second section explores and examines how running, the most integral and prominent practice within Back On My Feet, contributes to the creation of that unique form of voluntarism, as well as to communal relationships. Through their running practices and associated tests of physical endurance and mental fortitude, Non-Residents experienced ways in which their participation contributed to improving their lives and bodies. The third section

examines how community, in as much as it creates bonds of affiliation, also creates

lines of division. The labels of Resident and Non-Resident within Back On My Feet

contradict commonly held assumptions about running within the organization and the

creation of community. The conditions for joining and expectations of continued

participation differentiated through Residents and Non-Residents illustrated behaviors

that are and are not acceptable within the organization. The fourth section offers a

more analytical analysis of Back On My Feet's practices. Non-Residents expressed a

kind of intimacy in their involvement with Residents and Non-Residents, and yet they

maintain a distance in their practices from the world outside of Back On My Feet, as

well as the urban conditions productive of inequality. Essentially, through their

practices and perceptions, they reinforce a neoliberal voluntarist imperative while

also obscuring other possibilities of and for social justice or political activism.

This is No Soup Kitchen

Repeatedly, Non-Residents described Back On My Feet in terms that

characterized their voluntarism as different from other forms of giving. They

suggested that typical voluntarism involves one-way service provision, which sets up

a relationship between people as either giver or receiver. Although Back On My

Feet's organization of people into Resident and Non-Resident groups, Non-Residents

expressed that their participation was far more dialogical than a one-way determining

relationship. The claim in Non-Residents perceptions is that their perceived form of

dialogical voluntarism breaks down boundaries between giver and receiver to form a more collective sense of engagement and interaction.

Beth, a married white woman with kids in her mid to late 50s who lives approximately ten minutes by automobile north of Inner Harbor, juxtaposed Back On My Feet and her efforts within its practices against a soup kitchen: "That's the nice thing about Back On My Feet that's different than serving something in the soup kitchen. There's a relationship going on. They [the Residents] encourage me and I encourage them." She elaborated on this by indicating that through her participation in this form of dialectically engaged voluntarism relationships become the backbone of the program, not the transferal of food, money, or resources from a giver and receiver:

> To me it's a lot better than standing behind and slopping food out, and cleaning up tables. I think it's great for people. It's just not my comfort level. You know, here it's a totally different… And yet I'm still doing the same kind of thing, I'm getting something, they're getting something.

Materially, Back On My Feet uses its resources through the Next Steps program, but those resources in many ways are secondary to the formation of relationships. This form of corporeal and relationship-centered voluntarism aimed to break down barriers between Resident and Non-Residents was expressed in at least two ways on a regular basis: through every day bodily interactions and learning from each other through story telling.

Lots of Hugs, Two Circles, and One Prayer

Each morning The House chapter of Back On My Feet met, three practices were noticeable that, although they might seem somewhat strange, were intentional for the purposes of Back On My Feet's efforts to create a sense of collectivism: hugging, circling up, and the recitation of the Serenity Prayer. These might be regarded as superficial, but these three cultural practices are unique to Back On My Feet and the power of their capacity to create acceptance should not be taken for granted, nor underestimated. Consistently, Non-Resident members expressed these practices as important for their own personal development, and their suggestive connotations for those Residents in recovery.

The affection demonstrated in and through the practice of hugging carried two specific aims, according to one of the Back On My Feet staff members, Amie: to unsettle those coming into the group on each particular morning with the intention of breaking down physical barriers between people, and also to welcome those arriving in a convivial manner. This is how she described it:

> … at 5.30 in the morning you don't know where you're going or who's gonna be there. But to see this crowd of people and they've got their arms wide open and they're just ready to hug you. They don't know your name, they don't know why you've come but now you are part of their team. I think that that breaks down any of those nerves pretty quick, to know that you're automatically welcomed in. That's pretty nice feeling, you know, that we don't often have a lot of times, that security of knowing people, or feeling

stable. But, I think that the team leaders do it and the current team members do a really great job of just saying c'mon and you're part of our team now.

She elaborated by acknowledging that she was not sure how the practice was started in Philadelphia, but close contact and touch are important for breaking down barriers:

I think it was passed down from Philly, that was just kind of how they started doing things. You know I think the group hug, the team hug, kind of signifies a team, you know. Being able to be in close contact, just that sense of touch definitely goes a long way to help kind of breaking down barriers.

Embedded within the practice of hugging is not only the ability to break down barriers but also the capacity to create unity amongst those involved, especially for Non-Residents who may retain stereotypes of Residents. Amie continued:

My perception is that I feel as though a lot of times the population that we work with… you know get this labels of homeless or addict or poor, and so you automatically put up this barrier. You know, this person is different from me, and I think the act of hugging is such a simple way or breaking that down and acknowledging humanity. That, I don't care what your story is, what your stereotype is, I'm going to acknowledge you with the dignity of just being a human being. Whether I know you or we've been running together for six months, or I've never met you, it's something that you are my teammate, I'm welcoming you into this team. I'm acknowledging you as a human and I'm acknowledging you as part of this team. So I think you know, that gesture in of itself is very unifying.

Hugging was commonly accepted as a form of social cohesion and unity. Only one or two Non-Residents who were uncomfortable with the practice of hugging in general, one of which, Wendy, preferred not to hug anyone, including her parents. She actively practiced "hug-avoidance." The idea of creating unity and a team-like atmosphere was further expressed in how the group began each morning with a circle and prayer and ended with a circle and group cheer.

Each morning, the mechanism for suggesting that the group was ready to begin took shape through a collective circle within which everyone put their arms around the person next to them. After daily information about the upcoming events, milestones reached by Residents, or the route the group would run through the city for the morning, the *Serenity Prayer* was spoken collectively: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." At times, the more religiously inclined or faithful would complete the phrase with, "God's will, not ours."

Cameron discussed the significance of the prayer, its meaning, and its relation to Back On My Feet:

> I think if you look at the words behind the Serenity prayer, a lot of those
> words you don't have to be religious. This is something I take from it, is that
> you don't have to have a lot of belief or believe in religion a lot if you just
> take the words for what they are. Obviously, the God part and things like that
> for people who are religious. … You know it's funny, I even struggle to say
> the serenity prayer outside of the circle. But when you're inside the circle it
> just comes kind of natural. As somebody who is not very religious and to take

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it even a step further, skeptical about religion in general, I think it's awesome.

I think it's kind of a way to bring up again that we're all here for a common

purpose, and whether you're a Resident or Non-Resident you can appreciate

the words in the serenity prayer for what they're trying to say, outside of

God's will and not ours kind of thing. Just the three sentences really resonate,

at least I know with me in terms of saying, you know what, you're not going

to be able to control everything; the stuff that you can control take care of it;

and everything else just know the difference.

Back On My Feet did not officially endorse or affiliate with any religious institution.

Religion does not have an integral nor even minor presence within the operations of

the organization beyond the prayer. Yet, the speaking and presence of the prayer

invoked the religious heritage and symbolism emanating from Christian traditions

(Wagner, 2000), and out of which much altruism and voluntarism stemmed. In

Baltimore, religious institutions historically and presently featured prominently in

providing services to the poor and homeless in Baltimore.

Liz, one of the former Non-Resident leaders of The House group,

characterized the circle as a way to clearly define the starting and ending point for

running each morning:

… it's good to define a starting point and an ending point to the mornings, so

everyone knows that they need to be there when we were huddled in the circle

in the morning. You know if you're not out, if you're not there before the

huddle happens, you know you're late, and it's very obvious you are late. You

know, people apologize and so forth. Which is good, it just makes it clearly

defined and provides some structure.

After stretching from returning from a run, the group completed the morning with

another circle, finishing with everyone's hands in the center of the circle and a cheer.

The cheer was often something fun or timely, such as "Go Ravens" on Fridays before

a Sunday game in the stadium that was less than a five-minute walk from The House

and in immediate visual distance. Like the hugs, the circle was meant to be inclusive.

Together, the practices of hugging, circling up, and reciting the Serenity

Prayer, are intended to accomplish the following: foster a sense of unity in the

breaking down of physical barriers between people and humanize one another

(hugging), clearly define the commencement of the morning gathering and its ending

(circling up), and offering a suggestive advice about one's conduct (Serenity Prayer).

In addition to these, stories and learning about each other through also contributed to

the establishment of a more dialogical form of voluntarism than typically found

within contemporary voluntarist practices.

Story Telling

Another form through which relationships and bonds were forged occurred

through the telling of stories while running. The following two stories seek to

demonstrate not so much their content, although it is important, but rather express the

level of depth in which people engage with one another. At times engagement of and

with one another was tempered by different events happening in participants' lives,

such that people were tired and preferred just to run and speak far less. However, for

those Non-Residents who regularly attended, the sharing of stories created an intimate atmosphere within the group.

Beth described how the various stories she exchanged with participants provided a better understanding of a number of peoples' lives. Those exchanges cautioned her against the preconceived notions and judgments she previously carried about Residents and the people labeled homeless more broadly. Through exchange, she began to understand better some of the Residents' life experiences that have, in minute or significant ways, contributed to their current social and economic position. One story she shared was with Adam, one of the Non-Residents who fought in the Vietnam War. Although brief, Beth described one of the more traumatic experiences Adam recounted to her:

> He talked about having his boots shined by a Vietnamese boy and he'd be on top of a box and the kid ran. He didn't move that boot, he told his buddies he's gone because if you lift your boot, he would attach it to a bomb and detonate it. That stuff they tell you? It's true, all of it. The grenades, and baby is in the mother's hands handing them off to you. All of it's true. I said, 'I knew you guys fought a nightmare.'

For many Veterans, finding work when they returned from Vietnam, many of whom were black or Hispanic in their 20s and 30s, was difficult after being discharged (Kusmer, 2002). Running the city together, learning the histories of one another, and perhaps even understanding better how past events contributed to current plight, such as the case with Beth and Adam, all bespoke an engagement amongst participants that

began to demonstrate a relevant and humanizing interaction *between* Residents and Non-Residents.

The second experience of story telling involved Warren, a Resident, and Greg, a Non-Resident. Greg, white and in his late-30s, was about to become a father. He recounted one morning a story that Warren told him when he asked him about fatherhood. Specifically, he was seeking advice because he was about to have his first child. Warren characterized fatherhood in an intimate, serious, yet jovial way:

> You will do anything for your kids. Anything! Right, one morning, my son's nose was clogged up, he couldn't breathe! You know what you do when your kids are in pain, or even their life is at stake? You do whatever you can. Back then, we didn't have no … squeeze a tube to stick up someone's nose. So I did the only thing I could. I put my mouth over his nose and sucked out the snot. He started breathing right away and he was fine. Cause you know, you'll do anything for your kids, anything. Once you have that kid, you'll be a great dad.

Indeed, sharing stories, positive and negative, functioned to bring together these otherwise disparate people. Story telling provided another form of interaction that fostered the group's sense of collective identity.

From hugs, circles, a prayer, and story telling, it is not difficult to surmise, then, that Beth is not entirely inaccurate in her assessment of Back On My Feet: It is no soup kitchen.

The Practice of Running

The most integral practice of Back On My Feet, unsurprisingly, was the practice of running. Numerous Non-Residents demonstrated ways in which they understood and expressed their involvement in the organization as fostering a unique kind of voluntarism, all of which oriented around and were facilitated through the running. Although the practice may seem rather simple or perhaps natural, these notions belie the practice of running as it takes shape within Back On My Feet and its participants/runners. Physical endurance played a central role in creating, establishing, and maintaining communal relationships, as well as contributing to how Non-Residents used running to improve their lives and bodies.

Why run?

No person illustrated a dialectical engagement between Resident and Non-Resident members cultivated through *active* bodily movement more than Steph. She also demonstrates how the practice of running contributed to the facilitation of an emergent community. A white woman in early 30s who was soft spoken and full-figured, she considered herself a non-runner. She joined Back On My Feet because of the message, the accomplishments its members sought to attain, and her interest in losing a few pounds. As a non-runner before joining, she illustrated the difficulty and complexity of running, one that was often taken for granted by the Non-Residents who predominantly have practiced running or other physically demanding activities regularly. Before joining she believed Back On My Feet to be a positive program.

Once involved, however, she developed a different perspective. What she encountered surprised and enlivened her.

Indicating that her motto for and attitude toward running before joining Back On My Feet was, "I should not run unless someone's chasing me," she was naïve to believe her desire to run would sufficiently prepare her for its intensity. During her first few runs she was uncomfortable and nearly discontinued participating. An a-typical Non-Resident in the group, in that she was not an active runner prior to joining Back On My Feet, the bodily pain and difficulty of working toward her personal weight loss goals lead to disenchantment with running as a medium for expressing her altruistic intentions. She was more interested in what Back On My Feet hoped to accomplish for its Resident members.

After a few runs she questioned her involvement one morning by asking, "What am I doing? Really, why am I doing this?" Not considering herself a runner, not particularly enjoying the practice, and unsure if she wanted to try for longer distances, such as a marathon, she considered discontinuing participating. Not enjoying running, she stood in stark contrast to the many Non-Residents with whom she regularly spoke who loved to run, and many of whom were hyper-active in their regular mountain-biking, ultra-marathoning, and long-distancing activities. In fact, she compared herself to many of the Residents who trained and completed distances as long as a marathon. She told herself, "the guy next to me has spent his whole life on the street drinking, drugging, and doing all these things… If this guy is out here doing this, I can do this."

Contributing to the difficulties she encountered, she acknowledged the reputation she picked up over time for not finishing the various activities, programs, and tasks she began in her life. While in college fifteen years before we met, she turned in assignments late and carried incomplete grades. Growing up, her "wonderful parents" were relatively hands off in terms of her becoming a certain person or particular kind of professional. At first, Back On My Feet looked to be no different; she didn't know if she could or would continue. However, she began to challenge that perception of herself. In a series of events concomitant with her bodily pain, self-doubt, and hesitancy about the program, she re-evaluated why she ran.

Upon first joining, she could not run for a full mile. Over the course of a few months she built up her stamina, endurance, and strength with the encouragement of other members, both Residents and Non-Residents; that encouragement was a new experience for her. She recounted one morning specifically that she attempted to complete a four-mile run for the first time in her life. On that day, Reed, a fellow Resident member and friend became, in her words, her "cheerleader." She realized that day that she was arrogant enough to believe that she was helping him by participating in the program when indeed it was Reed helping her as much, if not considerably more. Although her parents were always supportive of her in her life, they were never supportive in the way and capacity that Reed imparted that day; she had never had someone else cheer her on and push her to finish despite considerable difficulty. On the surface, Back On My Feet suggested support for its members moved in a one-way direction from Non-Residents to Residents. In Steph's experience, however, this is far from accurate.

The dialectical engagement at times fostered mutual dependency, personal growth, and challenged more traditional voluntarist endeavors. Running was an integral practice for challenging the notion that the "service" involved within the organization is singularly directed from the organization and Non-Residents to Residents, or those in need. Running, despite the notion that "any one can do it" was a difficult practice to begin. Non-Residents, who do not typically run and join Back On My Feet, especially, had a hard time sustaining their involvement.

Running, a Pedagogical Practice

Running is no simple practice. As Steph experienced and explained her experiences, Back On My Feet forms a complex social space constituted through bodily running practices and psychic investment (Woodward, 2009, p. 114). In aiming to achieve its goal of self-sufficiency for its participants, running functioned as a mechanism through which group members formed collective bonds and individual meanings. The trials and tribulations of achieving running over sustained periods with the aim of reaping personal physical and psychological benefits, as well as creating a community with fellow runners, however, was not achieved in just a few short runs. Running was a difficult practice in which to become involved.

Despite its biomechanical complexity, running was frequently described as simple, as expressed through Amie's characterization:

I mean it doesn't require much. You know, it requires you to lace up a pair of shoes and go out and run. And it's instantly gratifying. You get returns right away from it, you feel good about it afterwards, you know there's a lot of

short-term benefits to it. Which I think makes it so simple. There's just kind of a pure beauty to it, it doesn't necessarily require a lot of skill. It's something that anyone can do, whether you're two or 102, whether you're small, tiny, fit, whatever your background, it's something that anybody can do.

Through repetition, continual embodied measurement one step through one run, then a few days, several weeks, numerous months, and year's worth of mileage, running gets easier. While appearing simple, which effectively ignores the multifarious knowledgeable and material necessities of running (e.g. shoes, attire, training to remain healthy, stretching, nutrition, etc.), the pathway to sustained running is anything but simple. The process of building up considerable mileage and comfort in repetition was one that began in all different places, and it was the exhaustion and pushing through that exhaustion that generated, in part, a way to work on the self and create collective bonds, a kind of individual and collective corporeography.

As a collective, endurance, pain (Allen Collinson & Hockey, 2001; Sparkes, 1998), and perseverance (Atkinson, 2008) contributed to the formation and maintenance of the community's bonds. However, unlike other communally oriented physical cultural practices, such as distance running in *just* running groups or triathlons, an additional *active* explicit and implicit underlying pedagogy percolated through the organizational culture of Back On My Feet through to Non-Residents and ultimately intended for Residents. Stressing the repetitiousness of placing on foot after the other, this bio-mechanistic training regime figuratively and physically aimed to reactivate and *train* bodies. Training bodies to run may be a reasonable task, one that Back On My Feet aims and intends to translate beyond the practice itself.

Jenn, one of the Back On My Feet Baltimore staff, described how running

translated beyond the running act and toward Residents' recovery. She analogized the

running act to how people, and specifically Residents, met goals as a metaphor and

pathway to success and recovery:

Getting that job is a success. Getting into a job training program, those are

successes. But I think the bigger ones are taking those first steps. It's kind of

like running: You've been doing this same thing over and over again, this

same movement, then you stop at a red light and you're just like, ahhhhh,

you've already run like three and a half miles and you feel like jello. Then, it's

so hard to start up again but you've got to finish. No matter how bad it's felt,

no matter how you feel after coming off those hills, you don't wanna stop. I

know it hurts, but to start up again… Finishing that race or that route, that's a

success. As opposed to saying "I quit," that's a success. Setting a goal and

reaching that goal, that's a success, no matter how small it is…

You have your running goals and your real life goals, you're just not gonna

say, "I'm gonna go run 5K." Well, that's fine and dandy if you wanna get

injured or just pass out in the first 75 yards and you go all out and just run

hard. You haven't paced yourself, you haven't fueled up, or trained, or

anything. You haven't even run a mile before you say you're gonna run a 5K.

You might be setting yourself up for a disaster. So you sit and make plans

about how you're going to execute this goal. And you know that's the same

thing that you can apply to life. You know you can say, I'm gonna go and get

this business degree or this psychology degree, but what kind of business?

What kind of psychology? If you haven't looked into even what school offers those programs, you just go to a trade school and they teach you how to drive trucks. You've already failed. You haven't put in your proper research, you don't have the books. Whatever the case may be, you've already failed because you haven't done the proper research and taken the proper steps. So, that's how I feel like running comes into play.

It was precisely this mantra that Back On My Feet brings to bear on its participants in order to foster a mentality of goal setting and working toward recovery. Cognitively perceived and physically manifesting as a "step by step" process, the rationalized and calculable minutia of running anchors each run as a step and toward cumulative mileage, and in Back On My Feet, cumulative success. In this sense, running *is* pedagogy. The organization aims to use the practice and process of working through running, often of long distances, to instill senses of self-reliance and confidence in the hopes that these translate beyond the running sphere to meeting goals related to attaining education, job training, and housing. As a pedagogical practice, Back On My Feet's Non-Residents largely represent pedagogues.

It would seem, then, that there is nothing natural about running. The dynamics of this running community with an orientation toward improving one's self and the lives of others were not solely attributable to the practice of running itself. The dynamics of the Residents and Non-Residents contour boundaries amongst them that problematize the notion of a cohesive, mutually beneficial, and ameliorative community.

A Transient Urban Community

One of the powerful effects of Back On My Feet is the sense of community its members create. Creating community also contributes to an understanding about who belongs, who does not, and in what ways. As Residents and Non-Residents came to increasingly identify, always to varying degrees, with the collective running practices of Back On My Feet, they began to relate to running in a cathectic way (Ingham & McDonald, 2003). Back On My Feet seems to be able to establish a grounded sense of communitas, which Ingham and McDonald characterize as "a special experience during which individuals are able to rise above those structures that materially and normatively regulate their daily lives and that unite people across the boundaries of structure, rank, and socioeconomic status." (p. 26). On its surface, Back On My Feet intimates that anyone who wants to participate can indeed join and run, both the largely white middle class citizenry and the marginalized urban Other in processes of recovery. It appears to be, with hugs, prayers, and people welcomed all with open arms three days a week, a kind of collective glue that bound them together. Often, these practices feel good. Yet, closer inspection of who was included and who was excluded became muddled and murky.

Amongst Back On My Feet's participants and staff, the status differentiation between the two created different expectations about who could be involved and in what ways. Non-Residents' narrativizations of and about their experiences illustrated how the tensions between Residents and Non-Residents within their collectivity

played out: First, the formal conditions that Back On My Feet placed on participation; and second, rates of participation.

Conditional Running

Upon first learning about Back On My Feet, the organization sounds as though a group of people running through the city simply pull people off the street and gets them up and moving. When Non-Residents characterized their participation with their friends, peers, colleagues, or just other runners at various running events, the response they often received was just that. In her numerous explanations to people about her role at Back On My Feet, Amie described one of the "obvious" questions others asked in response: "well do you just run around Baltimore and round up all the people that you saw on the street?" The idea of *running with the homeless* runs so counterintuitive to popular perceptions of those experiencing homelessness that Back On My Feet was at first perceived to strange, disorganized, and perhaps even crude in its approach. To outsiders, the stigma of homelessness operates as a blanket term that wrote them off, out, and away from the normalized social and cultural center. Not only did this perception mis-characterize Back On My Feet, but it also undermined its legitimacy, role, position, and influence within participants' lives and indeed the ways in which it engaged Non-Residents and Residents alike. If Back On My Feet is to be taken seriously, and I suggest that it should, then consideration of the ways it does approach making a difference in the lives of its participants is vital. In as much as Back On My Feet aims to ameliorate in some way the labels applied to those

experiencing homelessness, or materially improve their lives, the labels constituted within the organization operated by dividing the group.

In order to join Back On My Feet, Residents must consult with Back On My Feet staff about joining and attain approval from their counselors at The House. From there, Residents must maintain 90% attendance in order to begin accruing the benefits associated with participating. Should Residents fail to maintain attendance they became ineligible for receiving those benefits. Moreover, should they be asked to leave The House for violating conditions set forth for staying there, they were not allowed to continue participating with Back On My Feet. During her time as team leader, Liz experienced ten Residents relapses, and all were not allowed to continue participation. In one instance, the group lost one of its most long-standing, well-liked, and responsible members, Jeff. Upon the death of Jeff's father, he relapsed into drinking alcohol and was dismissed from The House:

> … He had been running with us for six or seven months; he'd run the half-marathon in the fall; he was there every single day, had lots of close members on the team, including lots of residential members. A couple in particular were very close with him. So, seeing your friend relapse, it's not healthy for those guys either who are trying not to do that, not do exactly that. So after he left it was… I mean half the team was crying at our run the next day. It was very very emotional. People cared about him very very deeply. He was a very positive person, kind of a positive quiet positive presence on the team. Everyone kinda felt his absence a lot but in a way that took away from the team. You know, just like any group of people who are close, when one

person leaves things will change. And, yeah. we always kind of hope they're doing well. Generally these guys, the relapses that I've seen, they're out for a few weeks and then they try to get themselves into a shelter again. Baltimore's a small enough city, and we're affiliated with five shelters in Baltimore, so we often see guys that have relapsed off of one team show up at another shelter with a team.

The group reacted in different ways dependent upon "how long the person has been part of the group, how important the person was, and how involved they were," according to Liz. Participation for Residents, then, was conditional upon demonstrating the right behaviors on the path to recovery.

In contrast to Residents, Non-Residents' process for joining and maintaining participation was far less strict and more flexible. When a person wants to join Back On My Feet, they expressed interest by signing up via Back On My Feet's website. Once a month, the staff arranged an orientation that explained further what the organization does and aims to do, what volunteers could expect in participating, as well as laying out expectations of Non-Residents' participation. Staff made it a point to clearly articulate that participation was not a form of community service.

One aspect asked of Non-Residents was to select one day per week to run, and to maintain that commitment. Non-Residents, unlike Residents who must maintain a 90% attendance rate to become eligible for the benefits the organization does offer them, can choose when or not to participate and how frequently. The organization ask Non-Residents to maintain regular attendance because they understood that Residents, as they begin to see some people on some days and develop relationships

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with them, they began to expect Non-Residents to show up. Sustaining regular attendance provides a degree of stability for all runners about who was coming on a particular day, especially some of the Resident members who came consider Back On My Feet, Non-Residents, and running as an important aspect of their recovery and lives.

Unfortunately, however, Non-Resident commitment to particular days often devolved into irregular commitment. While some Non-Residents ran every day that The House group met, most chose to participate once per week. More often than not, however, Non-Residents often adjusted their participation based on their lifestyle or job. In instances where Non-Residents forgot to set an alarm to wake up, were hung-over, or were just tired, their non-participation was acceptable. Moreover, the communication between Resident and Non-Resident members, or lack thereof, did not provide a way for Resident group members to know who was coming from amongst the Non-Residents until they showed up in the morning. Thus, the pattern of participation plays an important role in building and sustaining levels of commitment to the collective. With most Non-Residents enabled in the freedom to make decisions about how often they participate, and because Residents have incentives for maintaining their regular participation, Residents and Non-Residents have different degrees of vested interest. Residents have far more at stake than do Non-Residents, and this expressed their vulnerability within their already marginal position. If 90% attendance were a requirement of Non-Residents as they were of Residents, Non-Resident participation rates would likely plummet and the organization would be unable to sustain its level of involvement. A requirement for maintaining the group,

then, were conditions that privileged those in relative positions of affluence that

engage in acceptable behaviors while simultaneously making more vulnerable those

in already marginal positions when they engage in unacceptable behaviors. A paradox

of this, as demonstrated through Jeff, was that when Residents were perhaps in their

most time of need, when they relapsed and were removed from The House, Back On

My Feet's division between Residents and Non-Residents collapsed the community it

sought to establish.

Running, Or Doing Good by Doing Nothing

The reduction, closing off, or elimination of physical proximity amongst the

bodies of Back On My Feet participants contributed to a sense of collectivism. For

the duration of the time members were together during morning runs, these corporeal

encounters facilitated a strong sense of group cohesion. Through story telling and

learning about one another, and indeed struggling through running practices together,

participants felt included. Some characterized this as family, extended family,

community, friendship, or teammates. The various monikers used to characterize the

way Non-Residents viewed the group, while they often varied from a specific,

singular locution of meaning, all oriented around the sense that Residents and Non-

Residents while participating in a morning run moved through Baltimore city streets

together. They were, for approximately one hour, several parts of a whole. The

presence of someone's sweaty arm draping over another, the patting of a drenched

back of a t-shirt, and the polite and humorous dismissal of any ill-bodily aroma all came with the territory, taken in stride in order to feel a part of something.

The desire to feel a part of something, the desire to feel that one is doing good, unfortunately, can be tethered to their opposites. In the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, one way to solve class antagonism was to visit the poor (Wagner, 2000). In this sense, running with the Other is a kind of successor to Christian missionary and charity organization workers. Volunteers, as exemplified in and through Back On My Feet, rarely focused on financial or economic aid, much less political mobilization. Predominantly, Non-Resident members do not engage, discuss, or acknowledge the complexity of issues of homelessness and substance abuse. Indeed, the expectation placed upon the majority of Non-Residents was simply to show up and run. Fully aware of the potential for the organization to become, in Amie's words, "just another running club," Back On My Feet Baltimore's leadership supported for a time attempts to bring issues such as housing, employment, and social stigmas to the fore of Non-Resident members' participation through "Orientation 2.0," a successor to the initial orientation into the program and organization. However, these second orientations, important as they were, largely failed. Non-Residents did not attend and so the program was discontinued. Cameron, one of the former leaders of The House team, remarked that few of the Non-Residents even recognized that the Next Steps program existed, much less why it was important or how it operated. Thus, the group engages almost exclusively in running activities or social events, and very little if at all in civic engagement.

Moreover, in discussing the daily activities of the group, Amie indicated that the running group acted as a separate activity from Non-Residents' lives: "at the end of the run we stretch again and go over some announcements; anything that's going on, events that are going on or races coming up, and then everyone goes home and they go back to their own lives." Liz, also a one-time leader of The House team, like Cameron, also stated that the Back On My Feet was separate from "real life":

> … this is actually may be my favorite part of Back On My Feet. We all come from very different places in the city. It's an unbelievable mix of people in terms of where folks [Non-Residents] live around the city; in terms of their socio-economic status, their interests, their ages, and their jobs. We're probably 50-50 guys and girls. It's a really great representation of the city, I think. So, we come together and do this thing together in the mornings and then we kind of go back to our little caves, and our part of the city. I go back to school, which is not the most diverse subsection of Baltimore by any means. But yeah, everyone goes back to where their from.

Non-Residents' distinction and separation of Back On My Feet from their lives and parts of the city effectively partitioned out the organization and its Residents from the very social inequalities productive of the substance abuse and homelessness it purports to address.

Non-Residents experienced formations of individual growth and affective relationships. Back On My Feet presents new opportunities, and its commitment was at times a felt intensity and passion. The organization did not pretend or promise that its presence will end homelessness or cure all addictions and afflictions. Rather, its

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broader social and cultural potential dwelled in its ability to transgress socially constructed binary boundaries between the supposed social margin and center, invisible and visible, and abnormal and normal. However, these positive encounters and manifestations were woven into a "roll-with-it" neoliberalism (Keil, 2009) that obscures alternative actions or practices that might better contribute to the aims of civic engagement or social justice. At the same time Back On My Feet fosters positive corporeal encounters, such encounters were anchored within a Baltimorean healthy body politic (Silk & Andrews, 2006). The running act, whose participant bears its white middle-class derivative, simultaneously projects notions of fairness, equality, self-responsibility, and self-sufficiency for those in positions both of affluence and conditions of extreme poverty. As Cameron phrased it, "I'm socially liberal and economically conservative."

The practices of Back On My Feet as expressed through Non-Residents could be reduced to a suggestion that Non-Residents are *doing nothing*. This is intended not to suggest that what happens within and as a result of Back On My Feet is not beneficial to Residents. Indeed, in the following chapter I discuss further the ways in which Residents mobilize their participation in their efforts toward meeting goals and advancing forward in their recovery and lives. Rather, I want to suggest that *doing good by doing nothing* refers to the intimate yet/and distancing operations occurring in and through Back On My Feet's practices, the effects of which predominantly separate Non-Residents' perceptions of their experiences from the world outside of Back On My Feet. As Wagner (2000) noted:

… structural inequalities of social systems lead those in power to develop

secondary and subsidiary institutions such as charity and social services to

mitigate their guilt and attempt, at least symbolically, to display sympathy for

the "Other," while at he same time economic and political systems work to

maintain poverty and inequality. (p. 6)

Back On My Feet continues to be successful amongst Non-Residents because their

cultural proclivities toward running fit their self-concept. Altruistic gestures, in the

case of Back On My Feet, cultivate strategic efforts at "resocializing and taming

diversions from dominant culture" (Wagner, 2000, p. 7).

Samantha King (2003), invoking Lauren Berlant (1997), would seem to agree

with Wagner on this point. In King's (2003) discussion of the politics of breast cancer

philanthropy and voluntarism in the *Race for the Cure* in Washington, DC she

suggests, and analogous to Back On My Feet and the social problems industry more

broadly, that

… within the present moment conflict and dissent are typically portrayed by

the mainstream media as passions that are dangerous and destabilizing. By

focusing on the most disorderly performances of resistance, the media casts

public activism (on both the left and the right) as naïve, ridiculous, shallow,

and juvenile. Protest has become, to paraphrase Berlant, doubly humiliated,

both silly and dangerous. It subtracts personhood from activists, making their

gestures of citizenship seem proof that their very claims are illegitimate. (pp.

303-4)

Within Back On My Feet, what Non-Residents express is that the only reasonable and legitimate way Americans can claim both rights and sympathy is to demonstrate not "panic, anger, or demand," (King, 2003, p. 304) but morally virtuous maintenance of the body, physical worth, and self-sufficiency. Non-Residents establish running as a code of conduct, wherein bodies are judged, celebrated, or condemned within every day life (King, 2003; Cole & Hibrar, 1995; Silk & Andrews, 2006). This code of conduct manifest through bodies of the self-referenced "do-gooder" amongst Non-Residents, and indeed embodies a voluntarist imperative, effectively obscures other forms of responding to iniquitous conditions related to and productive of homelessness or extreme poverty.

Anger, dissent, or challenges to the iniquitous conditions within which Back On My Feet and its runners were products and producers, and further the operations of Back On My Feet, were almost entirely absent. Discussions of race, class, or addiction in relation to homelessness were only in rare instances topics of conversation amongst Non-Residents, such as Beth. Running became, in the words of Samantha King (2003) and Berlant (1997), a symbol and sign of hope for the future, rather than of urgency for the present. The banner of the runner enveloped concerns related to health, life outcomes, or even mortality rates that overwhelmingly and disproportionately impact Baltimore's populace along racial and class lines, especially its homeless population. Demands for action beyond trying to get more Residents to run after the failure of Orientation 2.0, identifying and securing funding, and continued suggestions that anyone running alone should really run with Back On

My Feet, all intimated that the organization is in danger of becoming "just another running club," complicit with and within the social problems industry.

Critical consideration of Back On My Feet's Non-Residents' perceptions in conjunction with the organization's emergence, expansion, and representation exhibits an intricate account comprised of many of the historically situated altruistic and meritocratic beliefs that continue to shape understandings of and approaches to social inequality in U.S. urban areas such as Baltimore, MD. The organization is not at all unrelated or external to the social and cultural context in which it is located, as its Non-Residents suggested. The organization's manifestation represents a relevant site of neoliberal governance through which specific altruistic, egalitarian, and meritocratic principles and assumptions enact, publicize, and legitimate the individually responsible based character of U.S. approaches to social welfare that underpin social and economic inclusion and exclusion.

Having expressed and examined the ways in which Non-Residents experience and perceive Back On My Feet, in the following two chapters I turn my attention to how the Resident members experienced, perceived, and narrativized their engagements with Back On My Feet.

CHAPTER THREE

THE USES OF RUNNING: NEOLIBERALISM'S *OTHER* URBAN

CORPOREAL AGENDA I

In his ethnographic exploration of how some of the men and women

experiencing homelessness in Las Vegas, Nevada used their "leisure" or "free" time,

Kurt Borchard (2010) asked the following: "in a culture promoting work and

consumption as key sources of self-definition and self-worth, how are those marginal

to this system supposed to thrive and feel good about themselves?" (pp. 463-4). Las

Vegas, he said, does not offer materially sustainable opportunities for all within the

city. Those without substantive employment are effectively excluded both from labor

and consumption practices through which their identities and self-worth might be

produced. While the same could be said of virtually every U.S. city, the contextual

specificity of each is unique, as are the experiences, practices, understandings, and

expressions of a city's inhabitants. Borchard's question is one not isolated to Las

Vegas but indeed relevant to and for any city in which homelessness arises,

employment not made available to everyone, and wherein consumption and labor

contribute to peoples' self-expressions and self-identifications. While I do not intend

to generalize Borchard's work, I do suggest that a common urban condition across U.S. cities has created environments wherein homelessness and unemployment occur, thus contributing to problems of and with the self in relation. I suggest, too, that Las Vegas like Baltimore incorporates neoliberal techniques of governance, though it does so in specific ways. Those specifics, however, are beyond the scope of this current project. Neither Las Vegas nor Baltimore, to reiterate, can be disconnected from the broader structures and forces of which they are products and producers.

Baltimore is not entirely different from Las Vegas. As Borchard (2010) noted, Las Vegas "is an example par excellence of a postmodern, service- and image-based tourist economy" (p. 464) that promotes entertainment, themed environments, and consumption as defining one's "lifestyle" (See, for example: Anderton & Chase, 1997; Gottdiener, Collins, & Dickens, 1999; & Rothman, 2002). Social geographer David Harvey (2001) described Baltimore (see Chapter One) as possessing plenty of "rot beneath the glitter" (p. 140) precisely because the city invested heavily in the physical, symbolic, and discursive transformation of urban space that privileged service, tourist, and entreprenurial based economies. From the 1970s onward, a prolonged concentration on post-industrial spaces around the harbor neglected the fracturing of once closely tied communities and neighborhoods around and within Baltimore, which increasingly came to resemble "a patchwork of vacant lots, abandoned housing, and boarded-up houses" (Levine, 2000, p. 138). Littered with and by drugs, failing public health provision, social and spatial exclusion, rises in crime, joblessness, a faltering educational system, and a plummeting population, pockets of poverty manifested (Levine, 2000). The core difficulties of the city were left

unaddressed through the 1990s, of which the effect on the population of those experiencing homelessness during this transformation was notable.

Throughout the 1980s, the homeless population grew (Maryland Homeless Services Program, 1994; Homeless Relief Advisory Board, 1995). Baltimore's African-American population represented the most severely struck demographic, representing 86% of those experiencing homelessness (1994), a trend not dissimilar from today's count over 80% (Olubi & Akers, 2011). To address the rise of homelessness in the 1970s and 1980s, the bulk of responsibility for addressing homelessness—a multifarious issue related to unemployment, lack of adequate and affordable housing, inability to access aid from state and federal programs, poor education, victims of abuse or traumatic experience, or drug addiction, just to name a few—fell onto, according to a Baltimore task force in 1983, a "patchwork quilt of resources" from "voluntary and religious organizations" (Baltimore City Council Task Force for the Homeless, 1983, p. 17). Although the City appropriated increased funding largely needed for emergency concerns, the systemic causes of homelessness were sustained.

Baltimore's urban transformation resulted in the increased collaboration of public and private entities with a growing emphasis on private funding. Groups of private citizens took up problems well beyond the province of public or state purview. As non-governmental organizations and volunteers increasingly became relied upon to address social ills, the relationships between those being served, the organizations oriented toward particular services, and those serving are of relevant concern and focus of and for critical inquiry. Back On My Feet represents one outgrowth of these

broader shifting structures and processes. For those experiencing homelessness, then, Borchard's (2010) question remains relevant in Baltimore. The emergence and growth of Back On My Feet, first in Philadelphia, then Baltimore, and now well beyond into eleven current U.S. cities as of 2013, indicates that the organization has created one mode of response relevant to Borchard's question that has and is still gaining traction. How that traction is achieved and for whom, especially in relation to those *being served*, are important questions worthy of consideration.

Complimenting the analysis of volunteers within Back On My Feet, this chapter explores and examines the relationships amongst the Resident members of Back On My Feet, the Non-Resident members, the organization, and the Baltimore context. By focusing on the experiences and self-narrativizations of Resident members, this chapter also offers a response to Borchard's (2010) timely and serious question. I suggest that Back On My Feet presents one possibility through which those experiencing homelessness can and did express themselves and develop a sense of self-worth. At the same time, however, this is not and cannot be the only effect of participation worthy of consideration. Within the Baltimore's neoliberal urban governance, running is not only a technique of self but also one of domination and subjection. I remain cautious of the uses of running both as techniques of the self as well as techniques of domination. Over emphasis on the individual uses can lead to a romanticization of those experiencing homelessness while ignoring the power and forces structuring their domination; whereas a highly critical representation and over-reliance upon literature or theory to speak for people risks over-writing the very voices that I sought out to learn more about.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore and express how Resident members of Back On My Feet perceived and experienced their participation. This chapter proceeds first by representing three individuals, Warren, Reed, and Malcolm, which speak to three main themes related to Residents' perceptions and experiences of health, relationships, and solidarity, respectively. Each person and connected theme demonstrates a relationship between the practices of running with Back On My Feet and how those practices are specifically made useful and productive for them within their lives and identities. This is followed by a discussion. In the second section, a more fluid integration of voices, people, and literature centers less upon individuals' voices and more upon the Residents as a collective group of people and the politics of their practices with Back On My Feet. In contrast to the first section, which overtly illustrates the productive relationship that running fosters within these men's lives, the second section suggests how even within these individually productive practices that they also foster and embody a neoliberal urban corporeal agenda. A concluding discussion follows.

Importantly, one of the dilemmas in representing anything or anyone in textual form is the negotiation around how that representation takes shape, what is included and excluded, and who is speaking and for whom. Within this chapter, I strove to create representations of those with whom I ran and spoke by privileging, as best I could, their voices, especially in the first section. I strove in part to contribute to representations that challenge stigmatizing homeless discourse and portray those experiencing homelessness as actively constructing their lives and choices. Recognizing that the historically contingent groups of people, faces, stigmas, words,

and meanings of homelessness have shifted within the United States, any meaning of 'homeless' must be anchored to the context of its emergence (Snow & Anderson, 1993). Stemming from Reagan inspired cutbacks to social welfare programs in the 1980s, discourses based on (im)morality and (in)dependency (Borchard, 2010) continue to constructed how assistance of various forms and purposes might be conceived, evaluated, or provided by those with the ability to make decisions affecting numerous people (from national governmental policy to state levels to local soup kitchens), or accessed by those experiencing extreme poverty. Kusmer (2002) notes that by articulating homeless stereotypes to meanings of dependency and deviancy, and indeed (im)morality, 'homeless' reframes some of the poorest into abstract others, marking them away and out as inferior from everyone else. Within these discourses, and following Borchard (2010), some have sought through qualitative accounts of homelessness to shift meanings within a structure-agency model toward understanding people as actors within certain contextually specific constraints (Shipler, 2004; Duneier, 1999; Newman, 1999). That is, to paraphrase that old phrase from Karl Marx (1852), those experiencing homelessness make decisions but not necessarily in conditions of their own choosing or making. In as much as I aim to express that the men within this text make personal decisions, mobilize their "free time," and pursue a life and degree of happiness, they do so under particular conditions. Moreover, the uses of running—one choice that they have made in which to participate within their free time—also serve neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda for creating docile bodies.

Uses of Running

The ways in which Back On My Feet's Resident members incorporated the practices of running into their identities and lives vary from person to person. Some discussed a number of benefits through participation, while some discussed two or three. Several if not all of the nine men with whom I ran and spoke shared the following three themes related to health, relationships, and solidarity. Importantly, the particular inflection of each theme was individually unique for Warren, Reed, and Malcolm while they also represent the theme shared amongst Residents. Each theme is represented through a conversation constructed from interviews with each person and my field notes and experiences.

Every participant discussed health, illustrated by Warren, as a benefit of and reason for participation with Back On My Feet, frequently as the primary reason for initially joining. Their running contributed toward improved cardiovascular health, reduced body fat, ameliorated heart disease or diabetes, lowered cholesterol, or assisted in managing blood pressure, amongst several benefits. Other common and frequently discussed reasons for participation included social engagement with those outside of The House, the achievement of personal goals, and developmental opportunities presented through Back On My Feet. Although many joined initially for health based reasons, the opportunity to build relationships and develop a sense of community, represented through Reed, became the primary reason for continued participation amongst the nine men. They described numerous aspects of the importance and relevance of building relationships and community with Resident and

Non-Resident members, such as: developing communication skills; gaining and providing moral support; becoming a source of and drawing energy from and with others; accumulating social capital and knowledge; and the fostering of mutual commitment toward achieving goals. For some, as expressed here through Malcolm, that sense of community also developed into a form of solidarity for those within The House.

Warren and Health

Before I met Warren and got to know him better over the course multiple runs and three interviews, I was made aware of his presence in The House group by his infectious laugh and bright personality. Warren is a 60-year-old African-American man who moved from Darlington, VA to Baltimore at age four, lived there through high school, and then again later in his life after serving in the military. Growing up, he helped raise his siblings as the eldest of a family with twelve children, learning to be a caregiver and fully self-sufficient. Upon completing high school he moved to South Carolina to work on his grandparents' farm before joining the military. The story of his addiction and subsequent experiences in and out of the penal system and drug and alcohol rehabilitation took root during his time serving in the military in Vietnam. There, he experimented with marijuana, opium, and heroin. After completing his service in 1972, he returned first to South Carolina and then to Baltimore where he kept jobs, was "messed up" on drugs, and did time in prison for "wild things like burglary." He described that period as "chaotic," as he unsuccessfully struggled through rehabilitation programs, a college education, and

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odd jobs, even with assistance from the Veterans Administration (henceforth, VA). He described himself as spiritual, open-minded, and not practicing any specific religion framed around cultural sensitivity and "doing the right thing." Married once and now divorced, he has a son and daughter. Despite the outwardly appearance of a difficult life, he maintains an overwhelmingly positive and genuine attitude toward people.

When we met, Warren had been living at The House for over a year and ran with Back On My Feet for more than six months, one of the more senior members of the Resident runners and The House and the team. He was relatively comfortable with The House environment, knowing well the ins and outs of the building and people by the time we met. He identified a little used, empty closet with a few chairs and some old equipment in which we could sit and talk without interruption or much noise. He explained how his addiction lead to numerous health issues that compounded over time, specifically related to his liver, and how Back On My Feet helped him address his health. He detailed specifically how in 2007 receiving a report from the doctor served as a catalyst for improving his health.

"'You got hepatitis and your liver enzymes are so high,'" the doctor told him.

"'Well what?'" he responded to the doctor.

"'Well hepatitis is a slow death. If you keep doin' what your doin', you're killing yourself,'" said the doctor.

"Oh man, he froze me. It really caught my attention. And I was in awe on the phone."

When he went to the doctor after receiving that phone call, he took note of how the doctor interacted with him: "I noticed that the doctor in the office when she told me my liver enzymes were high… I wasn't really listening to that part real hard but I was noticing her. The look she had on her face, like I was death, walking around!" As he said this, he laughed, and said laughing harder, "I was gonna die!"

After recovering from laughing, he continued to chuckle as he recounted what the doctor told him: "'You might live your whole life out before you even feel any symptoms from it. You just gotta stop your behaviors and your drinking and your craziness.'"

"So that's what made me get a grip on my health and everything else."

He continued to explain how running with Back On My Feet facilitated his efforts to improve his health by quitting smoking. The process of which he said was extremely difficult.

Through Back On My Feet I started running. First day, I was smoking. First day running with them, I almost fell over. I ran down the street and I didn't know… man, my mouth… nothing! I had to go to the hospital and get a physical and everything, get my lungs x-rayed, see what was going on cause I almost fell over when I ran down that street. Three blocks in!

Laughing wholeheartedly he continued…

So, the doctor said, 'you still got gas fumes and smoke in your lungs and it's gonna be a while before all that cleared up. And it's not stopping you. Just those fumes are in there. Whatever damage that the smoking did, or residue that's in your lungs, some of it will clear up. It won't all clear up but you're

lungs is gonna get better. It's gonna get better and better if you just keep running.' And I done got better. I started running, walking, run, walk, run, walk, and then I started running almost half a mile without stopping. Then a mile without stopping, then two miles…

His laugh rolled through his description of his experiences running before pausing as he says more straightforwardly but still smiling, "and I haven't picked up a cigarette yet." He then explained how his use of an ipod and spirituality inform his running practices:

That's why you see me with the headphones, I used to put on my music, my inspirational music that I used to listen to, to put me in a nice frame of mind. Once I put that on, they say all feelings will pass. In the bible when they gettin' ready to tell a story you know, it started off, "it come to pass," alright. So like feelings come and then they pass. So when the cigarette come and I listen to the music it takes my mind away from smoking and I come back in. But I couldn't shake that feeling of something in my hand, you know.

"Holding it… this is something… I'm used to having a cigarette in my hand," he says motioning like the filter end of a cigarette rests between his middle and index finger. "Then I just kept on going," he smiled delightfully.

Although Back On My Feet staff members prefer that every member run without headphones in order to interact with those around and better maintain awareness on the streets, Warren wears them much of his time with the group, though not always. Warren and I spoke formally in June 2011, almost two months after Back On My Feet celebrated the two-year anniversary of his not picking up a cigarette. As

of summer 2013 he achieved four years without a cigarette, although he runs less regularly as an alumnus of Back On My Feet than he did before. His laugh, for those who know him within the group, seems to maintain a presence whether or not he is running: he is missed when he is not there, and the morning atmosphere livens up when he is.

Reed and Relationships

Amongst those who expressed the important social components Back On My Feet contributed to their lives was Reed. He and I first spent time together beyond an introduction on a run together one summer morning in 2010. Half way through that run, Reed and I ran together for the remaining mile and a half. Feeling sluggish that day, I was looking for a slower pace to finish the run and Reed was moving a bit slower than typical owed to his aging knees.

I asked him as we matched our pace, "How are the knees today?"

He looked at me, pointed to the two braces he wore around his knees, and told me that he "just can't move like he used to."

At age 59 Reed does not move as smoothly as he did when he played football and baseball in high school. Like Warren, Reed experienced physical pain in order to run with Back On My Feet. In contrast to the pain in Warren's lungs that would subside as he continued running, the discomfort caused by Reed's knees would not subside over time and was likely increase with wear and tear. When we met he had been living in The House for approximately one year and had been sober for over a year for the first time in more than 35 years. For those 35 years, Reed was addicted to

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heroine and cocaine and he described himself as a "functioning addict" for much of that time. While he maintained his job for much of that time, the wear and tear of using, both narcotics and the associated lifestyle, caught up to him. After eventually losing his job he turned to his cousin, a local drug dealer, with whom he exchanged various services for cocaine, heroine, and the necessities for living. He fathered six children that in 2010 were in their 20s and 30s, though he never married. As a result of his drug use he was not part of his children's lives. Having lost his mother when he was a child, he told me that he "felt a loss for connecting and believing in people," which included family. Living in The House and confronting his addiction was part of his effort to create change in his own life.

We held our two conversations together, first in an empty counselor's office at The House and the second next to the playground outside The House. Reed said that although he was never a runner, "it seemed like something [he] could do." After joining Back On My Feet, he explained that participation contributed to him making "the right choices." Unsure if I understood, I asked him if he could explain this further.

> The camaraderie that you have with your co-runners. In cases that you get close to some, and a lot closer with some than some others, people have the tendency, especially the ones in your corner, to have the best for you. They say things that prove that they obviously care about you when they say, 'it's gonna be alright, it's gonna get better, you can do this, and I have confidence in your that you can accomplish that,' or whatever the case may be. With that in mind you find yourself where your back is up against the wall you just have

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to remember that there are people in this world that believe, that does give a fuck about you. And the difference between them caring and not, or the difference is, who are you responding to and reaching out to them? Having them available to you is one thing, but utilizing… that's the whole thing in a nutshell. So, it's networking, it's a resource, it's a plus, networking and that's just it for example where you find yourself in a program like I've been in here where it hasn't gotten to the point where I've been faced with a scenario where it's been overwhelming with me. I've witnessed guys willing to share, but this is the perfect time, especially when you have the ability to pick up the phone, and call somebody and say, 'look man, you're not gonna believe this, but I'm thinking about using and I'm some place I haven't been, and I'm calling because I'm just, I'm on a path, I don't know what to do.' And hopefully those people will guide you, coax you out of that position. And the main thing that I've found about being in this program [at The House] is that you can't do this by yourself, you really have to reach out and really trust in other people.

Like numerous Residents, the relationships, community, and team atmosphere became important to Reed. His social experiences, as a network that above all else was essential for developing care and trust, contributed toward his re-connecting with and believing in people. As the summer of 2010, Reed reconnected and is "making strides" with five of his six children with whom he was previous alienated. His oldest daughter, age 39, found him through a private investigator:

She's at that age where she's a mother. She just takes me by the hand and has a way of speaking. She just says to me, in a real soft voice, in so many different ways, 'just relax dad, I'm here for you, and we're together. I don't care what you did in your past, I'm just thankful that you're in my life today.' And that's outrageous, it blows my mind. That she's willing to put all that away, I just wasn't there for her in her life, she's willing to put it behind her and just move forward.

Whereas he was largely absent during the earlier part of his children's lives, he now characterized his relationship with his two oldest daughters as one wherein "we're raising each other."

By chance I ran into Reed at The House one day in the summer of 2012. As I was leaving The House he was on his way in, stopping by to see a few friends living there. He was upbeat and smiling when he told me that he was well, said he was living independently and continuing to build his relationships with his children, and provided me his new address.

Malcolm and Solidarity

Malcolm, in his early 50s, is an African-American man who was born and grew up in East Baltimore, which he described as a "negative environment" in the sense that he was consistently exposed to substance abuse, gambling, and stealing. Moving in and out of juvenile facilities and later prison "didn't faze" him as he "thought it was a way of life." He joined the military to get out of Baltimore and advanced to the level of an E-5 Sergeant. His anger and experimentation with Hash

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and Speed at first, followed later by Cocaine, Coke, and Heroine caught up to him and he was demoted and eventually decided not to re-enlist. Living in Georgia toward the end of his military service he kept a job for five or six years before moving back to Baltimore. There, he held a job for seven years at the University Hospital until drugs took over his life and he was terminated. Diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the VA helped him get into The House rehabilitation facility. Never married, his daughter was 32 and his son 16 as of the summer of 2012.

When we spoke, Malcolm had been at The House for six months. He was one of the more quiet and reserved members of the running group, and I looked forward to speaking with him to learn more about him and his experiences. We met in the common room on the main floor, which serves as a group meeting hall for large group sessions, common space during periods when not in use, and the dining area for the facility. Meeting in the evening when the room was open for use by anyone we spoke amongst approximately 30 others reading, talking, playing games, sitting quietly, or watching television.

When I asked him how he joined Back On My Feet, he said that before arriving at The House he knew about Back On My Feet from Warren, whom he had known from the streets, and that he sought to join the team soon after he arrived. After hearing and speaking about the organization from and with Warren, Edwin, and Stephen, Malcolm spoke with the Back On My Feet during his first month in The House. Initially, however, he stated that his counselor told him to "sit down and just be still for a while… It's gonna come." Frustratingly, he said he had to wait to join for more than two months "but was just doing my exercises back in the hallway,

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lifting weights and stuff." Once his counselor approved him to join he, like other

Resident members, established The House running group with Back On My Feet as a

place to develop relationships and build community.

"It's a community, a community of runners… You know, concerned about

one another, hoping that the best of them come out of every one. It's trying to help

the weakest link, you know what I'm saying?"

Unsure, I asked him what he meant by "trying to help the weakest link"?

Well, someone that you know, someone that don't have the physical ability to

run 2-3 miles. They are there to help them, push them, comfort them along the

way. I mean everyone ain't a top runner but you always have someone there

to motivate that person to drive on. I mean it works. I see it works, you know.

When I asked him if he could describe a time when it worked for him, he did so by

connecting his experiences specifically with other Resident members:

Like I was telling you about my right knee… My right knee feels bad off and

on. Warren and Stephen, they ran with me cause Warren's knee was bad and

Stephen's knee was bad. We ran together and we asked each other how we

doing along the way. At certain points one of us had to stop and we walked

with that person, we ain't leave 'em. We made sure they stay together. We

made it home. We alright, you know. So, I mean it works.

Warren and Malcolm frequently ran together during the mornings and

concluded their morning run by walking for a coffee from the Seven-Eleven a few

blocks from The House. Malcolm discussed Non-Residents in our conversation in

broad strokes as "Non-Residents," rarely specifying individuals—at our interview in

the evening he had forgotten the name of the two women with whom he ran that morning. In contrast, he discussed Back On My Feet staff and Resident members specifically by name. Every Resident discussed the broader social component of Back On My Feet participation, and Malcolm explained how the social aspect of participating with Back On My Feet improved his communication and his development of public, social comfort, although he emphasized the degree to which Back On My Feet provided him security and solidarity within The House by forging or fostering relationships with other Resident runners. They stayed together.

His sense of staying together was an important aspect of Malcolm's youth in Baltimore:

I wouldn't go through spots in Bmore, cause as a kid I wouldn't come through here, but I comes through here now. Cause that's how I was raised. You wouldn't go in certain parts of the city cause you feel as though you wouldn't belong.

I asked him if he went through more parts of the city today: "Yeah, definitely as I've gotten older, grown older. But as a kid we didn't know better. We thought we had to have a friend to run with us. You wouldn't go alone."

During his addiction he experienced a more extreme reticence about being in a variety public spaces compared to his youth and did not venture beyond a confined area:

Going out in public back when I was in my addiction I wouldn't care about the public. I was in a five-block radius, that was my comfort zone. So I had to

build that self-esteem to being comfortable going out in public, meeting people, talking to people.

More comfortable traveling alone now than during his childhood, running provided him a similar sense of solidarity as did sporting participation as a youth. Running with The House group, and specifically developing relationships with the Resident members of Back On My Feet, provided him a strategy for developing solidarity amongst residents of The House and a safe means of traveling through and seeing parts of the city. As of the summer of 2012, Malcolm had been clean for six months at The House and continued his participation with Back On My Feet.

* * * * *

Engaging in running practices challenges homeless stereotypes as lazy, degenerate, immoral, mentally unstable, criminal, or addict (Stern, 1984, Rossi, 1989; Snow & Anderson, 2003; Kusmer, 2002). The notion that those experiencing homelessness or recovering from addiction may not need or are not interested in physical activity rests in part on a normalized assumption about what kinds of people are or can be physically active. Homeless stereotypes create *others* through *difference* from normalized individuals, which contribute to the marginalization of the urban Other by marking them out and away. That *these people* would be disinterested in, or the thought that running is absurd for them, fails to recognize them as people, to consider their lives and identities in context, and themselves as active in the creation of their identities, lives, and worlds. Warren, Reed, and Malcolm illustrate the inaccuracy of the broad, sweeping label of "homeless." Contrary to the perception that running is an activity unsuitable for or desirable to those experiencing

homelessness or in addiction recovery, Resident members of Back On My Feet challenge such perceptions through their participation.

Framing part of this chapter is Borchard's question: "in a culture promoting work and consumption as key sources of self-definition and self-worth, how are those marginal to this system supposed to thrive and feel good about themselves?" (pp. 463-4). With Back On My Feet, the Residents utilize their discretionary time to improve their health, develop relationships with those inside and outside of The House, and create solidarity amongst one another. Residents made decisions to participate in Back On My Feet amongst several others, from the mundane to a return to addiction. Sleeping in was the most common activity Residents suggested they would otherwise be doing, which is not wholly unsurprising considering the group meets at 5:30AM three days per week. Other alternatives include playing cards or chess at The House, doing chores, or watching a television. Jeff, who at the time of our interview was the "Captain" of The House Resident members—responsible for organizing Resident members and communicating with the Back On My Feet staff and organizers—considered Back On My Feet as part of his therapy that importantly disrupted his previous daily behavioral patterns. Chuckling, he said, "My normal pattern was if there was beer available I would be drinking it at 5:30 in the morning. I thought I would find a different avenue, a different direction to take my day." According to him, running is "better than drinking a beer at 5:30 in the morning." Running is *one* option amongst several in which this *can* occur, but one that was important for and meaningful to Residents well beyond the confines of Back On My Feet activities.

My intent here is not to glorify Back On My Feet and its practices, nor romanticize its participants' uses of individual and collective physical activity. To do so would be naive. Rather, I endeavor to demonstrate the ways in which Resident members mobilize their participation consistent with, but also in un-intended ways from, Back On My Feet's intentions, as well as the relationship between their identities and practices with and through Back On My Feet. *The uses of running* narrativized by Residents were ways in which they made choices and decisions for their benefit within the neoliberal urban governance that excludes them from creating and sustaining self-expression and identity within labor and consumption practices. Be that as it may, a prescriptive basis of physical activity as a way forward in the recovery process relies heavily upon disciplining the body and the production of subjectivities suitable for and conducive to neoliberal urban governance.

A Corporeal Agenda

Warren, Reed, and Malcolm demonstrated three of the myriad uses of running for their lives and identities. Although running and participation provided those in various stages of recovery a meaningful and relevant modality for achieving particular goals, Residents' also illustrate the politics of their practices and experiences. The meaning of Back On My Feet, and specifically the practice of running as its primary means of engagement of and for those in recovery, must be contextualized in order to provide a better understanding not just of how specific individuals mobilize participation to meet their own goals, but also of what the

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organization and practice mean more broadly. The organization, its people, and practices cannot be considered disconnected from the context of which they are constitutive and constituted. Loic Wacquant (2002) writes that one of the pitfalls of ethnography, in working under a banner of raw empiricism, can be a failure to link together human beings within broader structures of power. Of empirically raw ethnography, he writes:

> It can get so *close* to its subjects that it ends up parroting their point of view without linking it to the broader system of material and symbolic relations that give it meaning and significance, reducing sociological analysis to the collection and assembly of folk notions and vocabularies of motives. (p. 1523)

Declaring the impossibility of ethnography without theory, he suggests that researchers work self-consciously to integrate theory and ethnography "*at every step in the construction of the object*." Acknowledging that symbolic and material elements are integral for those recovering from homelessness, I suggest that Back On My Feet addressed both. However, it did so in specific ways within the neoliberal urban governance in Baltimore.

Heeding Wacquant, this section politicizes the practices, experiences, and self-narrativizations of Back On My Feet specific to its Resident members. In the following, I demonstrate at least four of the ways in which neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda manifested within the Residents of Back On My Feet to produce neoliberal citizen-subjects: Rewards and opportunities made available through participation; how and in what ways the largely invisible Other was made visible;

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running as a means of corporeal training and discipline; and embodying and performing a neoliberal subjectivity.

Rewards and Opportunities

Recognizing that the issues producing homelessness and those responsible for sustaining it are many, varied, and pervasive, Peter H. Rossi (1989) focuses on poverty as a primary locus. He concludes that homelessness can be misstated as a problem of being without shelter, and instead advocates that homelessness be viewed as an aggravated state of *extreme poverty*. The line between homelessness and having a home can be "fuzzy" (p. 10) at times, as can the line between "extreme poverty and simply being poor." The Residents of Back On My Feet were indeed housed at The House, though many lacked places of residence to call their own, whether rented or owned. Economically, those within The House existed somewhere along a continuum of income from little or none, all under the poverty line. Materially, the organization presented both formal and informal economic or economically sensitive rewards and opportunities through which Residents might "move their lives forward" (2010).

Formally, Back On My Feet offered a companion program to running activities called Next Steps, which provided assistance for "educational and job training opportunities, financial literacy sessions, job partnerships, housing programs, and up to $1,250 in financial assistance" intending to "help move lives forward in a way that is self-sustainable." Financial literacy sessions and job partnerships or opportunities were especially important to Residents. The $1,250 in financial assistance, while seemingly and perhaps rightfully miniscule, was used in a variety of

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ways: toward a down payment on an apartment when Residents prepared to move out of The House; for educational costs or materials; or for necessary transportation. Ben, for example, used the money to purchase a laptop computer as part of his college education. Because the library at the College he was attending closed at a certain times during the week and weekdays his schedule did not allow him to complete some of the work he sought to engage within those hours. Amongst and between his curfew at The House, work hours, and classes, he could not rely on the library to be open. A laptop allowed him to "cut down on a lot of travel time to do work," thus giving him more time to do work, and allow him to "stay up late and work," sometimes "'till 2 o'clock doing papers… Working away."

Informally, Back On My Feet presented Residents with a network of people with and through whom they *might* develop and foster informal rewards and benefits integral in the process of economic recovery. Resident members described the sharing of knowledge and information with Non-Resident members as an informal benefit. Examples of informal benefits Residents learned of through Non-Residents included information on how to work through legal processes, opportunities for part-time and temporary jobs on the advice and support, knowledge about how to apply for particular educational programs, information about where and how to procure a driver's license, and advice about raising and relating to children and family. Reed, in particular, explained how the social capital (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986; Wacquant & Bourdieu, 1992) he developed through his participation facilitated his purchase of a car, which opened for him a range of opportunities and possibilities by increasing his

mobility. In place of taking public transportation, the car allowed him to save time traveling and reduced the stress he experience with public transport.

Initially, Reed intended to buy a used truck from a friend. He discussed this with a Non-Resident, Michael, during a run one morning. In response, Michael offered Reed another avenue through which he might purchase a car, through his friend that was a car dealer. Reed described the process of buying a car through Michael and Michael's friend:

> The guy who I had talked to initially wanted to charge me, take me, purchase a car. But Michael's friend wasn't going to charge me at all. So he talked to his friend about the three of us getting together. So they came, picked me up, and we went out looking for some cars. We did that a couple of times until I ran across something I was interested in. He took care of everything for me. All I had to do was go to the auction, pick the car out, and he told me, "All I want you to do is just give me the insurance information. When you come back to get the car everything will be done. You won't have to do anything." He took care of getting tags, giving insurance information, and he had it inspected for me through his friend. In other words, I paid for it but I would have had to literally go to all these places myself, where he just had it taken to a place through his friend and literally everything was done. He got it done then he called me up and said the car was ready. I went and got it. That's one of the fringe benefits as far as I'm concerned, is having that group who's willing to look past the drugs and everything. I always had cars but it had been over a year or more since I have had a vehicle. It wasn't first on my agenda

but riding that subway and public transportation to go to school every day…

man it can be nerve racking. So I knew eventually I had to get myself some

sort of vehicle. And it's a means for me to find some part-time employment

outside of the boundaries of the city, or whatever the case may be.

Although informal opportunities were not intended to be part of the program,

officially, Back On My Feet staff encouraged interaction and engagement amongst

Residents and Non-Residents. The organization offered a healthy and supportive

environment and social network for those who by and large remain outside of the

traditional economy, a feature of urban environments by Borchard (2010). The

information, knowledge, and opportunities that grew out of such interactions were

frequently recognized as positive and important to and for the program in achieving

its primary goal: for Residents to become independent, self-sufficient members of

society. My question in return asks whether or not this is an appropriate practice

equal for all of those in positions of economic marginality?

Such formal and informal benefits come with conditions. To access the Next

Steps program, Residents must maintain both 90% monthly attendance during

weekday runs and a "good attitude." In a given month, twelve to fourteen weekday

runs took place, which meant Residents could miss only one run per month to

maintain attendance. Should they not attain 90% attendance then they lost the

opportunity to continue accruing money that might contribute to their recovery until

their attendance rate reached back up to 90%. Although informal benefits spill out

beyond the boundaries of Back On My Feet as an organization, they too were

founded upon attendance, which was integral for developing relationships strong

enough in which informal opportunities become possible and available. In brief, material support was stitched together with running, attendance, and good behavior: In order to recover economically, Residents must continue to participate, wherein running is central. Suturing together running and economic recovery implicates power and power relations in both running as a practice in the process of recovery as well as consideration of who has the power to suture together the practice of running to economic recovery.

Here, I want to distinguish between running *to* recover and running *for* recovery. Running *to* recover, wherein the act and practice of running *is* part of the process of recovery in a therapeutic and corporeal sense, but also in a disciplinary sense. Residents demonstrated the ways in which running to recover was important and relevant for their lives and identities, but another aspect to this is how the practice of running constituted a way of disciplining the body according to social norms, values, and codes. In contrast, running *for* recovery, or running as a means of gaining access to the economic forms of recovery necessary for elevating an individual's economic position, considers the meanings produced in association with suturing running to that process. Undoubtedly, *running to recover* and *running for recovery* are interconnected. Their temporary separation, though, more fully enables their recognition and examination. Running to recover, the more disciplinary sense of the two is discussed in the third theme of this section.

Running for recovery links together the means of economic recovery to the practice of running. In this form, running is a way of expressing worthiness and deserving of support and assistance. At the same time academic views of

homelessness became rooted in poverty during the 1980s (Rossi, 1989; Borchard, 2010), popular debates about the degree to which homeless people deserved charitable assistance revolved around innocence and guilt (Snow & Anderson, 1993). The traditional image of the "lazy bum" was "largely supplanted by a stereotype that exaggerates the drug addiction, mental illness, and alleged criminality of the homeless population" (Kusmer, 2002, p. 246). In the 1990s, as social groupings not generally associated with homelessness grew, such as women and children, Hispanic, African-American, and younger people (Shlay, 1994; Kusmer, 2002), a moral framework based on discourses of innocent versus guilty took shape (Borchard, 2010). For example, women and children considered "victims" who were forced into poverty "deserved" assistance, whereas men with personal characteristics or lifestyles contributing to their plight were "guilty" and thus "not deserving" of assistance. In Back On My Feet, running was a way of becoming deserving for those who may have been previously or still are deemed undeserving.

When the Washington, DC Chapter of Back On My Feet opened in 2010, the President of Marriott illustrated how running participation repositions those underserving of assistance to those worthy of opportunities. As part of the celebration of the opening of the new DC Chapter, the Baltimore and Philadelphia Chapters traveled to and ran with the new Chapter. This required an overnight stay, which was facilitated and donated by hotel chain Marriott International, one of Back On My Feet's national sponsors. Covered by CNN, the Chapters of Back On My Feet present in DC were met by the President of Marriott who said anyone on the running team would have the opportunity to get a job with Marriott. To paraphrase Warren, the

Marriott President said they wanted on board anyone who could run with Back On My Feet, get up at 5 o'clock in the morning, and keep between 90 and 100% attendance. Whatever state or hotel, the President would co-sign Back On My Feet Residents' job applications, and he provided his name and number to do so. Seemingly willing to overlook other aspects of a person's work experience, education, or criminal record, the Marriott President intimated that Back On My Feet participation is sufficient enough a foundation for obtaining employment opportunities, a means of social reform, and a way of demonstrating commitment, responsibility, and capability. Or, as Anne Mahlum says, "One rule, no slackers."

Within the regimes of neoliberal urban governance, running for recovery expresses the way in which those in recovery demonstrated their moral fortitude and worth for support and assistance. In place of other, less acceptable choices or practices, running relies upon the approval of behavior deemed acceptable, positive, or beneficial. How then do running and recovery become sutured together? Where and from whom is the ability to suture together running and recovery derived, to position those in need of support and assistance as needing to express their worthiness?

The power to create the connection between running and recovery does not rest within any singular person, entity, institution, or organization. Back On My Feet as an organization and its participants represent the most immediate modalities of power with respect to Residents. If volunteers did not run then the connection would likely weaken. If the organization could not be sustained through corporate sponsorship, individual donation, and staff to run the organization then the connection

would likely weaken. While the volunteers and organization cannot be disconnected from the broader context, the organization and its people were instrumental in shaping the connection between running and recovery as encountered and engaged by Residents. Running and recovery were in part sutured together by the organization's ability to create and sustain that connection through Non-Residents and Residents. Thus, Residents were governed in part by the organization and its participants and vice-versa. However, the dominant force in the relationship between Back On My Feet and Residents lies with the organization.

Governance in the form of providing opportunities for some under certain conditions is attributed not just to the state but also those with the power to create conditions. Bratich et. al (2003) suggest more contemporary governing takes the form of structure wherein the state is de-centralized from the acts and practices of governed. The relationship found within the state, between state as governor and the governed, relies upon administrative, juridical institutions, and other state apparatuses. In contrast to state power, they suggest that governing takes place in innumerable sites through an array of techniques and programs defined as cultural (p. 4). Power and governance are intimately woven together and conceived as fluid, moving across a range of intermediaries. Nikolas Rose (1999a) notes that these various intermediaries, discourses, and practices contribute to and shape peoples' conduct (e.g. decisions, behaviors, judgments, knowledge, vocabulary, etc.). Beyond The State, Back On My Feet is a way of governing the people of Baltimore, specifically here the Residents of Back On My Feet.

Although running does provide a means of economic recovery for some Residents, the power to set forth the conditions of recovery, in this case running, resides predominantly within the organization's rules, regulations, and codes. In place of public welfare, or uniformly available resources for those in recovery at The House or elsewhere, Back On My Feet stitched together running for the material means of recovery. Along with the organization's expectations, those who successfully participate effectively contributed to the meaning of homelessness within neoliberal urban governance. Through the practice of running, the meaning the individual or group experiencing homelessness was rearticulated from immoral and undeserving to moral and deserving of assistance.

The locus of power within the relationship between Residents and Back On My Feet is further expressed in how monies derived from Resident participation were anchored to the agenda of those setting forth those conditions. While educational sessions and job opportunities were available to all Residents maintaining appropriate attendance and attitude, Back On My Feet must approve the use of any of the $1,250 in financial assistance. The basis for decisions communicated to Residents by the staff in Baltimore rested upon select examples, such as a laptop or down payment on housing, or that which they "need." Beyond this, the criteria were unclear for Residents. The Back On My Feet Baltimore staff did not have sole decision-making power in this regard, either. Direct payment of monies used for specific purposes by Residents was decided upon by "corporate," according to the staff. In this process, Baltimore staff made cases for the use of accrued financial assistance, but they, too, received little communication from "corporate" on approving or disapproving

decisions. Those doing the work, doing the running thus do so under conditions set forth by others. Moreover, those conditions and requirements were unclear. Floating norms around what was and was not eligible for funding support allow those with decision-making capabilities to maintain their position of authority, control, and power while dictating opportunities without explanation.

The power to produce the suturing of running to recovery was also woven into in the politics of rendering visible the already rendered invisible urban Other.

The Politics of Visibility

Both material and symbolic elements are integral for those recovering from homelessness, extreme poverty, or addiction. I suggest that Back On My Feet addressed both. Symbolically, the organization and its Non-Residents (Chapter Two), and Residents in this chapter and the next, illuminated some the myriad ways in which Back On My Feet strives to humanize people like the men at The House, around Baltimore, and increasingly across the United States. Challenges to homeless stereotypes, meaningful experiences of both Residents and Non-Residents and their exchanges, opening of urban spaces for further experiences, and the creation of community and relationships all demonstrated positive symbolic exchanges taking shape through Back On My Feet, its practices, and especially the practice of running. However, these symbolic acts and practices cannot be taken at face value or disconnected from power and power relations.

Articulated with meanings of dependency, deviancy, criminality, and immorality (Kusmer, 2002), homeless stereotypes render those experiencing

homelessness invisible as it marks then away and out as inferior. Shipler (2004)

underscores the disregard that the center of the United States populace carries for its

working poor as he unpacks the complexity and interlocking dynamics at issue for

those earning low-wages, of which those experiencing homelessness are some.

Understanding the ways in which "the working poor" (Shipler, 2004), those

experiencing homelessness, and indeed all those on the margins within urban

environments are rendered invisible are key for understanding the (re)production of

inequality. The creation of the marginalized urban Other as invisible enables those

not in those positions to act and live without thinking about those marginalized, much

less conceiving or enacting policy, practices, or changes that seek to ameliorate

iniquitous conditions associated with those positions.

As programs and services emerging within the social problems industry, and

indeed other services create lines of visibility, understanding not just how and the

ways in which those on the margins are made invisible is important, but so too are

attempts to foster visibility and the manner of those processes. Visibility and

invisibility should be considered and taken together. Back On My Feet is a good

exemplar through which to explore the practice and politics of the (in)visibility of

those experiencing homelessness; the organization and its volunteers strive to make

visible the invisible while also contributing to reinscribing the invisibility of others.

Undoubtedly, specifically seeking out and bringing together groups of people

to run that otherwise would likely not encounter one another, Back On My Feet made

visible through positive corporeal encounters the population of the city generally

ignored. The organization and its volunteers did so, however, only on the terms of the

organization itself and its volunteers, and it required of those largely invisible the willingness and physical ability to be made visible. The requirement of that visibility depends upon participation in practices set forth by those with the power to determine acceptable and unacceptable forms of behavior. The practice of running, widely accepted as a white, middle class practice (see: Atkinson, 2007; 2008; Bridel & Rail, 2007; Gimlin, 2010; Smith, 1998; Walton & Butryn, 2006; White, Young, & Gillett, 1995), was intelligible and possibly accepted predominantly because it is already recognized within more socially centered, popular discourses and practices associated with the white middle class. Moreover, running requires an able body.

Back On My Feet sets out to be an inclusive practice for both Residents and Non-Residents. The central practice of running, however, required participants to be able to run. Although running appears at first a simple practice that one might take up, doing so requires an able body. As running was preferred to walking—although walking occurs during times when runners are unable to run due to injury—those who could run by-and-large could not participate. As Ben remarked about the men in The House, "Some of them aren't capable of it, they may have a physical handicap, they may not be able to run." In effect, this creates division between the able bodied and non-able bodied amongst those in recovery. The able bodied individual is able to run as part of the process of recovery. Unintended, this marks out an exclusion manifesting within neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda as it articulates with the aims and intentions of Back On My Feet. Moreover, the bodily practice of running made available to some and not others along the lines of physical ability reinforce the practice of running as a way of demonstrating one deserves assistance. A

(dis)advantage was thus created in separating those unable to run from those who can, which potentially creates a gap in the recovery process between able bodied and non-able bodied individuals by affording opportunities to some and not others on the basis of physical ability.

Without discounting or condemning the actions and behaviors associated with and expressed by the staff and volunteers of Back On My Feet, the manner and mode in which the otherwise obscured urban Other is made visible took shape only through those practices deemed acceptable to the staff and volunteers. Such an agenda included able-bodied individuals capable of participating but inadvertently excludes those unable to run. Articulating running with recovery may actually provide an advantage in the recovery process by providing opportunities on the basis of physical ability. More than a practice in which one is able to choose to participate, the achievement of beginning and continuing to run requires significant bodily commitment, investment, and (self-)discipline. The body, more than just being able, must demonstrate its usefulness and capacity regularly in order to become deserving of assistance in symbolic and material form.

Corporeal Training

Gathering together for regular participation at 5:30AM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with an optional Saturday run at 7:00AM some Resident and Non-Resident members additionally prepare for races of distances ranging from five kilometers to full marathons or beyond. As a practice more generally, and through my experience, the dedicated novice runner spends considerable time,

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energy, and money preparing their body for daily and weekly training in preparation

for racing events. Constantly conscious of what food and drink go into the body, the

pliability of muscles, limbs, and tendons, correct form on changing and uneven

terrain, identifying which gear provides the most comfort and support for completing

runs, the culmination of which results in running a race or event. 'Lacing up one's

shoes,' or daily running, is used to build into the body the capacity to go further, to

move beyond, to push outside of the body's norm and comfort on a regular basis.

Learning to become a distance runner did not come easy for me and is by no means

an easy practice to accomplish. Rather than extinguishing the body's capacity in a fit

of fury and pace over short distance as would a sprinter, the distance runner tries to

establish a steady tempo over great lengths of time and space. This is learned

corporeally: That is, one must listen to one's own body—its rhythm, timing, gait,

pain, strength, stamina, and energy—in order to assess the appropriateness of one

particular tempo over a certain distance.

For Residents, many of whom possess varying levels of health, reactivating

their bodies was no easy task. All Resident members of Back On My Feet discussed

their experiences with pain, difficult, and bodily trails in learning to run and daily

running practices. Choosing to overcome his smoking habit, Warren's health

improved as he continued to run. For others, though, continuing to run posed

problems for health at the same time running became a way of demonstrating both a

deservedness of assistance and self-sufficiency. Ben, in his late 40s, early 50s, related

his body to his age, and Stephen framed his bodily discussion around aches, pains,

and asthma. When I asked Ben about the relationship between his body and running,

he explained, "well it could be bad on our knees if you don't watch how you're runnin'. Real bad on your knees."

Unsure of what he meant, I asked him to elaborate.

Well, when you're running, the shock of your foot hitting the ground transfers right into your knee. I've seen all different styles of running. I've seen people running on their toes, running on their heels, flatfooted. It all depends on your particular style. It may affect them different. The way I run, I usually run on my heels first. I try to land on my heel and then I try to push off with my toe, 'cause that seems to be the best way for me. If I try to run another way I'll probably end up getting pain in my knee. It can definitely take a toll on you. Especially my age, it's getting up there too. Age is a big factor.

Stephen described his body in terms of pain as a good feeling: "It's hard on the bones. They don't rush you to run through hurt but the running feels good. Some times after you run for a while aches and pains feels good."

I then asked him, "Does it?"

He explained, "Yeah, it does. It really feels good to me after I run for a period time. You know what, I say I'll work for the pain, I deserve that. That is a good feeling that you've earned."

One of the physical elements Stephen negotiated and pushed through while running was his asthma: "You know, sometimes when I run I gotta asthma problem. You know, I be huffin' and puffin' but I go boy, I can go… Deep, deep, deep down inside you feel like you're running in the Olympics."

Residents, in disciplining their bodies to learn and sustain running activities, considered learning to run part of their therapy and recovery. Stephen extended the notion of using running as a mechanism contributing to his recovery, one that was his responsibility:

> Recovery at The House, it's not their responsibility [the counselors], that's my responsibility to recover. I gotta man up, I gotta man up. You can't depend on someone else to do your work for you. Somebody's not gonna show up and give you a pot of gold. Know what, the pot of gold is there for you to get, but you got to go get it. You got to go get it.

Ben captured the sentiment of running as a disciplinary practice when he described Back On My Feet as an organization in his broadest terms: "It teaches self-discipline and self-reliance and things like that."

It is precisely this mantra that Back On My Feet brings to bear on its participants in order to foster a mentality of self-sufficiency. In this sense, running *is* again pedagogy, a technology for creating appropriate subjects within neoliberal urban governance. For Non-Residents, this pedagogical practice reinforced understandings about how to go about addressing social inequality, through a different kind of voluntarism. This effectively obscured alternative approaches. For Residents, the result is both different and related.

An effect of running with Back On My Feet is not a repressed subject, but a disciplined subject (Foucault, 1977; 1978), a repetitiously forged and normalized neoliberal subject that learns to take care of one's self (see Rail & Harvey, 1995; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Maguire, 2002). Discipline trains bodies in relation to a

"whole intermediary cluster of relations" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139), thus "fabricating individual bodies into social order" (Markula, 2006, p. 73). Foucault maintained that disciplinary power

> centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its
> capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness
> and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls,
> all this was ensure by the procedures of power that characterized the
> *disciplines*: an *anatomo-politics of the human body*. (Foucault, 1978, p. 139)

Reed captured succinctly the way running and physicality contributed to creating a citizen-subject that can move forward through self-discipline to take care of one's self despite contextual conditions: Back On My Feet "has let me know that through physical endurement, through mental discipline, that it doesn't really matter how you are, you can get some things done. Cause since I've been running I do felt a lot better about myself and my outlook."

Running as Neoliberal Subject Performance

Residents' integration of running as a "good" practice consistent with "positive" behaviors in place of *negative* or addictive behaviors through their engagement with Back On My Feet demonstrated how neoliberalism's corporeal agenda creates and achieves fitting subjects through the bodily discipline associated with running. In conjunction with the stitching of rewards and opportunities to the practice running—which effectively sanctions running as a "good" practice by deeming those in recovery worthy of various forms of support—two discernible

interrelated effects were produced amongst Back On My Feet's Residents that further demonstrate the inculcation of a neoliberal subjectivity: their positioning of Non-Residents as "good people"; and their differentiation from and evaluation of those within The House not participating in Back On My Feet.

Consistently, Resident members understood and described Non-Resident members as "positive" or "good" people who are "doing the right things" in their lives. Reed identified numerous Non-Resident members as "encouraging" or "inspirational"; Malcolm described some as "happy" and "positive" people; and Ben characterized Non-Residents as a "great bunch of people." In their interactions with Non-Residents, Residents discussed experiencing "good karma" or "positive energy" when participating in Back On My Feet activities. Ben juxtaposed the Non-Residents with his experiences in The House:

> some of the guys they are always down, it drains ya. It's good to be around people that have some energy. … Well it's a positive energy. Very positive energy. You can actually feel it when you get near 'em. It's contagious. It's like a feel good pill early in the morning. … At least when I'm done it provides me energy. I'm kinda cranky a little bit until I get warmed up.

When I asked him what he meant by good people, he described Non-Residents in this way: "You know, people doing the right thing. Living their life by the principles. Principles good people live by: Working, paying their bills, that's basically the principles; do unto others as they do unto you. Respect. Basically the principles, that's that." He continued to describe how his engagement with Back On My Feet Non-Residents let him know of the ways in which Resident and Non-

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Resident members were different, and a way for him to model his actions and behaviors:

> Oh they're a great bunch of people. Gotta love 'em. It's like brothers and sisters. Brothers and sisters. It's like a family, a big family. Like I say, you get that assurance, "this is how it's done." You go out and make your way in the world, legally, without using drugs and come in here and run with a bunch of addicts. It's pretty neat. Shows you where you're at. It's good people coming in here working on some karma. It's basically good, you know, good people with good karma.

Within these various expressions, Residents understood Non-Residents as behavioral exemplars of what was and was not appropriate. Running was an appropriate behavior because it communicated a healthy practice wherein one was considered to be self-responsible, one largely based on moral assumptions about the body and achievable by those with the means to do so. Relatedly, Borchard (2010) asks the following question of people's appearances within urban life: "In the postmodern era, to what extent does that economy include and reward people based on their image, and what groups are likely excluded from this economy?" Following the directives of neoliberal healthist discourse, health and wellness constitute private personal troubles as opposed to public concern (Ingham, 1985). In regulating the size and shape of the body (Kirk & Colquhoun, 1989), the body becomes articulated with moral worth and self-responsibility (King, 2003; Silk & Andrews, 2006) through the practice of running. Back On My Feet would seem to offer a response to Borchard (2010) as the organization seeks to engage an excluded group and include and reward

them. Inclusion in this instance required altering one's body and sense of self in the hopes of taking steps forward in the recovery process. Modeling their behavior after those expectations set forth by Back On My Feet and Non-Residents, Residents shift the realization of their own bodies from the unfit, socially irresponsible, and degenerate body to the socially responsible and virtuous.

In addition to identifying Non-Resident members as "good" or "positive" people, Malcolm recognized one or two fellow Residents as positive in a similar way most Residents understood Non-Residents. He talked about how he and Edwin sat and talked with each other, whom he regarded as a "good dude." As someone he could come to if he had a problem, Edwin became a person that Malcolm counted on to speak with in order to develop new ways of responding to problems or concerns, which in the past he would "just act out on." He explained that his self-esteem increased as he continued to interact with "positive people doing positive things." He compared this relatively new kind of interaction with people, both Non-Residents and some Residents, to those from his past as well as other men in The House that did not participate in Back On My Feet. In doing so, he contrasted these new, positive people and those in The House not participating in Back On My Feet.

At the same time that Malcolm experienced Back On My Feet as a way to build solidarity and safety with and amongst fellow men staying at The House, Back On My Feet and the practice of running became a way for Residents to differentiate themselves from other men in The House. When I spoke with the lead counselor in The House, Ryan, I asked him how some men came to join and some did not.

Initially he said, "They don't want to."

To which I responded, "That's it?"

He expanded, saying, "I don't know. I think the 5 o'clock thing has a lot to do with it. That's a hell of a commitment, man. 5 o'clock, I never get up at 5 o'clock and start exercising. Even when I play golf early I don't get up that early."

Acknowledging that perhaps the organization was not highlighted enough as an opportunity for the men in The House, he said "we kind of need to promote it a little bit because in a sense it's dropping. Sometimes the guys are uneducated on it. A lot of them make their choice by at least give them the information about it."

He then reiterated, "Why they don't run? They don't want to. I don't know, they don't want to get up. They don't want to, they ain't in shape, they don't feel they can do it."

Seeming to confirm what Ryan considered "a hell of a commitment," Ben and Stephen discussed how some men came to join and some did not. In their experience, they framed their other men in The House who did not join around "laziness." Ben put it this way: "Well, basically it's they don't wanna get involved. Laziness, the ones that don't join are pretty lazy. About all they do is go down [from their sleeping quarters] and eat breakfast, sit around all day."

In addition to recognizing that although some men could not physically run as a result of physical handicap or inability, Ben also commented that for "some it's just laziness, they don't want to."

In contrast to Back On My Feet's Resident members, he described the guys who did participate in Back On My Feet as having a "better attitude and how to handle things around [The House]", and also as "pretty good guys." He considered

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the men who participated in Back On My Feet to be "a little more upbeat than the other guys in [The House]," and also that "it seems like the guys in Back On My Feet work harder than the other guys." Stephen, too, considered the men who do not run with Back On My Feet as "lazy," saying that making someone run when they do not want to run could "contaminate the team."

Running with Back On My Feet was thus simultaneously a "hell of a commitment," above and beyond what most in recovery were willing to engage, and also an experience through which some Residents came to evaluate those not participating on the basis of "laziness." Concomitantly, as Residents came to understand particular behaviors such as running as acceptable and healthy, and as they came to embody those behaviors themselves, they also evaluated other men in The House at least in part with the stigmas attached to homelessness. Considering those who do not run as "lazy" or potentially "contaminates" of the team, Residents embodied and reified assumptions about the urban Other. Paradoxically, some Residents came to understand and evaluate Other Others based on the same assumptions of which they were once and likely still were evaluated within neoliberal urban governance, as unproductive and a burden to society.

In effect, and through their continued participation in Back On My Feet, Residents performed a neoliberal subjectivity. That is to say, running was a way of learning cultural norms about the body, health, and how to care for one's self. Learning to practice and then practicing running, to borrow from and paraphrase Bulter (1990), is a faithful reproduction of the neoliberal urban subject. Residents, in performing this neoliberal urban corporeal subjectivity, too, came to govern

themselves as they govern Others in The House through the norms, practices, and conventions about the body, health, and self-care that they came to embody. Residents became pedagogues.

A Few Steps to Start?

To return to Borchard's (2010) question: in a culture promoting work and consumption as key sources of self-definition and self-worth, how are those marginal to this system supposed to thrive and feel good about themselves?" (463-4). Further, he also asks: "To what extent should such environments be considered rights? Or have we created a group of superfluous, expendable people; and if so, what should they do with themselves?" Run, is the quickest partial answer offered by Back On My Feet. The rise in non-governmental sources of social welfare provision and emergence of creative forms of addressing social welfare issues can provide opportunities through which those on the margin might be better included. Rights of citizenship, according to neoliberal urban governance, are based on the idea that freedom of choice is best served and achieved through the free market, wherein each individual can select and pay for their own needs. Neoliberal discourse in Baltimore City, according to Silk and Andrews (2006) imposes personal responsibility and accountability through governance, thereby relieving city government from civic obligation. In order to enter that marketplace, those on the margins must begin somewhere. Back On My Feet, it would seem, is as good a place as any. It provides: valuable social networks not typically available to those on the margins; opportunities

for improving personal health; rewards and opportunities that contribute to symbolic and material means of recovery; and it creates within its Resident members more positive senses of self. Back On My Feet is one organization through which opportunities are created. As illustrated here, those opportunities carry expectations and conditions intimately bound up in neoliberal techniques of governance and its corporeal agenda.

Even as I strove to represent Resident members in ways that might challenge dominant stigmatizing discourses of homelessness, the power relations within neoliberal urban governance are hierarchical and dominant. Although Residents mobilized their Back On My Feet participation in several ways unique to their lives and identities, neoliberalism's corporeal agenda created docile subjects. In the following chapter, I discuss ways in which power was negotiated, agitated against, and at times refuted by two Residents, Edwin and Matthew. Acknowledging these micro-politics of power is important because Matthew and Edwin illuminate that although power operates hierarchically, it cannot fully dominate, power is always contested and shifting.

CHAPTER FOUR

NEGOTIATING AND REFUSING: NEOLIBERALISM'S *OTHER*

URBAN CORPOREAL AGENDA II

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how Residents perceived and experience their involvement with Back On My Feet. I detailed how they mobilize their participation for the achievement of certain goals in their paths to recovery—be those economic, addictive, mental, or social—unique to their identities and within their discretionary time. I also problematized Back On My Feet as an opportunity or option for Residents within the regimes of neoliberal urban governance, which through *discipline* facilitates a corporeal agenda. In this chapter, I continue to examine Residents' perceptions and experiences of their involvement. Specifically, I aim to illustrate the ways in which two Residents, Edwin and Matthew, negotiated, agitated against, or refused power and power relations within neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda.

Like other Resident members, Edwin and Matthew mobilized their participation as part of their recovery and achievement of goals. Both Edwin and Matthew sought out, created, and strove to maintain in Back On My Feet the relationships created through its practices. Uniquely, however, each illustrated ways

in which neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda could not and does not constitute a fully formed, dominated subject, a docile body in Foucault's terms (1977). Through Edwin and Matthew, this chapter is partly a response to the preceding chapter in its acknowledgement that people, bodies, and the practice of running cannot be guaranteed in advance (Grossberg, 1997b) to facilitate the production of neoliberal subjectivities. Although I wish I could point toward more emancipatory practices or events within neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda, such interruptions, challenges, or ruptures are fleeting and microscopic in comparison to its dominant forces, structures, and processes.

As in Chapter Three, I strove to represent Edwin and Matthew at least partially on their terms, where their voices *do* most of the talking. While recognizing the impossibility of fully representing them, I aimed to do so by presenting them in their words as much as I could, and in a way that demonstrates that they make decisions amongst many within their lives. They too made use of the practice of running for their own purposes.

As such, this chapter takes is shaped and proceeds in the following way. The first section begins with a brief introduction of Edwin, followed by the ways in which he perceived the labels of Resident and Non-Resident to be problematic in relation to his identity and the practices of Back On My Feet as a collective. The second section begins with an introduction of Matthew, followed by the ways in which he disrupts and refuses some of the practices of Back On My Feet, and thus subverts some of the power embedded within his positioning as a Resident. Following the passages of

Edwin and Matthew, I offer an analysis of Matthew and Edwin, together. To conclude, I revisit my last interactions with and knowledge of each of them.

Edwin's Negotiation

Throughout the summer of 2012 Edwin and I ran together and met formally for two interviews and informally two or three times for lunch. During the two meetings we shared in which I audio-recorded our conversations we met at the Barnes & Noble at Inner Harbor, which is part of the Pratt Street Power Plant. The Power Plant is a series of three buildings originally built in the early 1900s as an electrical power plant that now constitutes part of the Inner Harbor's entertainment core. We met on the white, concrete steps at the entrance of the building and walked together through the Barnes & Noble and up to the outside patio of the building and store's top level looking out over the heart of the harbor. After our interviews, we continued our conversations as we walked from the Harbor toward The House and the apartment I rented for the summer of 2012.

Edwin is an African-Baltimorean man in his late 30s, early 40s. He was raised by mother and moved constantly during his K-12 school years, attending twelve different schools for those thirteen years. He has had little trouble finding jobs since completing his military service in the early 1990s, working, for example, at General Motors where he made $27 an hour, and later for other companies such as Aramark and Comcast. His mother and sister live in or immediately near Baltimore, and his daughter was finishing her undergraduate degree as of 2012. When we first met he

had been living at The House for six months, where he was court stipulated to stay in response to his heroin use.

Running To Think

Like all participants with whom I spoke, one of the early questions I asked Edwin was why he joined. He said, "I just wanted to run a couple miles in the mornings to try and get my hypertension under control." Quickly, though, he started to enjoy running to the degree wherein he ran by himself on Back On My Feet's off-days. Training for a half-marathon, which he was working toward at the time of our interactions, was not initially part of his intentions in joining. As he ran individually and collectively, two important features of running became most meaningful for him: the therapeutic use of running as a way to think, and as a way to create and develop friendships. These two themes were shared across several of the Residents with whom I spoke. He described running as therapeutic in the sense that it became way for him to think and reflect on his self. Accordingly, I asked him what he thought about while he ran.

It runs the gamut. I think about family, health—my health because that's important and that's the main reason why I started. I think a lot about the team and people that I'm running with. It helps me plan my day and get my thoughts together. It's part of the preparation for what I have to do that day. A lot of times I'll think of my past; the chaos and confusion that I caused for my family, friends, self. Know what I mean? My thoughts are all over the place, know what I mean? Just the fact that when I'm running I don't have to think

about running, just pick 'em up and put 'em down. So my mind starts to go. And when it goes, it goes. Wherever it goes, I'm with it. Like I said, I don't like to dwell on my past but in a situation where I'm running and thinking about it, I'll go with it. I'll go with it… It's not something that happens as soon as we break but as the run progresses I'll try to lose myself, for lack of a better term. I'll lose myself within my thoughts. And that's what I do

Later, he mentioned again his choice of running as a way to think: "It's when I do my best thinking now. I was telling a friend of mine, it's like when you're out there and you're running and it's nothing but you and the road, you're mind's going. And yeah, it's when I do my best thinking."

Social engagement through Back On My Feet was a common experience amongst Residents, but for Edwin this took on added significance. He explained that despite his numerous positive experiences running individually and with Back On My Feet that, "The main thing that keeps me here is the people." In two ways, Edwin spoke about the social interactions with members, which while positive for his personal development and sense of self, were also fraught with tension. The first connects his experiences to losing people in his life, and the second revolves around his identity woven into and with Back On My Feet. Both illustrate broader tensions within Back On My Feet as its practices play out in the lives of its members, and suggest ways in which Back On My Feet's intentions, while important and beneficial in many ways, are also not as clear cut as they appear.

Throughout Edwin's childhood and adolescence, he expressed that he consistently lost family and friends in his life, predominantly his father leaving his

family and moving around regularly through his childhood and adolescence. He connected the loss of people in his life to Back On My Feet in the sense that getting to know people and then seeing them leave was difficult now, as it was when he was an child and adolescent.

> People have always left me in my life. My dad left when I was one and my sister was two, so my mother had to raise us by herself. Other than that, she might get into another relationship with a gentleman… He'll leave. So you know it's always people in and out… in and out of our lives. Taking it a step further, [my mom] being a single mom, we moved every year, year and a half. I think I went to twelve schools in my thirteen years of schooling counting kindergarten. I was always in a different school every year. So I would meet people, know them for a few months and then… gone. That was my lifestyle all my life. So I hate to take to a person and then they're gone. It's destroyed my life, know what I mean. … It's almost like you build relationships with these teammates and when they leave it's somber. It's tough.

In addition to discussing how growing closer with and losing some members was difficult for him, Edwin also raised concerns about the potential superficiality of his interactions and experiences, as well as the limitation of interaction to Back On My Feet's practices.

> I sometimes wonder to myself, do you guys ever wonder who we really are? You understand what I'm saying? We'll touch on certain things [when we run and talk about our lives] and it's almost like your past isn't important [in the organization], but in some ways I want the team to know who I am. Cause I'm

not The House guy, I just ended up there. There's a lot more to me and I want my teammates to know that.

"Do you get the opportunity to share that?" I asked him in response.

When we're running you can touch on it, but in two to three miles it's not like you can sit down across the table and let a person know who you are and thank them for what they're doing. You get a hug in the morning and a hug after and everybody's off to their destinations. And it's appreciated. I'm grateful because there's a whole lot of other stuff you guys could be doing than coming out and running with us. If it wasn't for the Back On My Feet organization none of us would be running. I wouldn't.

Together, the sense of loss experienced and expressed by Edwin with respect to his Back On My Feet teammates discontinuing their participation and his questioning of the quality of interaction he experienced through Back On My Feet illuminate tensions around Back On My Feet's division between its Resident and Non-Resident members. Edwin confirmed the perceptions of Back On My Feet's Non-Residents, in that the Non-Residents separate Back On My Feet from the context from which it emerges, one of the main themes in Chapter Two. Such a division further calls in to question both the degree to which the organization accomplishes its goals of humanizing the marginalized experiencing homelessness or recovering from addiction.

That Edwin calls these labels and this division into question also expressed his negotiation with the power embedded within those labels, and by extension their logical underpinnings. He continued, throughout our conversations to discuss these

labels and their implications. They took on added significance as he deepened his dislike and discomfort of how he was positioned.

Once a Resident, Always a Resident?

In Edwin's questioning of the relationship between Resident and Non-Resident members throughout our interactions and conversations, he reflected upon the ambiguous nature of this relationship and the tensions surrounding the labeling of members. He specified both in relation to his identity and constitutive of broader societal divisions. Occurring partly and specifically through Back On My Feet with Resident and Non-Resident members, Edwin encountered ambiguity as he sought to foster stronger relationships with Non-Resident members.

> We don't have a lot of contact right now with positive people, for lack of a better term. And so, you know, it's almost like a tease. There are a couple [phone] numbers on the board [at The House for Back On My Feet Resident members to get in touch with The House group's Non-Resident "Cores"] I would call. I would text if I had a question or something because I didn't wanna cross a line, a line that I have no idea what it is. So I'll text and see the person and I'm like, 'is it alright that we do that type of thing?' While the relationships are the major part of the running thing, the teammates, the cammaraderieship, it's only for that hour. It's almost like a tease type of thing. Then you guys are gone until two days later or three days later. Like today is Wednesday and I can't wait till Friday just for that, you know. But at the same time, I totally understand the lines, and you guys have lives, and we're really

not part of them. But at the same time you may hear Non-Residents are going to such and such place and it's like 'wow, I wish I could go' type of thing. That's a reminder that while we run together there's still a separation. And I understand it. I don't like it… but I understand it. …

For every Resident member, Non-Residents represented a group of people with whom interaction provided numerous and varied positive engagements and benefits. For Edwin, distinctively, those relationships were symbolic in ways other members did not overtly express. Although other members benefited from interactions with Non-Residents in terms of the social capital they provided, positive interactions and experiences, or time and space outside The House, Edwin sought out in Non-Residents relationships in of themselves that he could continue to build upon. As such, the ambiguity around what was and not appropriate between members benefitted, troubled, and delimited his ability to do so.

Some expectations of Back On My Feet members were made explicitly and implicitly clear by guidelines and expectations, while other lines between members were less clear. For example, Back On My Feet staff made clear that it was inappropriate to have an alcoholic drink with a Resident member. Not talking about alcohol or illicit substances or behavior, or using foul language during runs or in the presence of Resident members are examples of implicit guidelines. Violation of explicit or implicit expectations could produce a comment from a team leader or member suggesting that behavior was inappropriate. If extreme enough, inappropriate behaviors could warrant formal responses, such a meeting with Back On My Feet organizers about one's involvement or expulsion from the organization at the

extreme. Such broad parameters provided considerable, ambiguous middle space in which Edwin enjoyed flexibility but also found limiting. In the ambiguity of Resident and Non-Resident relationships, Edwin fostered relationships with Non-Residents through meeting and speaking with organizers on a regular basis and meeting with Non-Residents outside of official Back On My Feet functions (indeed, he and I met for lunch on a friendly, casual basis) without putting his involvement with Back On My Feet into question or doubt. However, the extent to which those relationships could flourish was always cast in a cloud of uncertainty. Were Edwin to push those boundaries too far he would encounter push back from organizers jeopardizing his involvement with Back On My Feet. This line, however unclear, remains tacitly clear in some ways: He could not go for a drink with members, meet with Non-Residents at Non-Resident-only functions, and nor could he develop an intimate relationship with a Non-Resident. The ambiguity between Residents and Non-Residents provided flexibility but set up parameters of rigidity that effectively maintained difference and distance between.

Less ambiguous and at the heart of the difference between Back On My Feet members, as Edwin expressed, was the labeling of its members as Resident and Non-Resident. The discursive manifestation of difference expressed through these rhetorical devices undoubtedly introduced and positioned Back On My Feet members in either/or terms, effectively dividing one from the other. Within the schema of the organization, Edwin acknowledged his designation as a Resident, although he sought to distance that designation from his identity. He explained that although he does not sense overt, differential treatment, the label and associated behaviors of the

organization and its members constantly reminded him of the difference.

Even for the time when I go down to the Back On My Feet office and talk to the [staff] down there, even with the interns, to every body on the team, it's nothing but positive, you know what I mean. I feel like part of the team. I feel Resident, Non-Resident goes out the window. It's just the reality of it that says, 'you know, you're part of the team, but slash…' because it's always the Residents, da da da da, and the Non-Residents this, that, and the other. And when you have a team, it's always a team thing. There's no 'I' in team and the team is one, da da, but there's a separation there. It's made me conscious or self-conscious but it's there, for me.

While running, he experienced the group as a team and teammate. However, in those moments wherein the group was not running he experienced a differentiation reminding him of his differential status:

There are rules and regulations for the Residents and Non-Residents. We can call it what we wanna call it but the fact still remains that we're two different parts of a whole. I don't know if that makes sense? We're a team but we're two different part of a team. I feel just as much a part of the team when we're running. When we stop running, that's where difference comes in.

During periods where Residents were rewarded through incentives or acknowledged for maintaining attendance or achieving certain running mileage markers, Edwin explained how Residents were distinguished within the group. That distinction manifested not just in the reward system, which while intending well marked out members differently, but also in everyday practices of the group, as he

discussed:

> When we circle up there are things that you know, the Residents, we need to
> be addressed, or there's some information that has to come to us through a
> Non-Resident in the circle. For [the Non-Residents], they have to refer to us
> as something, and we are Residents. I mean, I don't know what they can use
> instead, or call us that doesn't separate us. Cause there is a separation whether
> I like it or not… there is a separation there. I keep saying that I don't wanna
> feel like part of a project… I'm part of a project.

The experience of being marked out through every day practices reminded Edwin regularly of the division between Residents and Non-Residents. He explained further how his residence at The House, Back On My Feet's designation, Back On My Feet's fleeting duration, and the division between Back On My Feet and other parts of Non-Residents' lives made him feel this constituted him as "part of a project":

> Nobody has made me feel that way or referred to me as that, it's just the way I
> look at it. I am a resident of The House. I am referred to as a Resident. You
> guys come from wherever you come from and you run with me in the morning
> and that's how I look at it. Good, bad, or indifferent. I'm not saying it's a bad
> thing, I'm just saying that's how I look at it as part of that project. It's part of
> this project.

Although feeling at times as part of a project, Edwin expressed uncertainty about how impactive and meaningful the designation of Resident was to and for him. In this tension, Edwin's identity and his status as Resident collided:

> Some days it is a problem, some days it's not. I'm one of the guys from The

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House that you run with. I'm not Edwin, one of the guys you run with. And it's true. But I just want to be one of the teammates. It's not by anybody's doing, it's just some days you have to pull back and remind yourself that you are a project.

Through his own reminding, he sought to distance himself from his status as Resident by regarding it as temporary and by seeking experiences and recognition beyond Back On My Feet's labeling of him. In this, he expressed that although the difference between Residents and Non-Residents was present, he thought of the distinction as temporary:

Am I a Resident? Yeah, I'm a Resident. Am I part of the team? Yeah, I'm part of the team. Is there a difference? Yeah, there's difference. Am I made to feel that way? No, not at all. It's just the reality of it. It's set up to help us and I'm one of the people it's set up to help. At this point in my life that's where I am and I've accepted that. I'm not gonna be at The House forever. So it's temporary.

Despite his effort at viewing his involvement with Back On My Feet labeled as a Resident as temporary, and thus marked out as different and as part of a project, his negotiation of his status as Resident was left unresolved. Edwin questioned whether or not he or anyone else involved with Back On My Feet as a Resident could become more than or move beyond that designation in his succinct statement, "maybe it's once a Resident always a Resident regardless of where you are in life."

Like Edwin, Matthew did not take his participation with Back On My Feet for granted. Differently, though, while Edwin engaged in Back On My Feet's practices to

the degree that he was widely considered a model Resident member, Matthew chose to disrupt some of the practices of Back On My Feet in his re-modulation of running practices and refusing the few material benefits for which he was eligible. In the next theme, I present a brief introduction to Matthew, followed by two passages that illustrate his disruption and refutation. Following this next section, I offer an analysis of Matthew and Edwin, together.

Matthew's Refusal

One Saturday morning in April 2010, Matthew and I met and ran together with all of Back On My Feet Baltimore's five groups—on occasion, all groups were brought together for larger collective runs, often including 100 to 150 people. We arranged during the week prior to run together and sit for a recorded interview afterward. Matthew is a white American man in his mid 40s, originally from New York City. He is approximately 6'4" and 250lbs, an avid reader of books and local papers, loves baseball, is well informed about contemporary political happenings, stays engaged in Baltimore events and experiences, and speaks with a mix of seriousness and dry humor. Although he attended Catholic schools and was raised in a Catholic family, he no longer practices a religion. In line with his working class sensibilities, he works as a carpenter. After a car wreck caused by a drunk driver killed his girlfriend and her sister, he has kept people, and especially women, at a distance for fear of being hurt again. When we met Matthew had been living at The House for two years and sought to make the transition out of The House to

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independent living within the coming months.

Melting Blubber

As we sat for our interview at a small park in East Baltimore fresh off of our morning run together, Matthew smoked two or three cigarettes. Amongst the list of questions I intended to ask of everyone, I was especially interested in learning more about his running attire. After completing one of my first runs with Back On My Feet —one month before our interview—Matthew's attire was noticeably different from everyone else's. A group of 25 of us were returning from our run to the half-circle drive in front of the small building next to The House to stretch followed by our regular circling up to conclude the day together by putting our hands in and shouting the cheer for the day, "The House!" After the stretch and cheer, Matthew removed his hat and unleashed the heat and steam into the cool morning air that had been imprisoned between his slowly balding, shiny scalp and embedded within the knit hat. He proceeded to wring it out like a used wash-cloth at the end of a shower; by twisting the navy fabric from end to end he wrenched out the sweat once and then folded the hat over and did so again. Each time, liquid quickly trickled initially from the hat and his clenched fingers around it followed by a few late drops. A small puddle formed underneath his hat. Shaking loose and then unfurling the hat, he carried it in his hand back inside the front doors of The House.

In the spring, runners typically begin wearing lighter weight clothing—such as lighter fabric long-sleeve shirts or short-sleeve shirts, and shorter tights or shorts replace long running tights—as a result of the warmer weather beginning to seep into

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Baltimore. In contrast, and as I would learn over the next few months, Matthew changed little about his clothing choices throughout the course of the entire year and corresponding weather changes. I asked him how he chose what he wore, to which he responded that when picking out his clothes the night before in preparation for a morning run that he set out "pretty much the same old, same old." During winter months he might wear a long-sleeve, cotton shirt for an added layer underneath his nylon suit, and in the summer a short-sleeve, cotton shirt. Throughout the entire year he wore his hat.

Matthew's clothing choice, in contrast to other Residents and Non-Residents, was intended to raise his body temperature. He explained that he chose "Anything that is gonna raise my body temperature to the point where the oil is separated from the body." His nylon sweatsuit "dries quickly and there's not that much aroma," and he continued, "I wear the same thing every time. Yeah, the only thing different is the socks and t-shirt."

I responded while chuckling, "Well at least you're changing your socks!"

"Right, right… I run to sweat! I'm trying to melt blubber," he said happily and seriously.

For him, inducing sweat simultaneously became a sign of personal achievement and an indicator of improving physical health. Matthew recalled his run the previous weekend:

Last Saturday I ran with Rich and we did the Charles Street run and it was four miles. In my mind I'm cursing him a blue streak as we're going up that frickin' hill, but then when we finally get to the fire-house and I've had five

minutes to catch my breath, it is the natural, it's the euphoria, the accomplishment. I mean it's Saturday morning, it's 9 O'Clock, the rest of the weekend's been a *success*. I just ran four miles. I'm pleasantly soaked in sweat. How many other people, or what percentage of the population of Baltimore can say that 'I've just run four miles'; no matter what happens the rest of the weekend it's been a success as far as I'm concerned from a cardiovascular standpoint. You know. I really gave it a hard workout.

While understanding that running improved his physical health, Matthew quickly distanced himself from associating too closely with the Non-Resident members and their accompanying health-conscious lifestyle choices: "I'm noticing that of the civilians, the Non-Residents, a lot of them are college educated. They're in college right now or they're college educated. They're definitely health-minded. They suffer from above average intelligence."

Consciously, Matthew sought to subvert some of the practices of Back On My Feet. In his desire to produce copious amounts of sweat, Matthew did follow the normative behaviors one would expect of a runner. His mockery of Non-Residents, too, suggested he aimed to distance himself from some of the practices associated with Back On My Feet and the Non-Residents. By engaging in these practices, Matthew subverted some of the healthist, assumptions about running, bodily maintenance, and expressions of moral worth, though not all. In other ways, Matthew agitated against some of the logics underpinning Back On My Feet's practices by refusing the opportunities offered to him through the Next Steps program and

preferring to maintain his engagement with Back On My Feet in more strictly social terms.

Fishing in Inner Harbor

In the weeks following our interview and throughout the remainder of that summer, we ran together four or five times. He greeted me the same way almost every day whether we ran together or not, "Pulitzer! Publish that paper yet? I want to read it." My reply remained the same for quite some time, "not yet, but I'm working on it."

Matthew's speech and tone were frequent sources of laughter but they were also concern for some. I found his dry, direct, sarcastic, and ironic humor enjoyable and fairly honest, but at times offensive, which infused his daily demeanor with the group and during our conversations. Humor pervaded his explanation of reasons for running with Back On My Feet. He recognized and made use of running for pursuing health and physical benefits similarly to other Residents (e.g. weight loss, improved cardiovascular health) but also distinctly (e.g. sweating profusely). Like Edwin, the social benefits of participation were imperative for Matthew. Distinctively, he characterized the social benefits of Back On My Feet participation in at least three ways: in comparison to individually based running, through escape from the house, and both of which were paramount over opportunities presented to him through Next Steps.

Although the practice of running can be achieved individually, when I asked Matthew about running individually he said doing so did not appeal to him: "Oh,

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please. Please, there's no *incentive*! There's no incentive." It is "bordering on *sadomasochism* but it's also extremely motivational." The Non-Resident members he cracked, "have undergone a CIA sponsored, psychological class. They've spent at least a week at *The Farm* in Langley Virginia. There's no doubt in my mind, there's no doubt in my mind." When running he balances between a sadomasochistic experience and a sense of achievement while being buoyed by Non-Resident members: "When I'm five steps from suffering a major myocardial infarction, I hear just one sentence of encouragement and I'm able to do it."

As we continued discussing the social aspects of his participation, he took on a more solemn tone when speaking about the relationship Back On My Feet participation held for him to The House and the recovery program. With an air of melancholy he discussed running as a way to escape The House, a fantasy:

> Cause [The House] ain't always peaches and cream ya know… There's people that have demons, you know. And we are so tightly packed so that if one guy is really off the hook it affects us all mentally. I mean we've had some guys that are just… basket cases. You know, if they can't make it in The House they end up on the sixth floor of the VA, and that's like, you know, the rubber room. They really got spiders in their head, you know. They are in need of more help than is possible at The House. They really need to be shrunk… they need real help, and you don't know that until they make it known whether unconsciously or consciously and there's a cry for help.

> "Are they unable to get that help?" I ask him.

> He responded,

At The House, yeah. They need professional help. They need headshrinkers. They need psychologist, psychiatrists, therapists, medication, you know. They're crying out for help, and that's not what The House is about. The House is about helping semi-responsible people that don't have bats in their belfry. It's not a cure-all. It's the launching pad and if you don't have all the parts to achieve lift off, they gotta pop the hood and tinker.

Back On My Feet participation for Matthew became a fantasy in so far as he was able to socialize, engage in physical activity, and escape at times the tense, congested, and trying atmosphere in The House.

It's hard to run by yourself. You want to stop, you don't have the incentive. There's much more incentive when you're running with a buddy. It's just like when you were in the Boy Scouts. You weren't supposed to go swimming by yourself, you had to have a buddy to go swimming. It's common sense. But it's been taken a step higher when you run with somebody. You need a rest, you rest, you pip. You know, you shoot the breeze, you catch your breath when your resting, and then you run again. And then it's like you almost don't wanna come back to the house. You really don't, and that's reality. Running for lack of a better term, it's fantasy.

Matthew described coming back to The House, at times, like "crashing back into reality."

Suggesting further the importance of and meaningfulness of participating with Back On My Feet for its social components and mild health benefits, Matthew eschewed the opportunities presented to him through the Next Steps program. When

asked repeatedly about joining the Next Steps program by Jenn—who was the full-time Back On My Feet staff member coordinating and organizing Next Steps—Matthew refused to take part.

He spoke candidly about his outlook on Next Steps.

Of course, you know, one of the stipulations is if you keep up 90% attendance you are eligible for some things. I am totally ignorant of what these things are because I really don't care. I mean some of these guys are voracious in their appetite to set these goals so they can get… I mean there's actually financial rewards. I could give a *flying fuck about them*, I swear to god. But some of these guys you're dealing with, they're dope fiends that just, you know, they're going through the motions. I just like breaking a *frickin' sweat*. Jenn! Jenn has tried two or three times to extol the virtues or the benefits of keeping up the attendance: 'You're eligible for this in five months, you're eligible for that if you stick to runs.' I just look at her and say, 'Jenn, you're really wasting your breath. I'm working. I don't really need the money, it's great. If it ever comes to the point where I have to have a sit down with you, I will. But I don't foresee that. I just like getting together with you guys and I like breaking a sweat

He continued, "I told Jenn that if someone was going to throw some money at me I'd want a Bass boat." While laughing I said, "I don't think that's on the list!"

Unflinching, dry, and straight-faced, Matthew said, "She really wasn't sure if that was under the umbrella of necessities."

Concluding his thought, he remarked, "You know if I caught three fish in the Inner Harbor, the ratings would be through the roof! The *Mayor* would come out fishing with me, 'you actually caught three fish in the Inner Harbor? *Good God!* How many dead bodies?' … Yeah, we'll edit that out."

Divide and (Try To) Conquer

Old Categories, Emergent Iteration

Without undercutting the meaningful, important, and powerful ways in which Residents make use of Back On My Feet, the labeling of participants as either Resident or Non-Resident elicits constitutive effects contributing to the distance between the normalized, centered, and often valorized group of volunteers and the abnormal, marginalized, and often denigrated people in recovery. The fundamental division between participants, the very identification and categorization of members as Resident or Non-Resident, reifies each grouping's social positioning and reproduces those divisions. Interlinked with neoliberalism's capillary-like governance, the distinction between the groups is notable in relation to Back On My Feet's non-profit status and the practical separation Non-Residents established in their perceptions in relation to its context of emergence (Chapter Two).

Consistent with the perceptions and experiences of Non-Resident's engagement, Edwin called attention to the separation of Back On My Feet from the rest of Non-Residents' lives. The separation of charity and voluntarism from "real

life," or the context out of which they emerge, positions Back On My Feet as sacred, distinct, and divorced from the structures and processes in which it is located, produced, and productive. As Wagner (2000) discusses of charity, voluntarism, non-profits, and altruism more generally, the "love affair with the nonprofit continues the emphasis on delivering sentiment outside of major societal power structures—business and government" (p. 88). Wagner suggests business and government constitute major societal power structures, and I would not disagree entirely with his assessment in that business and government constitute two formative loci of power. Back On My Feet's practices call attention to the "much broader sphere of practices in which claims to particular forms of knowledge and authority are invoked in the context of attempting to direct" (Bennett, 2003, p. 61), to quote Foucault, "the conduct of conduct" (1991). Charity, voluntarism, non-profits, and altruism, create meanings and understandings about the nature of contemporary life. That is, they govern. Additionally, the categories manifesting within Back On My Feet are implicated in the processes of neoliberal subject creation.

Privatization and personal responsibility reside firmly within the core of neoliberalism's key assumptions. Lisa Duggan (2003) discusses neoliberalism as a "late twentieth-century incarnation of Liberalism" (p. 3), from which it has derived master terms and categories: Liberalism's master terms of public vs. private, she contends, "*have* remained relatively consistent" (p. 4), as have its master categories, "the *state*, the *economy*, *civil society*, and the *family*." These rhetorical terms and categories, though, are more than descriptive of the "real" world, but rather provide singular minded ways of understanding and organizing collective life. Two effects of

the constitutional organization of social life are: the obscuring of several aspects of life under capitalism, which hides stark inequalities of wealth and power; and also the hegemonic formation of the ideas of Liberalism, thus working to "*create* or *remake* institutions and practices according to their precepts" (p. 5). In governing at a distance from overt business and governmental organizations and practices, voluntarist efforts are further bound to non-political positions.

Dividing Back On My Feet's participants into two distinct categories belies the notion that Back On My Feet is both collective and inclusive because those divisions reproduce societal divisions anchored to Liberalism and neoliberalism. The effect of this double bind—the sacred assumptions about non-profits and public and private rhetorical separation—reproduces assumptions about privatization and personal responsibility. Deriving financial support from non-governmental and non-public sources, Back On My Feet is established as a private, non-profit organization. The organization expresses these two neoliberal precepts through its own rhetorical division between Residents and Non-Residents, thus providing a singular minded way of organizing its practices, and social life more broadly (Duggan, 2003). Non-Resident members are *free* to separate their lives from Back On My Feet as well as themselves from Residents; they owe no responsibility to others, they are responsible to and for themselves. In doing so, they govern their teammates, Resident and Non-Resident alike, through the rhetorical and bodily conduct of personal responsibility and self-sufficiency.

However, power does not operate in totally subordinating ways, as Edwin and Matthew perceived and expressed. Through their bodies and bodily practices, Edwin

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and Matthew modulate the hierarchical power operating on and through them. For Edwin, as running became a space within which he contemplated, he not only mobilized the practice of running as a way to work on his self, constituted his identity, or mobilized for his own purposes its practices, as did all Residents (Chapter Three). Edwin did not do so wholesale or uncritically. The degree with which each Resident did or did not engage consciously in the practices of the organization will forever remain muddled and unique to each. Matthew, in contrast to Edwin's referenced model behavior and incorporation of running into his identity, refused in two ways the hierarchical powers that sought to normalize his understanding of and participation in Back On My Feet and its running practices.

An Other Politics of Sweat

The sweat Matthew loved to produce, a sign that his morning was a success, is antithetical to the aims of a *runner*. Preferring to wear sweatpants, sweatshirts, and a knit cap during runs even in the summer to induce sweating comes at the cost of maximizing performance. Sweat is one of the primary ways in which the human body attempts to cool down itself. When active, as the body builds up heat it responds by releasing sweat, which through the process of evaporative cooling allows the skin and body to regulate the body's temperature. The overheating of your body can cause heat exhaustion or stroke, rendering the body inoperable. Sweating is an important bodily function to allow one to continue being active. If the body's temperature were to rise high enough, the effect could be dangerous, though this never occurred in my experience with Matthew. Moreover, the body requires water and other nutrients to

continue to function. Depleting the body of its water and nutritional content through the process of hyper-sweating can cause dehydration. Some of the symptoms of dehydration include: thirst, dry skin, headache, dizziness or lightheadedness. More extreme consequences include: sunken eyes, low blood pressure, rapid heartbeat and breathing, fever, or most seriously, delirium or unconsciousness.

By encasing his body in clothing and effectively trapping sweat preventing the evaporative process, Matthew heated his body. Matthew's body and sweat, as a system of signs immersed within power and power relations (Turner, 2008; Hargreaves & Vertinsky, 2007), suggest ways in which he negotiated and at times refused the constitutive power operating within the practice of running. Sweat in this way communicated that for him Back On My Feet was a "healthy social network… It's socially positive… It's really nice, it really is." Healthy in his sense here is not linked to health but instead to social life and relationships. Through the expression of sweating Matthew demonstrated largely that the social aspects of Back On My Feet supersede the healthist logics underpinning its capacity to govern. The healthist neoliberal assumptions that health can be achieved unproblematically through individual effort and discipline, directed mainly at regulating the size and shape of the body (Kirk & Colquhoun, 1989), which were unpacked more thoroughly in Chapters Two and Three, here do not successfully seep through entirely within and inside Matthew. His preferences to produce sweat and overheat his body secrets at least a partial refutation of power that strove to produce him and his body as docile (Foucault, 1977). His smoking of cigarettes after running while we sat for our interview, too, clearly counteracts a healthist agenda. While he does subscribe to

some of the healthier bodily effects associated with running, such as "melting blubber" or cardiovascular health, he, like Edwin in his discussion of the Resident and Non-Resident rhetorical separation, does not take on entirely the underpinning logics of neoliberalism.

In his negotiation, Edwin developed his subjectivity as both an object of power and individual working within relations of power. Problematizing the foundational division between group members, and indeed the broader distinction between Residents and Non-Residents, Edwin demonstrated that each runner was more than a conduit through which culture, discourse, and governance find and produce expression. Rather, each runner creates during each run and step their own meanings and interpretations; each runner (re)creates themselves in the corporeal space between the forces, practices, and discourses producing subjects and bodily performance (Turner, 2008).

Like other Resident members, Matthew and Edwin's uses of running were not isolated to healthy benefits, nor entirely those conceived by the organization. Benefits were articulated along a range of preferences, tastes, and lifestyles. While Non-Residents and many Residents govern their own bodies through the practice of running, they cannot successfully close off all other formations of power in the constitution of a docile neoliberal subject. The body's indeterminacy is one of its major characteristics; bodily experiences are modulated through cultural practices, processes, and experiences, and thus the body is always "in process" (Hargreaves & Vertinsky, 2007, p. 20). Indeed, the body and embodiment are never neutral, always

operating within the ebb and flow of power between individual bodies and the social body (Frank, 1991).

Matthew's refusal manifest in sweat, though he does subscribe partially but by no means entirely to the healthist regimes of neoliberal urban governance, takes on further significance in how he regards running more generally and the material benefits offered by Back On My Feet through its Next Steps program.

A Bass Boat?

Sardonically, and even though it is easy to disregard because of its triviality, fishing the Inner Harbor reconnects the popular perception of Baltimore expressed by David Harvey's (2001) oft used phrase: Baltimore possesses plenty of rot beneath the glitter. Matthew's sense of humor often mocked the high levels of commitment to running amongst the Non-Residents, which were ways of distinguishing himself from Non-Residents while at the same time recognizing what Harvey references, the iniquitous conditions evident within Baltimore. Through humor, sarcasm, and mockery, which at times can be quite sharp, in several senses of the word, evinced here about the Non-Residents and Baltimore's Inner Harbor, he critiques the self-responsibilitization of neoliberalism's corporeal agenda while at the same time acknowledging Baltimore's pervasive inequalities. In at least two ways Matthew refutes neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda: his rejection of running on an individual basis, and his rejection of the benefits associated with Back On My Feet and the Next Steps program. Through both instances, Matthew modulates power

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seeking to produce his body in accordance with neoliberalism's urban corporeal agenda.

In contrast to Edwin, who incorporated running into his lifestyle outside of Back On My Feet's official practices, Matthew could not tolerate individual running. In this, he refused neoliberalism's individualizing approach to responsibility; running for Matthew was not a way to achieve some notion of moral fortitude, nor a way of achieving individuality. His communally oriented approach and engagement curbs individualist sensibilities. Through sweating, smoking, and refusing individual running practices, Matthew's body could be transgressive, if even in a microscopic way. Duncan (2007) regards the transgressive body as one that "deviates from the social norm and defies social expectations" (p. 60). For example, pierced, tattooed, transgendered, or queered bodies all deviate from normalized assumptions about what the body should *be* and look like. Matthew's body defied the normalized body within Back On My Feet, and as such refused the logics that seek to transform it. Extending his refusal beyond his own body, Matthew also challenged assumptions about those in marginalized positions requiring monetary support by not partaking in the Next Steps program.

One of the aspects of the corporeal agenda expressed within neoliberal governance is the stitching together formal material rewards with running, attendance, and good behavior. Matthew's behavior was largely considered "good," but despite his regular attendance he did not participate in the Next Steps program and therefore did not accrue the financial support and other forms of support the program offered. Doing so, he disrupted the linkage between running and material benefits.

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Undoubtedly, he relied upon Back On My Feet as a way of creating social networks and social capital. He did so on his terms, though, and not on the terms set forth exclusively by Back On My Feet. Far more important for Matthew were community and sociability, two aspects important to him that he felt were lacking inside The House, enough to consider Back On My Feet as an escape from the hectic and restless atmosphere associated in living with 90 or more other men inside one shared-space building.

Hargreaves regards the body as a major site of social struggle (Hargreaves, 2007). Indeed, Matthew embodies that struggle within the fluidity of power. Within the framing of Rose (1999a) and Foucault (1977; 1978; 1982; 1991), power and governing take place across innumerable sites, and of course the body is one site, including individual bodies. It makes sense then to turn to the body and its practices as an expression not solely of power and domination but also in terms of how bodies mediate and transform power and power relations, even on the individual level. Matthew, like many Residents ran at times *to* recover, but unlike many of the Residents he refused to run *for* recovery.

Edwin, unlike Matthew mobilized his participation and running in vastly different ways. Rather than overtly subvert power through his practices, Edwin engaged in the discursive manifestation productive of difference.

Resident and Non-Resident as Racial and Class Metonyms

Edwin asks a serious question, similar to one Borchard (2010) asks about those experiencing homelessness within urban environments. Of the categorization of

people as homeless, Borchard asks: "To what extent have we created a permanent category of people marginal to "our" competitive, capitalist economy?" (p. 464). Duggan's understanding of Liberalism and neoliberalism frame the organization of material and political life "*in terms* of race, gender, and sexuality as well as economic class and nationality, or ethnicity and religion" (p. 3). The master terms, public versus private, and categories, *state*, the *economy*, *civil society*, and the *family*, produce that organization, two effects of which are the obscuring inequalities of wealth and power, and working to recreate institutions, practices, and people according to their precepts. The division between Resident and Non-Resident participants works with a racial logic that effectively recodes race and class hierarchies; the Resident and certainly the homeless, predominantly black and in a form of recovery, and the Non-Resident, predominantly white middle class. Simultaneously, through that recoding those divisions become more palatable, understandable, and divisively non- or a-political. Recoding race and class through Resident and Non-Resident obscures the racial and class inequality pervasive in Baltimore. Furthermore, such divisions impede opportunities to discuss, unpack, or interrogate those hierarchies and inequalities, so they continue to operate and reproduce division.

Although Edwin did not necessarily refer to race and class within our discussion, his questions about the distinction between Resident and Non-Resident demonstrated that these labels may or are indeed be misnomers. For him, these misnomers deny in many ways the self-identification he desired to share with his fellow runners and his intentions of creating a more cohesive collective. He may not be discussing these in racial or economic terms directly, but as they become

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metonyms for race and class, he is interrogates some of the assumptions upon which those metonyms are founded. In his questioning of and contemplation about the labeling of those housed within recovery facilities and volunteers as Resident and Non-Resident, respectively, Edwin expressed Back On My Feet's positioning as a racial project. According to Omi and Winant (1994), race is a powerful concept that "signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies" (p. 55), and a social construction that plays a significant role in structuring and representing the social world.

Through the Resident and Non-Resident recoding of race, Back On My Feet constitutes what Omi & Winant (1994) discuss as a racial project. They characterize race as a dialectically related, socio-historical process that operates at both macro and micro scales. Macro-formations of race occur on structural levels, such as political rulings, law, or social structures, whereas Micro-level racial formations involve common sense and every day experiences. Macro and micro formations of race are interrelated; race is a matter of both "social structure and cultural representation" (56), although one never guarantees the other (Grossberg, 1997b). Racial projects are the "simultaneous interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to recognize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines" (56). To see racial projects within and operating at the level of everyday life, Omi & Winant (1994) suggest that "we have only to examine the many ways in which, often unconsciously, we 'notice' race" (p. 59). One of the ways that Back On My Feet governs racial logics is through its investment in whiteness.

In his writing on race, George Lipsitz (2006) highlights the privilege of whiteness within historical contexts. Racism, in Lipsitz's understanding occurs not from the existence of people of color in the United States but rather from the behaviors of whites. He suggests that law, ideology, and economics have been used to develop and perpetuate an investment in and protection of white privilege. African Americans disproportionately represent homelessness in Baltimore: Whereas the population of Baltimore is approximately 63% black and the state of Maryland is 29%, the homeless population is approximated at 80% to 85% black (Olubi & Akers, 2011). Back On My Feet, however, has a near even, 50/50 representation of whites and blacks. As such, whites disproportionately represent the Resident runners with Back On My Feet with respect to the broader racial makeup of the homeless populace. Further, its volunteer base is almost exclusively white. Of the few resources Back On My Feet does distribute, they are distributed along disproportionate racial lines. Even if the organization could or does transform some lives significantly, and even supposing Back On My Feet was rampantly successful, it would emerge as a privileged way for the white population experiencing homelessness or in recovery to gain access to those resources. Lipsitz (2006) writes that "advantages of whiteness were carved out of other people's disadvantages" (p. xiii). Running, then, may be considered an *exercise* in and of white privilege. Indeed, for as much as Matthew subverts power overtly, he does not engage in the more problematic discursive formation of Resident and Non-Resident differentiation, as does Edwin. In this way, his whiteness prevents him from unpacking race and white privilege in the way that Edwin begins to do so.

The continual investment in whiteness has worked to institutionalize white privilege, from the federal government and business spheres outwards. Within neoliberal urban governance, the investment in whiteness operates not solely from the state but percolates porous social institutions, collectivities, communities, groups and individual bodies. Back On My Feet as as technology of governance extends that investment through every day cultural practices, such as running. When for so long many of us have been living within a Reagan inspired neoliberal agenda it becomes difficult to imagine alternatives. In Roger Keil's (2009) terms, we roll-with-it. In Back On My Feet, we run with it. In terms of race, Back On My Feet produces the illusion of leveling the playing field but fails to do so, ultimately reinvesting in white privilege. Because race is made palatable through Resident and Non-Resident rhetorical separations, the opportunities to challenge those labels, positions, and rhetorical divisions are difficult to recognize, understand, and much less ameliorate. The protection and investment in white privilege not only moves misunderstood, misrecognized, or unacknowledged, but it is unnoticed.

Coda

Matthew

Throughout and following the time I shared with Matthew, he continued to pick up work as a carpenter. After receiving permission to seek work from The House staff, he began with light spring-cleaning and home repairs for a man on the board of directors at The House. During his work on that home he picked up two more jobs

from people walking by. One of the jobs was renovating the attic, turning it from a storage space for Christmas boxes to a room for a married couple's teenage daughter. This was a three-month job because Matthew was "really trickin' it out." Following that job, he had another lined up with another couple's home that included an artist studio. Ideally, he sought a job in the Washington, DC Monument area:

> If I can get one job in the greater Washington Monument area, which is basically central park West as far as I'm concerned, if I can do one job there then word of mouth… Bam. Just to be able to work in that neighborhood, to go to work everyday… 'where you working today?'… 'I'm working on a house, around the Washington monument.' You know, that's a rather prestigious address. We'll see.

Through word of mouth and passing out business cards at community events, such as the Baltimore Flower Mart, he was optimistic and upbeat about finding regular work around the Washington and Baltimore areas. As he gained jobs, employment, and income, The House required him to cover the cost of his stay: "the only stipulation, now that I'm working, is that [The House] asks for $300 bucks a month."

Matthew continued to run with Back On My Feet until he moved on from The House at which time he entered into the ranks of the Back On My Feet Alumni. Few Back On My Feet members with whom I spoke who knew Matthew while he stayed at The House and ran with The House group of Back On My Feet in Baltimore knew much about him in the two years following his completion of The House recovery program, and he no longer ran with Back On My Feet. Although no one gave me specific details about him, when I asked Jenn she mentioned that Back On My Feet

was not in touch with him directly. Through the Back On My Feet alumni gathering once a month Jenn learned about Matthew from other alumni and she believed he was "doing alright" in the sense that as far as she knew he was working and had not encountered *trouble* or returned to a recovery facility.

Edwin

The night before the marathon I trained for and ran with Back On My Feet in mid October, 2012, my first (and only, for now), Edwin and I had not seen each other for about two months—my time, funding, and related ability to stay in Baltimore ran out during the August prior and forced me to return home to Washington, DC while Edwin remained at The House in Baltimore. I traveled back to Baltimore specifically for the marathon that weekend. The night before the 2012 Baltimore Running Festival, Back On My Feet organized for its members a pasta party in support of those participating in the running festivities the following day. The party was held at the Marriott hotel, right in the heart of Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

After finishing dinner, Edwin and I spoke about the marathon approaching the next morning, each of us revealing our trepidation and excitement—for both of us it was our first. He initially planned to run the half-marathon but decided in late August and September to try for the full, unbeknownst to me until that night. As soon as Edwin completed the mileage for and planned to run the full marathon I thought to myself instantly, "let's run it together," seeking support and familiarity in Edwin for what would undoubtedly be a trying and taxing event. But I did not say this to him. I planned all along to run alone because I was not familiar with anyone from Back On

My Feet running the full marathon at the pace for which I trained (about ten minutes per mile). I was excited to learn he would be running the full and we might run together because: I had never run that kind of distance and was uncertain about whether I could truly accomplish the feat; I was nervous about the experience, having no clue what to expect from "race day"; we ran together on a regular basis during weekday runs and one 10-mile race; our pacing was similar and conversation smooth, invested, and honest; and I could count on someone other than myself in case I encountered difficulties. His thoughts were the same as mine. I do not remember and did not record who said it first, but we agreed to run the marathon together. At that moment, it felt as if (and might have been said that) each of us assumed we would be running together, even though for the last two months I did not know he was running the full and he thought I was only running the half. With Cameron and Jay pacing Edwin and I, we completed the full marathon together from start to finish. Sarah, my significant other, joined in with us to run the second 13.1 miles, and Rachel joined in the final mile to celebrate Edwin's accomplishment.

I feel a sadness knowing I was someone who came into Edwin's life for a brief period of time, shared experiences and conversations both inside and outside of Back On My Feet, and then left, too. We maintained E-Mail contact with one another over the next year, but as time drew on we communicated less frequently. I am always optimistic that we will meet for lunch in Baltimore, and I have always sensed a connection with him through our regular conversations at lunch or while running in the mornings, and especially since we together endured and shared the experiences of training for and completing a marathon. As of the summer of 2013, Edwin continued

to stay clean, remained a regular Back On My Feet member, and began school in pursuit of becoming a rehabilitation therapist.

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Matthew and Edwin both demonstrated in different ways negotiations, agitations against, and at times refutations of the practices or social positionings produced in through Back On My Feet. Although in different ways, both elucidate that power does not operate *only* in hierarchical fashion, as much as it might try. Without belittling or diminishing the ways in which Edwin and Matthew modulated power through their own practices, I wish I could point toward more emancipatory or forceful responses. Yet, it remains important to acknowledge the ways in which people subvert dominant power relations in and through their practices, however minute or microscopic.

Based on my experiences with Back On My Feet, and especially Edwin, I strove to reconsider the polemical approach that I initially brought to bear on the project. How could the positive experiences I had with Back On My Feet be reconciled with some of its more problematic elements? Problematically, the Non-Residents express a kind of voluntarist imperative whose practices constitute a pedagogical practice aimed at ameliorating and improving Residents and Non-Residents' behavior. Residents, too, are largely disciplined into a particular neoliberal subject who becomes responsible for himself or herself and encourages others to do so. My own bodily experiences, and the euphoria of completing a marathon with

Edwin, Cameron, and Jay, especially, encouraged me to try and reconcile the positive

and negative elements within my own body and experiences. As such, in the

following chapter, I interrogate my own subjectivity through my understandings,

perceptions, and experience of my involvement with Back On My Feet, its practices,

and people.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUSPECT OF SMILES

In the wake of my own embodied experiences with Back On My Feet, and in an effort to reconcile both positive and negative elements of its operation and practices, this chapter focuses on interrogating my subject position within the context of this project. By piecing together stories from my experience, memory, and notes I write to learn about and make known my own hesitancies, hypocrisies, and uncertainties as expressed through my body as part of my ever-unfolding search of urban social justice and to begin to try and decolonize my inquiry.

I begin with a brief introduction that contextualizes my subject position within the project. I also discuss the performative literatures upon which I draw this methodological approach. In the second section, I proceed to work through my apprehension about charity, voluntarism, and bodily discomfort within those spheres. In the third section, I consider whether running is a way for me to reconcile the tensions I experience in situations of giving, and with Back On My Feet. I offer, in conclusion, a brief poem.

Introduction

"What?!" said John Caughey, one of my mentoring professors. "They do what? Why would the homeless even want to run?"

"I don't know," I replied.

The dominant imagery of the homeless body—a body that Kusmer (2002) noted through its articulation of homeless stereotypes to meanings of dependency, deviancy, and uncleanliness, frames some of the poorest into abstract others, thus marking them away and out as inferior from everyone else—clouds our ability to imagine a runner who is homeless. The contrast between the homeless body and the running body—an expression of status and membership in the white, middle class, which tends, as Atkinson (2008) discussed, to include community bonding within an imagined middle-class community, meritocratic lifestyles, and disposable income— strikes us as odd. These two groups do not go together. What is going on here?

Although both my professor and I were confused, we agreed that our curiosity was a compelling reason to learn more about Back On My Feet—a non-profit organization that partners with addiction and homelessness recovery centers to empower those recovering through the practice of running (Back On My Feet, 2010). Derived from that sense of curiosity, I began volunteering and running with the organization at The House, one of its five locations in Baltimore, MD. For three years, ten months of which I participated on a day-to-day basis, I ran with The House group. This essay delves into, reflects upon, and unpacks that curiosity. What is curious about this group? And why was I curious to learn more about it? Responses to

these questions may seem obvious, especially the former, but in my experience, neither was clear. Neither *is* clear.

The following experiences and narratives take shape within and upon the urban streets of Baltimore, MD. They are scenes from my dissertation research, wherein I explore and work through what I am calling neoliberalism's urban, corporeal agenda. The project explores how bodies are sought out for incorporation into and service to the logics of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006). Back On My Feet is one non-profit organization through which this agenda might be read. The goal of the project is essentially to examine the inequities of the late-capitalist, urban city by looking at the experiences, self-narrativizations, and interactions amongst the organization, its leaders, volunteers and those whom Back On My Feet aims to serve, as well as my own. Baltimore represents the built testament to a three-decade transformation effectively refashioning its form and function from primarily focusing on managing the welfare of its citizenry to becoming preoccupied with the entrepreneurial restructuring of the city as a motor of private capital accumulation (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2001; MacLeod, 2002; Silk, 2007, Silk & Andrews, 2006). Within this shift, philanthropic, non-profit, and voluntarist contributions of private citizens and organizations attempt to fill gaps in social welfare and service provision created by the largely uncritical adoption of neoliberal techniques of governance (Rose, 2001; Ong, 2006). By refashioning urban space intended for the promotion of consumptive based capital accumulation, responsibility for social welfare provision and access shifted from public, governmental sources to individual, communal, local, and entrepreneurial modalities.

Back On My Feet, therefore, embodies both the novel ways in which city inhabitants generate new ways of being together, new forms of collective life (Latham & McCormach, 2010), as well as the adoption of non-governmental entities and private-public partnerships attracting business inspired, creative, and entrepreneurial solutions to social welfare issues.

I experienced with The House group an explicit, daily agenda to break down physical and social barriers amongst and between people. Two distinct but related everyday practices focus upon, mobilize, and mark the bodies of participants in attempt to foster a loosely knit collective that at present I cannot honestly offer a coherent or singular label: primarily the practice of running, and secondarily the ritualized symbolic and physical interactions of hugging, smiling, and 'circling up'. It is these two bodily practices that I work through based on my experience with the organization, doing so without taking them for granted and also critically examining while performing them.

I seek a kind of relational writing that emphasizes the connection between readers and myself, enacting as it describes (Denzin, 2003; Bochner, 2000). This writing takes my body as a source of knowledge, comprised of impressions and interpretive meanings (Madison, 2012; Richardson, 2000). Writing from and through my body, I work through my interviews, and field notes, experiences, notes, and memories. I write to explode the boundary between those within my research and myself, to place myself firmly within our co-constructed realities. Doing so, I work through two interrelated embodied tensions: first, my bodily discomfort with charity and voluntarism; and second, my relationship to the practice of running and my own

(running) body. I detail, in particular, how these tensions problematize the desire to help others, challenge my sense of self, and challenge my own politics, all while trying not to undercut the positive effects of the organization, its people, and its practices. Piecing together our stories by writing through my body, I write to learn (Ellis, 2000), to make known my flesh and blood (Bochner, 2000) hesitancies, hypocrisies, and uncertainties. I write through my body in search of social justice and to decolonize my inquiry.

Of Daily Hugs, Smiles, and Circles…

5:19am. I stagger out my front door to meet the group. A reasonably healthy individual by contemporary bio-medical standards, though always a bit skinny according to socio-cultural-masculine-corporeal scripts, my legs are still sluggish from a weekend 12-mile run in preparation for the marathon I hope to complete. Now mid-summer, the heat and humidity in Baltimore are palpable, even this early in the morning. After months of fieldwork, reading, and writing, I am still trying to wrap my head around what is going on with this practice of *running with the homeless*. What does the word "homeless" do? Is this a charity and non-profit organization? A volunteer organization? Is it a community? A running club? A recovery program? I thought that by now I would have a clear understanding of the group, its people, and their relationships to Baltimore and U.S. approaches to poverty, suffering, and recovery. Instead, I become simultaneously more aware and confused. The more I seem to note, write, read, learn, and speak, the more I seem to realize how much I do

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not know and will never know: This is specific to Back On My Feet, human beings, knowledge and its production, and myself. Two categories of people, conceived of by Back On My Feet, will greet me: *Non-residents*, or volunteers; and *Residents*, or those in recovery. They tell me how little I know, and my body tells me how I avoid knowing.

5.26. I slow to a walk as I turn the street corner and check my watch. I walk around the corner to see eleven or twelve bodies forming a circle in an empty parking lot. Inside, three or four people are walking around the circle, hugging everyone one-by-one. Not averse to, but not desiring hugs, I never go inside and around the circle. I join the human ring between two people. "Morning." says a woman in an even tone on my right. "Morning," I respond. Bethany—a Non-Resident, pale white, five and a half feet tall, skinny, early 30s, a doctor at the hospital less than a mile away, wearing an old race t-shirt and dark blue shorts—opens her arms and we hug briefly. All arms and shoulders, no chest or torso touching, she's a quick hugger. I like that. "Hey man," says Edwin to the right of her—a Resident, African-American, one or two inches over six feet, 190 pounds give or take, early 40s, orange Nikes and a white t-shirt. I muster a "hey," but am not quite awake yet. Our arms wrap all the way around each other as I rock forward slightly onto my toes in an effort to get my chin above his shoulder. I step back to the other side of Bethany so they can continue their conversation. I feel as though I've interrupted. Someone I have not met before is now on my left, hugging Ben—a Resident, white, late 40s early 50s, five foot eight, balding, unshaven, wearing running shorts and a lightweight t-shirt. "Morning!" he shouts to the woman, grinning and upbeat. How does he have so much energy right

now? He lets go of her and steps in front of me, the next-in-circle person due for a hug. "Morning!" he says with the same jubilation. "Morning, man!" I respond, surprised I suddenly have a bit more energy. I move slowly through our chest-to-chest hug and he's patted my back three times and started to step back before I realize it. He moves quickly to the next person, Bethany, with another, "Morning!" The woman on my left, a Non-Resident, looks a little unsure of what to make of what just happened. She must be new. "Good morning," she says to me smiling, and I step forward to hug her saying, "morning." Quickly, her arms go underneath mine and wrap straight up to my shoulders, no back, no torso. "Been before?" I ask. "This is my third time, I'm still figuring it out." Smiling, I say "me too," while chuckling to myself. "You get used to it," I tell her. "I'm Anne," she says. "I'm Bryan. Welcome back." Everyone is so damn nice. I once heard Grant Farred remark that saccharine should be a sin. This morning I agree with him. At other times, it feels like a warm blanket I cannot myself put on. I put my feet together and bend forward to stretch my hamstrings, and to carve out a space for myself.

Rachel, our team leader, begins stepping inward, opens her arms and gently grabs the shoulders and necks of the two people next to her with a wide smile. Caught off guard, I step forward quickly to get back into the circle with everyone else. Two arms come toward me, one from each side. Oh right, I gotta put my arms around them, too. I reach my arm around Anne's shoulders on my left and Bethany's back on my right. Their arms reach across my back and neck, resting steadily. My hands close in loose fists, I do not let much more than my wrists connect with the shoulder on my left and mid-back on my right. "Okay guys, are we waiting for anyone else?" Many

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heads shake no in response. She congratulates Jeff on reaching 100 miles the previous week and everyone claps for him, and then she mentions a run and two social events coming up. "Anything else?" she asks. No one says anything. "Okay," she reacts, "Who wants to run what today? We have 2, 3, and 4-mile loops." Three people raise their hands for the 4-miler, two or three for the 2-miler, and the rest of us default to the 3-miler.

That settled, Rachel begins speaking, "God…" and 20 or so people create a chorus… "grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." While everyone utters the opening portion of *Serenity Prayer*, I hear some voices more coherently than others. Remaining silent with my head down, I think: Does this help people? If so, how? David Wagner (2000) reminds me that philanthropic virtue and symbols of Christian charity have been "arguably far more successful in absorbing dissent in American than violent repression has" (p. 6). I feel deceitful lifting my eyes up to look at everyone. They all look so serious. I try to shuffle my feet in order to distract myself from my own discomfort. They do not move, feeling somehow detached from my body, which is now motionless, stuck to the concrete and the bodies next to me. It is a strange sensation; detached yet anchored. After the prayer, everyone breaks from the bodily circle. My legs return and we begin walking toward the end of the block approximately 50 feet away. Slowly, our feet pick up speed and all of a sudden we are running. It's quiet at 5:33AM. The street is ours.

* * * * *

It's difficult to have a dig at people whose kindness and compassion seem to guide their every day (inter)actions, as do the runners at Back On My Feet at 5:30 in the morning. Although it may seem banal, I would be remiss if I did not admit that at times I wish I could be as outwardly affectionate as some of the people with whom I met, ran, spoke, and experienced. Overwhelmingly positive, smiling, and energetic characteristics, though, have never suited me. Even when I tried them on, they never stuck. Admittedly, family and friends have *accused* me of rarely smiling, appearing concerned, not *letting go*, nor *just having fun*. In others, all-too-ready warm or compassionate sentiment seems to me a veneer of some undisclosed reality or anti-intellectualism. Charity and voluntarism bring forward in me a tension between compassion and criticality.

Of charity and voluntarism's aim of ameliorating suffering and as methods of socially just change, "I want to believe." To borrow from Grainger (2011), this brings to mind the poster adorning a wall in Fox Mulder's office. Played by David Duchovny, Mulder is an FBI special agent in the *X-Files* television and film series. In the series, Mulder searches for *the truth* about unexplained phenomena and the occult, most often oriented around extra-terrestrial life. "I want to believe" differs from "I believe" in that the one desiring belief knowingly is unable to achieve that belief; it remains elusive. Mulder believes, but he always lacks the necessary *proof* to move belief beyond himself. Thus, that belief is always in tension, up for grabs between Mulder and the social world that does not establish belief *as* truth. I want to believe that charity and voluntarism make a difference beyond the temporary, that they lead

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to structural change and urban social justice. I am not so sure. The trouble is, widely held beliefs about voluntarism and charity uphold them as making a difference.

Seemingly straightforward compassionate endeavors, charity and voluntarism make particularly difficult practices to critique. I agree with Lauren Berlant's (2004) sentiment that there is nothing clear about compassion except that it implies a social relation between spectators and sufferers. I also agree with David Wagner's (2000) sense that compassion and altruism are not always what they seem. He writes that charity should give us pause. Perhaps this is why I have become suspect of smiles, both others and my own. Perhaps that is why I don't smile very often and garner criticism of a perceived corporeal non-affection. A discomfort with charity and voluntarism is lodged within my body. It is expressed through bodily hesitation and cognitive confusion, and anchored in an angst-ridden hyper-awareness of my own presence within social situations of giving. It emanates from a sense that I am merely placing a bandage on a gaping wound or patronizing those "in need." Whether serving or cooking food in a soup kitchen, giving donations to the Salvation Army or the bell-ringing Santa Clause outside the grocery store, or buying a particular product that gives a *portion* of the proceeds to some cause, I experience pause and corporeal discomfort with "giving."

The latter is a particularly problematic, and unfortunately popular, modality of giving, if it should be called that at all. Corporate interests in charitable causes— wherein corporations commoditize emotions such as caring and compassion, and mobilize various causes to promote brands and products for the purposes of profitability—blur the lines between emotions, identity, and consumerism.

Effectively, shopping as a practice of giving relieves consumers of social responsibility in the (mis)guided belief that their purchase has made a difference, repackages issues such as poverty, education, and health care in pursuit of corporate interests and profits, and has little effect on the conditions producing social issues (Einstein, 2012). Even with causes appearing to provide a genuine sense of assistance create problems as they seek to create possibilities. Six years ago, my experience with TOMS Shoes' "one for one" promotion (2013)—that in buying one pair of shoes TOMS would donate a pair to those in need— taught me this. Despite its seemingly altruistic intent in giving away shoes, TOMS promotes a kind of dependency between foreign aid and those people whom that aid intends to help, and it also disrupts local (shoe) economies (Keating, 2013). Such is the ruse of the cultural logic of late-capitalism (Jameson, 1984), capable of shackling emotion to the dominant consumptive order with perceived simplicity and ease, thereby obscuring itself within its false compassion. My body shudders. I feel used.

More direct acts of giving appear to be a more conducive practice for ameliorating suffering than the practice of shopping as giving. Yet, when I donate old clothes or furniture to Goodwill, I smile and say, "you're welcome," when thanked for my donation. Internally, though, I question my actions, telling myself: "Is this really helping? Is this all the effort you can muster? Against the serious inequality present around you and within the U.S., let alone along and across *our* borders or the globe, you managed to donate some clothes. Congratulations. You deserve a badge." My sarcastic self-denigration, assuredly a coping strategy, freezes and confuses my body and mind. It also distances myself from the social realities of injustice and

inequality that create the very need for various forms of giving. In a similar way, as shopping provides a way to appease consumers, my sardonic self-deprecation keeps me from facing up to contemporary social ills, negotiating my own subjectivity, and sense of compassion and criticality.

Here I am. Compassionate and critical don't seem to work together in my body; I cannot be both. My concern is that in seeking to *be* critical or analytical, I am then unable to escape those critiques. I withhold compassion in favor of critique. What do I miss? What would working with both simultaneously enable me to see, feel, and produce? Can I be/do both? The test of a first-rate intelligence, wrote F. Scott Fitzgerald (2008[1936]), is "the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function." The latter part of this statement, to function, is the part I cannot seem to grasp or feel. My morning introductions with Back On My Feet remind me of this. I find myself each morning experiencing the physical manifestation of Leon Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance—"the state of tension that occurs whenever an individual simultaneously holds to cognitions (ideas, attitudes, believes, opinions) that are psychologically inconsistent" (Aronson, 2008, p. 184). My corporeal dissonance creates as it maintains the distinction between compassion and criticality. If only it were as easy as Potter, played by actor Kevin Nealon, suggested to Happy Gilmore, played by Adam Sandler in the farcical film *Happy Gilmore*, about how to negotiate the pressure of playing professional golf:

> You've got to harness in the good energy, block out the bad. Harness...
> energy... block... bad. Feel the flow, feel it. It's circular. Its like a carousel--

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you pay the quarter, you get on the horse. It goes up and down and around.

Circular... circle. With the music, the flow. All good things.

Unfortunately, "the flow" can be a problem in of itself, and recognizing the good

from the bad, as Potter puts it, is not simple. Indeed, to paraphrase Berlant (2004),

there is nothing simple about compassion apart form the desire for us to take it as

simple, as a true expression of human attachment and recognition.

Her response to the tension between analytical seriousness and the desire for

the good to feel simple is to locate compassion's derivation and production from

social training, emergent within historical moments, aesthetic convention, and

occurring within anxious, volatile, surprising, and contradictory scenes. Scholarly

critique and investigation, she writes (2004):

> … do not necessarily or even usually entail nullifying the value of an
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> affirmative phrase or relation of affinity. It is more likely that a project of
>
> critique seeks not to destroy its object but to explain the dynamics of its
>
> optimism and exclusions. If we challenge the affirmative forms of culture, it is
>
> not to call affirmation wrong but to see how it has worked that forms of
>
> progress also and at the same time support destructive practices of social
>
> antagonism. (p. 5)

One needs only to turn to how compassion is mobilized within the Republican Party's

twenty-first century adoption of the phrase, "compassionate conservatism," to

recognize the slippery slope of compassion. For Back On My Feet's various runners

and myself, then, the optimistic yet exclusionary practices of running, the running

body and its social norms, aesthetics, and contextual location are of central import.

Perhaps this is why I thought Back On My Feet might give me a way to begin addressing my discomfort. Was I drawn to participate because the organization promoted a kind of corporeal voluntarism? I had only to *give* my participation in running practices. While the body and physical exertion are undoubtedly present in numerous forms of giving—as a laboring body in building homes, cleaning up neighborhoods, or preparing food—Back On My Feet hinges upon mobilizing bodily labor as an act in of itself, a promising of laboring/running/moving together with others and *others*. "This is no soup kitchen," numerous Non-Residents told me. The idea, I read and heard over and over, is that it's so simple; all you have to do is show up; anyone, and everyone, can run. Might this allow me to *move* through my bodily discomfort? I am not so sure. The body's seeming *naturalness*, I fear, gets in the way, the bodies of others as well as my own. Besides, I am no *real* runner. Am I?

Our Running Bodies

Not unlike what Charlie Chaplin illustrated in his film *Modern Times*, running is a practice of monotony that I fear is too rigid and rationally productive to fully humanize. In the film, Charlie is a worker on an assembly line. Becoming unaware of his surroundings as a result of the repetitiousness of his task, he is pulled into the gears of the large machinery of which he works in front, which symbolizes his dehumanization within the rational productivity focus of capitalism. Similarly to Chaplin, I run not because I particularly enjoy the practice itself, but rather its bodily *effects*: the release of endorphins coursing through my brain and the resulting

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euphoric bodily sensations; the improvement in stamina and physical strength that allows me to not have to worry about having trouble walking up stairs or long walks; having fewer aches and pains as I progress through adulthood; and the lithe body I prefer to a larger body, be that of muscle or fat—at 5'10" I perceive 160 pounds as bordering on the heavy. My body is a product and effect. It's work becomes lost in its disconnection from that which makes a body in motion wonderful; namely its ludic capacity, involving elements of free expression, pleasure, and playful creativity—that which partly makes us human. In this ill-fated pursuit of running effects, my body is a lived thing and a situation as much as it is situated (de Beauvoir, 1989; Woodward, 2009). White. Healthy. Middle-class. Heterosexual. Educated. *Normal*. Was this what Back On My Feet hoped to achieve? Was I a part of this? Am I a runner? Why do I run, then?

My fear and suspicion appeared to have been warranted in running through some of the phrases I heard during runs and in interviews with Back On My Feet's Non-Residents: "we're teaching them self-sufficiency," said one person; "we're getting them committed," said another, which for drug and alcohol addicts in a different context could take on an entirely different meaning; and most notably and troubling that I heard on the first day I ran, "we're giving them a new addiction." The desire of many of these self-referenced "do-gooders" in a city like Baltimore achieved through running, as a modality of giving, is not wholly unsurprising within a neoliberal climate. Altruistic gestures, writes Wagner (2000), are strategic efforts at re-socializing and taming diversions from dominant culture. The reality for runners/volunteers/Non-Residents is that our cultural affinities, preferences, and

commitments to running fit our self-concept. Back On My Feet appears to expand on the practice of "thoning." Samantha King (2003; 2006) demonstrates how marathons, or "thons," represent physical activity-based fundraising and exemplify contemporary articulations of moral worth with both voluntarism and self-responsibility for one's health and bodily maintenance. Running, therefore, represents an acceptable, relevant, and as yet under-utilized way to address poverty and inequality. Within the neoliberal order, secondary and subsidiary institutions, such as charity, non-profit organizations, and social services, mitigate guilt and attempts to express sympathy for the urban other (Wagner, 2000). In place of material social welfare, running offers a therapeutic service aimed at character amelioration. It leaves intact the material and structural contributors to inequality. With Back On My Feet, this corporeally responsibilitized citizenry appears the latest iteration into the domain of the everyday, from the marathon to the daily run. Compassionate? Here I am.

Here's my body, a corporeal volunteer. Foucault (1979) tells me that disciplinary power centers

> … on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines*: an *anatomo-politics of the human body*. (p. 139)

Our bodies become machines. Non-Residents come to represent givers, pedagogues of neoliberalism. Residents become receivers, needing and learning to become productive, self-sufficient, and therefore not a burden to anyone else. Within this

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neoliberal agenda, Residents *must* run to demonstrate moral worth and healthy behavior so as to become *innocent* and *deserving* of assistance against popular, deleterious perceptions. We all are fabricated into a social order (Markula & Pringle, 2006). We are all relegated, deprived of working with and negotiating power and power relations.

But… I desire to believe.

My body lies.

I take it for granted even though I tell myself I *do* something different.

I explain to numerous of my fellow Back On My Feet runners that I run with the group as part of a research project. At this, many exclaimed, "how cool, you're doing work right now!" They ask me about my field or department, to which I say, Kinesiology. Unsure of sure what Kinesiology means, "Kines… what? What is that?" they respond. Trying to keep it simple so as to avoid confusion, I explained it broadly as the study of human movement. "Isn't that the body, like physiology and stuff, for like Physical Therapists?" came replies. To this I said something along the lines of: Kinesiology tends to be understood within such terms, the terms set forth by *hard* science (Andrews, 2008; Ingham, 1997), but that the body *could* and *should* be understood as a social, cultural, and historical entity and construct, as well. I'm seeking to experience in and through our bodies what this group is all about. "Is fieldwork, like in anthropology?" they came back with. "Sure," I conceded, sensing that might be the best place to end that discussion. "Oh, okay, I know what that is, then. Don't you belong in anthropology?" A Kinesiologist in the field did not make sense to them. I did not make sense to them. I might have been "cool" for being able

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to run and work simultaneously, but I was not legitimate. Running while working/researching? Treating the body as socially constructed? These are illegitimate. Similarly to Andrew Grainger (2011), the paranoia of *being* illegitimate crept into my thoughts—beyond knowing that the perception of my illegitimacy was *out there*—as I (re)consider my presence with Back On My Feet, and more broadly within this emerging, critical "intellectual project" called Physical Cultural Studies (Andrews & Giardina, 2008; Silk & Andrews, 2011; Giardina & Newman, 2011).

Can I reclaim my body?

Can we reclaim the bodies of each other?

Running is also a technology of self-care. Warren taught me this.

I am partly wrong about hugs and smiles, too. Malcolm taught me this.

I am partly wrong about running solely as a practice of domination, corporeal discipline, and the molding of neoliberal subjectivities. Matthew and Edwin taught me this.

Warren—a Resident, African-American, early 60s, infectious laugh, all smiles, continuous jokes, skinny, spiritual, open-minded, recovering from drug and alcohol addiction—he tells us about running in the face of death.

"You got hepatitis and your liver enzymes are so high," the doctor tells him.

"Well what?" he responds.

"Well hepatitis is a slow death. If you keep doin' what your doin', you're killing yourself."

"Oh man," he froze me. It really caught my attention. I was in awe on the phone.

…

Going to the doctor, I noticed that the doctor in the office when she told me my liver enzymes were high… I wasn't really listening to that part real hard but I was noticing her. The look she had on her face, like I was death-walking around! Laughing, "I was gonna die!"

Doctor says, "You might live your whole life out before you even feel any symptoms from it. You just gotta stop your behaviors and your drinking and your craziness."

So that's what made me get a grip on my health and everything else.

…

I had to quit smoking. Through Back On My Feet I started running. First day, I was smoking. First day running with them, I almost fell over. I ran down the street and I didn't know… man, my mouth… nothing! I had to go to the hospital and get a physical and everything, get my lungs x-rayed, see what was going on cause I almost fell over when I ran down that street. Three blocks in!

The doctor said, "you still got gas fumes and smoke in your lungs and it's gonna be a while before all that clears up. And it's not stopping you. Just those fumes are in there. Whatever damage that the smoking did, or residue

that's in your lungs, some of it will clear up. It won't all clear up but you're

lungs is gonna get better. It's gonna get better and better if you just keep

running."

And I done got better. I started running, walking, run, walk, run, walk,

and then I started running almost half a mile without stopping. Then a mile

without stopping, then two miles…

Malcolm—a Resident, African-Baltimorean, light brown skin, mid-50s, one

daughter, one son, recovering from cocaine and heroin addiction—he tells us about

smiles and hugs.

"So all that was new to me. So I'm here right now with Back On My

Feet, and ya'll huggin' me. It's a whole new different environment. So just

being around different people, hugging, asking how I'm doing and all like

that; it may not seem much to some people but it really means a lot to me."

…

"That right there… give me a hug… they see you… It's real, you

know what I'm saying. It ain't no fake. I don't feel it's like they doing it just

to be saying they did it. They concerned about how I feel that morning, how I

feel, how things going."

…

"The hug is for me a greeting and to know how everybody doing and

everything, how they feel, a wake up call. To me, it's about how somebody

care about you. Knowing how you doing, happy to see you, you know."

Matthew—a Resident, white skin, tall, mid-40s, slightly heavy, balding, sarcastic and dry humor, loves to sweat—he tells us that running creates community, he's not involved for the potential associated material benefits.

Running individually: "Oh, please. Please, there's no *incentive*! There's no incentive." It is "bordering on *sadomasochism* but it's also extremely motivational."

…

"It's hard to run by yourself. You want to stop, you don't have the incentive. There's much more incentive when you're running with a buddy. It's just like when you were in the Boy Scouts. You weren't supposed to go swimming by yourself, you had to have a buddy to go swimming. It's common sense. But it's been taken a step higher when you run with somebody. You need a rest, you rest, you pip. You know, you shoot the breeze, you catch your breath when your resting, and then you run again. And then it's like you almost don't wanna come back to The House. You really don't, and that's reality. Running for lack of a better term, it's fantasy."

…

"Of course, you know, one of the stipulations is if you keep up 90% attendance you are eligible for some things. I am totally ignorant of what these things are because I really don't care. I mean some of these guys are voracious in their appetite to set these goals so they can get… I mean there's actually financial rewards. I could give a *flying fuck about them*, I swear to god. But

some of these guys you're dealing with, they're dope fiends that just, you know, they're going through the motions. I just like breaking a *frickin' sweat*. Jenn! Jenn [who organizes the incentives for Back On My Feet] has tried two or three times to extol the virtues or the benefits of keeping up the attendance: 'You're eligible for this in five months, you're eligible for that if you stick to runs.' I just look at her and say, 'Jenn, you're really wasting your breath. I'm working. I don't really need the money, it's great. If it ever comes to the point where I have to have a sit down with you, I will. But I don't foresee that. I just like getting together with you guys and I like breaking a sweat.'"

Edwin—a Resident, African-Baltimorean, one or two inches over six feet, 190 pounds give or take, early 40s, recovering from heroin addiction—he tells us of the tension he experiences with Back On My Feet even as he is one of the Baltimore chapter's most dedicated runners.

"There are rules and regulations for the Residents and Non-Residents. We can call it what we wanna call it but the fact still remains that we're two different parts of a whole. I don't know if that makes sense? We're a team, but we're two different part of a team. I feel just as much a part of the team when we're running. When we stop running, that's where difference comes in."

…

"Nobody has made me feel that way or referred to me as that, it's just the way I look at it. I am a Resident of The House. I am referred to as a Resident. You guys come from wherever you come from and you run with me

in the morning and that's how I look at it. Good, bad, or indifferent. I'm not saying it's a bad thing, I'm just saying that's how I look at it as part of that project. It's part of this project."

…

"I don't know what they can use instead, or call us that doesn't separate us. Cause there is a separation whether I like it or not. There is a separation there. I keep saying that I don't wanna feel like part of a project… I'm part of a project."

…

"Some days it is a problem, some days it's not. I'm one of the guys from The House that you run with. I'm not Edwin, one of the guys you run with. And it's true. But I just want to be one of the teammates. It's not by anybody's doing, it's just some days you have to pull back and remind yourself that you are a project."

…

"Am I a Resident? Yeah, I'm a Resident. Am I part of the team? Yeah, I'm part of the team. Is there a difference? Yeah, there's difference. Am I made to feel that way? No, not at all. It's just the reality of it. It's set up to help us and I'm one of the people it's set up to help. At this point in my life that's where I am and I've accepted that. I'm not gonna be at The House forever, so it's temporary."

Back On My Feet humanizes urban *others*, even as it promotes neoliberalism's corporeal agenda. Our running bodies with Back On My Feet, unfortunately, promote the U.S. cult of individualism, which Finley and Diversi (2010) suggest leads to the division between those experiencing homelessness and recovering from various forms of addiction from mainstream society. Here I am. Here we are. All smashed together. Running. While Back On My Feet's participants by and large do not address the multiple narratives of poverty, they do yet create community, however ephemeral, with those that most of us choose not to think about.

Bodies reclaimed? I don't know. I hope so. I'm no judge. I want to believe. It is all these things. At times collective and creative, Back On My Feet running bodies "mark the triumphs which human beings are capable of achieving" (Woodward, 2009, p. 118) while making manifest differences and inequalities. As Toby Miller (2009) notes,

> … the elevation of sport as a transcendent form of life, beyond the social or embodying its best aspects is ridiculous. Conversely, the notion of sport as a technique of the self that is equally a technique of domination makes sense. It suggests a search for the political technology *and* the political economy of popular subjectivity." (p. 190)

In Back On My Feet our bodies manifest in spaces of "pleasure and domination; the imposition of authority from above and the joy of autonomy below" (p. 190). I don't find this terribly comforting. I am overwhelmed by the push and pull of these tensions, others I have yet to explore, and those of which I am not yet aware. In the worst moments, I feel a little bit like the character Hansel in Ben Stiller's satirical

film about male modeling and the fashion world, *Zoolander*. Hansel, one of the male fashion models played by Owen Wilson, described his approach to modeling like this: "I care desperately about what I do. Do I know what product I'm selling? No. Do I know what I'm doing today? No. But I'm here, and I'm gonna give it my best shot." In my best moments, I struggle.

I see those things I did not accomplish, the connections I did not make, the language I am missing to carefully and accurately work through these dilemmas, the people whom I offended, or the difference I did not achieve. I lack compassion for myself. Slowly, in the back of my head, Patricia Hill Collins's voice re-surfaces. To paraphrase: if you're not robbing to survive or feed your family, then you're okay. Keep moving a little bit further down the road. Writing for educators, Maxine Greene (1994) regards struggle as a good thing: "Realizing that no metanarrative can offer guarantees, educators may come together in local spaces and struggle to create humane communities, playful communities, at once beautiful and just." I struggle. It is a sign that the myth of neutrality is under pressure. My struggle and discomfort, then, is the space I try to work in, with, and through. My flesh bears this.

Moving Onward…

I offer the following to bring this chapter to a close:

Can I reclaim my body?

My body lies.

There is no noble Non-Resident.

There is no degenerate Resident.

I lie to myself.

I'm a liar.

Yes, Edwin, you are part of a project.

Multiple.

So am I.

So are we.

Some are temporary.

Some may not be.

I don't want to hide.

One of them is mine.

Control is an illusion.

We have strength.

We are powerful.

Account for you as you account for others.

Have courage.

Be seriously analytical.

Be political.

Speak.

Act.

Run.

Transform all you can.

There is no singular *wisdom* to know the difference.

CONCLUSION

When I began this project I was highly skeptical about Back On My Feet, its practices, and its people. I retained that skepticism for the first year in which I immersed myself within the organization and its people, and my writing in that time expressed this through its polemical approach. My approach to conducting research and writing slowly began to change as I became more bodily and personally invested in the project, the people, and the practice of running. As I further immersed myself within the world of Back On My Feet, the physical distance between myself, the project, and my writing narrowed. I could no longer critique Back On My Feet so heavily without turning around and levying that same critique at myself. I am, after all, a Non-Resident. When I trained for and completed a Marathon with Edwin, Jay, Cameron, and my wife for half of the distance, my perceptions began to change. How could something meaningful to me be so bad? I don't want it to be, I told myself. So, I sought to try and explain this.

Back On My Feet's Residents and Non-Residents expressed that the organization facilitated dialogical relationships. With this I do agree. These, however, cannot be assumed wholly positive inherently in of themselves, to do so without further consideration and contextualization would ignore the power relations in which the organization and its people are embedded. When I made that move, to try and

examine the ways in which Non-Residents, like Residents, were constrained in ways, too, the alternatives to neoliberalism that obscure themselves so well and escape us slowly found their way into my body, thinking, and typing fingers. Keil (2009) regards the way in which neoliberalism achieves this kind of obfuscation as a loss of externality. Back On My Feet demonstrates that we are all constrained in different ways. The way those play out amongst other people, practices, institutions, and structures is where dynamics become complex, and quite fascinating. Without having trained for the marathon and experienced these dynamics at play within my own body and subjectivity, I would not have tried to explain the positive elements of Back On My Feet with the negative critiques. Without that, this project would likely look completely different. Its polemic would be so strong that I would not dare share what I have written with the members of Back On My Feet. I did not want to put them or myself in that position. While some of this could be read as harsh, I would make the same critique of myself in many ways. I aim to be critical but kind, of others and myself. I am delighted to return and share this work, and I hope it contributes to moving *our* lives forward, however minutely.

Embodied Research Acts, Urbanism, Voice, and Giving

I want to acknowledge four important items germane for continued contemplation: embodied research acts, continued interest and focus upon the urban environment, ever-present questions about voice, and the ways in which we give. I

drew upon these as relevant themes through this project. As they were important here, I hope they may be of use to some in similar or other ways.

First, importantly within this project, and testament to the need for embodied research acts (Giardina & Newman, 2011; Hughson, 2008; Markula & Denison, 2005), my initial low-level bodily investment as an observing participant obscured recognition of: both the depth participation can provide and the limits of ethnography; and a need for emancipatory research designs. Only as a member of the group willingly mobilizing my body in practice, feeling and listening to my body and the bodies of others, brought into focus Back On My Feet as a physical cultural practice forging a multiplicitous, contradictory, and productive relationship between knowledge and power.

Running the city, moving through it with its inhabitants, and allowing it and them to seep through bodily senses challenges us to think more critically about the kinds of subjectivities and spaces we create, for whom, and my/our role in that process. In ethnographic research, especially with those people disenfranchised and marginalized, is ethnography enough? Markula and Denison (2005) wrote that ethnography has moved researchers toward feeling, embodied, and vulnerable positions within research acts adding a valuable human dimension while acknowledging the risk of turning research into a confessional. Ethnography for better or worse seems to have emerged as a preferred, highly regarded, and privileged methodology within qualitative research. This project, and specifically my bodily experiences, suggest selected limits of ethnography. I agree with Markula and Denison, and with Aihwa Ong's recognition of ethnography as a key site for

exploring neoliberalism (2006), yet because ethnography does not necessarily or explicitly carry an emancipatory or social justice initiative, and when a project is contextually specific, the methodology does not alone present tools to challenge inequality or injustice. We need different intellectual tools, of which there is more emerging of late. Importantly, we need those tools to be recognized within an institutional culture that for some time has underprivileged or worked against qualitative research.

Second, the urban environment is one place that will continue to be an important site of analysis. As jobs relocate overseas and financial centers and tourist based economies continue to reconstitute the urban core, people will continue to flock to the city. As they do so, space between and around people will grow smaller, and tensions, contradictions, and conflicts will certainly emerge. As such, the urban environment must, and I think it will, continue to be a site researchers turn to in conducting their work on inequality and injustice. Moreover, if neoliberal urban governance continues to invest and exploit bodies, suffrage will be grow, too.

Third, for many within the urban environment, "voice" will also rise as a central concern and issue of researchers and those being marginalized. Amongst so many people in ever shrinking urban spaces, it becomes harder to hear one voice within the cacophony of all. Remaining attentive to who speaks, can and cannot speak, is able and unable to speak, wants and does not want to speak, and how they speak, cannot be overlooked or taken for granted. For those that can speak for others, do so; for those who can provide outlets for others to speak, do so; and for those that can create spaces for others to create spaces, do so. Those relegated to marginalized

and vulnerable positions, whether they be political, social, cultural, or economic, must be heard.

Finally, charitable and voluntarist acts and practices must not be taken for granted, nor smiles, hugs, and circles, either. We must be aware of our own charitable acts and practices. Whether these occur through consumption, donation, or small everyday niceties, and whether they occur by us or for us, do not disregard them hastily or dismissively. They are never what they seem, and they should give us pause (Wagner, 2000).

Limitations of the Project, and Future Directions

Throughout this project I tried to be mindful of my own subject position, continually reflecting upon and analyzing my self in an effort to do so. At times, this was debilitating and defeating. At other times, I brought out some personal bodily tensions for analysis that generated relevant inquiry into my own research practices and self. Notably, in Chapter Five I lay bear some of my own hypocrisies, contradictions, and hesitancies to illustrate the politics of compassion. Such work can be self-indulgent at times, while at others contribute a great deal. If we are brave enough, and we analyze our selves in the same ways we analyze others, such inquiry can be powerful. It must also be done so bravely; in the academy we are often taught not to speak with "I," and the dominance of objective inquiry conditions us to believe that using "I" is not *scientific* and therefore illegitimate within the knowledge industry and the standards it lays out, professes, and governs. In some ways, we put ourselves

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at risk in doing so, both in the eyes of our colleagues, some of whom will evaluate us, and in the eyes of our selves.

In as much as I may or may not have succeeded in contributing to the emerging field of physical cultural studies, and specifically this analysis of the social problems industry, the context of Baltimore, and the people and practices of Back On My Feet, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that my own subject position brings forward some forces, structures, processes, bodies, identities, spaces, people, and practices more than others. Throughout my experiences, and in wrestling with these and other dilemmas, I developed the following four features in which this project was/is limited, undoubtedly a product of my subject position.

First, in my family the military is a source of pride, tension, and anxiety. As I developed more clearly the focus of this project, I wondered if my own experiences with the military—though I myself have never been involved directly—obscured my ability to recognize its prominence within the lives of Back On My Feet's Residents. Many of the Residents were Veterans, and The House was comprised mainly of those who served in the military. Veterans, especially those who fought in Vietnam, comprise a large portion of those in conditions of ill physical and mental health, debilitating addition, extreme poverty, and indeed homelessness. As was pointed out to me, in addition to race and class, the labels of Resident and Non-Resident may also line up with enlisted personnel and officers. Discipline, too, is a consideration between military bodies and those in physical cultural practices in which bodily discipline occurs (where does it not?), as some scholars and friends of mine have illustrated. If, as I suspect it would upon further investigation, this is true, then the

military, its relation to homelessness, neoliberal governance, and the social problems industry, represent complex space in which to work. This, to be sure, deserves attention.

Second, although I was mindful of the class and racial dynamics operating within Baltimore, homelessness, Back On My Feet, the social problems industry, and physical culture more broadly, I was not mindful of the gendered and sexual politics that were undoubtedly also present, or always already there, to paraphrase Derrida and Heidegger. Numerous Residents and Non-Residents expressed a *politics of hugging* and physicality more broadly that could have, perhaps should have, been unpacked. However, on these I did not focus. Perhaps this is because as a white, straight, married man in his early 30s I take for granted my own *normal* status in ways I cannot see or know. I am sure this happens. I am also sure that gendered and sexual politics within the domains relevant to this project, as well as countless others, warrant further attention. Perhaps I will return to this some day. I hope someone does.

Third, the interconnections, articulations, and intersections amongst the themes I have outlined here, as well as those I do address within this project, surely will produce further insight into the complexity of social, political, economic, and cultural life within neoliberal governance. As of yet, I am unsure of the distinction between Articulation, as it emerges from cultural studies, and Intersectionality, as it emerges from race, class, and gender studies in the United States. I know the distinction is important, and I know that working with both concepts can contribute to suggesting ways the other might be thought together to improve them both. However,

I am not yet there. Through these thinking tools, I am sure that prescient insights can be reached and communicated.

Other dominant forces in society, such as nation, family, age, or time, and indeed a more thorough analysis of race, are surely relevant to this project, too, and I acknowledge their importance.

Finally, although I read and engaged with some of the theoretically informed and methodologically focused literatures on performance and performativity in an effort to work toward better understanding myself, my subjectivity, and to strive toward decolonizing my inquiry, I have undoubtedly failed to do so adequately. Indeed, the forces and power permeating throughout contemporary society, and especially those related to neoliberal governance formations, I must admit that I will likely never fully decolonize my inquiry, nor my everyday practices. Continuing to work toward this unachievable aim will remain a constant point of scholarship for those attune to the ethical and moral complexity within peoples' lives in and across time and space. As such, I will continue to seek to better understand myself in attempts to decolonize my inquiry. Moreover, I also seek in the future to develop projects that are not solely *about* people, but that work toward better understanding and working *with* people, especially those marginalized, disenfranchised, and located in social, political, and economic positions of vulnerability. Accordingly, and as a response to my experiences, I seek to move my future research when conducted with people/bodies into domains with specific political and emancipatory agendas that go beyond academic publication, such as service learning (e.g. Angrosino, 2005) or Participatory Action Research (e.g. Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Kemmis & McTaggart,

2005), to name two amongst several. I am wary of others, and indeed in myself, of becoming what Veissiere (2010) calls an academic pimp.

Committed to qualitative, ethical, and careful scholarship, I hope to have the opportunity to work with and develop future methodologies with these considerations at their core. Furthermore, I hope to contribute to the cultivation of critical and analytical thinking, both within and outside of the academy. The tension filled spaces, often uncomfortable, sometimes painful, and at other times physically and cognitively challenging, that is where the *work* needs to be done.

…

Okay, I am going for a run…

APPENDIX A

THEORY

Articulation

One of the more intellectually generous and disciplinarily fluid ideas emanating from Cultural Studies scholarship is Articulation. Not necessarily a theory per say, nor a "method" alone, the term, idea, or concept references a way of "understanding what a cultural study does" (Slack, 1996, p. 112) and also to provide a way of thinking or strategizing for undertaking a cultural study; a way of "contextualizing the object of analysis." Cultural studies, according to Grossberg (1997a) is a "particular way of contextualizing and politicizing intellectual practices" (p. 246). It is "animated by subjectivity and power – how human subjects are formed and how they experience cultural and social space… with a particular focus on gender, race, class, and sexuality in everyday life… under the sign of a commitment to progressive social change" (Miller, 2001, p. 1). To accomplish this a cultural study utilizes an overarching framework, conjunctural-articulation, or conjuncturalism, in its engagement with society as a historically produced, fractured totality comprised of a myriad of social relations, practices, and experiences.

Articulation retains viability across scholarly disciplines, and thus befits cultural studies as "a tendency across disciplines rather than a discipline itself" (Miller, 2001, p. 1). Articulation, meaning links between concepts (Slack, 1996), is not just a connection but also a "process of creating connections" (p. 114), a kind of mapping connections. Hall described articulation as "the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions" (1986, p. 53). Importantly, connections or linkages do not *have to be*; no element necessarily corresponds with any other particular element, and linkages carry no necessary guarantees or correspondences to other elements or linkages. The process and practice of creating links between elements thus provides a pliable concept of power: Hall (1996) recognized power as the ability to bring about the consensual acceptance of a particular significations and meanings. Following cultural studies' understandings and expressions, Articulation is part of the broader framework of Conjunctural-Articulation, which attempts to provide an ephemeral conceptual framing and shaping to concatenated Articulations.

Conjunctural-Articulation, or Conjuncturalism, is "a model or framework of determinateness which attempts to avoid the twin errors of essentialist theories of determination: necessary correspondences and necessary non-correspondences (Grossberg, 1997b, p. 220). The conjuncture, as Grossberg described, is "The meaning, effects, and politics of particular social events, texts, practices, and structures …" (p. 221b). Together, the conjuncture and articulation comprise Conjunctural-Articulation. One of the tasks of this project is to simultaneously locate, analyze, and create the conjuncture in, of, and for Back On My Feet in Baltimore.

The concepts mentioned here thus far represent social forces and ideas I feel pertinent to the project at hand. Through my understanding of the contemporary conjuncture, of which I am in part creating conceptually here, liberalism, neoliberalism, and constructions of the body provide potent conceptual apparatuses to understand Back On My Feet within the contemporary moment.

Biopower, Biopolitics, and Discipline

Michel Foucault (1977; 1978; 2008) explores a shift of power relations from sovereign power to a formation often controversial and misunderstood (Cole, Giardina, & Andrews, 2004). Foucault explored power as manifest among and within discursive relations that are derived from linkages among knowledge, power, and the body, which he frames as political technologies of the body (Foucault, 1977; 1978). Power, in this form "focuses not on the macro level… but on individual people and the web of power relations they live in from day to day" (Webb, McCaugherty, & Doune, 2004, p. 208) and away from the conventional split between base and superstructure as one often found within Marx (Miller, 2009). As Rail and Harvey noted, "Power is not ascribable to a class that would possess it. Rather, power circulates through a network of individuals; it is omnipresent; it is in everyone; it is immanent in the structuralist sense of the term" (1995, p. 166). Moreover, "it is always the body that is at issue—the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission." Foucault's notion of power pivoted on the distinction between power over death and power over life and traversed macro

and micro scales.

Foucault conceptualized what he called biopower, the deployment of the organization and investment in life. That is, a set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power:

> Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars, causing so many men to be killed. (Foucault 1978, 137)
>
> Hence there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of 'bio-power'. (Foucault, 1978, p.140)

This formation of biopower developed along two technological poles, biopolitics and discipline, the first of which is concerned with the political economic administration of life at the level of the population (1978; 2008). Conceiving of societal problems at the level of the population, they can be examined, explained, and rationalized through statistical markers associated with a population, the characteristics of a set of living beings, such as health, hygiene, birthrate, life expectancy, and race (Foucault, 2008; Dean, 2010). Concerned with processes encouraging the optimization of life at the level of the population, biopolitics weaves together the spatial, economic, social, and cultural context (Foucault, 2008).

At the other pole, as biopolitics operate at the level of the population, discipline is inextricably linked through power to the level of the population but works at the level of the individual. Disciplinary power directly involves the body as inscribed site for power and knowledge; as he described it, "the body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (1977, p. 25). Foucault maintained that disciplinary power

> centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its
> capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness
> and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls,
> all this was ensure by the procedures of power that characterized the
> *disciplines*: an *anatomo-politics of the human body*. (Foucault, 1978, p. 139)

Discipline trains individual and collective bodies bodies in relation to and overlapping with biopolitics linked by a "whole intermediary cluster of relations" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139), thus "fabricating individual bodies into social order" (Markula, 2006, p. 73).

Accordingly, a disciplined body is a body that entered a "machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down, and rearranges it" and thus it becomes "subjected, used, transformed, and improved" (p. 136) only to become "more obedient as it becomes more useful." This form of power is unique in that it uses normalization as opposed to repression (Rail & Harvey, 1995). Consistent with the replacement of corporeally exerted punishment by behavior modification and the growth of the penal system, this form of disciplining power establishes bodies as subjects, or "docile

bodies" (Foucault, 1977). That is, "the raw stuff of human beings is not individuals: people *become* individuals through discourses and institutions of culture" (Miller, 2009, p. 181). In this formation, power is not reductive, restrictive, or necessarily negative, but instead produces subjects and effects. Power flows in and through bodies, accumulating into the establishment of practices, events, subjects, and contexts.

APPENDIX B

METHOD

Ethnography

Following Wolcott's (2008) ethnographic suggestions, I employed three

methodological categories emanating from ethnographic inquiry: experiencing,

inquiring, and examining, within which a combination of sampling strategies

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006) deployed their associated methods. *Experiencing*—

comprised of participant observation and casual conversation during organizational

activities, such as runs and socials (Willis, 2000; Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, &

Tincknell, 2004; Wolcott, 2008)—achieved through opportunistic and random

sampling allowed me to take advantage of the presence of different participants at

Back On My Feet gatherings. I actively participated with The House (a pseudonym)

group on a day-to-day basis for ten months over approximately two and a half years.

During these ten months of immersion I participated in official Back On My Feet

functions on two to four days per week. A transient grouping with ephemeral meeting

periods—typically less than an hour and a half each morning—presented fewer

opportunities for in-situ data collection. Although I was unable to immerse myself for

days or weeks on end because the group comes together only briefly, I prolonged my fieldwork practices to accommodate for this limited group access. In total, I participated in approximately 60 runs, which in themselves ranged from as little as thirty minutes to those the length of the marathon I completed in four and a half hours.

Inquiring—semi-structured interviews, conversation while running, and email and phone correspondence—was achieved via opportunistic and random sampling (i.e. requesting interviews and future correspondence with those whom I met) and purposeful and snowball sampling procedures (Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The three Back On My Feet Baltimore organizers and the group leaders of The House group during the time period in which I was a volunteer and participated were selected through purposeful sampling. Additionally, snowball sampling was used for recruiting additional members of The House team, which allowed me to expand my ability to arrange interviews. In total, I conducted 37 semi-structured interviews with 26 people amounting to 2938 minutes, just under 49 hours, of tape time. Each interview ranged from 30 minutes to three hours. Nine of those interviewed were Residents (those in recovery), 16 were Non-Residents (volunteers and Back On My staff), and one was the counseling director of The House. One of the interviews with Non-Residents was conducted with two people at the same time, a husband and wife who participated in the group together; and one interview was conducted with all three of Back On My Feet's organizers. All participants were given pseudonyms.

Examining—analysis of public information and historical and scholarly texts—provided a means to articulate social, cultural, historical, political, and

economic developments with participant experiences. These include Back On My Feet documents such as: email correspondence, Back On My Feet materials, and publicly accessible information related to Back On My Feet such as information from news and internet coverage and sources. In addition to scholarly texts, information about homelessness in Baltimore was collected from the Marylandia archive on the University of Maryland, College Park campus. Utilizing a small sample, I strove to work with rich, detailed, and in-depth data, description (Geertz, 1973).

One of the limitations of this project was my focus upon the people involved with Back On My Feet, and I did not specifically incorporate those Residents not participating with Back On My Feet but living in The House. Part of this decision was based around the strategic decision to make the project more manageable. The other contributing factor to my decision not to seek interviews with non-Back On My Feet participants or counselors at The House was based on my interactions with the lead counselor, Ryan, who was largely supportive of my and the project. When I sought to make connections with the staff at The House, leaving open the possibility of speaking with counselors and those living there not participating in Back On My Feet, Ryan was rightly protective of his staff and the Residents. As a gatekeeper (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), and although he did not overtly indicate I could not interview people further, he was wary of my presence. I surmise that this is to protect an already vulnerable organization and group of people, as well as the counselors. If I were to ask questions that may present different points of view from a staff that strives to be unified in its approach then I am a potential disruption. Without his permission, I decided not to pursue expanding the project beyond Back On My Feet participants.

Although I would have enjoyed and valued speaking further with The House

counselors and those not running, I understand and respect Ryan's position.

Together, experiencing, inquiring, and examining constitute the core of the

ethnographic data collection. Ethnography, however, is more than just a series of data

collection methods. As a way of "seeing," and echoing Lather's flexible approach,

Wolcott (2008) puts forward ethnography as more than just how researchers go about

fieldwork, or its techniques, by considering patterns of socially shared behavior. In its

most traditional sense ethnography is conceived as a *by the numbers* approach that

cloaks ethnographic research in objectivity (Wolcott, 2008). Dismissing its objectivist

roots, Wolcott indicates that ethnography constitutes "more than a method" (p. 71), a

recognition that researchers bring with them into their research particular conceptual

frameworks and subjective sensibilities. Moreover, while recognizing that I bring my

own particularities into this project, it is also openly ideological (Lather, 1986). In

Lather's terms, *methods* are techniques for gathering empirical evidence and

methodology a "theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework that guide a

particular research project" (2004, p. 208), both of which are inextricably linked to

issues of power. Critical research design in Lather's frame directly connects meaning

and the process of its generation, of which academic inquiry is implicated, to broader

structures of social power, control, and history.

Positionality, "Validity," and Reflexivity

One of the key tensions within ethnographic research is the relationship between the researcher and the researched with respective to what kind of knowledge, information, or stories are produced. Paul Willis (2000) acknowledges this tension, writing, "… the ambition, at least [for the researcher], is to tell 'my story' and 'their story' [the participants'] through the fullest conceptual bringing out of 'their story'" (pp. xi-xii). In seeking out participants' experiences and self-narrativizations, ethnographic techniques provided me thinking and practical tools to seek out what I did not understand. In at least three ways, I strove to work within the space between the participants and myself throughout data collection processes, employing constructs of validity, and practicing reflexivity.

The first device I employed was to allow questions to develop in the field (Caughey, 2006). Doing so does not suggest some objective truth to participants' expressions of their experiences, and nor does this overcome these tensions. On the contrary, seeking out others' stories is an attempt to work with these tensions while understanding that they cannot fully be resolved.

Second, I conceptualize validity within this project as *careful*. Fusco (2008) understand qualitative approaches in terms of accuracy. For her, "accurate" is taken not in the sense of 'correct in all details' but rather in terms of sixteenth-century uses of the Latin word *accuratus*, which translates as 'done with care' (New Oxford Dictionary of English, 1998). Patti Lather, again, provides an pertinent discussion for establishing rigor and validity within qualitative research. In her seminal contributions to the field of qualitative inquiry, Lather (1986) contends that research cannot be neutral. Therefore, ideologically open research rests on a commitment of

using research to change the status quo. From this perspective, Lather described four processes for establishing data trustworthiness within the then emerging post-positivist paradigms: triangulation, face validity, catalytic validity, and reflexive subjectivity. Since her early work, these concepts have undergone critical review, expansion, and contestation from the academic community. I incorporate both Lather's initial conceptualizations with augmentations from more recent literature. First, updating Lather's (1986) notion of triangulation—the inclusion of "multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes" to seek out counter-patterns and convergences (p. 67)—Richardson (2000) discusses "crystallization" as an appropriate construct within postmodern methodologies. Within Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) ethnographies, which seek to accomplish research practices both creative and analytical, and in place of a "rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object" (p. 963), Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) propose crystallization as a process of acknowledging unfixed, refracting, and reflecting mode of inquiry. Seeking no single and unified truth, crystallization seeks to recognize how multifarious "texts "validate themselves." In this project, as previously discussed in the theoretical and methodological components of this proposal, combining the multiple data sources suggested by more traditional ethnographic convention with the diverse, supportive, and sometimes contentious theoretical frameworks submits a prismatic post-ethnographically informed understanding toward validation and trust.

Augmenting an approach that mobilizes multiple methods, data sources, and theoretical frameworks, Lather (1986) suggests that "face validity" as another criterion of validity. Face validity, she contends, should be recognized as more

integral to the process of establishing data credibility. Adopting Guba and Lincoln's (1981) and Reason and Rowan's (1981) understanding of member checks, she claims that face validity vitally acknowledges at least the partial interest of research for participant benefit, a central aspect of emancipatory research designs. Within the current project, I employed four modes of face validity amongst participants and myself, when available. First, I distributed or attempted to distribute all transcripts of interviews prior to analysis. This allowed participants to remember what they said, check for errors on my part in the transcription processes, and ensure the data is acceptable for use. Of the 26 people who sat for an interview, I returned 24 transcripts; two Resident members either left The House or were asked to leave between the time of our interview and the completion of transcription, and I was unable to find a forwarding address or contact information for these two people.

Second, as part of the process of working with Back On My Feet organizers, in acts of reciprocity, I wrote narratives of participants' experiences for Back On My Feet's blog. Although this was not as successful as I had hoped in garnering attention or discussion, such reciprocal writing validates the ways in which I strove to represent the people within the organization. Third, upon completion of the dissertation I will share the entire project with the organizers and participants through a presentation. Having shared already one article based on this project, presents an opportunity for validating my work (or not) and promoting conversation about some of the issues and tensions within the project itself and the practices and people of Back On My Feet. All three of these practices speak to the intention and care with which I sought to conduct my body, self, and words throughout this project.

Third and final, one commonly used approach involves reflexive practice, often which takes the form of detailing one's cultural sensibilities with the goal of illuminating how the researcher brings himself or herself to bear on methodological and representational tensions (Caughey, 2006). Writing out one's cultural sensibilities includes detailing how one conceptualizes, frames, and represents a given project in relation to race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender, sexuality, education, music, media, occupation, and sport, to name a few. Acknowledging these traditions rejects notions of objectivity and provides a foundation for beginning to conceptualize my own presence within the project through data collection, analysis, thinking, writing, and representation. Clearly, maintaining awareness of my own presence within this project recognizes the ideologies and experiences that I bring to bear. While this is consistent within some critical modes of qualitative inquiry, and specifically ethnographic projects (Crotty, 1998; Caughey, 2006; Wolcott, 2008), linguistic and postmodern reflexive practice holds the possibility for radically deconstructing and reconstructing inquiring practices. If taken superficially, the relatively simplistic approach of listing off one's various sensibilities clings to notions of positivism and does not extend an analytical gaze back on to the researcher. Preliminarily writing out my own cultural sensibilities I found to be too simplistic and insufficient for my self in response to working with a group of people experiencing a large degree of marginality. Thus, in Chapter Five I turn my analytical gaze back on to myself (Davies, Browne, Gannon, Honan, Laws, Mueller-Rockstroh, & Peterson, 2004) in order to analyze my

involvement, experiences, and understandings of Back On My Feet, its participants, and myself.

Following more recent post-structural qualitative research wherein writing becomes a method of inquiry in of itself (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005), reflexivity involves "turning one's reflexive gaze on discourse—turning language back on itself to see the work it does in constituting the world" (Davies et al., 2004, p. 361). Dedicating a chapter to reflexive practice and the negotiation of my self in relation to theory, literature, and the participants of Back On My Feet allowed me to achieve at least five features. First, I honed in on language and discourse and constitutive forces linking subjectivity, social organization, and power within this project. Second, reflecting upon my methodological decisions and exploring alternative possibilities for knowing my self and others while recognizing these sensibilities as always in process enabled me to humanize both my self and participants. Third, I came to terms with and acknowledged the self-transformation occurring as a result of conducting this project, both as a human being interacting with other people every day and as a researcher learning how to write about and with others. Fourth, I may be prefacing a potential shift in my thinking and writing toward more emancipatory aspirations related to research and practice. Finally, because some of the people/participants within this project are experiencing a significant degree of social marginalization and inequality, it is important to and for me to extensively discuss my relationship to the project and the participants. Writing about those in positions of marginalization, as one who does not share nor experienced that form of marginalization, I run the risk of colonizing for my own purposes the very people about whom this project is focused. I

strove to minimize as much as possible the degree to which this occurs in order to assist in creating a project that, even if it does not explicitly carry emancipatory goals, curtails dominating or subjugating research in practice.

Proceeding with a characteristic of the radically contextualist practice of cultural studies—that no singular theory or method is best, guaranteed, or appropriate in advance (Grossberg, 1997b)—this project mobilizes a diversity of theoretical, methodological, and methodical tools. In contrast to applying one theory or method to an object of study, I have assembled here what I consider the pertinent intellectual tools for understanding the historically constituted, contemporary context specific to homelessness, voluntarism, Back On My Feet as an organization, and Back On My Feet's participants.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions related to Back On My Feet and Exercise

In your own words, can you tell me what Back On My Feet is and how it came to be?
- Who comes to Back On My Feet?
- How do members come to join?
- Are there roles within the organization?
  - How are those established?
- I remember hearing about "steps" in the program. Could you describe:
  - Who they are aimed at,
  - What those steps are,
  - How they are achieved,
  - And their purpose?

What are some of the successes of the Back On My Feet program?

What are some of its problems?

Are there any limitations?

Can you describe the importance of exercise with Back On My Feet?

I have heard many references to "family" from those I have met involved with Back On My Feet. Can you describe this?
- Is Back On My Feet a family?
- What makes it a family?   OR…
- How would you describe Back On My Feet to an outsider?

Questions related to Back On My Feet and its Events

Can you tell me about a time you trained with Back On My Feet?

Can you take me through your routine of a typical…
- Training day, Race day
- Body – what worn, how chose outfit, other bodily adornments, bodily effects/impact

I participated in a group hug and prayer before our run, which I gather is a consistent feature of the program. How did this come to be and what is its purpose?
- What is the prayer?
- Can you discuss the significance of the hug and prayer before a run?
  - As well as the general practice of hugging?

I have observed that the Back On My Feet exercise takes place quite early in the morning and lasts different lengths for different people, what causes the run to occur so early and the varying lengths of exercise?

Are there other events that Back On My Feet is involved with?
- Tell me about your participation in other Back On My Feet events

Questions related to Back On My Feet, Baltimore, and Recovery Facilities

Where did Back On My Feet originate and how did it come to exist in Baltimore?
- Is there a difference in the program here versus its origin city?

During my first run, a discussion about Back On My Feet and the connection to the government in Baltimore was briefly mentioned. Could you describe how Back On My Feet is connected with the Baltimore government and how that came to be?
- What is the significance of this relationship?

The training runs originate at various shelters around the city. How do people come to live in those shelters?
- Can you describe a shelter?
- Is there an expectation that different members of Back On My Feet have different access to the shelters?

In bringing together residents and non-residents, has their ever been friction between residents and non-residents?
- If so, how did it come about?
- If so, how was this handled?

In running/walking through Baltimore, have their ever been a problem?

- If so, how did it come about?
- If so, how was this handled?

APPENDIX D

IRB APPROVAL

Initial Application Approval (2010)

To: Principal Investigator, Dr. David L. Andrews, Kinesiology
Student, Bryan C. Clift, Kinesiology

From: James M. Hagberg
IRB Co-Chair
University of Maryland College Park

Re: IRB Protocol: 10-0618 - "Back on My Feet": An Ethnographic
Inquiry

Approval Date: November 04, 2010

Expiration Date: November 04, 2011

Application: Initial

Review Path: Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office approved your Initial IRB Application. This transaction was approved in accordance with the University's IRB policies and procedures and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. Please reference the above-cited IRB Protocol number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Renewal Application Approval (2011)

> To: Principal Investigator, Dr. David L. Andrews, Kinesiology
> Student, Bryan C. Clift, Kinesiology

> From: James M. Hagberg
> IRB Co-Chair
> University of Maryland College Park

> Re: IRB Protocol: 10-0618 - "Back on My Feet": An Ethnographic
> Inquiry

Approval Date: September 07, 2011

Expiration Date: September 07, 2012

Application: Renewal

Review Path: Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office approved your Renewal IRB Application. This transaction was approved in accordance with the University's IRB policies and procedures and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. Please reference the above-cited IRB Protocol number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Renewal Application Approval (2012)

Please note that University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB has taken the following action on IRBNet:

Project Title: [357160-2] "Back On My Feet": An ethnographic inquiry
Principal Investigator: Bryan Clift

Submission Type: Continuing Review/Progress Report
Date Submitted: October 1, 2012

Action: APPROVED
Effective Date: October 9, 2012
Review Type: Expedited Review

Renewal Application Approval (2013)

Please note that University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) IRB has taken the following action on IRBNet:

Project Title: [357160-3] "Back On My Feet": An ethnographic inquiry
Principal Investigator: Bryan Clift

Submission Type: Continuing Review/Progress Report
Date Submitted: September 28, 2013

Action: APPROVED
Effective Date: October 8, 2013
Review Type: Expedited Review

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