

DISMANTLING BIFURCATING DISCOURSES OF HOMELESSNESS: TOWARD  
AN ONTOLOGY OF LAND/BODY SIMULTANEITY AND RESISTANCE TO THE  
SEVERING VIOLENCE OF *OCCUPATION, SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT*

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By GESSIE STEARNS, BSW

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TITLE: Dismantling Bifurcating Discourses of Homelessness: Toward an ontology of  
Land/Body Simultaneity and Resistance to the Severing Violence of Occupation,  
Settlement and Development

AUTHOR: Gessie Stearns, BSW (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Ameil Joseph

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis inquires into the transformative potentials and possibilities of attending specifically to matters of *occupation, settlement* and *development* for rearticulating discourses and knowledge relations on homelessness to undermine the projects of separation of land from body. Through an historiographical analysis applied to the National Housing Strategy (NHS), Reaching Home (RH), and Housing First (HF), as contemporary Canadian iterations of housing and homelessness policy and practice, this work critically examines representations, attentions, and omissions to understand, engage, and intervene on considerations of the common projects that constitute discourses on homelessness. This analysis found that contemporary understandings communicate and define the homeless body as an identity of lack, novel to the neoliberal contemporary that omit attentions to homelessness as a colonial capitalist process implicated in ongoing, relational, and severed histories of violence. This work also revealed that NHS, RH, and HF operationalize solutions to ending homelessness through abstracted/eugenic ‘expert’ medicalized, liberalized, and market-based systems/taxonomies of worth that reify/silo/silence/erase knowledges through and by embodied projects and discourses of ‘rights’, justice, care, and help. While NHS, RH, and HF claim ‘housing as a right’ and advocate deinstitutionalization via a discourse of ‘choice’ in a market system, this work revealed these discourses to be part of a redeveloped economic institutionalized politics severed, rearticulated, and managed in the social sphere. These findings are considered as a violence of Land/Body bifurcation possible through and by the imposition of claims on body and land in the creation and maintenance of ideal citizen subjects as *settlement*

subjectivities *becoming* self-determined rights holders, consumers, tenants, and citizens placeholders in a commodified market for home. Overall, this project aims to contribute to a resistance of the severing violence of *occupation, settlement, and development* through an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity offering possibilities for transformational intervention into the context from which the ideas of homeless bodies and landscapes emerge.

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## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, public and media attentions to housing and homelessness have focused on the appearances of encampments, some appreciating the impacts of dehumanizing conditions for people living outside, expressed uncertainty with respect to the connections between a "middle-class" housing crisis, *development*, and homelessness, and some draw attention to the use of public spaces by those without housing (Moro, 2021a, 2021b; Hunt, Bruno, & Bond, 2022; MacPhail, 2022; Spectator Editorial Board, 2022).

Some have expressed aggressive and hateful hegemonic opinions about the kinds of bodies deserving of support and about a perceived risk to “citizen” safety marking those without housing as dangerous outsiders, and costly strangers encroaching on the space reserved for hard working, morally minded communities (Draaisma, 2020; Moro, 2020; Moro, 2021a; Hunt et al., 2022). Media reports have also documented the ways in which some have come to feel authorized to expect and demand police involvement, violent interventions, and/or increases to institutional fundings to remove homeless bodies from public spaces in efforts to preserve the appearance, *development*, and investments of a society without them (Draaisma, 2020; Moro, 2021a, 2021b, 2022; Brockbank, 2022; Hunt et al., 2022; Peesker, 2022; Spectator Editorial Board, 2022). In Canada, there has been much debate over the best use of public land, resources, shelter space, criminality, drug use, affordable housing, and mental illness with little to no listening and concern for those facing real material life or death, risk and need (Casey,

2020; Craggs, 2020; Moro, 2020, 2021a, 2021b; Brockbank, 2022; Hunt et al., 2022; MacPhail, 2022; Spectator Editorial Board, 2022).

Within these representations, and for most working within housing and homelessness systems, discourses about homeless bodies often circulate analyses that prioritize attentions about the causes of homelessness and produce responses that can impede transformational intervention. The understandings and ideas within these discourses shape and are shaped by longer histories and legacies in Canada. There exists a dominating tendency to confine knowledge on homelessness to discussions of neoliberalism, deinstitutionalization, and housing divestment as the beginning of homelessness while omitting attentions for Indigenous genocide, the pass-system, and residential schools - the violent control, discipline, and removal of human bodies from family, community, land, and *home* (Polyani, 1944; Neale, 1997; Swain et al., 2003; Hulchanski, et al., 2009; Gaetz, 2010; Pleace, 2015; Johnstone, Lee, & Connelly, 2017; Ince, 2018, 2021; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Spectator Editorial Board, 2022).

Moreover, this tendency in the dominant literature on homelessness also pays inadequate attention to issues of (dis)placement, forced migration, and/or expulsion of peoples as things from land for exploitation, profit, nation-making, and community-building – multiple erasures bifurcating land from body and destroying intimate relations and connection to *home* (O’Connell, 2009a; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2017; Chapman & Withers, 2019). Omissions of attentions to critical analyses of eugenics, medicalization, human hierarchy, taxonomy, and classification systems, complicity with difference-making knowledge systems about animality, madness, morality, laziness, vulnerability,

and danger as bound to ideas of defect, illness, disability, and dysfunction have limited possibilities in research and policy making on matters of homelessness by leaving intact technologies and practices that continue to operationalize hierarchies of worth and life (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978; McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Razack, 2007; Thobani, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; Ahmed, 2013; Jaffee & John, 2018; Joseph, 2015b, 2017). These experiences and legacies, while broader in scope than the material possession of a house or built structure as shelter (what some could call ‘houselessness’), are nonetheless intimately connected to what we imagine and constitute as homeless. In this thesis, these omitted attentions will be engaged to allow for a reconsideration of the common projects that constitute discourses on homelessness. They are embedded in how we see ourselves and others, in our sense of being and belonging, and how we operationalize bodies and land through practice, policy, and law to attend to housing/homelessness, place/space, and *home* (Joseph, 2017, 2022). Overall, this work aims to “reconcile the material and discursive” (O’Connell, 2010, p. 32) to appreciate “history, context, and that which is happening in practice” (Joseph, 2022, p. 487). Specifically, I will inquire into the transformative potentials/possibilities of attending to matters of *occupation, settlement and development* for rearticulating discourses and knowledge relations on homelessness for undermining the projects of separation of land from body (O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Gilbert & Powell, 2010; Joseph, 2015b, 2022). It is concerned with examining Canada’s National Housing Strategy (NHS), Reaching Home (RH), and Housing First (HF) as policies and practices of interest for

their current widespread use and stated commitment to address and eliminate homelessness. (GOC, n.d.(a), 2022a, 2022b).

### **THEORETICAL APPROACH - An Ontology of Land/Body Simultaneity and Identity**

In my thesis, I am attempting to examine and analyze the historiographical discourse of homeless bodies and land with particular emphasis on *occupation*, *settlement*, and *development*, in relation to discourses within contemporary homelessness policy and practice. This work is based on an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity. Land/Body simultaneity is undergirded by Joseph's (2015b; 2022) conceptualization of confluence and Watts (2013) communication of Place-Thought. Place-Thought demands an understanding of body and land as indivisible - in constant communication and relationship (Watts, 2013). For Watts (2013) indivisibility within Place-Thought is communicated as occurring through and around euro-western ontological/epistemological division and abstraction as theory that bifurcate "constituents of the world from how the world is understood" (Watts, 2013, p. 22). The ontological/epistemological divide situates bodies and land in a hierarchy, positioning land as inert and unthinking through euro-western imaginaries of human supremacy (Watts, 2013). As such, this separation presupposes that only humans are capable of thought, agency, and communication, omitting relational possibilities and communication between humans and land by positioning them as commodity/thing/Other/animal/mad – identities of lack, advancing logics of erasure and ideologies about *how/why/what* embodies and communicates knowledge. Similarly, Joseph (2022) introduces confluence as a theory grounded in

epistemic dissidence that aims to consider the fluid, active, and divergent nature of identity, subjectivity, intersectionality, and difference while simultaneously addressing these as active, nonlinear, incomplete, ongoing, ideological, and relational phenomena. The confluence model rests on an understanding of complicity in relationality and attends to both identity formation and the extending material consequences of unquestioningly embodying hegemonic subjectivities (Joseph, 2022). For instance, Joseph (2015b) states, "...madness and savagery were/are co-constituted through a confluence of ideas that rationalized forms of violence on bodies of difference deemed worthy of harm or exclusion" (p. 40). Within an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity, the epistemological/ontological bifurcation described by Watts (2013), and the violence on bodies of difference described by Joseph (2015b), provide the contours of colonial capitalist technologies of abstraction (severance), taxonomy, and operationalization that rationalize violence by and through normalized/normalizing systems of hierarchy/worth via divide and conquer logics of war and conquest. Ways of knowing, according to Watts (2013), become suspect byway of Land/Body bifurcation thereby severing, erasing, and (re)defining relations that (re)enforce/d/s the supremacy of colonial articulations of theory - abstracted and hierarchical. Watts (2013) states, "the epistemological/ontological removes the 'how' and 'why' out of the 'what'. The 'what' is left empty, readied for inscription" (p.24). Joseph (2022) asks, "how might we harness an appreciation of our infinite uniqueness and our commonalities while appreciating that our commonalities might be/often are complicit within historically entrenched systems of violence?" (p. 486). An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity aims to resist abstracted theorizations of

life and worth that can/often sever the ‘*how*’ from the ‘*why*’, embracing complicity, not for innocence-making but as a necessity of relationality, and asks us to consider epistemic theorizing (‘*how*’) as unsatisfactory (‘*why*’) for appreciating how life (‘*what*’) is materially lived.

The erasure of Land/Body simultaneity, as a way of being, is an erasure of a relationship of meaning. This erasure advances hegemonic representations of land and body as siloed objects, self-consciously (re)articulating the possibilities of agency, and continuously (re)configuring relations. An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity, positioning place, space, and knowledge as relationally agential, aims to intervene on knowledge categories and abstraction to attend to the erasure of logics, laws, policies, and disciplines co-constituted within the violence and harm of colonial capitalism’s rationalization of operationalization as tantamount to progress, reason, and truth. It understands operationalization as a technocratic tool of division and *development* and is interested in questioning “motives and design” asking what “technologies, practices, and complicities” contribute to taxonomic and reified categories of being (Joseph, 2022, p. 487). Importantly, an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity takes note of exceptions via relationality, communication, “diminutive agency” (Watts, 2013, p. 24) and “does away with any foreseeable idea of sovereignty” (Joseph, 2015b, p. 24) advancing complicity as necessary to respecting worth, value, agency, and life. Finally, an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity understands the bifurcation and siloing of land and body as the context from which the ideas of homeless bodies and landscapes emerge.

- **The Identity called Homeless and its Formation**

Because this work understands the bifurcation and siloing of Land/Body as the context from which the ideas of homeless bodies and landscapes emerge, an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity proposes that the identity called ‘homeless’ in the contemporary is not always utilized to mark its possible formation. In colonial capitalist conquest and *occupation* prioritizing particular ideologies about how/why/what embodies and communicates knowledge, Land/Body underwent/go thingification/commodification and became/come segmented (Polyani, 1944; Césaire, 1955). From a Marxist political-economy frame, Polyani (1944) articulates one understanding of the colonial capitalist *occupation* of land, labour, and money as “a commodity fiction” that “supplies a vital organizing principle in regard to the whole of society<sup>1</sup> affecting almost all its institutions in the most varied way, namely, the principle according to which no arrangement or behavior should be allowed to exist that might prevent the actual functioning of the market mechanism on the lines of the commodity fiction” (p. 76). From a critical disability studies frame, Jafee & John (2018) explain that *occupation* necessitates “logics of elimination and erasure” (p. 1413) where euro-western *occupation* thingifies and logics of elimination and erasure transform Others into ‘unthinking’ placeholders embodying hegemonic subjectivities of bodies and land created in a colonial image (Said, 1978;

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘society’ that is used throughout this thesis includes land in this definition. Even when this term is quoted from other sources, it has been read with intentionality to an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity as understood from Watts (2013) description of Place-Thought: “The evaluation of human interaction and culture has been a concern of traditional sociology since its inception and has led to the definition of what constitutes a society or various societies. The idea of “society” has revolved around human beings and their special place in the world, given their capacity for reason and language. Though this idea of society is still largely attributed to human relationships, in recent times we can see the emergence of non-humans being evaluated in terms of their contributions to the development and maintenance of society” (p. 21).

Razack, 2007; Ahmed, 2013; Watts, 2013; Jafee & John, 2018). An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity understands elimination and erasure as a product of bifurcation, a process of homelessness-ing, as securing particular ways of being into colonial space. From a critical disability frame, John & Jafee (2018) describe bifurcation as a material disabling, noting that Land/Body bifurcation (thingification/commodification) represents a disablement of land-knowledges that understand Land/Body solidarity as necessities of life and *home*. For Sharma (2020), the bifurcation and thingification of Land/Body is not only a colonial capitalist phantasmagoria that transforms “people of a place” into “people out of place” (p. 4) but also, the culmination of Land/Body bifurcation on a global scale producing a national-native/migrant “post-colonial new world order” (p. 282).

Fanon (1961) reminds us that colonialism is a violent process. He offers, “[the colonist and colonizer’s] first confrontation was coloured by violence and their cohabitation – or rather the exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer – continued at the point of the bayonet and under cannon fire. The colonist and the colonized are old acquaintances. And consequently, the colonist is right when he says he ‘knows’ them” (p. 2). The process, often terrifying and brutal, where meaning and memory, living with, for example, need and fear, mark bodies and land with more than just lines, boundaries, or borders (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1961; Mbembé, 2008; Bulhan, 2015). According to Mbembé (2008), “late modern colonial regimes [are]...specific instances and experiences of unfreedom. To live under late-modern *occupation* is to experience a permanent condition of ‘being in pain’” (p. 91). Re/co-constituted within euro-western epistemology (a problematized and waring territory), the possibilities for power, security, and safety,



present limited possibilities for bodies becoming subjects. Recounted within the abstracted silo of property law, Bhandar (2016) states:

property law [...] is not only the means through which land is appropriated in the colonies, but is posited as the index of civilised society itself. As such, property law holds a very unique position in Enlightenment thought and ensuing discourses of modernity: it operates as both a set of techniques and mechanisms (embodied in legislation, legal judgments and everyday practices) that have structured and supported a racial, colonial capitalism, as well as (and likely as a consequence of the former fact) being a central fixture in the philosophical and political narratives of a *developmental*, teleological modernity that has set the standard for humanity and civilisation (p. 120).

In this manner, an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity, considers the ‘homeless body’ not as a distinct material identity-marker, rather, as formation of a colonial capitalist *occupation* to “set the standard for humanity and civilization” (Bhandar, 2016, p. 120). As such, this thesis is asking readers to consider that bifurcating Land/Body becomes homelessness, that the colonial context is born of and dependent upon this bifurcation, its exploitative potential, and its possibilities for being/becoming ideal citizen subjects. An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity asks that we question a politics (the systems of rules, behaviour, and beliefs governing space, place, and being) that require the siloing of land as its foundation and intervene in the ideas of imperial and colonial sovereignty and agency (the questionable possibilities for power and protection derived from borders/siloes and hierarchical representations of worth). Because neither land nor bodies (nor, by extension, nations) become individual or ‘self’-determined without the violence of bifurcation (Watts, 2013; Sharma, 2020).

- **KEY CONCEPTS – Conceptualization via *Occupation, Settlement, and Development***

The following analysis of discourses of the homeless body within policy and practice in the contemporary will use an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity derived from my understanding of complimentary aspects of Place-Thought and Confluence (Watts, 2013; Joseph, 2015b, 2022). For this project, I will examine contemporary discourse and epistemologies of the homeless body alongside select historiographical moments of interest to conceptualize communication and obligation, agency and sovereignty, and abstraction/classification as they relate to colonial capitalist conquest via *occupation, settlement, and development*. These concepts are also understood within Watts' (2013) work as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- ***Occupation***

Within this work, the concept of occupation is understood as a process of “epistemology-ontology divide” that bifurcates the relationship between land and body via colonial logics of hierarchy, knowledge, and power (Watts, 2013, p. 22). Specifically, the process of *occupation* is understood as interrupting **communication** and distorting **obligation**. Watts (2013) offers, “from the process of colonization and the imposition of the epistemology-ontology frame, our communication and obligations with other beings of creation is continuously interrupted” (p. 24). **Communication** and **obligation** within the process of colonial *occupation* is thus understood to include the prioritization/domination/imposition of a particular set of ideas, responsibilities, and bodies as supreme, reasonable, and rational. Materially this can also be understood as a

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<sup>2</sup> See graphic in Appendix ‘A’ for Watts (2013) euro-western representation of epistemological/ontological divide.

humancentric process of forceful and invasive expansion of euro-western domination to accumulate land and body, the *development* of epistemological expertise as a tool of communication, diagnosis, and problem-solving, as well as the *settlement* of obligation via subjectivities promoting technologies of hierarchy and difference-making as systems of meaning, morality, and belief. From a colonial capitalist analysis, the ontology of Land/Body simultaneity understands *occupation*, the siloing/thingifying/commodifying/claiming of land and body, as a context from which the ideas of homeless bodies and landscapes emerge.

Biomedicine is one example of an occupation imposing and prioritizing siloed humancentric language/rules as a means to validity and truth. Within biomedicine, specialized scientific knowledge is defined, obtained, and observed with human senses, severed from relation via normalizing hegemonic benchmarks of biological/physical health that communicate obligation to labelling/identity, quantifying perceived aberration/worth through uncritical and rationalized biomedical assimilations/*settlements* of particular ideas of ‘health’, worth, and life

- ***Settlement***

*Settlement* is understood as the process of wielding “an exclusionary relationship with nature” (Watts, 2013, p. 22) and thus, via *occupation*, limiting/bounding communication and obligation as possible only through siloed, individualized, specialized, and/or expert human knowledges wherein **agency**, **autonomy**, and **sovereignty** are enacted, imbued, and protected by and through the strength of their euro-western bounds of worth and expertise. *Settlement* via colonial capitalism is often

articulated as **agency** and **sovereignty** - the process of wielding power/rights/laws/morality produced through individualism, autonomy, severance of relations, and communication/erasure (how meaning, memory, being, becoming, and belonging are articulated to shape and produce discursive and material force) (Watts, 2013; Joseph, 2015b, 2022). Because colonial capitalism positions land (and Others) as inert and unthinking (human supremacist), *settlement* is most often visible within and through human subjectivities *occupied* by/through euro-western communication and obligation. As a process this can often appear as a repetition and proliferation normalizing a particular set of ideas and/or way of being, sometimes by punitive measures and/or discipline, norms, taboos, policies, and laws to assimilate colonial capitalist ways of knowing and being communicated as normative, necessary, rational, progressive, and true. Some examples include the communicated/embodied/enforced negotiation of end/completion/'peace'/'stability' within a dispute via arrangements like divorce, child custody, property, immigration, etc., *settlements* wherein siloed parties/individuals reach 'agreement' based in valuations of rights/morality/law/reason.

- ***Development***

The processes that “separate constituents of the world from how the world is understood” (Watts, 2013, p. 22). It involves epistemological **abstraction** that can be understood as **eugenic**, drawing our attention to reification, taxonomy, labels, identities, and the creation of hierarchies within projects, logics, and technologies bound to siloed time and place (Joseph, 2015b). It is understood to flow from/through *occupation* (colonial capitalism’s epistemological divide that has force in producing technologies of

**difference-making** as communication and obligation). As such, *development* is a proliferation of epistemological/ontological severance, divorced from time, place, meaning, and memory. It is understood as a eugenic process that **abstracts** and operationalizes, producing material outcomes, and enacts action and/or policy that (re)*settles* categories/hierarchies/taxonomies as systems of law, reason, and profession that define our world through particular logics of time, worth, space/place, language, research, ethics, and morality (Watts, 2013; Joseph, 2015b, 2022). Some examples can include urban planning, the DSM, educational curriculums, tax systems, etc., often connected to resource allocation to improve/advance/modernize life and worth.

While these conceptual categories are siloed for ease of definition herein, they are to be understood as fluid, at times converging, dependent, and productive (Joseph, 2015b). For instance, Joseph (2015b) states, “when people focus on the identity *qua* difference category intersecting (whether understood as mutually constituting/dependent or not) or the analytical perspective/systems interlocking (while understood as interdependent or not) we lose the focus of analysis on the temporal and the procedural, processes over time, space, when technologies and practices are institutionalized in policy and law, embedded in people’s beliefs and then divorced from their original project” (p. 25). Together, these understandings form the basis of methodology within a historiography via Land/Body simultaneity. Providing an attention to epistemological-ontological division, its abstractive potential, and a point of analysis for housing and homelessness policy. Derived from Confluence (Joseph, 2015b, 2022) and Place-Thought

(Watts, 2013), an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity is thus a theory and tool of intervention, inclusive of the contributions of critical colonial theories, that deconstruct positivist analyses stubbornly rooted in contemporary terms, innocence-making, and disconnection from relationality positioning bodies as non-complicit and problematized in the formation of policy, practice, law, and discourse.

To analyze and intervene on the discourses of the homeless body with a particular emphasis on *occupation, settlement, development*, and land through a Land/Body ontological positioning, intentionality is required to attend to practices, relations, knowledge, and power that span several disciplines and temporal periods. While appreciating how the identity called ‘homeless’ is not always utilized to mark its possible formation, this analysis requires an examination of multiple epistemological discourses of being and becoming. As conceptual categories, the analytical tools of *occupation, settlement, and development* are useful to this endeavour as they allow for analysis to reach beyond and through normative descriptions of the homeless human body with the hope of attending to common ideas, projects, and technologies through time. Moreover, as conceptual tools, *occupation, settlement, and development*, can help us to appreciate homelessness and the homeless body not only as a system of structures, set of problems, or as an identity, but as a fluid happening that produce/s/d and shape/s/d fields of understanding, practice, policy, material experience, and power.

## **CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE**

The following literature review will attend to the conceptual categories of *occupation, settlement, and development* as they relate to the thoughtful work put forward by numerous authors that contend with matters of identity, being, becoming, belonging, and the violence of colonial capitalist epistemic frame (Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978, 1993; Narayan, 1995; Swain et al., 2003; Razack, 2007; Thobani, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; Mignolo, 2009; O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Ahmed, 2013; Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Dowbiggin, 2018; Joseph, 2017, 2022; Sharma, 2020). It will begin by situating contemporary normative ideas of housing and homelessness by providing a breakdown of discourses related to homeless bodies and contemporary housing and homelessness theories alongside the dominant epistemic frame of neoliberal governance and discursive understandings of its adherent forms of agency. It will then attempt to admit the homeless body as a discourse into previous historiographical conceptualizations of space and place in relation to colonial capitalism and land. Important to this endeavour alongside an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity is to explore discourses of taxonomy, abstraction, and classification as epistemological and for the purpose of this work, this is done by examining existing, relevant literature and scholarship that contributes to the historiographies of property, poverty, law, eugenics, and social work as complicit in the making of an ideal citizen subject.

- **Contemporary Epistemic Framings**

An analysis of *occupation, settlement, and development* in relation to discourses of the homeless body and land requires understanding the current epistemologies shaping contemporary housing and homelessness policy and practice. Many have described the

origins of homelessness in relation to government divestment in housing, federal responsabilization, economic and political climate, and/or as welfare and social service privatization born of neoliberal policy (Hulchanski, et al., 2009; Gaetz, 2010; Pleace, 2016; Johnstone, Lee, & Connelly, 2017). The advent of neoliberalism in relation to housing and homelessness appears almost unilaterally understood as a primary origin of homelessness in Canada (Hulchanski et al., 2009; Gaetz, 2010; Pleace, 2016; Johnstone et al., 2017; Sparks, 2017; Voronka, 2019). This oft cited era witnessed a reduction in income supports, programs for people defined as vulnerable and low-income beginning in the 1980s and was marked by a federal divestment and downloading of subsidized and affordable housing construction and maintenance in the 1990s (Hulchanski et al., 2009; Gaetz, 2010; Macnaughton, 2010; Voronka, 2019). Some sources cite the initial use of the term homeless as originating in a *developed* set of United Nations (UN) commitments to first ‘*developing* countries’ in 1981 followed by a 1987 address to ‘*developed*’ member states including Canada in 1987 (Hulchanski et al., 2009). In these works, the homeless body appears *settled* as a localized identity of vulnerability *occupied* by structural market-based political forces *developed* by and through the ideology of neoliberalism in the West.

The discourse of dehousing, divestment, and housing austerity, represents an important and sometimes intentionally politicized discourse for some that positions governments fiscal policy as complicit in the creation of the homeless body, further concretizing it as neoliberal fall-out (Hulchanski et al., 2009; Parsell, 2017; Voronka, 2019). Some authors contend that the homeless population were/are primarily single men,



and some connect this to feminized ideologies of home reminiscent of post WWII and depression-era vagrancy (Neale, 1997; Hulchanski et al., 2009; Hennigan, 2017). Some of these same authors posit that white men were the primary homeless population, not because they necessarily lacked shelter, rather, on account of a lack of a heteronormative place complete with the adjacent material benefits of a ‘traditional’ home (Neale, 1997; Hulchanski et al., 2009). Notably, the previously mentioned advent of UN commitments to the homeless in ‘*underdeveloped* nations’ has been described as different through similar hegemonic social, cultural, and political ideologies (Hulchanski et al., 2009). As a result, many authors tend to differentiate between the homeless body, an individual without a house or home, and an abstracted discourse of homelessness defined as a “set of social problems”, structural factors, or ‘pathways’ as fields of epistemology distinct from theorizations of experiences in poorer countries (Hulchanski et al., 2009, p. 6; Gaetz, 2010; Pleace, 2016; Johnstone, Lee & Connelly, 2017).

A large majority of authors engaged in addressing the homeless body within policy and practice do so from heavily researched, theorized, and abstracted taxonomies known as ‘risk factor models’ and ‘the pathways model’ (Neale, 1997; Hulchanski et al., 2009; Fitzpatrick & Watts, 2010; Gaetz, 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Hennigan, 2016; Pleace, 2016; Johnstone et al., 2017; Voronka, 2019; Dej, 2020). These two oftentimes converging epistemic streams of causation theories and paradigms of practice are described as similarly positioned wherein the former examines ‘individual factors’ (sometimes understood as “agency explanations”) (Neale, 1997, p. 49), ‘structural factors’, or a combination of both, where the latter is epistemically positioned in a manner

akin to a choose-your-own-adventure novel wherein an individual's life path is imagined as encompassing discrete courses or 'pathways' related to their individual 'vulnerabilities', market pressures, poverty, and the so-called culture of homelessness (Neale, 1997; Hulchanski et al., 2009; Fitzpatrick & Watts, 2010; Gaetz, 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Hennigan, 2016; Pleace, 2016; Johnstone et al., 2017; Voronka, 2019; Dej, 2020). In these works, discourses of the homeless body appear (are *settled*) as a problem of individuals and *development* reliant on a twofold stream of operationalizing market-based social programs vis-à-vis economic pressures/poverty, and identification/*occupation* through reified/*developed* medicalized taxonomies measuring vulnerability/culture.

According to some authors, discourses of the homeless individual held in the context of rights or agency are shaped via political and professional legacy, past institutional and eugenic responses to fitness, and systems of classification that informed and informs '*development*' goals (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Bulhan, 2015; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Joseph, 2022). Similarly, several contemporary authors locate agency for the homeless body as extended through case management provision within policy and practice (Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Neale, 2016; Pleace, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Dej, 2020). One author appears to understand this through the epistemology of neoliberal poverty governance described as 'paternalistic' (Hennigan, 2017). Here, the disciplining practice for homeless bodies are described as Housing First (the most widely used program to house homeless bodies as individual market-based actors) and the apartment lease (the legal apparatus meant to

secure tenure), as practices and sets of laws that civilize via case management support operationalized to secure and advocate reintegration to the normative marketplace (Hennigan, 2017). For a few authors, a civilizing practice for the homeless body is primarily a (re)connection to real estate, understood as the propertied space of the nation-state supported through housing and homelessness programs and practice (Sparks, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Voronka, 2019).

Similarly, historiographies of eugenics and social work connect these ideas about poor and homeless bodies (understood as lesser stock) through Darwinian ideological scientific and political discourse of fitness and civility (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman & Withers, 2019). According to some, charity and mental asylums were criticized for being places that made it more possible for the less fit to survive, on the one hand, while benevolence and sacrifice of the virtuous elite (moral agents) were encouraged to train/discipline poor and homeless bodies as a matter of civility (a marker of their benevolence) on the other (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman & Withers, 2019). These authors appear to agree that these *settled* supremacist Eurocentric subjectivities, derivative in part from 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century taxonomic *development* projects and population science reveal that discourse of poor and/or homeless bodies is often conflated with benevolence, morality, and improvement logics of agents/doctors/social workers/case managers, while simultaneously concerned with the making of ideal citizens (McLaren, 1990; O'Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Joseph, 2022). From many sources, there appears to be agreement that regardless of era or epistemic orientation, case managers, agents, property,

and institutions are technologies of being and becoming ideal market and/or moral subjects (Polyani, 1944; McLaren, 1990; Swain, Evans, Phillips, & Grimshaw, 2003; Thobani, 2007; O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Neocleous, 2011; Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021; Joseph, 2022).

- **Problematization/War**

Contemporary epistemic framings of the homeless body and homelessness tend to leave out historical analyses of *occupation* and war instead citing sanitized discourses of taxonomic ‘problematization’ via scientific, medicalized, and/or economic disciplinary knowledge compartments (Kawash, 1998; Fitzpatrick & Watts, 2010; Macnaughton, Egalité, Nelson, Curwood, & Piat, 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Sparks, 2017; Voronka, 2019; Peter & Polgar, 2021). Theorists of discourse and ideology consider how knowledge (often understood as ‘truth’ or ‘fact’) and ideology (often regarded as ‘belief’ or ‘fiction’ produced within social, cultural, and political contexts) are presented in text derived from “epistemic communities” with special (expert) “knowledge criteria” (Carabine, 2001; Loomba, 2007; O’Connell, 2010; Van Dijk, 2013, p. 177). Van Dijk (2013) offers that the structure of ideology is a kind of internal group self-image where “...the typical polarized structure of ideologies [are] organized representations as *Us* versus *Them*” (p. 178). Many note that discourse has both the potential to communicate what is deemed real, true, or valuable, and conversely what is not and often erased via dominant or ‘ingroup’ ideology forming normative discourse, law, policy, and practice (Said, 1961; Carabine, 2001; Loomba, 2007; O’Connell, 2010; Van Dijk, 2013; Watts, 2013; Sharma, 2020). These understandings underscore false problematizations of

identity, being, and belonging via binary representation previously defined by many thoughtful authors of anti-disciplinary works within anti/post/de colonial orientations: for Said (1978) us/them is “the Orient” and “the Occident”, for Mignolo (2009), us/them is “the knower” and “the known”, for Mbembé (2008) us/them is “human” and “animal”. Many of these (and numerous other works) analyze hegemonic ideologies of ‘truth’, ‘reason’, and ‘progress’ derivative of white, colonial, and/or imperial supremacy to intervene on discourses of conquest and technologies of erasure (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978; Arendt, 2003; Razack, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; Mignolo, 2009; Ahmed, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2015a, 2015b). The ideas within these anti-disciplinary works are helpful toward (and visible within) analyses of the productive capacity of discourses within contemporary practice and policy relative to ‘expertise’ about homeless bodies (as ‘them’) and the ‘community’/‘society’ (as ‘us’). They communicate colonial capitalist legacies of domination via *settlement* and *development* severed from the historical record that permeate contemporary discourses to intervene on the process of *occupation* in and through identity, space, and place.

Moreover, according to many, the force of discourse (and its productive capacity) varies based on authority/power/expertise imbued through the interlocuter’s identity/position/affiliation and internal coherence within dominant epistemologies of knowing and being (Carabine, 2001; Loomba, 2007; Van Dijk, 2013). A variety of post/de/anti-colonial scholars from several epistemic frames address matters of problematization through analyses contextualized via attentions to war and violence often communicated as colonial, metacolonial, imperial, Manichean, epistemic, economic,

postcolonial, and necropolitical (among others) as structures, systems, and processes complicit in the operationalization of life, death, identity, memory, meaning, time, being, and becoming (Polyani, 1944; Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978, 1993; Loomba, 2007; Razack, 2007; Thobani, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; Sen, 2008; Mignolo, 2009; Ahmed, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Sharma, 2020). These authors interrogate the discourses of war highlighting their capacity and limitations in relation to power and communication, difference and division, while attending to how these discourses are organized epistemically, legally, and materially to produce an effect through object/subject positionality (the previously mentioned polarizing binary problematization of us/them) (Van Djik, 2013). Many of these works wield discourses of object/subject positionality in relation to material safety, belonging, identity, and communication to advance discourses of resistance and intervene on technologies of conquest and domination to examine where cultural, social, political and personal lived understandings become embedded in policy, law, practice, and discipline (Césaire, 1955; Said, 1978; Arendt, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2015b, 2017, 2022; Chapman & Withers, 2019; O’Connell, 2019a, 2019b; Sharma, 2020).

Importantly, many authors note the erasing/silencing capacity of these problematizations (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978; Arendt, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Ahmed, 2013; Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2015b, 2017, 2022; Razack, 2007; Dowbiggin, 2018; Chapman & Withers, 2019; O’Connell, 2019a, 2019b; Sharma, 2020). Here, problematizations are understood as scientific, technical, identity-based, at times political, social, or cultural concerns to be addressed as individual systems and structures

rather than as possible instances of *occupation*, conflict, or domination as described by anti-disciplinary authors. In these works (as is also apparent in works about/on behalf of homeless bodies via-a-vis ‘experts’, politicians, and the like), the productive capacity of discourses on homeless bodies is how they *settle* body as object awaiting *development* via charity, case management, and law (Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978; Arendt, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Ahmed, 2013; Joseph, 2015b; Razack, 2007; Dowbiggin, 2018; Chapman & Withers, 2019; O’Connell, 2019a, 2019b; Sharma, 2020). As previously highlighted, many authors understand housing and homelessness policy and practice as a discourse of problematization internal to the homelessness system in the contemporary (Neale, 1997; Hulchanski, Campsie, Chau, Hwang, & Paradis, 2009; Fitzpatrick & Watts, 2010; Gaetz, 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Pleace, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Johnstone, Lee, & Connelly, 2017; Johnstone et al., 2017; Parsell, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Voronka, 2019). Some of these operationalizations (i.e., as a problematization of pathology, rights/agency, neoliberalism, vulnerability, morality, safety, etc.) are abstracted by ‘experts’ and *developed* into larger systems of classification forming the basis of research, policy, and practice while, it has been noted, few are conceptualized or *settled* by and from the experience of those with lived-experience or frontline material knowledge (Kawash, 1998; Fitzpatrick & Watts, 2010; Macnaughton, Egalité, Nelson, Curwood, & Piat, 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Sparks, 2017; Voronka, 2019; Peter & Polgar, 2021). Unsurprisingly, a few authors note that research about homeless bodies is likely to be one of the most heavily examined topics (Neale, 1997; Pleace, 2016; Voronka, 2019). An exceptional number of authors utilize health research methodologies in the discourse of

homeless bodies while some critique the current usage of pathways and risk factor analysis epistemologies as synonymous with a medicalized gaze overemphasizing individual pathology as central to material deprivation (Hulchanski et al., 2009; Macnaughton et al., 2010; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Johnstone et al., 2017; Dej, 2020; Voronka, 2019).

Still, some contemporary epistemic frames of homelessness describe the discourses of the homeless body through similar anti/de/post colonial framings of object/subject problematization defining homelessness as a war on homeless bodies, space, place, and land (Kawash, 1998; Neocleous, 2011; Jones, 2019; Sharma, 2020; Ince, 2021). Many note how the abundance of homelessness classification systems, numerous abstracted spider vein-like systems of nomenclature, taxonomize research, practice, and policy continuously (re)defining the contours of space and place, society, and the public (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Mbembé, 2008; Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Joseph, 2022). Similarly, literature within post/de/anti-colonial orientations have noted that through division, abstraction, classification, and hierarchy, knowledges and communication became/become siloed, compartmentalized, *settled*, and wielded in a manner coherent mostly to colonial capitalist *occupation*, *settlement*, and (re)*development* (Mignolo, 2009; O'Connell, 2010; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2022). These siloes have aided in building and maintaining lines of thought grounded in enlightenment-era logics that see knowing and being as fundamentally separate. For example, many scholars note that (re)*development* of imperial and colonial logics help to grow and maintain privilege over what we have come to accept as reason (through



historical ‘fact’), who we accept as the expert/knower (through, for example, profession, religion, and language/discourse), and who can shape current and future debates (through the ideal citizen subject and supremacist performativity) (Césaire, 1955; Fanon, 1961; Said, 1978; McLaren, 1990; Arendt, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Razack, 2007; Joseph, 2017; Dowbiggin, 2018; Ince, 2018, 2021; Chapman & Withers, 2019; O’Connell, 2019a, 2019b; Sharma, 2020).

When considered alongside enlightenment-era historiographies of fitness, science, improvement and progress, these forms of operationalization, understood in the aforementioned works as domination, war, or problematization, are also understood to describe the “biological politics” of civilizing via eugenic abstraction (McLaren, 1990, p. 13; Dowbiggin, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Chapman & Withers, 2019). Some authors discuss eugenic practice as the bureaucratic re-enactment of brutal abstraction and exploitation derived from the slave-trade and plantation system, (re)articulated, notably, in the colonies as Apartheid, poor houses, asylums, immigration systems, and the like (Mbembé, 2008; Bhandar, 2016; Ince, 2018). Notably, Mbembé (2008) highlights how these abstractions and adjacent disciplinary logics “...can take multiple forms: the terror of actual death; or a more “benevolent” form - the result of which is the destruction of a culture in order to “save the people” from themselves” (p. 22).

Some authors note that in the colonies, benevolence and carceral ideologies were enacted to erase or eliminate so-called contaminant culture through social Darwinism and forms of social control and punishment derivative of Lamarckian theories via health, psychiatric, institutional, and diplomatic civilizing practices (Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman

& Withers, 2019). Many offer that these *occupying* enlightenment-era logics were part of the abstractive *development* process of making and *settling* an ideal national public co-constituted with concerns of population size and fitness within the growing colonial capitalist project (Polyani, 1944; McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Thobani, 2007). For instance, authors of eugenic history describe the abstractive hierarchy of medical and psychiatric diagnoses and practice as problematizations of bodies of difference posited as inferior (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003; Chapman & Withers, 2019). Here, eugenic ideology and practice of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries saw so-called genetic inferiority in need of remedy through medical practices like sterilization and segregation, on the one hand, with diagnoses of cultural degeneration as social illness in need of care and/or healing via the benevolence of psychiatrists, psychologists, and/or social workers who were/are tasked to cure the mind, family, and community of cultural contamination (and potential economic loss) on the other (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003). In both instances, Lamarckian degeneration theory (an idea that proposed that degeneracy and population management could be managed via control of domestic and working environments) translated into an institutionalized solution to, 1) increase fit stock vis-à-vis market and home policy, and 2) decrease birthrates of unfit/degenerate stock via institutionalization (Dowbiggin, 2003). Many authors of anti-disciplinary works and historiographies note that the illness or moral/cultural ineptitude understood in these logics as ‘lack’ and/or the inability to thrive in the colonial capitalist context were measured via euro-western conceptualizations of intelligence, physical and mental/moral fitness, and culture. Moreover, some of these same authors note that these methods, as a

civilizing science, could bureaucratically lay to rest (cure) ‘problematic’ bodies through medical, psychiatric, and moral logics (McLaren, 1990; Dowbiggin, 2003). Many discuss how these scientific measures have been/are applied and reapplied within policy and law to establish citizenship, rights of passage, migration controls, and educational streams vis-à-vis euro-western imaginaries of fitness and discuss how bodies are systematically rank-and-filed into a hierarchical allotment of rights and privileges, and places and spaces based on test/outcome measures (McLaren, 1990; Arendt, 2003; Dowbiggin, 2003; Thobani, 2007; Joseph, 2015b; Bhandar, 2016; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Sharma, 2020).

- **Deserving and Undeserving - Responsibility, Agency, and Care**

Within modern westerns conceptualizations of individual rights and liberties as of paramount priority, congruent with the priorities of colonial capitalism, some note that contemporary iterations of homelessness policy and practice place further responsibility on homeless bodies to access health and welfare state ‘rights’ via case management and the market to bridge gaps in service provision that could provide the homeless individual with equitable social service provisions (Narayan, 1995; Neale, 1997; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Pleace, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Voronka, 2019). Within these arguments, a few claim that in the neoliberal era (where privatization of welfare service is described as growing through responsabilization and Malthusian laissez-faire logics and practices), these models are understood as providing the homeless individual an opportunity to actualize *settled* normative rights via consumer choice – the aforementioned “agency explanation” connected to individual risk factor analysis (Neale, 1997; Johnstone et al.,

2017; Parsell, 2017). Individual market freedom *is* a form of agency and access to rights under neoliberalism some argue (Neale, 1997; Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Voronka, 2019; Dej, 2020). Accordingly, some examine not only the discourse of homeless bodies as agential via the colonial capitalist market system, but that housing and homelessness case managers (operationalized within the current iteration of housing and homelessness service provision) are available for homeless bodies in need of support to access these rights – this, according to one author is aligned with the structural arm of risk factor analysis (Farrugia & Gerrard, 2016; Neale, 2016; Sparks, 2017; Dej, 2020). According to Neale (1997) within the risk factor analysis discourse, these more vulnerable homeless bodies are not understood as responsible but rather as needing “humanitarian assistance” (Neale, 2016, p. 49). Here Neale (1997) connects the historically *settled* ideologies of deserving/undeserving poor to the bifurcated arms of contemporary homelessness theory: undeserving = agential individuals in markets, deserving = vulnerable individuals in need of charity (Neale, 2016, p. 49).

Some understand these discourses of deserving and undeserving as part of a process of colonization that *settle/s/d* Christian morality as normative while rationalizing domination via logics of benevolent morality (Narayan, 1995; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Ince, 2018, 2022). For instance, Narayan (1995) offers, “...the colonizing project was seen as being in the interests of, for the good of, and as promoting the welfare of the colonized – notions that draw our attention to the existence of a colonial care discourse whose terms have some resonance with those of some contemporary strands of the ethic of care” (pp. 133-134). Narayan (1995) and some historiographical works situate care

discourses in legacies of domination via paternalistic ideologies of benevolently saving the morality of the colonized from themselves within modern euro-western conceptualizations of individual rights and liberties (Swain et al., 2003; Thobani, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; O’Connell 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Neocleous, 2011; Ince, 2018; Chapman & Withers, 2019). According to these authors, the morality of the colonized was/is of paramount priority, and the *development* of bodies deemed fit for accessing rights was/is bestowed upon peoples via deputized moral agents (Swain et al., 2003; Thobani, 2007; Mbembé, 2008; O’Connell 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Neocleous, 2011; Ince, 2018; Chapman & Withers, 2019). Overall, some note that the meanings derived from legacies of deserving/undeserving poor within these ‘new’ neoliberal epistemologies are materially absorbed by the contemporary homeless body through a (re)*settlement* of market discipline, the “healing power of class” (Chapman & Withers, 2019, p. 31), “the force of moral economy” (p. 158), and “the ethic of improvement” (p. 158) imbued through case management, both historically connected to *settled* punitive forms of homelessness service provision (some examples include enduring legacies of the Poor House, the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, and the principle of less eligibility) (McLaren, 1990; Neale, 1997; Voronka, 2019; Peter & Polgar, 2021).

- **Beyond a Neoliberal Frame – The Homeless Body**

Many authors introduce the principle of Terra Nullius as having provided legal grounds for Indigenous displacement and genocide to facilitate a sanitized discovery-myth where land and people were objectified, *occupied*, and *developed* via colonial technologies, logics, and law (Polyani, 1944; Swain, et al., 2003; Thobani, 2007; Jones,

2019; Ince, 2021). According to these works, Terra Nullius not only envisioned/s lands free of Indigenous bodies, but it also presupposed/s *settler* superiority positioning living things into hierarchies, operationalizing sovereignty and agency as measurable vis-à-vis human/white euro supremacy and benevolence (Polyani, 1944; Swain et al., 2003; Neocleous, 2011; Ince, 2018, 2021). According to some, as veritable blank slates and held in relation to Eurocentric ideas and order (the prototype of the ideal subject and kingdom), land and Indigenous bodies were/are *occupied* and marked as different through a taxonomic project of separation and division wherein power was/is/can be more easily enacted and land became/becomes a colonial (dis)possession subject to colonial property laws (Swain et al., 2003; Ince, 2018).

Others have contributed to an understanding of (dis)placement in connection to objectification, commodification, and law as historically linked to chattel slavery and the improvement of brutal hierarchical classification in the colonies for exploitative purposes and the making of ideal citizen subjects (McLaren, 1990; Said, 1993; Thobani, 2007; O’Connell, 2009b; Bhandar, 2016; Joseph, 2017; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Sharma, 2020; Ince, 2021). Here, according to some, imperial projects of conquest, profit, and white supremacy, prioritize/d/s a logic of hierarchy/classification/human worth where land and bodies could/are/can be sanitarily reified as things/commodities via a confluence of capitalist ‘free’ market ideologies, liberalizing conceptualization of political economy, and Lockean property logics (Polyani, 1944; Swain, et al., 2003; Thobani, 2007; Neocleous, 211; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2018, 2021). Hence, some identify the taxonomic practices/violence of, for example, chattel slavery as co-constituted with disciplinary

technologies (i.e., laws, policing, sanctions, etc.) and liberalizing Eurocentric logics of benevolence, improvement, democracy, reason, and progress as fundamental to the extension of rights, sovereignty, and agency in the metropole (Polyani, 1944; Swain, et al., 2003; Thobani, 2007; Neocleous, 211; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021). For instance, Ince (2018) describes how Indigenous genocide and slavery represent brutality in the colonies unseen and likely morally unacceptable in the metropole. Described by Ince (2018) as “capital’s despotism” (p. 24), and understood as a technology of an institutionalized market systems, the ensuing historical discourse of political economy (i.e., Capitalism’s ‘free market economy’ interacting with a democratic civil society) became a sanitizing *settlement* practice, erasing violence and brutality, and “disguising illiberal origins” (p. 24) through “the civilizing power of commerce” (p. 26) and the individual’s right to property in a free market civilization (p. 26).

Overall, within these discourses, discovery, hierarchy, and the enactment of the Canadian national identity transplanted from the imperial metropole to the colony appear to work/ed simultaneously to produce the modern normalised body of the deserving citizen, the usable commodified landform, and a *developed* system of liberalism *occupying* the colonies erasing the violence of conquest through the civilizing technology of market and property logics (Swain et al., 2003; Bhandar, 2016; Ince, 2018, 2021; Jones, 2019). Reified, erased, exploited, (dis)possessed, (dis)placed, disciplined and/or murdered peoples in the colonies were not recognized as free market citizens with rights to property (this misrecognition became a colonizing identity) (Ince, 2018; Mbembé, 2008). Moreover, while these sources discuss Indigenous genocide and the displacement

of peoples in relation to, for example, the slave trade, immigration systems, exile, indentureship, the reserve system, residential schools, and property/ownership they do not identify the direct material (dis)placement and *occupation* of peoples and land as instances of homelessness like those understood as such in the contemporary.

- **Spaces and Places of *Occupation, Settlement and Development* – Research, The Public, and Property**

Several scholars describe abstractions of space, place, the public, research, and law in relation to the homeless body (McLaren, 1990; Kawash, 1998; O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Macnaughton et al., 2010; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Joseph, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Jones, 2019; Voronka, 2019; Ince, 2021). Some of these works, focus on the civilizing of (dis)placed (homeless) bodies into citizens, through the disciplinary possibilities of wielding/wielded territory, land, and law (O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Joseph, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021). They draw on colonial capitalist epistemological knowledges and legal histories of property and ownership outlining hierarchies and classification systems that draw lines into land – abstracting and ordering space and place in relation to power, wealth, and waste (some examples include the Workhouse, the Torrens system of land registry, the Indian Act) (Swain et al., 2003; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Ince, 2018, 2021; Jones, 2019). Several of these authors attend to how abstraction, classification, and *development* of land via systems of enclosure (the system of (dis)possession partitioning land, thereby increasing its economic value at the expense of environmental and social (dis)location), ownership, and property law (including the lease)



are communicated to intervene and offer analyses wherein feudalism and mercantilism, followed by enlightenment era epistemologies of improvement, the free market, the division of labour, ‘rights’, and reason, are appreciated as techniques for ordering space for ideal citizen subjects (Polyani, 1944; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Hennigan, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021). Some of these same authors highlight how partitioning (*developing*) land along Eurocentric boundaries of colonial capitalist production became/come co-constituted with identity where the primacy of economic gain via resource extraction prioritized/s European cultural and social knowledges and techniques (Bhandar, 2016; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021). Others examine how land, bodies, and space are wielded to produce a civilized public through abstractions that constrict, erase, or render object/Other (Said, 1978; McLaren, 1990; Kawash, 1998; Macnaughton, et al., 2010; Bhandar, 2016; Voronka, 2019). Some of these understandings are described in terms of land and law, and as mentioned, some recall the legacies of feudalism, mercantilism, and Adam Smith’s Enlightenment thinking as holding sway in the (re)*development* of land produced through and by social, political, and economic bifurcation and abstraction (Polyani, 1944; O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Sparks, 2017; Neocleous, 2011; Joseph, 2017; Jones, 2019; Ince, 2021). Jones (2019) offers “as the history proceeds through the Middle Ages, feudalism is discussed for its understanding of the direct connection between king and land, and of land as a source of power” (p. 192). Some authors offer that the liberalizing effects of the enlightenment concretized the legal aspects of property ownership as belonging to the free-market individual while noting how this process conceals its historical ties to political and social power (Polyani, 1944;

Bhandar, 2016; Jones, 2019). This body of literature offers interesting understandings about the nature of problematization as a potential site of *occupation*, *settlement*, and *development* its trajectory and (re)construction within contemporary discourses of homeless bodies as “homeless wars” (Kawash, 1998, p. 329). Specifically, how subjects and objects alike are activated, constricted, compressed through *occupation* and in the *development* of hierarchy, identity, being, and belonging to *settle* ‘the public’, ‘the citizen’, or ‘the nation’ via land-based abstraction through and by the legacies of social, political, and economic worth in relation to land (Polyani, 1944; Said, 1978; McLaren, 1990; Kawash, 1998; O’Connell, 2009a, 2009b; Neocleous, 2011; Joseph, 2017; Hennigan, 2017; Sparks, 2017; Jones, 2019; Voronka, 2019; Ince, 2021). In each case, land’s form appears to be used as a tool of division, surveillance, or detention against bodies in search of *home*. These discourses of land *development* in relation to homeless bodies (productively positing land as an exploitable thing, a commodified, balkanized and sometimes segregated space for (re)drawing boundaries of meaning and material need into the civic sphere) appear connected to the project of making/re-making the ideal citizen subject. Moreover, these current understandings of land and body *development* are barely discussed in exacting terms as produced through histories of colonial capitalist *occupation* and *settlement* while their abstraction through time, reason, improvement, freedom, and progress appear to erase the literal need of Land/Body relationality.

Much of the literature examined in this review explored how *occupation*, *settlement*, and *development* in relation to discourses of the homeless body form part of a

confluence of co-constituting meanings, becomings, practices, events, and understandings about homelessness that shape/s/d identity, law, discipline, policy, and practice. Using *occupation, settlement, and development* as discursive analytical tools to deconstruct historiographic discourses of the homeless body, I now turn my attention to an analysis of NHS, RH, and HF as forms of policy, practice, and knowledge operationalized to address housing and homelessness in the contemporary.

### **METHODOLOGY – Historiography/Genealogy**

According to Carabine (2001), “discourses are historically variable ways of speaking, writing, and talking about, as well as practices around, an issue. They have outcomes/identifiable effects which specify what is morally, socially, and legally un/acceptable at any given moment in a culture” (p. 274). Before analyzing discourse across histories and time, each stand-alone text offers rich information about ideology, power, and understandings of discrete topics and events (Agger, 1991; Carabine, 2001; O’Connell, 2010, O’Connell, 2009a). The first reading is about asking what the authors are saying in their own words and understandings (O’Connell, 2010). The set of materials chosen for analysis were those that describe and operationalize NHS, RH, and HF and the period for these documents range from 2006-2022. Included in these materials are government documents, senate reports, policies, practice toolkits, published articles explicating the creation, maintenance, and evolution of NHS, RH, and HF. These items were chosen for their adherence to and discussion of contemporary national housing and homelessness policies and adjacent service provision models. These materials were

initially analyzed by attending to their theoretical/epistemological orientations, and the information they appear to communicate as stand-alone disciplinary knowledge compartments (as siloed forms of communication in their own right).

As a second set of textual sources, I included approximately 40 news articles ranging from October 2018-August 2022 mentioning housing and homelessness, people experiencing homelessness, social service, police, state, community, and civic responses to encampments/homelessness/care strategies/injunctions, the ‘housing crisis’, and civic land *development*. As a source for real-time community discourse in flux, news articles provided a general reaction, productive positioning of community discourse, and social communication shaping community being and becoming alongside current policy and practice. As such, they prove to be rich sources of discourse about practice, policy, and law pertaining to homeless bodies and land, and offered a temporal timeline for social and political discourse, events, and localized material responses. Through an iterative process, these materials were selected for their combined utility in “reconciling the material and discursive” (O’Connell, 2010, p. 33). This is accomplished for the purpose of comparing where text is presented as fact, explicit truth, concrete history, or confirmed as institutional knowledge and/or law, and involved asking preliminary questions like, *how does the author’s disciplinary understandings shape what they imagine as fact?* and *what is presented as material understanding of ‘the problem’ through the author’s epistemic frame?* (Agger, 1991; Carabine, 2001; O’Connell, 2010). The discourse was also compared against how it is epistemically and materially organized to produce an effect and how it activates action and/or produces meaning that become embedded in policy,

law, practice, and discipline (O’Connell, 2010; Joseph, 2022). Important to my project and according to O’Connell (2010), “what matters at a methodological level is that we focus on the discursive and material currency of the documents and literatures we scrutinize...interest in any data lays not only in their discursive arrangements but also in the material conditions from which they emanate and the ones they generate” (p. 33). To this end, I was interested in understanding *what is communicated about the relationship between land and body in this text? What epistemic frame is being used to discuss this relationship? How has/is land and the homeless body framed socially, culturally, politically, through policy, law, to produce material outcome? How have these ideas been discussed in relation to one another?*

Throughout the literature review, documents from within distinct epistemologies were read beside histories often understood as different and siloed to breach their compartmentalization and examine where they converge, separate, or remain within the same discourses (albeit sometimes as siloed or specialized epistemological knowledge). My use of the conceptual *occupation, settlement, and development* was strategically chosen to do much of this work prior to reading these policies and practices. O’Connell (2010) offers, “the separation of these disciplines invites discussions that operate within its own parameters, providing a self-sustaining logic and economy of thought. The interconnected forms of domination get lost which tempers the violent history of empire and how colonial and imperial projects rely so closely on academic disciplines” (p. 34). To attend to how “disciplines colonize” (via siloed epistemological theorizations) (O’Connell, 2010, p. 34), and to how discourses are “politically active” but have “the

possibility of rupturing epistemological practices” (O’Connell, 2010, p. 35), in my literature review I chose to explore a variety of texts to analyze how/where and through what problematizations of multiple material concerns occur simultaneously while oftentimes becoming divorced from one another (Loomba, 2007; O’Connell, 2010; Joseph, 2015b, 2022). These included firstly (but in no assigned order) a set of scholarship I describe as theories of homelessness texts to represent discourses that appear to understand homelessness from a distinct knowledge compartment in connection with a particular understanding of ‘the problem’ and ‘solution’, in the contemporary. Theories of homelessness texts allowed me to analyze and appreciate how the homeless body and land is/has discursively (and by extension, often practically) shape/d/s materiality. Questions I considered when reading these texts included: *Is agency, autonomy, sovereignty, or social justice addressed in the text? What is the nature or frame of this discourse? Is individualism, neoliberalism, and autonomy communicated in this text? If so, what is the nature or frame of this discourse?*

The third and fourth sets of scholarship included in the literature review included published articles and books that I will term historiographical analyses of lands and/or bodies and theories of process texts and these texts span temporal periods of analysis from enlightenment era to the present. In the absence and limitation of extensively consulting archived resources and historical government documents, historiographical texts were read for their anti-disciplinary potential and the work they do in producing alternative lines of thought by addressing systems and structures over time and space vis-à-vis colonial capitalist, imperial, and epistemic ideologies. Theories of process texts

communicate modes/processes involved in shaping over-arching ideas and concepts of power, domination, and relationality through ideology. These texts can be helpful in explicating and appreciating technologies of difference-making in relation to power, agency, and nation-building. Overall, these texts were also sourced for their work in addressing ideologies of ‘completeness’. While utilizing an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity, at times reading spatially for discourse about bodies and land, I asked: *How have we come to understand and discuss occupation, development, and settlement? How do the discourses of homelessness appear and reappear over time? What is the discourse about land and body through histories?*

- **Considerations of Data Analysis and Matters of Resistance**

Positioning this analysis within an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity, the indivisibility of Land/Body relationality and an understanding of epistemology as divisive, sanitizing, and isolating/erasing can help us appreciate how vulnerability, identity, and intersectionality are understood and communicated and how agency can be wielded in social work practice (Watts, 2013; Bulhan, 2015; Joseph, 2022). To be clear, there are real material impacts and consequences (i.e., need and risk) to bodies and lands *settled* by legacies of *occupation, settlement, and development* and as such, this work has important ethical considerations. For instance, in this discussion there is much attention paid to technologies, ideologies, projects, logics, and mechanisms that can be seen as creating agents of violence and thus could be seen to arrogantly produce oceans of victims, few of whom were consulted before my analysis. None of this should be understood as a means of innocence-making. Rather, an ontology of Land/Body

simultaneity accepts and embraces complicity as part of an ongoing process of knowledge with attention to ethics in questioning embodied subjectivities.

Confluence requires lived-reality as discourse in meaning-making and values these contributions as necessary to intervention and transformation – not as a project of innocence-making, but as a recognition that our experiences are interconnected and at times traumatizing and infuriating (Joseph, 2022). My hope is to explore technologies of difference-making in homelessness policy and practice and engender a greater appreciation of social work’s complicity in both legacies and contemporary disciplinary practice – not to confirm specific individuals as ‘the’ or even ‘a’ source of violence and distress, nor to categorized anyone as villains decidedly defensive of their actions, but rather as part of a process of promoting broader ongoing relations worth valuing and ways of being and knowing that allow us to listen and consider carefully.

Because imperialism and colonialism use tools of war, discipline, and violence to *occupy, settle, and develop*, legacies of domination permeate but do not extinguish the existence of relations outside of their grasp. There is a tendency to identify particular bodies with discourses of vulnerability, violence and trauma at the expense of narratives of strength, care, and exception. Many of these discourses have been about and/or on behalf of peoples and have attempted to erase, essentialize, and (re)define. These works tend to abstract and theorize material lack as a product of broken people rather than as a product of colonial and imperial domination. Moreover, beyond appropriating customs, cultures, and histories as exoticisms that essentialize peoples for hegemonic ends, these accounts do not take stock of the ways peoples have overcome, understood,



communicated, resisted, regrouped, and survived. They do not account for stories of care, strength, solidarity, relationality, and life outside of a colonial gaze. In short, these discourses have a reifying effect in the former, often erasing the latter.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

The NHS, RH, and HF, as contemporary iterations of homelessness policy and program, are disciplinary “knowledge compartments” shaping how we attend to homelessness, how community and political structures respond, how we understand being and belonging, and attend to material need (O’Connell, 2010, p. 35; Joseph, 2022). These understandings are embedded in a particular way in these policies and programs and, in turn, how land and bodies are attended to/wielded by and through the identity of homeless. As ideas, practices, and technologies they can be understood as part of the culture and politics embedded in our language, policies, and professions, where we can begin to appreciate how they have influence and force in the production of contemporary policy and practice. The previous examination and analysis of texts allowed us to gain an appreciation of past and present discourses, embedded (*settled*) in colonial capitalist (*occupied*), and hierarchical legacies and practice (*development*) to now attend to the discourse of addressing/ending homelessness within NHS, RH, and HF. The legacies of historical and contemporary classification systems, knowledge, and funding, include/exclude particular populations and lands, operationalize action, and (re)enforce/distort meaning and being about the homeless body through and within housing and homelessness policy and practice. As such, the question I am asking in this analysis is: *What does an examination of the historiographies of the discourses of the*

*homeless body, with particular emphasis on occupation, settlement, development, and land reveal for intervention and analysis when applied to contemporary policies and programs such as NHS, RH, and HF?*

## **FINDINGS**

Having described the broad contours of the historiographical discourses of homelessness and the homeless body, in this section I provide an analysis of NHS, RH, and HF documents as forms of policy, practice, and knowledge operationalized to address Canadian housing and homelessness in the contemporary with attention to matters of *occupation, settlement, and development*. Necessary to this endeavour is an appreciation of an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity that attends to how homelessness (and housing) are incomplete *processes* intertwined with, yet much more than, structures, problems, and recognition/identification projects continuously (re)*developed* as/through policy and practice attending to homeless bodies (Mbembé, 2008; Joseph, 2022).

### ○ **OCCUPATION – Communication and Obligation**

Medicalized mental health research and neoliberalist epistemological discourses are evident within the NHS, RH, and HF policies and practices, producing a system of communication that erases potentially transformative knowledges. As frames of problematization that (re)inscribes us-them binaries wielding “an exclusionary relationship with nature”, they produce discourses of completion and improvement through the process of “separating constituents of the world from how the world is

understood” (Watts, 2013, p. 22). In this way, the historiography of the discourse of homeless bodies within NHS as an *occupying* federal policy communicates homelessness as a novel ‘problem’ where bodies of difference are materially deprived.

At Home Chez Soi, the largest multi-site homelessness research initiative in Canada informing current policy in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association and created through the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is credited with being the foundation to our current framework for housing and homelessness in Canada (Hwang, Stergiopoulos, O’Campo, & Gozdzik, 2012; Aubry, Nelson, & Tsemberis, 2015; MHCC, 2022). MHCC (2022) cites its origins as stemming from the report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science, and Technology disseminated in 2006 wherein they claim that the government of Canada “completed the first-ever national study of mental health, mental illness, and addiction” (para. 3). Within the title of the report the goal appears to be “transforming mental health, mental illness, and addiction services in Canada” (SSCSAST, 2006). Alternatively known as the ‘Kirby Report’ (named after its chair Senator Michael Kirby), it is credited with establishing the MHCC where Sen. Kirby was later appointed the inaugural chair in 2007 and then approached by members at senior levels of the federal government in January 2008 to “do something for the homeless on the downtown East side of Vancouver” (direct quote of Michael Kirby in Macnaughton et al., 2010, p. 10; Cordy, 2016; MHCC, 2022). Macnaughton (2010) offers that the request to address the Vancouver Olympics/Homeless ‘problem’ was accompanied by a large fiscal contribution from the federal government, a shorter than average timeframe for completion, and an advisement to address

homelessness in a manner that appeared broader in scope than the Olympic concern. The ‘something’ very quickly resulted in the At Home/Chez Soi research project where, according to Macnaughton et al. (2010), “the driving forces behind the choice to take action at this particular time and in this particular way appeared to relate to certain salient situations, such as the homelessness situation in Vancouver’s Downtown East side as the Olympic Games approached, combined with a strong commitment to the issue of mental illness at the highest political level” (p. 5). Consequently, RH directives and HF programs and practice informed by At Home Chez Soi’s foundations within the Senate’s report on “transforming mental health and addictions”, espouse health research/mental health epistemologies, that examine individual pathology and diagnostic classification systems immersed in a discourse of recovery for the purpose of housing. These health research epistemologies circulate analyses that prioritize attentions about mental illness and addictions as the individualized causes of homelessness and *develop* responses via this *occupying* ideology/epistemology.

Some authors within the circles of influence during the conception and creation of At Home/Chez Soi, have been critical of its conception (as a response to creating a sanitized space for the Vancouver Olympics), its construction (i.e. as a rapid, covert, and politically self-conscious project with hegemonic origins and design), and its validity (i.e. as a randomized control trial operationalized through psychiatric/mental health epistemology lacking consideration toward lived-experience and long term material impacts and outcomes for people’s needs) (Macnaughton, et al., 2010; Voronka, 2019). According to Macnaughton et al. (2010), this last concern was particularly salient to the

founding team of researchers concerned about utilizing the unusually large financial resources to impact homelessness in the longer-term. As such, the team opted to prioritize a research design that could fiscally support an ongoing program model once the Olympics were complete (anticipating the possibility that federal funding for post-study policy and program delivery would diminish). Thus, rather than attending only to encampments in Vancouver's East side (the original political concern), the At Home/Chez Soi project's specialized team of mental health researchers operationalized a step-wise system of case management provision for varying 'need' through a problematization of agency vs. institutionalization that imagine/s/d a reduction in emergency shelter lengths-of-stay as a product of an institutional ideology of paternalistic 'housing readiness' (what the study operationalizes as control group/treatment as usual (TAU)) (Macnaughton et al., 2010). According to Macnaughton et al. (2010) ultimately the research design was realized through the expertise of a small group of health researchers, political connections, and fortuitous relationships (notably Sam Tsembris of the American Pathways model and collaboration with the Streets to Homes Program in Toronto) that shape/s/d and facilitate/s/d an abstracted/streams-based 'made-in-Canada' research design that signalled, in part, progressive fiscal ideology and political leverage given its established 'success' in the American context (Macnaughton et al., 2010). Not only was the design operationalized to erase and empty the streets of homeless bodies through the more palatable social discourse of anti-stigma mental wellness as a product of the mental health methodological frame, but it also simultaneously introduced how practice would incorporate a market-based 'right to housing' discourse, the structural

arm, via HF's neoliberal epistemology that positions individual choice in markets as freedom/agency to combat a lack thereof in institutions.

Within HF, the discourse of rights is *occupied* by a discourse of individualism. In turn, and in this context, the rights of the individual are *settled* as consumer choice – it posits that *developing* individuals experiencing homelessness into consumers within a market-based housing economy is commensurable to the right to housing. In the Canadian Housing First Toolkit (2014) the homeless body is defined by the discourses of “consumers” and/or “clients” (p. 6). Polvere et al. (2014) offers that the consumer classification highlights the differentiation from institutional responses to homelessness “that ignore the importance of choice” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 23). Here, the previously institutionalized land or place (TAU) used for homeless bodies becomes land as consumer space. Moreover, choice in the free market becomes agency for homeless bodies *(re)developed* as individuals outside of the paternalistic ‘housing readiness’ discourse of the institution. The Canadian Housing First Toolkit: The At Home/Chez Soi experience (2014) states, “participant’s choice allows for these individuals to pursue choices that they see as meaningful and valuable... Consumer choice over housing and services also promotes feelings of self-efficacy and self-determination in other aspects of life” (p. 23). The epistemology of neoliberalism is evident and *occupying* in HF texts wherein this one document, mentions the term ‘consumer’ 46 times, the term ‘choice’ 59 times, and the term ‘individual’ 99 times (Polvere et al., 2014). Described as “a program model”, “systems approach”, and a “philosophy” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 6) HF appears to respond to concerns raised about paternalism and control of institutionalized bodies via

market logics espousing individual choice as agency while erasing the market's disciplinary and institutional functions.

The structural and individual arms/problematizations of contemporary practice was *settled* in the At Home Chez Soi project through HF's attentions to an *occupying* market-based assertion that 'housing is a right', and the medicalized mental health and addictions epistemologies in the Kirby report *developing* a practice model that claims to be "individualized, recovery oriented, and client-driven" (Polvere et al., 2016, p. 2). According to Polvere et al. (2014), "...while the [HF] toolkit has a mental health focus because it is based on the At Home/Chez Soi experience, it is applicable and can be adapted to other segments of the homeless population (e.g., youth, families), many of which also experience mental health challenges." (p. ii). Because the intervention's broad applicability is repeated several times throughout HF toolkits and published articles (as a policy/practice package that can meet the needs of most any individual experiencing homelessness), the discourse of using a mental health system of classification foundational to At Home/Chez Soi for the broad range of homeless bodies regardless of their identification with mental health systems appears to be *settled* within these programs and policies as reasonable and desirable (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018, 2020; GOC, 2022a). This speaks to the process of difference-making necessary for *(re)development* within colonialism (a process that produces logics of erasure) - the *occupying* classification system is unilaterally understood to produce meaning and obligation to the identity of homeless rather than the specific distress and need of the circumstance or person.

(Re)occupation is apparent in the RH directives (the federal funding source for housing and homelessness services), where there is a strong focus on the category called ‘chronically homeless’ that operationalizes funding for increased case management, and increased reporting, guidance and expected housing outcomes for this specific category/classification (GOC, 2022a). The foundations, recommendations, and operationalizations of current housing and homelessness policy and practice, via At Home/Chez Soi, have been specifically designed to attend to ‘chronic homelessness’, an identity category that signals ideas about the kinds of ‘contamination’ visible in public space, produces and circulates analyses that problematize via hierarchies of individual pathology as linked to housing precarity, marking the homeless body as undeserving, and rationalizing operationalizations of human life through research. Derivative of erasing homelessness from the Olympic games, this omits attention to the policy’s use of eugenic era population science erasing attention to the material provision of housing in contemporary policy and practice. Thus, an examination of homeless bodies in housing need (the need for built structure) becomes an examination of individual lack (the locum of houselessness based on an idea of individual pathology).

In response to individualized operationalizations of a ‘right to housing’ that positions homeless bodies in taxonomies of mental illness, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2012) *developed* a definition of homelessness as typology in relation to structural, land-based assessment wherein the identity category of ‘chronic homelessness’ is eschewed in favor of a combination typology that measures acuity/severity based on



time spent (dis)located from land.<sup>3</sup> While this ‘newer’ liberalized typology, complicit in engaging discourse for social transformation, appears grounded in attending to (dis)location and Land/Body bifurcation, categorizing homelessness as “unsheltered”, “emergency sheltered” (COH, 2012, p. 2), “provisionally accommodated” (p. 3), or “at risk of homelessness” (p. 4), it impedes transformation through and by becoming a (re)development of research and assessment operationalization prioritizing hierarchies of lack that omit attention to material housing access in any concrete sense<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, this response also omits attentions to *occupation* via Land/Body bifurcation where the definition of homelessness as typology is severed from the history complicit in its (re)developed and sanitized design. Here, via genocide, dislocation, exclusion, assimilation, and environmental degradation, ‘discovery’, hierarchy, and the desire to *occupy* a national identity transplanted from the imperial metropole to the colony co-constitute to produce the modern normalised body of the deserving citizen and the usable commodified landform through and by logics of elimination/erasure of land knowledges (Land/Body relation) deemed wasteful to bounding, enclosing, and owning a nation state (Swain et al., 2003; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Ince, 2018, 2021; Jones, 2019). Utilizing technologies of abstraction and classifying Land/Body knowledge as waste, *settlers* rationalize/s/d property logics prioritizing colonial capitalist commodified ownership as reasonable and tantamount to human euro supremacist imaginaries of progress and improvement (Swain et al., 2003; Neocleous, 2011; Bhandar, 2016; Ince,

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix ‘B’ for COH (2012) definition.

<sup>4</sup> Assessment tools will be discussed further in section titled ‘Reaching Home’

2018, 2021; Jones, 2019). Whether the technologies of abstraction for homeless bodies and land can be located in the medicalized epistemology of the Kirby Report and At Home/Chez Soi, derived from a conceptualization of rights to housing born of market-based configurations of agency in HF, or they are a product of colonial property logics bifurcating space and maintaining place for profit and progress is, in the end, somewhat irrelevant. What remains important here is the *occupying* force of epistemology, its capacity for erasure and operationalization of life, and its possibilities for attending to material risk, need, and/or distress. In this way, *occupation* via the epistemology/ontology divide – evident in these documents - severs/(dis)locates and (re)places, and Land/Body becomes, for example, ‘provisionally housed’, ‘chronic’, asylums, clients, mines, researchers, experts, reservation systems, mentally-ill, free market actors, and homeless via colonial capitalist needs, risks, responsibilities, and obligations.

- **DEVELOPMENT – Classification and Abstraction**

- **National Housing Strategy (NHS)**

According to the Government of Canada report entitled, Canada’s National Housing Strategy: A Place to Call Home (n.d.(a)), the NHS was *developed* to attend to a number of economic and social concerns raised by the Canadian population: addressing the decades long downloading of affordable housing responsibilities to municipal governments, an increase in “severe core housing need” identified by CMHC as spending more than 30%-50% of household income on housing cost, to “strengthen the middle-class” and improve paths to home ownership, to reform homelessness policy and programs, to attend to the right to housing, to attend to “vulnerable populations”, and to

encourage outcome measures, research, and economic partnerships (GOC, n.d.(a), p. 4). To meet these ends, Employment and Social *Development* Canada (ESDC), the branch of the federal office tasked with administering RH – the program at the helm of the housing and homelessness arm of service – *develop*, set directives, evaluate, and allot RH funds to municipalities who in turn repeat the process for local applicant social service agencies (GOC, 2022a). Most other programs within the NHS are led by CMHC, generally geared toward “the middle-class”, reliant on land *development/developers* and multi-level governmental partnership (GOC, n.d.(a)). Some programs of note for their connection to this arm of the NHS are first the National Housing Co-Investment Fund – a low-interest or forgivable loan program geared toward renovations and repairs to existing community/affordable housing and new builds wherein eligibility is prioritized for projects that meet NHS goals (CMHC, 2022a). These loans are considered only if applicants have a pre-existing governmental partnership and pre-existing financing to support the proposed project. The second program is the Federal Lands Initiative which is designed to provide low or no-cost transfer of federal “surplus” properties to *developers* in partnership with government, for the purpose of affordable housing *development* (GOC, n.d.(b); CMHC, 2022b).

The bifurcated structural and individual streams of attention created by the choice to separate CHMC and ESDC operationalizations divorce how land is wielded for the purpose of creating built material structures from homeless bodies that would attend to human material need. This bifurcation not only positions *developers* with governmental relationships as a subjectivity with the responsibility of wielding land and producing

housing (bifurcating Land/Body), but it also abstracts “severe core housing need” into streams of attention wherein more affluent middle-class populations are “strengthened” in the CMHC structural streams and ‘vulnerable populations’ (identities of lack vis-à-vis income and identity) become the objects of ESDC individualized streams (*re*)*developed* through At Home/Chez Soi structures (GOC, n.d.(a), p. 4; GOC, 2022c). This kind of abstraction erases the process of Land/Body bifurcation via policy and (*re*)orients our attention from difference-making to colonial capitalist ideologies about the kinds of bodies deemed fit for the obligation and responsibility of *development* and land ownership (i.e., here land is in the hands of qualified government sponsored *development* subjects, and the middle-class is incentivized to maintain/ensure status and well-being via home ownership). Bodies marked as poor, homeless, vulnerable (or dangerous), those without land holdings or economic status, undergo (*re*)classification through streams of service operationalized in ESDC and RH. These attentions are visible as middle-class *settlement* discourse in mainstream news articles that attend to the housing crisis for middle-class citizens as “...good, hard-working famil[ies]...not looking for programs...not looking for money...just looking for a fair place for family to go where we can continue working” (Weisz, 2021, para. 1) severed from discourses of housing crisis vis-à-vis people living in hotels, shelters and encampments in many Canadian cities (i.e., Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver, Kitchener, Charlottetown, Hamilton, Winnipeg, and Montreal among others) that utilize bylaws, municipal resources, and police violence against people who face the same ideological crisis but live with far greater material risk and need (CBC News, 2021, 2022; Malone, 2022; Nickerson, 2022; Shingler, 2022).

Within the NHS, the ESDC means-tested programs for homeless bodies bifurcated from the CMHC's incentivized tax transfer co-investment fund system as an equivalent and universal claim to housing rights *develops* and *settles* ideas about worth through and by policy streams that communicate there are different housing crisis for the poor and rich. Moreover, the bifurcation of structural and individual streams attending to housing are productive policy-based decisions that impact one's proximity to political process distancing homeless bodies further from accessing housing rights directly.

- **Reaching Home**

According to ESDC (2020), "The Reaching Home directives provide guidance, details and expectations related to the program requirements to assist communities in preventing and reducing homelessness. This includes a description of eligible activities and expenses" (para. 13). RH is categorized by ESDC as being part of the social *development* arm of a primarily labour-related stream of means-tested programs for people experiencing or "at risk of homelessness" (GOC, 2022a). The RH Directives are the abstracted (re)*development* frame and funding structure for local community programming oriented to address and reduce homelessness, provide suggestions for guiding program delivery, and set expectations and benchmarks for outcomes (GOC, 2022a). Eligible activities and expenses are "housing services", "prevention and shelter diversion", "health and medical service", "client support services", "capital investments" (to improve or expand existing sheltering facilities), and "coordination of resources and data collection" (GOC, 2022a, para. 3). Qualifying applicants for RH program funding almost unilaterally use a HF modality discursively geared toward housing as a right

*developed* through and *occupied* by neoliberal and health research/mental health assessments (CAEH, 2022).

The RH directives operationalize program access to possible housing outcomes (“choices”) based on perceived fitness through a connected and similar process: Housing is segmented as transitional, permanent congregate, permanent with home-visits, market rent, subsidized, and affordable, through the researched taxonomy that also determines service level as Intensive Case Management, Rapid Rehousing, Shelter Diversion, Eviction Prevention, etc., the service’s frequency and duration, and availability based on the local social service agency’s population parameters (GOC, n.d.(a); CAEH, 2022). Because assessment and reporting systems have become a necessity for funding housing and homelessness programs within Canada through the transition from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to RH, this requirement means that as a necessity for accessing funding, the collection and reporting of client information is used to achieve community benchmarks, assess program fidelity, and report more broadly on the status of homelessness via available measures (National Housing Strategies Act, 2019; GOC, 2021, 2022a). This can include information derived from diversion and assessment questionnaires that vary considerably usually along the boundaries of municipality and/or social service agency, and assess criteria based on often invasive trauma-related questions measuring neoliberal and mental-health related benchmarks (Aubry, Bell, Ecker, & Goering, n.d.). These are euro-western tools that advance logics of erasure through assessment as normalized (*settled*) and problematized (*occupying*) systems of hierarchy/worth. Many assessment tools are lengthy self-report questionnaires measuring

social/health/police service utilization as markers of individual ‘vulnerability’ and severity (i.e., how much is spent to keep this person afloat as markers of individual vulnerability/acuity) vis-à-vis self-report questions regarding mental wellness in relation to individual ‘vulnerabilities’ (Aubry et al., n.d.). Focused on acuity of need and articulated as a necessary practice within RH funding directives, identity becomes intertwined within homelessness policy, program, and practice by way of this system of classification and its force in producing funding for homeless bodies via benchmarks within ‘best practice’ guidelines. The *development* of problematizations via research, measurement, and fiscal responsibility/surveillance in RH omits attentions to the process of erasure and abstraction that *settles* homeless bodies as individual acuity scores measuring lack.

The impact of research as *development* - progress and improvement - is that it understands the body as object in a complex system of means-tested categories and streams, shaping eligibility and determining access based on abstraction from abstractions further divorced from lived-reality (and care) and relation to land. Importantly, the process of abstracting shifts our attention from the political to the social process of *development* (re)focusing instead on colonial capitalist systems and structures each problematizations and difference-making projects with ‘new’ research possibilities. NHS and RH state that policy and programs *developed* to attend to housing as a right have an intentional focus on matters of identity in relation to experiences of homelessness (GOC, n.d.(a)). Accordingly, NHS offers that concerns about identity are addressed with an intersectional lens at all levels of these policies because there is an understanding of

material inequality for people experiencing homelessness who also identify as being members of historically disadvantaged populations (GOC, n.d.(a)). The NHS describes this as “housing barriers faced by vulnerable populations”, the “LGBTQ2 community, homeless women, women and children fleeing family violence, seniors, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, those dealing with mental health or addiction issues, veterans, and young adults” (GOC, n.d.(b), p. 18). Increased attention to lived-experience consultation, research, and the setting of program funding benchmarks aiming for improved identity-based housing outcomes are offered by NHS documents as method of research *development* for attending to those disadvantaged within policy and program structure (GOC, n.d.(a); GOC, 2022a; CAEH, 2022). At the local level, RH Directives aim to operationalize and abstract objectives and adjacent funding to meet people’s needs by offering definitional levels of individual acuity/severity using agreed upon assessment tools reported to newly required centralized report systems (i.e., HIFIS) (GOC, 2022a). Within practice, these attentions via assessment tools were/are *developed* to stream populations into the program of ‘best fit’ (creating a classification system meant to prioritize ‘need’), inform case management plans (and housing ‘choice’), and reinforcing a regional reporting mechanism for municipalities and funding organizations alike to assess program outcomes, community gaps in service, and to allot funds accordingly (Aubry et al., n.d., ESDC, 2022). Best fit, need, and choice, all operationalizations representing the formation of a population science derived from the *occupying* research process and its attention to *developing* unfit individual homeless bodies into configurations of structural and individual human well-being. In relation to “vulnerable”



populations, from the program/practice level, the Canadian Housing First Toolkit offers that “the model can be modified for various subpopulations” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 45). The “vulnerable” homeless body is abstracted as a variable and cultural identity marker within these theorizations, distilled into questionnaires and assessments erasing histories and context where ‘contemporary’ operationalizations of hegemonic case management subjectivities are *developed* to address their modern needs. Moreover, it omits the history of so-called vulnerability produced through and by a continuous colonial capitalist process of (dis)location and violence (re)*developed* as ‘new’ research possibilities in the contemporary.

- **SETTLEMENT – Agency**

- **Housing First**

An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity understands agency as possible through our relations, obligations, and communication (Watts, 2013). Epistemological division, within euro-western problematization of the homeless body via research, systems of hierarchy and classification produce an objectification/subjectification process where research abstraction and its adjacent funding is further operationalized and *settled* into two sanitized streams of historically understood power via embodied identity: Social services and case managers (moral agents) and landlords (wielding land in the market). Here, the NHS right to housing for homeless bodies has been (re)*developed* as accessible via social and economic systems/structures/streams.

HF is defined as having five recovery-based ‘core principles’ that include: “immediate access to housing with no preconditions”, “consumer choice and self-

determination”, “individualized, recovery oriented, and client-driven supports”, “harm reduction”, and “social and community integration” (Polvere et al., 2016, p. 2). These core principles are *developed* to guide case managers working primarily in social service organizations funded through the ESDC’s RH directives by way of municipal channels (ESDC, 2022). According to ESDC (2018), “case managers are the cornerstone to support clients in obtaining and maintaining stable housing”, they are “called upon” to be “a navigator”, “an advocate”, “a coordinator”, “a collaborator”, and “a communicator” (p. 2). It is in these HF operationalizations of ‘best practice’ where moral and market logics are enacted via case management subjectivities as a response to individual market problematizations and liberalized moral ideologies. Understood as a practice model to meet the needs of homeless bodies, RH operationalizations and funding priorities omit attention to the longer histories/process of erasure via, for example, *settlement* and assimilation policies and Enlightenment era property logics dependent on Land/Body bifurcation and systems of classification.

Within HF toolkits discourses of culture appear to permeate organizational and case-management levels of service wherein a “culture of Housing First” (described as a “sense of community”) (p. 82) is itself encouraged, especially where “culture reflects Housing First principles” (p. 82), within a “culture of evaluation...to ensure that the evaluation is useful to a broad range of stakeholders who “buy in” to the process” (p. 149) (Polvere et al., 2014). Overall, social service organizations are encouraged to provide case managers with “a culture of problem-solving and learning” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 40) and, in turn, case managers provide clients a “culture of hope” (ESDC, 2018, p. 9), a

“culture of safety” (ESDC, 2018, p. 24), and overall, must become ‘culturally competent’ (Polvere et al., 2014; NEAH, 2016; ESDC, 2018). Within NEAH’s (2016) toolkit are hegemonic discourses about client culture in relation to a case manager’s aptitude for wielding cultural competency as capital to mitigate housing stability issues and the landlord-tenant relationship. For instance, NEAH (2016) states: “case managers must consider that some behaviors and beliefs of tenants may be culturally rooted, requiring conversations about alternative ways for tenants to move forward without compromising their housing” (p. 43). This kind of discourse has force in *settling* ideas about cultural erasure as necessary to maintaining/*settling* the homeless body’s ‘right’ to housing – where identities of difference/lack mark a client’s behavior and beliefs as “requiring” polite and liberalized “conversations” about becoming ideal tenants (an assimilative practice and helpful metaphor highlighting HF’s connection to Land/Body bifurcation as a cultural/material (up)rooting). Multiple toolkits appear to demonstrate an adherence to assimilative cultural tropes relating to *settlement* as a response to HF’s recovery-oriented philosophy (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). The “sense of community” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 82) established through the *settlement* logics of case manager as moral agent defending individuals and their agency/rights (their rights to be a lease holder) through and by disciplinary moral techniques of cultural erasure to assimilate homeless bodies into social ‘recovery’ and thus become ideal tenants, community members, and consumers. Moreover, through HF cultures of “problem-solving and learning” (Polvere et al., 2014, p. 40) case manager subjectivities inscribe while themselves *becoming* culturally managed beacons of safety and hope.

HF, via RH funding, prioritizes case management and landlord recruitment/retention as a primary source of alleviating housing need for homeless bodies. According to NAEH (2016), under the first core principle, activities for a program “...include paying for security deposits, move-in expenses, rent, utilities, arrears, or other costs that may help a participant obtain and sustain housing” (NAEH, 2016, p. 24). “Core components” of these programs include: “housing identification”, “move-in and rent assistance”, and “rapid rehousing case management and services” (NAEH, 2016, p. 4). Moreover, while the ideas surrounding consumer choice and recovery (assimilation) are described as imbuing clients with “feelings of self-efficacy and self-determination” (Polvere, 2014, p. 23), nearly all the toolkits examined for this work paternalistically recommend that successful tenancies ensure that a tenant’s funds are paid directly to the landlord (Distasio & McCullough, 2010; Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). This understanding supports responsabilizing social service organizations to act as economic and moral middlemen (agents) on behalf of homeless bodies mitigating relations with landlords. According to NAEH (2016), “critical to the formation of a landlord-program relationship is the recognition of the landlord as a vital partner” (p. 8). The ESDC (2017) toolkit also suggests that “if the landlord/property manager/superintendent is on site, make a habit of knocking on their door after every home visit with a tenant. This opens up a line of communication while also reassuring the landlord that the tenant is receiving the support that was promised” (p. 40). Here, HF programs hope to gain access to properties through the extension of moral client surveillance meant to reassure landlords that their property and economic investment will

not be wasted. In relation to “drug users”, Polvere et al. (2014) recommends reminding stakeholders (i.e., landlords, clients) that “housing first is not ‘housing only’ and requires participating in home visits and carrying out the responsibilities of “being a good tenant” (p. 45). Again, a signal that access to housing is not a guarantee, rather it is contingent on *becoming* worthy of the ‘right’ to housing through case management education/assimilation (perhaps similar to the aforementioned ‘uprooting’ of “behaviours and beliefs” mitigated/erased to actualize a so-called ‘right’) (NAEH, 2006, p. 43). In response to these kinds of concerns, HF operationalizes case managers as housing rights specialists and client/tenant educators to combat and overcome a *laissez-faire* logic of the landlord/tenant relationship (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). These discourses of homeless bodies promote hegemonic case management subjectivities in relation to the abstracted and erased Other (re)articulating how disciplinary market logics may be mitigated through HF’s operationalizations of moral surveillance, education, and discipline. Here, agency is understood as the opportunity to be a tenant, albeit through *occupying* medical and market logics via the proper ‘recovery’, mental health ‘stability’, and cultural integration (*development*) necessary to becoming assimilated/*settled* into material access.

As pre-emptive strategies to obtaining a tenancy on behalf of/with homeless bodies, case management activities involve information-gathering strategies for securing market-rent units ‘with’ clients (i.e., credit, eviction, budgeting history) (NAEH, 2016). The toolkit warns that people may not provide all information nor remember what may be important and so case managers are encouraged to paternalistically investigate

information on a client's behalf (NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017). The strategy is designed to mitigate landlord disapproval during the application process and ensure a tenancy of 'best fit' (most often one where landholders feel secure in the receipt of return on their property investment) (NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017). Budgeting and financial assessments, while a degrading practice for those with meagre financial resources, prompt case managers to diplomatically engage primarily economically driven landlords to consider clients/tenants despite the (de)institutionalizing promise of obtaining housing first. Diplomatic appeals, operationalized as case management strategies in landlord HF toolkits include, for example, the promise of the home visit, connection to social/medical/mental health supports, and the promise of program funds to cover imagined future damages (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). Quite often, despite these landlord recruitment strategies (and omitted in HF literature) case manager advocacy for client tenancies devolves into appeals to landlords for charity and/or benevolence to just 'give people a chance'. This speaks to familiar case management responsibilities and obligations within broader colonial capitalist projects of social and economic transformation: identities marked by lack prescribed hegemonic and often degrading operationalizations of care/help to respond to material need and risk through and by degrading forms of charity and moral/market surveillance. These hierarchies of identity normalize dominance and benevolence in colonial capitalist terms, and relations with clients/consumers/homeless bodies/land allow landlords and case managers to become and/or remain ideal citizen subjects.

Within HF case management, the understanding of housing as a right has translated to a focus on landlord-tenant law, eviction prevention, and human rights in housing, these understandings are applied almost exclusively as useful to supporting clients in the market rent system and can often produce an ethical burden of balance for programs that both recruit landlords for housing homeless bodies and advocate for tenants with these same landlords (arguably supporting a conflict of interest) (GOC, n.d.(a); Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2018; CAEH, 2022). Proposed as a universal right in landlord/tenant legislation like the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA, 2006) and the Ontario Human Rights Code (HRC, 1990), GOC (2022b) offers that “clients housed [from RH programs] have rights consistent with applicable landlord and tenant acts and regulations”, but, like all of the HF toolkits, the management of these rights are *settled* within a case manager’s roll and ability to “*develop* strong relationships with landlords” (para. 3, emphasis added). Moreover, some HF literature warn case managers to be aware of tenancy concerns suggesting tenants be moved prior to a legal proceeding to mitigate evictions at all costs – a landlord retention practice that renders access to recourse via RTA and HRC null potentially erasing a broad range of tenant experiences from legal record (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017).

Stable housing and housing-stability are cited as the most important goal of HF programs (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). Housing placement within these policies is most frequently sought from the private market system but the assumption that units, and their proprietors, are stable, suitable, and safe is questionable at best and media stories about “slumlords” (Scott, 2020; Weisz, 2021; Cuthbertson, 2022;

Gemmill, 2022; Hristova, 2022; Little, 2022; Patil, 2022), despicable living conditions, and displacement/eviction through landlord-tenant law are frequent (and when addressed, often produce gentrified space economically inaccessible to bodies (dis)placed through *development* and ‘progress’) (Naylor, 2018; Weisz, 2021; Cuthbertson, 2022; Hristova, 2022; Luck, Pierce, Angelovski, & Malik, 2022; Patil, 2022). Meanwhile, discourse within the HF toolkit literature relating to the stability of rental units and landlords/property managers appear to unilaterally be understood as a question of client/tenant stability (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). Accordingly, ESDC (2017) offers that, “an effective marketing strategy [that] will address landlords’ needs and goals [are] regular home visits to offer services to tenants” are important selling features for housing workers and organizations in establishing trusting relationships with landlords who are considering renting to HF clients (p. 29). What is being marketed are *settlement* practices that promise guidance, the optics of surveillance and discipline, and paternalistic control in the lives of tenants/clients to improve the homeless body into ideal tenants.

According to NAEH’s Rapid Rehousing Toolkit (2016), “housing first is not solely about housing and never should be. Support services are part of the HF model and may include formal support services (e.g., doctor, therapist, social worker) or informal supports, like connecting with family, friends, and faith groups (Polvere et al., 2014; NAEH, 2016; ESDC, 2017, 2018). In HF, these supports are not prescribed; people have the agency to select supportive services they need and want, tailoring their supports to their unique situation” (NAEH, 2016, p. 5). NAEH (2016) also states that “the solution to



homelessness is housing” (p. 5), explaining that previous evictions, individual problems with “compliance” (p. 5), or criminality are not reasons to exclude clients/consumers from service. Rather, NAEH (2016) states “in order to honor client choice, it may be important to offer some homeless programs with requirements” (p. 5). The exact contours of individual agency within these discourses often appear as gaslighting - confusing, contradictory, and unclear. While in the first statement it appears as though the institutional ideologies of housing under the preconditions of utilizing support services remain within the structure of HF programs (albeit they are described as being subject to client ‘choice’, they are not “prescribed” and clients “select”), the second statement appears resolute about a right to housing stance devoid of the same conditions (NAEH, 2016, p. 5).

An appreciation that HF program implementation as situated in a process of Land/Body bifurcation is helpful to understanding how individualism and choice can quickly become conditional and constraining. Where “the solution to homelessness is housing” (NAEH, 2016) and core principles of “immediate access to housing with no preconditions” (Polvere et al., 2016, p. 2) are emphasized, there remains a medicalized/mental-health epistemology/*occupation* (and an adjacent liberalized but eugenic system of taxonomy) that continues to classify homeless bodies based in systems of worth in need of *development* via benevolent and liberalized forms of social, medical, and community help and care to become ideal tenants. Here, the agency/rights meant to be afforded via deinstitutionalized ‘choice’ in the market system become part of an economic institution managed in the social sphere. The discourse of “housing first is not

solely about housing” (re)articulates the importance of case managers as *settlement* subjectivities for clients/consumers in *becoming* self-determined rights holders, tenants, and consumers in the market for land albeit with the caveat that organizations can consider “offer[ing] some programs with requirements” as exclusions signaling exceptions to benevolence and limits to liberalized program/practice flexibility based on meeting social, cultural, and moral benchmarks.

Similarly, analysis of discourse in news reports describe the material consequences of exclusions and exceptions within the shelter systems (the main site location for access to HF supports) through the language of shelter-restriction and alternative housing options (Craggs, 2020; Hristova, 2021; Snowdon, 2021; Chen, 2022; Spurr & Gibson, 2022). According to some, many are “...being service restricted from all of the shelters... due to the fact that their needs are too high” (Craggs, 2020, para. 5). Many homeless bodies restricted, evicted, or excluded from tenancies and emergency shelters for actions described as ‘violent’, or as “acute mental health and addictions related”, live, often unwelcome, in public spaces prioritized for the deserving public and ideal citizens (City of Hamilton, 2021, para. 6; Hristova, 2021; Snowdon, 2021; Chen, 2022; Spurr & Gibson, 2022). Other discourses about homeless bodies in public space (often ‘housing’ of last resort) appear to signal the boundaries of community belonging (i.e., “not the kind of community we want” (Craggs, 2020, para. 16)). The *settlement* of colonial capitalism’s epistemology communicates an obligation in these kinds of discourses, prioritizing the rationalization of “unsafe” bodies threatening adjacent neighbours, the larger community, and the public, despite the obvious lack of safety

embodied by unsheltered homeless bodies (Draaisma, 2020, para. 1; City of Hamilton 2021). These discourses also prioritize attentions to eugenic era conceptualizations of social and moral contamination often at the expense of (or limiting) political action about a lack of built housing. Recently fire safety orders emptied encampments of hundreds of homeless bodies either evicted, restricted, or excluded from shelter and/or tenancies on Hastings Street in Vancouver (The Canadian Press, 2022; Cox & Keller, 2022; Metassa-Fung, 2022). Similarly, encampments in several Canadian cities have been cleared of homeless bodies often through police brutality (Moro, 2020, 2021a, 2022; CBC News, 2021, 2022; Brockbank, 2022; Draaisma, 2022; Hunt et al., 2022; Nickerson, 2022; Peesker, 2022). In all these instances, orders and bylaws designed to attend to community risk and need (fire safety in the former and camping and loitering prohibitions in the latter) wield dehumanizing hierarchies of worth to partition, reserve, and protect (often through police violence) land for the public, the “national-native”, and property owners. Often excluded (again) through discourse defining ‘community member’, orders and bylaws are discussed as concrete and intractable (as though they were not enacted within social and political dialogue in the first place, nor formed or malleable to new considerations of risk and safety to best meet the needs of the whole). Here, like the funded priorities and program boundaries in RH and HF, the so-called chronically homeless body is rendered wasteful, dangerous, and excluded/exiled through and by degrading operationalizations of colonial capitalist systems of worth and legalized or researched strategies for attending to safety, risk, and need revealing exceptions where

eviction, restriction, removal, and criminalization discipline bodies stretched against the bounds, laws, norms, and rules of belonging.

## **DISCUSSION**

The right to housing described in NHS is an injection of liberalizing law and policies into the brutal institutional reign of the market system. It readmits a consideration of a particular kind of social ideology into a political market-based institution to blunt and make good economic discipline and violence. Not unlike the rationalizations used to sanitize brutal imperial and colonial violence (dis)possessing bodies (i.e., slavery, Indigenous genocide) via racialized taxonomies of worth and Enlightenment era ideologies of a free market economy (where the social and democratic system of rights became/come co-constituted with the brutality of capitalism) to make profiteering and global economic conquest good for the metropole, contemporary policy introduces housing as a right to varying degrees based on patronage and economic worth streaming via classifications/taxonomies into a similarly operationalized system of ‘rights’ access that, in turn, shape being, becoming, and belonging. For homeless bodies, economic violence is made good via ESDC the benevolent civilizing of ‘individuals’ (a way of being) with the right to choose in a free (democratic) market (economic) system - a liberalized resolution of the ‘right’ to housing fit for a body’s taxonomic position and guarded by the principle of less eligibility.

The liberalized resolution to a right to housing is also where contemporary “agency explanations” within theorizations of so-called neoliberal homelessness are

*settled* and embodied as HF case management subjectivities. Just as colonial care discourses derived from Christian morality legacies of, for example, the Indian Act paternalistically aimed to save the colonized from themselves, as well as the charitable mitigation of *laissez-faire* Malthusian logic that understood the demise of the poor/defective as a natural phenomenon of progress and production co-constituted with eugenic era euro-western embodiments of benevolence and sacrifice to produce morally superior expert/teachers of assimilation as social worth, RH and HF use logics of assimilation that promote the embodiment of euro/human/white supremacist moral and market ideologies to access ‘normative’ housing rights. Within contemporary discourses of homelessness, case managers *become* these projects of “humanitarian assistance” (i.e., being the conduit of the landlord/tenant relationship, maintaining a regiment of surveillant home visits, and extensive credit and budgeting checks) to *develop* not just socially assimilated ‘individuals’, but economic and morally viable human bodies (worker and client) deserving of the symbolically adjacent ‘rights’ of consumer choice (Neale, 2016, p. 49).

The understanding of homelessness within contemporary policy as a problematization of individual (medicalized) and structural (institutional) factors within a neoliberal market economy omits critical analyses of mental health systems complicit in difference-making knowledge that often understand distress as pathology internal to the homeless body rather than as a consequence of the violence of erasure, discipline, and surveillance inherent to the process of assimilative colonial capitalist conquest. Often circulated as a cause of homelessness and bound to NHS, RH, and HF, homeless

Bodies/Land become ill/defective (or derelict) and policy makers, researchers, doctors, psychiatrists, social workers, (or remediators) and the like un/questioningly embody hegemonic subjectivities of ‘care’ as siloed purveyors of recovery (and *development*). These contemporary analyses also prioritize attention to institutions as **material places** (i.e., hospitals, asylums, prisons, shelters, etc.) of structural problematizations about homelessness and omit critical analysis of, for example, economic, governmental, and judicial systems (**non-material spaces**) as institutions complicit with identity projects bound to colonial capitalist ideology/power. Understood in the problematized context of systems/structures, these institutions (and our embodied complicity within them) communicate hegemonic knowledge about criminality, laziness, madness, poverty, guilt, punishment, vulnerability, danger, (or condemnation, ghettoization) that *become* homelessness through and by the public, the citizen, and the nation.

As closed/complete, siloed/individual policy and practice, with specialized knowledge and expertise, NHS, RH, and HF represent difference-making knowledge systems (and their respective embodied subjectivities) that leave intact technologies of war/problematicization/*occupation*/science and logics of erasure/assimilation that self-consciously communicate obligation (agency) to themselves and their projects/’benefactors’ (relations) through and by continuous operationalizations within hierarchies of colonial capitalist worth. Understood as obligation or responsibility to discipline and/or cause, the war on homelessness requires instead obedience to Land/Body bifurcation to act upon and through technologies of abstraction to understand allies (the ‘subjects’, ‘communities’, ‘nations’, ‘experts’, ‘frontline workers’), enemies

(the ‘Others’, ‘strangers’), to avoid the unpredictability and foreignness of nature (‘animality’, ‘incivility’), danger (‘madness’, ‘terrorism’) and what it operationalizes as signs of weakness (‘laziness’, ‘vulnerability’, ‘defect’, ‘illness/disability/disease’ in a mission of completeness to end homelessness (‘the’ problem) for all time. According to Butler (2020), “...by acting as if the use of violence can be a means to achieve a nonviolent end, one imagines that the practice of violence does not in the act posit violence as its own end...the use of violence only makes the world into a more violent place, by bringing more violence into the world” (p. 20). The discourses of the homeless body via *occupation*, *settlement*, and *development* reveal a project of violence, nation-building, conquest, and domination often enacted through embodied hegemonic subjectivities enabled and evident in these contemporary policies and practices. The technologies of abstraction within NHS, RH, and HF advance logics of erasure and ideologies about the ways in which Land/Body bifurcation (‘*how*’), produce cultural/knowledge erasure (‘*why*’), to advance the embodiment and communication of domination and benevolence in ideological/political terms (‘*what*’). These forms of assimilation and erasure work hard to silence valuable knowledges consequential to how life is lived. As longer histories and processes of domination, benevolence, and power, non-material political ideology ((dis)placing an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity and producing a thingified and ‘disabled’ system of worth and life) demands obedience and impedes transformational interventions necessary to address the material causes of homelessness created by and through human supremacist rationalizations of truth, reason, and freedom. Transformed, Land/Body, material culture producing social relational

knowledges, become ‘unthinking’ placeholders embodying hegemonic subjectivities (re)*developed* as political ends. As such, Land/Body bifurcation/*occupation* is a wielding of the material to produce/*develop* a symbolic, concretized/*settled* political order.

The severance and abstraction of land and body promote a disengagement with the political that perpetuates the silencing of unique Land/Body knowledges (material power and relations of meaning) productive to the creation of solidarities and potentially transformative relationships. While colonial capitalism (a becoming) reorganizes communication and appropriates obligation as obedience to sovereignty (and its adjacent militarized protectorate) as a principle of protection for its thingified “people out of place” (Sharma, 2020, p. 4), it standardizes laws, rights, policies, and practices *occupying* the siloed political and social realms signifying boundaries of acceptance, exception, belonging, and meaning. Watts (2013) reminds us that “from the process of colonization and the imposition of the epistemology-ontology frame, our communication and obligations with other beings of creation is continuously interrupted” (p. 24). By and through these interruptions (normalized/normalizing systems of hierarchy and rights) agency becomes obedience (to euro-western ways of being) instead of responsibility (to ourselves by and through our relations) placing colonial power, us and our, maintenance above reflecting on Land/Body knowledges, experiences, and ethics to determine, interact with, and become relationally material/political (Arendt, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

This historiographical study utilized an ontology of Land/Body simultaneity to examine the discourses of homelessness with particular emphasis on *occupation*,



*settlement, development*, and land for analysis, and intervention when applied to NHS, RH, and HF. Although contemporary discourses of homelessness understand the homeless body as a neoliberal manifestation, when compared alongside anti-disciplinary, historiographical, and news related texts, homelessness appears as an active, nonlinear, incomplete, ongoing, and relational process. NHS, RH, and HF circulate and prioritize analyses about the causes of homelessness via epistemological expertise with specialized skills of abstraction that erase valuable knowledges and experiences. Siloed into disciplinary fields, experts *become* exalted problem-solvers/wielders of ideological/non-material things tasked with solving/ending very material concerns. Within the contemporary discourses of homelessness understood as of neoliberal origin, NHS policy makers wield law, rights, and relationships, researchers wield scientific and economic mental health modalities and attentions to ‘deinstitutionalization’, and programs and case managers wield legal/landlord/tenant education and assimilative conceptualizations of recovery as operationalized and embodied subjectivities of human life and worth. NHS, RH, and HF (re)occupy Land/Body by and through these technologies of colonial capitalist conquest (re)developed as human supremacist ‘rights’-based virtue signalling. As such, these policies, practices, and adjacent institutions, professions, communities, etc. create the context for maintaining a euro-western *settlement* status quo, taxonomizing homeless bodies and landscapes to prioritize and exalt ideal citizen subjects wielding commodified ‘wasteless’ landforms, sanitizing/civilizing/operating as hegemonically designed.

Although there were numerous technologies and logics named and described in this analysis (i.e., domination, war, problematization, operationalization, science, abstraction, difference-making, being and becoming, discipline, morality, Land/Body bifurcation) of note are first the interaction of benevolence and domination - where historiographies of religion, liberalism, and embodiments of care/helping (that often have force in the creation of law/moral code) co-constituted with conquest/domination, institutionalizing economic logics, and embodied expert authority (that more often had force in protecting and enforcing laws via discipline/punishment). Secondly, the spatial configuration of 'rights' in relation to taxonomies of worth (where proximity to identities of worth create proximity to political power in accessing so-called housing as a right). Thirdly, the erasure of culture to produce/enforce/enact an ideological political (where the colonial capital formation of society and its attendant 'rights' necessitate assimilation to 'save the person from themselves', or, more simply, the maintenance and defence of siloed political order severed from recognition of social interaction). And lastly, despite elaborate epistemic discourses of land as economic, political, and legal claim/thing/commodity, an absence of contemporary discourses that reveal attentions to land as material and relational, cultural and social, part of a whole that is *home*.

- **Implications and Limitations**

The implications of these findings for social work speak to a need for deep reflection, reconciliation, and action about the history, and particularly the violent legacy of social work as a profession and its continuation in the contemporary – these are ongoing and incomplete ideologies and practices of benevolence, innocence-making co-

constituted with a deeply rooted legacy and contemporary professional violence. Ideas about charity, liberalism, and social justice (social work's siloed conceptualization for many similar projects through and by the 'vulnerable') become assimilation, erasure, and trauma. In a warring territory of Land/Body bifurcation vulnerability becomes something to eradicate or benevolently ameliorate because, in war, vulnerability (the abstraction of emotion and experience) becomes liability/weakness/risk to maintaining power omitting value, strength, and need. And as a society and culture that lives with, perpetuates, and operationalizes violence as tool of knowledge and power, a constant threat (and sometimes hegemonic hatred) of being and becoming vulnerable *occupies* material and political lives. Butler (2020) asks, "in portraying people and communities who are subject to violence in systematic ways do we do them justice, do we respect the dignity of their struggle if we summarize them as 'the vulnerable'?" (pp. 186-187). In relation to *occupied* hegemonic knowledge and land, Watts' (2013) explanation appears to reply: "dirt is acknowledged as an actant at best, no longer an afterthought but still limited with regard to ability. How does dirt affect me? How do I affect dirt? These are the questions that underscore the agency which is limited to a humancentric quandary...consumption, ownership, etc. are conceptualized as the basis for trans-corporeality in the process by which borders are constructed and solidified. In this relationship with dirt, humans are responsible to land the way an owner might be responsible for a pet" (pp. 29-30). Such a humancentric, paternalistic, *occupying* and abstracted stance about the significance of responsibility and vulnerability represent help and care discourses based in a particular understanding of Land/Body (one that does not acknowledge, listen, nor learn to/from its

(de)graded and objectified Others). This underscores how agency is dependent upon colonial capitalist charity, liberalism, and social justice, where professions/experts make claim and/or impose ideas via supremacist obedience (like an owner would a pet).

Social work's foundation and legacy have *occupied* and become 'innocent' beneficiaries of a colonial capitalist 'us-them' identity war – if 'they' are a devalued, vulnerable, embodiment of cultural lack, marked by perceived defect, it is because an 'us' *develops* and wields to become dominant, benevolent, knowledgeable, responsible, rights holders/placeholders that *occupy* disciplines/positions of *settlement* and safety. In this way, and through the laws, morals, operationalizations, and enforcement communicating obedience to frontline expertise and position, agency is secured within a hierarchy created by and through our own silenced vulnerability and fear. While social work's forms of 'helping' (as, for example, researchers, managers, frontline workers) can often secure and become, for example, a warm bed for the night, a meal, a facilitated tenancy – all arguably much lesser evils and in line with the NHS's vision of "...stemming the flow of people into homelessness" (GOC, n.d.(b), p. 18), it is imperative to pause, recognize, reconcile, and repair our relational complicity as individuals and as a profession at the confluence of it if not only because "...we are all at some level vulnerable to the violence that is possible within it", but also to *unsettle* imaginaries of individualized agency/safety to demand/risk relational and complicit action addressing materiality in a siloed political sphere (Joseph, 2015a, p. 35).

An ontology of Land/Body simultaneity communicates a need to aggressively risk questioning the claims we make (claims about ourselves, our specialized knowledges,

claims about Others, and claims on land) and become responsible to ourselves and our relations in non-violent ways. A colonial capitalist *occupation* provides an illusory claim to self-sustainability and the possibility of freedom, improvement, reason, and truth – it is time to accept that risk and need are inherent to being, are ongoing/continuous, and cannot ever be *redeveloped* as complete, endable projects (this bifurcation of time and relation amasses endings and identity in its cross hairs and we must stop theorizing, operationalizing, researching, embodying, and *developing* its newest targets). An ontology to Land/Body simultaneity communicates a need to embrace possibilities to undermine *occupation, settlement, and development* by listening to ourselves and others, being self-aware instead of self-conscious, and *develop* ways of learning to risk, imagine, and dream. This analysis offers possibilities to undermine the practices of *occupation, settlement, and development* - to *occupy* new ways of being ourselves together, to recognize hegemonic negotiations of life and worth *developed* to survive exclusion for a limiting/individualized/and contrived agency and power, and to *settle* for nothing less than a political and public process that is relational, centers material life (Land/Body), and recognizes knowledges by questioning symbols/systems of worth and *redevelopment* that enclose/bound/border/silo to erase and eliminate. Land (this planet) is, in so many ways, communicating a responsibility (obligating us) to risk *becoming* actively complicit in (dis)locating the severing maps of colonial capitalist exploitation that create the context for homelessness because Land/Body need place/space to *be home*.

There is a lot to learn about the nature of our interventions and our rationales. As such, through nuance and care both in this work and in practice we are wise to be alert of

our position, motivation, and practices as interlocuters. I think that this kind of analysis helps to understand the nature of complicity, how legacy and communication have force – just as the being and becoming of the homeless body is formed and forming, so too are disciplines and our responses. Overall, I am hopeful to undertake this examination and analysis as a process of incompleteness, esteem, and relationality, and that, with others, it can communicate an invitation to harness experiences and knowledges that work well, improve thinking, listening, learning, and is most concerned with appreciating how and why homelessness is being lived.

## Appendix A

Watts (2013) schematic “on the left is a depiction of how an Anishnaabe and/or Haudenosaunee cosmology might be represented. On the right, the process by which a Euro-Western meta-understanding can contribute to colonization of these Indigenous cosmologies” (p. 22):

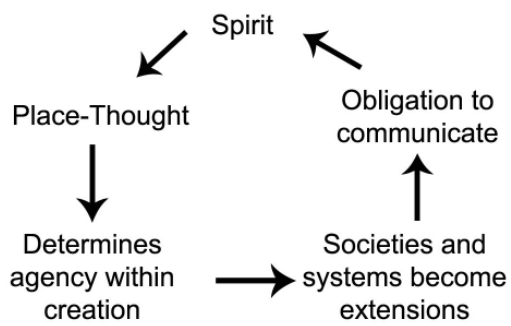
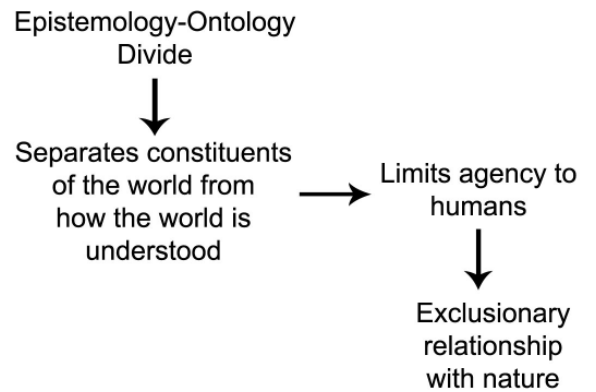


Table 1.1



## Appendix B

# Canadian Definition Of Homelessness

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

## DEFINITION

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing.

Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other. That is, homelessness encompasses a range of physical living situations, organized here in a *typology* that includes 1) **Unsheltered**, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation; 2) **Emergency Sheltered**, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence; 3) **Provisionally Accommodated**, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, and finally, 4) **At Risk of Homelessness**, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/ or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one's shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.

The problem of homelessness and housing exclusion is the outcome of our broken social contract; the failure of society to ensure that adequate systems, funding and supports are in place so that all people, even in crisis situations, have access to housing and the supports they need. The goal of ending homelessness is to ensure housing stability, which means people have a fixed address and housing that is appropriate (affordable, safe, adequately maintained, accessible and suitable in size), and includes required income, services and supports to enhance their well-being and reduce the risk that they will ever become homeless. This means focusing both on prevention and on sustainable exits from homelessness.

In the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the definition of homelessness recognizes the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples (including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) amongst Canadian homeless populations resulting from colonization and cultural genocide. The [Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada](#) highlights the necessity of considering the historical, experiential, and cultural perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the ongoing experience of



colonization and racism as central to understanding and addressing Indigenous homelessness. In addition, numerous populations, such as youth, women, families, people with mental health and/ or addictions issues, people impacted by violence, seniors, veterans, immigrants, refugees, ethno-racial and racialized people, and members of LGBTQ2S communities experience homelessness due to a unique constellation of circumstances and as such the appropriateness of community responses has to take into account such diversity.

## TYPOLOGY

The typology describes the range of accommodations that people without appropriate, stable, and permanent housing may experience. Those without acceptable housing experience a range of different types of homelessness, from being unsheltered to having housing that is insecure or inappropriate. As homelessness is not one single event or state of being, it is important to recognize that at different points in time people may find themselves experiencing different types of homelessness.

### 1) Unsheltered

This includes people who lack housing and are not accessing emergency shelters or accommodation, except during extreme weather conditions. In most cases, people are staying in places that are not designed for or fit for human habitation.

1.1 PEOPLE LIVING IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SPACES WITHOUT CONSENT OR CONTRACT

- **Public space, such as sidewalks, squares, parks, forests, etc.**
- **Private space and vacant buildings (squatting)**

1.2 PEOPLE LIVING IN PLACES NOT INTENDED FOR PERMANENT HUMAN HABITATION

- **Living in cars or other vehicles**
- **Living in garages, attics, closets or buildings not designed for habitation**
- **People in makeshift shelters, shacks or tents**

### 2) Emergency Sheltered

This refers to people who, because they cannot secure permanent housing, are accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user. Such accommodation represents a stop-gap institutional response to homelessness provided by government, non-profit, faith based organizations and/or volunteers.

2.1 EMERGENCY OVERNIGHT SHELTERS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS

These facilities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people who are homeless. Such short-term emergency shelters may target specific sub-populations, including women, families, youth or Aboriginal persons, for instance. These shelters typically have minimal eligibility criteria, offer shared sleeping facilities and amenities, and often expect clients to leave in the morning. They may or may not offer food, clothing or other services.

Some emergency shelters allow people to stay on an ongoing basis while others are short term and are set up to respond to special circumstances, such as extreme weather.

## 2.2 SHELTERS FOR INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES IMPACTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE

These shelters provide basic emergency and crisis services including safe accommodation, meals, information, and referral. They provide a high security environment for women (and sometimes men) and children fleeing family violence or other crisis situations. Residents are not required to leave during the day. These facilities offer private rooms for families and a range of supports to help residents rebuild their lives.

## 2.3 EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR PEOPLE FLEEING A NATURAL DISASTER OR DESTRUCTION OF ACCOMMODATION DUE TO FIRES, FLOODS, ETC.

### **3) Provisionally Accommodated**

This describes situations in which people, who are technically homeless and without permanent shelter, access accommodation that offers no prospect of permanence. Those who are provisionally accommodated may be accessing temporary housing provided by government or the non-profit sector, or may have independently made arrangements for short-term accommodation.

#### 3.1 INTERIM HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS

Interim housing is a systems-supported form of housing that is meant to bridge the gap between unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing. In some cases referred to as 'transitional housing', this form of accommodation typically provides services beyond basic needs, offers residents more privacy, and places greater emphasis on participation and social engagement. Interim housing targets those who would benefit from structure, support and skill-building prior to moving to long term housing stability, with the ultimate goal of preventing a return to homelessness. In the case of second-stage housing for those impacted by family violence, the key characteristics of this housing are the safety and security it provides, trauma recovery supports, along with the ultimate goal of preventing revictimization. Interim housing has time limitations on residency, but generally allows for a longer stay (in some cases up to three years) compared to emergency shelters.

#### 3.2 PEOPLE LIVING TEMPORARILY WITH OTHERS, BUT WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF CONTINUED RESIDENCY OR IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS FOR ACCESSING PERMANENT HOUSING

Often referred to as 'couch surfers' or the 'hidden homeless', this describes people who stay with friends, family, or even strangers. They are typically not paying rent, their duration of stay is unsustainable in the long term, and they do not have the means to secure their own permanent housing in the future. They differ from those who are staying with friends or family out of choice in anticipation of prearranged accommodation, whether in their current hometown or an altogether new community. This living situation is understood by both parties to be temporary, and the assumption is that it will not become permanent.

### 3.3 PEOPLE ACCESSING SHORT TERM, TEMPORARY RENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS WITHOUT SECURITY OF TENURE

In some cases people who are homeless make temporary rental arrangements, such as staying in motels, hostels, rooming houses, etc. Although occupants pay rent, the accommodation does not offer the possibility of permanency. People living in these situations are often considered to be part of the 'hidden homeless' population.

### 3.4 PEOPLE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE WHO LACK PERMANENT HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS

Individuals are considered to be provisionally accommodated and 'at risk' of homelessness if there are no arrangements in place to ensure they move into safe, permanent housing upon release from institutional care. This includes individuals who:

- a) were homeless prior to admittance (where their stay may be short-term or long-term) and who have no plan for permanent accommodation after release; or
- b) had housing prior to admittance, but lost their housing while in institutional care; or
- c) had housing prior to admittance, but cannot go back due to changes in their needs.

In either case, without adequate discharge planning and support, which includes arrangements for safe and reliable housing (and necessary aftercare or community-based services), there is a likelihood that these individuals may transition into homelessness following their release. Institutional care includes:

- Penal institutions
- Medical/mental health institutions
- Residential treatment programs or withdrawal management centers
- Children's institutions/group homes

### 3.5 ACCOMMODATION/RECEPTION CENTERS FOR RECENTLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Prior to securing their own housing, recently arrived immigrants and refugees may be temporarily housed while receiving settlement support and orientation to life in Canada. They are considered to be homeless if they have no means or prospects of securing permanent housing.

## 4) At Risk of Homelessness

Although not technically homeless, this includes individuals or families whose current housing situations are dangerously lacking security or stability, and so are considered **to be at risk of homelessness**. They are living in housing that is intended for permanent human habitation, and could potentially be permanent (as opposed to those who are provisionally accommodated). However, as a result of external hardship, poverty, personal crisis, discrimination, a lack of other available and affordable housing, insecurity of tenure and / or the inappropriateness of their current housing (which may be overcrowded or does not meet public health and safety standards) residents may be "at risk" of homelessness.

An important distinction to make is between those who are at "imminent risk" of becoming homeless and those who are "precariously housed".

No matter the level of probability, all who can be categorized as being “at risk” of homelessness possess a shared vulnerability; for them, a single event, unexpected expense, crisis, or trigger is all it may take for them to lose their housing. As the risk factors mount and compound, so too does the possibility of becoming homeless.

#### 4.1 PEOPLE AT IMMINENT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Many factors can contribute to individuals and families being at imminent risk of homelessness. Though in some cases individual factors (such as those listed below) may be most significant, in most cases it is the interaction of structural and individual risk that, in the context of a crisis, influence pathways into homelessness. In other words, what separates those who are at risk of homelessness due to *precarious housing* from those who are at *imminent risk*, is the onset of a crisis, a turn in events, or the increase in acuity of one or more underlying risk factors. Factors that may contribute (as singular or co-occurring factors) include:

- **Precarious employment.** Many people have unstable employment and live pay cheque to pay cheque. Precarious employment describes non-standard employment that does not meet basic needs, is poorly paid, part time (when full time work is desired), temporary, and/or insecure and unprotected. An unanticipated expense, increases in cost of living or a change in employment status may undermine their ability to maintain housing.
- **Sudden unemployment** with few prospects and little to no financial savings or assets, or social supports to turn to for assistance.
- **Supported housing with supports that are about to be discontinued.** Some Housing First models provide supports, but on a time-limited basis. If such resources (aftercare, services) are withdrawn but are still needed, individuals and families may be at imminent risk of re-entering homelessness.
- **Households facing eviction**, lacking the resources needed to afford other housing including social supports, or living in areas with low availability of affordable housing.
- **Severe and persistent mental illness, active addictions, substance use and/or behavioural issues.**
- **Division of Household** – caused by situations (such as separation, divorce, conflicts between caregivers and children, or roommates moving out) where the affected do not have the resources to keep the existing housing or secure other stable housing.
- **Violence / abuse (or direct fear of) in current housing situations**, including:
  - People facing family/gender violence and abuse
  - Children and youth experiencing neglect, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse- Seniors facing abuse
  - People facing abuse or discrimination caused by racism or homophobia or misogyny
- **Institutional care that is inadequate or unsuited** to the needs of the individual or family.

#### 4.2 INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED

Many individuals and families experience severe housing affordability problems, due to their income, the local economy and / or the lack of availability of affordable housing that meets their needs in the local market. The income of these households is not sufficient to cover the household's basic shelter and non-shelter costs. This includes people who are on government benefits but who do not have sufficient funds to pay for basic needs.

The greater the shortfall of income in covering basic costs, the more at risk of homelessness the household is. Those classified as "precariously housed" face challenges that may or may not leave them homeless in the immediate or near future (in the absence of an intervention). Those who manage to retain their housing in such circumstances often do so at the expense of meeting their nutritional needs, heating their homes, providing proper child care and other expenses that contribute to health and well-being.

Precarious and inadequate housing not only relate to household income and the physical structure of the dwelling, but also to lack of access to necessary supports and opportunities, including employment, health care services, clean water and sanitation, schools, child care centres and other social supports and facilities. Housing that is not culturally appropriate in the way it is constructed, the building materials used, and the policies that support it is also considered inadequate.

CMHC defines a household as being in core housing need if its housing: "falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards)." (CMHC, 2012)

- **Adequate** housing is reported by residents as not requiring any major repairs. Housing that is inadequate may have excessive mold, inadequate heating or water supply, significant damage, etc.
- **Affordable** dwelling costs less than 30% of total before-tax household income. Those in extreme core housing need pay 50% or more of their income on housing. It should be noted that the lower the household income, the more onerous this expense becomes.
- **Suitable** housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the resident household, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

HOW TO CITE THE CANADIAN DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS:

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The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness is a non-profit, non-partisan research institute that is committed to conducting and mobilizing research so as to contribute to solutions to homelessness. We work together as a group of researchers, service providers, policy and decision makers, people with lived experience of homelessness as well as graduate and undergraduate students from across Canada with a passion for social justice.

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