

CONFLICTING VISIONS: POLITICAL STRUGGLE
OVER URBAN SPACE IN LAWRENCE HEIGHTS

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL SCIENCE
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

DECEMBER 2022

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Abstract

This dissertation is a political economy-based examination of “urban revitalization” in Lawrence Heights, the largest project of its kind taking place in Canada. This study explores the extent to which this “revitalization” scheme is rooted in neoliberal policy regimes and how this process of change is affected by the community in Lawrence Heights and their representative grassroots organizations. To this end, the study addresses the following questions: What do ongoing relations between interested parties involved in *remaking* Lawrence Heights tell us about the capacity for late neoliberalism to absorb and modify the multiple visions put forward for the neighborhood’s future that align with its principles? What political outcomes arise in the deliberations over the use and distribution of resources associated with the “revitalization”? How do these interactions in this localized case study fit into larger struggles between different groups to leverage the state to institute certain policies in an environment where neoliberalism’s negative impacts on poorer communities have fueled energetic counter-pressures?

This dissertation argues that the public housing community in Lawrence Heights and its grassroots representatives have seized meaningful levels of control over the direction of “revitalization” planning while struggling against the prevailing limits and power set by neoliberal policy regimes. However, the salience of neoliberal policy regimes has been further fractured after crisis conditions erupted in 2008. Using a new conceptual approach to theorizing the state, which I term dynamic selectivities, I incorporate the

multiple ways in which the state deploys its powers when confronting social movement pressures involved in twisting the direction of “revitalization” towards their respective vision for the future of their neighborhood. Using this concept in tandem with others drawn from Marxist political economy, my analysis shows that in the years after 2008, grassroots energies within Lawrence Heights have pressed the state to divert resources towards what tenants are explicitly calling for, including more employment opportunities and public funds for tenant-led initiatives.

These conclusions offer us insights into the hold that neoliberalism continues to have on daily life in Canada. Indeed, I suggest that grassroots interventions into the “revitalization” reflects their efforts to realize change on their terms without simply accepting a vision affixed to what is most amenable to the desires of capital to create a densified and appealing environment for business to flourish. At the same time, the community is being permitted to only go so far in the degree to which it can realize change that challenges the conventions of neoliberal policy regimes.

Acknowledgements

I would like to give a sincere thank you to those who helped make this work possible. First, I want to thank all the members of my supervisory committee. My primary supervisor, Dr. Robert Latham, offered immeasurable assistance in improving this work throughout its production. I am also very grateful for the insights and suggestions provided by the other two members of my committee, including Dr. Karen Murray and Dr. Carlo Fanelli. I also want to give a very sincere thank you to Dr. Ethel Tungohan, who for years provided me with invaluable advice, contacts of people working in my field of interest, and suggestions for how to improve my writing. My committee was instrumental in helping me to sharpen the focus of this study. These professors also made the valuable suggestion to devote more attention to the impacts of Canada's settler-colonial legacy on the historical trajectory that Lawrence Heights has taken as a significant public housing community in Toronto, Canada. I also want to extend a thanks to the Toronto Community Housing Corporation whose staff members very helpfully provided me with invaluable internal documents related to the Lawrence Heights case.

I would also like to thank my family members. My stepfather offered constructive advice on early drafts of the chapters in this dissertation. Thank you as well to my biological parents, my sister, and other relatives. A sincere thank you to my partner Sabrina is also in order as she helped immensely with editing recommendations and support. Lastly, I want to extend my appreciation to my colleagues who have become close friends and

confidants since beginning my doctoral degree, including Benjamin Johnson, Ryan Kelpin, Grant Andersen, Rimmy Rhiah, and Michael (Yiming) Ye.

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Introduction

The planning of developers. They conceive and realize without hiding it, for the market, with profit in mind. What is new and recent is that they are no longer selling housing or buildings, but planning. With or without ideology, planning becomes an exchange value. The project of developers presents itself as an opportunity and place of privilege: the place of happiness in a daily life miraculously and marvellously transformed.

– Henri Lefebvre (1996, p. 84)

In May 2007, the former city of Toronto councilor Howard Moscoe announced what is popularly termed an ““urban revitalization” project” in Lawrence Heights, the largest undertaken in Canada in terms of scale, comprising a 100-acre site (40.5 hectares) south of Yorkdale Shopping, making it roughly double the size of Regent Park (Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC, n.d.). “Urban revitalization” is otherwise called “urban regeneration, urban redevelopment, urban renaissance, and urban renewal” and has been a longstanding feature of city life (Ramlee, Omar, Yunus, & Samadi, 2015, p. 362). “Old cities are in a constant process of metamorphosis and unavoidably have to face the necessity of continuous regeneration” (Hou, 1985, p. 223 as cited by Broudehoux, 1994, p. 5). The term “urban revitalization” communicates a message that political power and capital are being deployed to “liberate” a community in need of help.

As a set of policies, “urban revitalization” has assumed different forms depending on the spatio-temporal context in which it has arisen, but nevertheless have similarly had socially violent consequences for the persons and families most centrally affected by them. An earlier form, known as slum clearance, reached its high point in the early-to-mid

twentieth century and typically involved the state first identifying certain areas it targeted as slums – which officials believed to be condemned to unproductive land uses so long as they are allowed to subsist – and subsequently expropriate the lands before expelling their residents elsewhere (Rutland, 2018, 99-100). A contemporary model of “urban revitalization” has gained prominence since being promoted as a success story in places like Regent Park and rests on an insistence that it inverts the old slum clearance model (James, 2010). Once again, the state targets neighborhoods it believes are slums, razes them, and replaces the housing wholesale in partnership with private developers.

The difference with this more recent form of “urban revitalization” is that the state plans things in such a way that the new housing is intended for both incoming and existing residents to live alongside one another, which in fact resuscitates a very old planning strategy called “social mixing” (Lees, 2008). However much the state differentiates the policies that comprise “urban revitalization,” though, they remain at base what Neil Smith (2001, p. 69) refers to as urban revanchism (meaning: *revenge*) whereby the powerful seek “to reassert a sense of traditional decency” against social forces who represent incivility. Revanchism involves capital, resources, and people flooding into a neighborhood, overwhelming any opposition from the disadvantaged people who already live there and upending their lives. We must critically assess these “urban revitalization” schemes since predominant narratives associated with them tend to get coated in language signifying “progress,” which can obfuscate the multiple dynamics at play.

The idea is to de-mystify “urban revitalization” as a concept imbued with common sense, which Gramsci (1971, p. 330) understood as diffuse elements of a wide form of thought that is common to a certain time and domain. Adhering to such common sense is not thinking critically about what it implies. The Italian Enlightenment philosopher Giambattista Vico once said that the sense “common to all is a judgment without reflection” (Giambattista, 2020, p. 78). When it becomes common sense, “urban revitalization” can become normalized as signifying what the name implies and what state officials say it does, engendering “liberation” instead of initiating slum clearance. So that “revitalization” remains in our sights as a critically contested concept, it will remain set within quotation marks for the duration of this text.

By the same token, this dissertation frames *the state* in similarly critical terms as with “urban revitalization.” I will pay significant attention later in the text to the state as a concept as there are countless theories of what it is and how it behaves. At this point, it suffices to say I will avoid the trap of viewing the state in common-sensical terms as something people recognize as an institution that simply exists and functions as a legitimate authority in multiple (and often vaguely) recognizable forms, such as the police, the courts system, legislatures, and the domain of politicians and civil servants.

Borrowing from Nicos Poulantzas (1976/2014), Bob Jessop (1990), and others, I draw on a Marxist understanding of the state as a composite of social relations whose content reflects the dynamics of class struggle. From this vantage, the state is not a discrete entity that exerts authority. Instead, what we recognize as state activity is a material

distillation of class struggle. It thus has a presence materially, but its makeup and function are driven by what are amorphous underlying social struggles. Agents and institutions that get codified as representing “the state” become a terrain through which resources are leveraged to enhance or protect some class interests and obstruct others. From hereon, any references to the state will be made with this understanding in mind.

A brief historical treatment shows how *state* strategies associated with terms like urban renewal, regeneration, and revitalization have been deployed for “slum clearance” despite being cloaked in emancipatory sounding language. Coordinated efforts towards “slum clearance” and “renewal” took shape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between “local governments, reform groups, and business interests” set on eliminating “the physical manifestations of urban decline” (Broudehoux, 1994, p. 5). Indeed, the year 1934 saw the release of the Report of the Lieutenant Governor’s Report on Housing Conditions in Toronto, otherwise termed the Bruce Report after Ontario Lieutenant Governor Herbert A. Bruce. The influential report found that Toronto, “in common with every large city, has acquired inevitable *slum districts*, which in the eyes of officials ‘produce negative impacts on the civic character of the city’” (Rosa, 2018, p. 4 *italics added by author). The report recommended that the state clear such areas and construct public housing in their place to provide temporary accommodation for low-income families (Brushett, 2001). The Bruce report’s recommendations fell in step with the move by the federal government to amend the National Housing Act of 1944 (NHA) to go beyond the objectives of promoting new housing construction and repairing existing

homes, and to address the housing crisis spurred by returning veterans after WWII, which dovetailed with the swelling demands at that time for a stronger welfare state (Rosa, 2018, pp. 4-5). NHA amendments in the late 1940s included a written-in commitment to undertaking slum clearance and subsequent “urban renewal” (Hackworth, 2008, p. 11). There was a subsequent razing in Toronto of what was deemed low-quality housing in Cabbagetown, and the building in its place of a new public housing neighborhood called Regent Park built between 1947 to 1957 by the newly constructed Metro Toronto Housing Authority (Lehrer, Keil, & Kipfer, 2010, p. 86).

Public housing districts continued being constructed in Toronto in the immediate decades after World War II, and this included the opening of Lawrence Heights in North York in the late 1950s. These housing projects amounted to the state warehousing low income and otherwise disadvantaged and oppressed peoples, resonating “with pre-modernist ways of exercising control through spatial proximity and assume, in classic colonial fashion, that the subjects of territorial management are incapable of living “normally” and governing their affairs without benevolent external help” (Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009, p. 131). It also happened that by the late 1960s, the state began winding down its public housing program, which officials blamed for erecting new slums in place of the old ones (Purdy, 2003). Albert Rose, who was a significant force involved in the planning of Regent Park as a longtime Dean of Social Work at the University of Toronto, admitted in writing that many saw Regent Park as being ““similar in many respects to the Cabbagetown neighborhood that was destroyed to build it’ – an oversized, poorly planned,

criminogenic ‘haven of single mothers, welfare families and deviants’ in the parlance of the day” (James, 2010, p. 75). James (2010, p. 75) goes on to say that Regent Park itself would be further neglected and marginalized for decades, eventually becoming a target in the 1990s for what was being touted in the business press as a new model for “urban renewal” called “urban revitalization.”

What the 1990s so-called “revitalization” amounted to was the razing of the existing public housing supply in Regent Park. State authorities partnered with private development firms to replace the razed housing with condominium-style homes alongside similarly built expensive market-rate ones that are rendered indistinguishable from one another and are occupied with subsidized tenants and new condo-buyers and renters alike (Purdy, 2005). What was being deployed in the *revitalized* Regent Park was a rehabilitated form of a nineteenth-century planning strategy known as social mixing, which paternalistically suggests that blending disadvantaged and advantaged residents together in the same neighborhood works to compel the former to adopt the morally superior attitudes and behaviors that are “embodied” in the latter (Lees, 2008).

The move away from the discourse on *urban renewal* towards *revitalization* was promulgated in the late twentieth century by the levelling of social services spending, privatization, and the withdrawal of extensive fiscal support for measures like social housing on the one hand, and the downloading of responsibility for it from provinces onto relatively less resourced municipalities on the other (Rosa, 2018). With its housing stock deprived of fiscal support, combined with growing calls for its renewal, Regent Park

became the model for “urban revitalization” that has been deployed in other Toronto-based districts that have a subsidized housing supply.

Proponents of the Regent Park model of “urban revitalization” might see its deployment in Lawrence Heights as signaling a reversal from decline into a new phase of progress. Others may not see *progress* but rather a veneer for underlying forces at work, which involve applying new forms of social control to the neighborhood’s public housing residents.

The social theorist Henri Lefebvre might see the “urban revitalization” underway in Lawrence Heights as a set of strategies to create efficient abstract space instead of differential space. Abstract space refers to a *regressive* condition of living hidden under the pretense of ‘consensual governance,’ which is enforced coercively by institutional power (Butler, 2012). Making *abstract* space binds people to act in ways conducive to economic growth and be politically passive. Importantly, Lefebvre also drew attention to differential space, which refers to resistance to abstract space, to “struggle against a society of ‘indifference,’ not just by producing but also in the way we live ‘differentially’ (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 27). Differential space refers to resistance to abstract space, to “struggle against a society of ‘indifference,’ not just by producing but also in the way we live ‘differentially’ (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 27).

This dissertation will apply similarly critical theorizations of “urban revitalization” to a study of what is currently underway in Lawrence Heights. Critical assessments of “urban revitalizations” of the sort offered by Lefebvre echo in many contemporary works

on this subject (see Weber, 2010; Roberts & Catungal, 2017). There is a tendency in this scholarship to explain today's "urban revitalization" schemes as policy strategies that create abstract space, fortify neoliberalism, and revivify neighborhoods. Still, the focus of such researchers has often been so trained on how power gets accumulated onto itself that they potentially overlook countervailing political movements happening in the same contexts. I call this tendency 'the resistance problem.' Here, resistance is layered through multiple levels of social activity that cut across space and time in ways that often intersect. Such layers of resistance may fall outside the researcher's vision, while others can be misleadingly aggregated into being part of more predictable outcomes.

In other words, one can fail to appreciate how forms of everyday resistance, particularly those in smaller local contexts, might represent genuine resistance to the broader incumbency of austerity politics, privatization, and common-sense style politicking that could otherwise be assumed to swallow them up. The example of Lawrence Heights explored below evidence many occasions in which tenants and representative organizations have come together to press for change that rests on a shared commitment to distributing public resources towards issues of concern to them, thus resisting the de-democratizing pressures that neoliberal policy regimes can engender.

The Lawrence Heights "revitalization" cannot be disentangled from neoliberalism, but resistance to it can be shown to have historical roots in the community's shared perseverance against other equally important forms of struggle. Generations of oppressed people have striven to live in Lawrence Heights more on their own terms in tension with

an often violent presence of a state that has played a disproportionately invasive managerial role in their community along with other neighborhoods and institutions that have routinely ignored and stigmatized them. Such oppression, in this case, helped fuel and strengthen organization, activism, and solidarity among those who have been left behind.

Social scientists might fall prey to the resistance problem, as well, because “urban revitalization” has become an essential way for states to generate newfound growth in urban spaces at a time when neoliberal policy regimes remain deeply relied upon. Neoliberalism originated among a small group of liberal intellectuals in the 1930s who met in Paris to discuss the dangers of war and related threats to freedom posed by totalitarianism and collectivist planning (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, p. 5). Its proponents championed it as a radical new doctrine set in opposition to socialism by defending capitalism as a vital prerequisite for democratic freedoms that collectivism – and corruptibly aggressive liberalism – otherwise encumbers (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, pp. 5-6). Neo or *new* neoliberalism became the antidote.

Classical or laissez-faire style liberalism is idealized as a liberatory set of ideas in its uncorrupted form. Alan Ryan argues that classical liberalism is associated with people like John Locke, Adam Smith, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Frederic Hayek, all of whom are

bound by a common concern for an ‘idea of limited government, the maintenance of the rule of law, the avoidance of arbitrary and discretionary power, the sanctity of private property and freely made contracts, and the responsibility of individuals for their own fates’ (as cited by Gane, 2015, p. 135).

Classical liberalism is associated with limiting the degree to which the state interferes in daily life beyond its role of protecting private property rights. While its progenitors

advanced neoliberalism as a new and subversive fix to what they perceived as the failings of state intervention in the private sphere following the Great Depression and with Keynesianism after WWII, such ideas were always features of policy discussions in Germany, Great Britain, and the United States (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, p. 5).

Nevertheless, neoliberalism's defenders insist they offer a liberatory set of ideas that snuff out misdirected and overzealous usage of state planning, which Hayek warns us about in *The Road to Serfdom*. Neoliberalism suggests one can successfully realize their interests on their own terms, provided they are organized into commodified social relations. And yet, as an applied philosophy, neoliberalism involves mobilizing all the agents and bureaucracies that comprise the state to forcibly create a new set of rules for people to abide by. In this way, the state lifts productive activities and assets out of the realm of democratic accountability, public control and to be kept away from redistributive measures. Gane (2015, p. 135) cites Hayek's *Constitution of Liberty*, writing that "the problem of more conservative forms of liberalism is that they necessarily have to be pulled along paths not of their own choosing." The idea of neoliberalism is not to erase state planning but to institute – by force if necessary – a form of conservative-liberal governance that can ensure markets function freely (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, p. 6).¹

¹ Hayek repeatedly stressed a preference for liberal dictatorships that in times of instability could use force to protect against state-overreach into market affairs, saying once in an interview that:

Absolute powers that need to be used precisely in order to avoid and limit any absolute power in the future. . . when I refer to this dictatorial power, I am talking of a transitional period, solely. As a means of establishing a stable democracy and liberty, clean of impurities (as cited by Farrant, McPhail, & Berger , 2012, p. 521).

Konings (2012, p. 89), too, writes that “neoliberal policies do not involve a literal retreat of the state from society and that deregulation is always re-regulation (i.e., that ‘freer markets’ mean ‘more rules.’” For abstract space to spread, then, people need to be made to conform to its demands and not subject them to democratic norms. In times of crisis and unrest, governments can be guided by the liberal dictator Hayek spoke so fondly of to keep markets safe from regulations or substitution by anything resembling socialism. Philip Mirowski (2009) lists doctrines that the neoliberal thought collective, including people like Hayek, Milton Friedman, and others, had drilled into major institutions by the 1980s that

democracy and politics should be understood in economic terms, freedom can only be negative, ‘capital has a natural right to flow freely across national boundaries’ unlike labour, wealth inequality is necessary for the ideal market system, corporations are people but they can do no wrong, the properly engineered market can always correct itself, and neoliberal theory should serve as a moral code (as cited by Hardin, 2014, p. 213).

At first glance, the “revitalization” in Lawrence Heights may represent an unencumbered application of neoliberal policy strategies that revamp the neighborhood to fit Lefebvre’s abstract space criteria. But this research will start from the premise that “urban revitalizations” are politically conflictual processes between those involved and the multiple interests that collide among them. There is also a long historical record of conflict and change that must be reckoned with when distilling the “revitalization” process in Lawrence Heights. A narrative begins with the theft of Indigenous territory by colonial settlers, subsequent establishment of ethnonationalist authority, and dispersing of said territories to settlers who streamed into newly established borders. After WWII, the government transformed a stretch of land into what became Lawrence Heights, a public

housing development that was a product of the former model of slum clearance and urban renewal that amounted to the warehousing of poor people into isolated and closely managed housing projects.

Since it was approved in 2007, the same model for “revitalization” made so popular in Regent Park was molded to fit onto the Lawrence Heights district. It involves the government and its partners setting a rationalist and common sense set of policies and legitimizing discourses into motion through the work of a cadre of officials, planners, and experts armed with the goal of creating a newly revamped socially mixed neighborhood. Operating under the banner of being a “liberating force,” the government exerts control over land use, development, and settlement, where capital and people are directed and flow into the area to ensure the tenants who live there stay closely managed. The dynamics of this process are not bereft of the exertion of counter-pressure and leverage by people already living in Lawrence Heights. This community has developed a strong activist culture in the face of being continuously ignored and stigmatized by surrounding Torontonians. Residents and organizers alike are pressing forward with their visions for change without being merely subjected to the oppressive dictates of the “revitalization” model that is upending their lives.

The idea here is to avoid the resistance problem by setting up a study, a set of theoretical tools to analyze collected data, and research questions that compel us to look inductively at the case of Lawrence Heights. The research uncovers the forms of political conflict that have arisen in Lawrence Heights to see how this struggle has impacted its

trajectory as it gets transformed according to the contemporary model for “revitalization.” My questions, more specifically, focus on the issue of state intervention because it plays a central role in determining what the “revitalization” accomplishes and in whose interests. In using my understanding of the state as a social relation and as a material distillation of the struggles between social classes, the following questions are asked:

- 1) What do ongoing relations between interested parties involved in remaking Lawrence Heights tell us about the capacity for late neoliberalism to absorb and modify the multiple visions put forward for the revitalization that align with its principles?
- 2) What political outcomes arise in the deliberations over the use and distribution of resources associated with the revitalization?
- 3) How do these interactions in this localized case study fit into larger struggles between different groups to leverage the state to institute certain policies in an environment where neoliberalism’s negative impacts on poorer communities have fueled energetic counter-pressures?

I argue that the public housing community in Lawrence Heights and its grassroots representatives have seized meaningful levels of control over the direction of “revitalization” planning while struggling against the prevailing limits and power set by neoliberal policy regimes administered by the state. Such activity unfolded when the salience of neoliberal policy regimes got strained in the aftermath of the wider global economic crisis of 2008. The analysis shows that after 2008, the community in Lawrence Heights has tilted the direction of planning towards their demands on key fronts, including access and control of funding for resident-led programs, delivery of job training and employment opportunities exclusively for tenants, and maintaining the integrity of long-

standing and active communal care provision for seniors, the disabled, and others with personal challenges.

These events demonstrate a concerted struggle on the part of the community to create differential space in opposition to abstract space. What this looks like in practice is that the community's voice has successfully leveraged the state to give attention and public resources to their demands. Such community-led pressures align with the quotidian social struggles to level discrepancies in advantages, life chances, and power among classes in a capitalist context. There is a striving here among Lawrence Heights tenants for spaces of difference that are local, where their lives and future can deviate from the status quo that has enveloped so much of the larger society under contemporary capitalism. But the struggle for differential space is running up against the limits of abstract space, which neoliberalism continues to exert firm control over.

These scenarios reflect what I call *the permeation of abstract space*, referring to when society's oppressed succeed at creating disparate pockets of differential space that exploit weaknesses in the larger realm of abstract space. This study aims to unearth the form and content of political conflict that will shed light on how the community resists the totalizing creep of abstract space. In the context of my case study, the evidence will show that differential space is being created through leveraging state intervention in ways that challenge neoliberalism's power over the direction of policy. That my case study concerns a local matter should not dissuade us from considering its implications for the question of whether a different type of state is realizable. State power can be challenged at many

different levels. My conclusions raise hope that the social relations that constitute state activity will be channeled more widely into differential space creation.

Outlining a Theory of Community-Led Change

I will now clarify theoretically how a grassroots movement permeates abstract space. Lefebvre might say that the pervasive spread of abstract space will always rouse counter-movements set on creating differential space. However, some counter-movements may run into more limits in realizing the change they desire. They are both prosaic but also given to periods of sudden change. The countermovement in Lawrence Heights is itself a longstanding fixture, but it has also reactively seized on the “revitalization” as a moment to leverage the state, which, in turn, is negotiating how it is going about destroying and re-constituting their homes. As a countermovement, it has encountered limits in that it cannot stop the “revitalization” outright even if it wanted to. It has worked within these limits, demanding and obtaining resources to be used on their terms for their own programs, priority job placements and training for tenants, as well as demanding reformative action from the state on other pressing issues such as public safety. In this way, counter-movement activity is not simply being absorbed by the state and woven into the plan to make Lawrence Heights into just another engine for capital to create surplus.

The countermovement in Lawrence Heights is striving to accentuate “differences in contrast to the homogeneity of abstraction, while simultaneously overcoming alienation by “restoring unity to what abstract space breaks up”” (Wilson, 2013, p. 369). Lefebvre (1996, p. 124) writes supportively of the left’s striving to undermine centralized forms of decision-

making and build up self-management “and create new institutions going beyond those that simply ratify the dissociations.” Magnusson (2013, p. 78) says that prioritizing individual freedom is essential. However, when taken to a logical extreme, it can eliminate any semblance of society, exacerbating alienation.

The concept of passive revolution can be instructive here. Marxists typically associate passive revolution with Gramsci, who borrowed it from the Italian writer Vincenzo Cuoco to help explain how revolutionary movements become supplanted by policies of restoration where “social struggles find sufficiently elastic frameworks to allow the bourgeoisie” to gather power over the oppressed “without dramatic upheavals” (Morton, 2007, p. 600). Unlike revolutions with abrupt and pronounced social change, passive revolutions move in reverse, where sudden transformation is stonewalled, or permeations are made by counter-hegemonic pressures that may induce change over generations. In other words, a passive revolution is either a *blocked dialectic* or a *condition of breakage* of “socio-political processes in which revolution-inducing strains are at once displaced and at least partially fulfilled” (Callinicos, 2010, p. 491).

Often, a passive revolution operates as a technique of statecraft used to hold capitalist societies intact. The capitalist class draws in the oppressed while either forming a new state based on instituting capitalism or maintaining an existing state and augmenting capitalist social relations (Morton, 2010, p. 332). For Karen Murray (2015), capitalist imperatives stretch beyond extracting value from workers who sell their labor power. Capitalists and public sector workers, alike, see disadvantaged and oppressed persons as a

source of “raw material” whose bodies and minds are coordinated into processes of human development, re-education, and surveillance, by in-demand technical workers, who in turn seek to enhance spaces for urban consumption, inure a shared sense of self-reliance, and maximize land values by controlling “disordered” people (Murray, 2015, p. 290). From this vantage, when the technique of a passive revolution succeeds, organic intellectuals rise from within a social class and form alliances with the bourgeoisie and those traditional intellectuals that are overly wedded to the old ways of doing things. This group, operating on behalf of hegemonic forces, collectively subverts and redirects popular discontent away from revolution and towards consent and compromise (Gramsci, 1978, pp. 14-15).

It is also valuable to consider what it is about a local urban setting that can give rise to a passive revolution where counter-hegemonic pressures can permeate the existing order as opposed to being blocked by it. Such an event can take hold across much broader contexts and spaces, with multiple numbers of them conceivably happening simultaneously. In theoretical terms, a localized counter-hegemonic passive revolution of the sort unfolding in Lawrence Heights has been made increasingly possible through overlapping activity common in capitalist societies for the last few decades. As a terrain of class conflict, state action in the immediate period after WWII momentarily leveled class disparities by instituting a mix of redistributive policies before crises and disorder set in and turned things in the opposite direction over the 1970s and 80s (see Piketty, 2014).

The centrally organized social-welfare state under the Keynesian paradigm was gradually hollowed out beginning in the 1970s, jumpstarting a restructuring of institutional

authority and resource distribution towards supranational and subnational levels with cities adopting newfound governance and accumulation strategies (Uitermark, 2014, p. 1420; see also Jessop, 1994, p. 24). States moved away from managerialism, predicated on centralized planning, technocratic governance, and domestic Fordist-oriented growth strategies, and towards entrepreneurialism, characterized by consumption-based growth, privatization, and austerity politics (Harvey, 1989). For cities, states at all levels began supporting “wealth creation through competition on multiple scales for investment, economic activity, tourists and the sustainable population. As such, nation-states increasingly bet on their ‘strong horses,’ their ‘champion cities’” (Van Loon, Oosterlynck, & Aalbers, 2019, p. 401).

The hollowing out of national welfare states magnified the importance of cities as sites of entrepreneurial governance and neoliberal policy regimes, a prominent feature of which are capital-intensive development projects, building advanced public transportation systems, and fueling commercial and residential gentrification. State action was a prime mover, rolling back the welfare state and then rolling out a neoliberal solution (Brenner & Theodore, 2019). The roll-back phase saw the social-welfare state get cut down through austerity, combined with a propaganda effort by the business class, right-wing educators, and politicians to convince people that privatization, markets, and self-reliance are how prosperity is created.

Roll-out neoliberal growth strategies were not coincidentally made popular during the 1980s and 90s and involved remaking and “beautifying” urban areas in many cases.

Urban governance has tended to move from the formerly managerial approach with the state constructing segregated districts of concentrated poverty towards facilitating redevelopments that “revamp” poor neighborhoods and generate ‘social mixing’ or the melding of different income classes together (see Lees, 2008, p. 2461). The breakdown of the social-welfare state in the 1970s became part and parcel of a post-industrial turn towards working-class disenfranchisement, greater outsourcing, union dismantlement, and rising living costs. These pressures collided with coincident globalization, multiculturalism, and the racialization of spatially clustered poverty in urban settings, supercharging social anomie and civil distrust of state authority. States have opted for more ostensibly integrative planning that may encourage social mixing but also helps placate and suppress popular discontent (Loopmans, De Decker, & Kesteloot, 2010).

The revolutionary turn towards neoliberalism set the table by which “urban revitalization” became a premier feature of the state’s rationalist and common-sense policy toolkit. So-called ‘champion cities’ like Toronto have targeted districts with concentrated poverty as laboratories for new types of urban planning and development strategies, and with this came innovations in measures to govern, surveil, and repress the marginalized people living in them (Uitermark, 2014, p. 1420). But the appeal to “urban revitalization” as the rational path forward creates resistance to what are overwhelming consequences at play, namely the entire destruction and replacement of an existing neighborhood. Given the stakes, the “revitalization” has supercharged the activist energies within Lawrence Heights, helping a passive revolution take form.

When it comes to passive revolutions specifically, states must constantly reproduce hegemonic conditions through the interactive flux of competing ideologies, values, and processes of policymaking and administration (Fuller, 2012, p. 27). Locally based social movements can challenge hegemony on this front, but there are peculiarly difficult challenges associated with gaining enough support that can permit popular struggles to get past a passive revolutionary phase. Raymond Williams uses the term “militant particularism” to describe how urban social movements, because they arise in such highly pluralistic environments, can get “directed away from general social movements and locked into engagements over fragmented and particularistic issues” (Uitermark, Nicholls, & Loopmans, 2012, p. 2548). The more that a given local social movement becomes fragmented, the potential for a passive revolution only increases, especially given how it feeds off fracturing and pacifying counter-hegemonic struggles. To be clear, this text explores what I identify as evidence for a potentially unfolding passive revolution that is anticipating and confronting what is a significant channeling of money and political power into destroying an existing neighborhood. This work paves a path for future research into this case study to examine whether the elements of passive revolution that I looked at have either augmented, stalled, or perhaps have gotten steered in another direction entirely.

The challenge is grasping how the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” fits into the larger picture and tempo of social change. I make the case that what is happening in Lawrence Heights likely represents multiple passive revolutions occurring synchronically and diachronically at different levels of activity in other contexts (Latham, 2018). In

Braudel's words, social change unfolds through three temporal synchronic rhythms – “short, middle, and long duration” (Aurell, 2018, p. 56). Braudel warns us against attributing too much credit to ephemeral events as stimulating social change, describing them derisively as “surface disturbances, crests of foam that the tides of history carry on their strong back” (as cited by Hall, 1980, p. 115). Social change can, as Braudel might say, occur rapidly through major short-term events. But it can also occur through diachronic systemic shifts that happen through the normal passage of time or *la moyenne durée*, or even so slowly that it is imperceptible to those who are a part of it and thus can only be discerned after the fact (Hall, 1980, p. 115).

With the community-led social change that I witnessed in Lawrence Heights, the hope is that movements fueling it overcome boundaries, or what Braudel (1981) calls ‘the limits of the possible.’ For movements to reach beyond limits, or in other words, to resist being partially or fully displaced by the power of neoliberalism, it gains momentum by combining with like-minded passive revolutionary activities that pressure the state. Braudel says that long periods have been without a single hegemonic power, but rather inter-linked hegemonies that comprise a world system (Gills & Frank, 1992, p. 624). A counter-hegemonic movement can mobilize a passive revolution that links with others and fulfills greater aims beyond what the state currently permits. Or it could be that such movements run their course independently from one another or simply stall out, potential outcomes that speak to the ever-present possibility for something like militant particularism to rear its head. This project shows that a passive revolution is perceptible in Lawrence

Heights. But as to where it ends up, whether it magnifies or gets incorporated with others of a more radical nature, it may be something that can unfold rapidly or gradually.

The potential for more rapid social change could be wrought if the energies like what I have seen in Lawrence Heights sprout up in what the City of Toronto calls priority neighborhoods. As a term, priority neighborhoods are portrayed in discourses from the state and in the media “in terms of deficiencies: lack of access to services, insufficient “social infrastructure,” and a shortage of communal space” (Leslie & Hunt, 2013, p. 1176). Some grassroots movements seek change on their terms, eliding discourses that revolve around concepts like “priority neighborhoods” that help operationalize “revitalizations.” Such movements prioritize social justice, public resources usage, and the democratic process as an antidote to neoliberalism’s contradictions. David Harvey has spoken encouragingly about radical local politics undertaken in big American cities, including passing a living wage ordinance in Baltimore and campaigns by local legislators in Seattle to boost the minimum wage.

With the Lawrence Heights “revitalization,” this dissertation explored the exertion of pressure on local officials by the neighborhood and its grassroots representatives, where there is palpable opposition to how the state perceives their home in paternalistic fashion, as warranting “priority status” on account of being “deficient” and thus requiring a massive infusion of capital and densification. Karen Murray (2004, p. 254) gives a historical accounting of how the traditionally classical tradition of limited government was incapable of bearing the mercurial nature of market societies, as evidenced by the rapid growth of

people and industry evident in Toronto in the late nineteenth century with a parallel erosion of traditionally rural family life and its accordant traditions.

These changes set a path for a paradigm of liberal welfare governance to arise that was rooted on the idea “that a disciplined and ordered society could be promoted through targeted interventions in the lives of individuals and the economy” (Murray, 2004, p. 254). Dr. Peter Bryce, eugenicist and advisor to the Ontario government in the early twentieth century, felt that rural people were healthier, arguing that they were “free from the degenerative effects seen in those classes which have been for several generations factory operatives and dwellers in the congested centers of large industrial populations” (McLaren, 2014, p. 54). In the eyes of the state, explosions in urban growth, social dislocation, and the incessant need to create growth, pressed it to find ways to govern *at a distance*, where the souls, minds, and bodies the urban masses must be held in check in lieu of the strong moral and familial disciplining that came with a formerly pervasive rural lifestyle.

The events occurring in Lawrence Heights are an ideal example of governance being instituted *at a distance* where the local state takes the colonialist approach of bringing in newer advantaged residents to “discipline” the existing disadvantaged tenants to fit with the systemic imperatives of contemporary capitalism in Toronto. After all, the official line of the “revitalization” is that it is a public-private partnership intended to introduce social-mixing into Lawrence Heights, a so-called “priority neighborhood” with newfound growth potential. The importance of the private sector in this partnership is in part a by-product of the subordinate relationship between Canadian cities and their provincial counterparts,

with austerity and privatization becoming safety valves for states to maintain that they must turn to markets to address issues because their hands are tied. Indeed, austerity and public sector gridlock have helped legitimate the Lawrence Heights “revitalization planning.”

Gridlock has unique facets when applied to urban politics, where Canadian cities are traditionally considered “creatures of the provinces,” meaning their powers are limited to those granted to them by provincial governments (Magnusson, 2005). In Canada, this means that cities like Toronto “must run to the provincial legislatures for amendments to already long and complex general purpose municipal acts-and they must do so whenever a new issue emerges that requires either prohibition or regulation” (Levi & Valverde, 2006, p. 416). After Ontario took legislative action in 1998 to amalgamate Toronto into a now combined six administrative boroughs, local pressures arose to pursue more flexible and powerful legal powers for cities to manage their increasingly complex affairs, which culminated in the passage of the 2001 Ontario Municipal Act (Bradford, 2004). Ontario thereby created a new broadly drawn “sphere of responsibilities” for cities to adopt stewardship over, but nevertheless did not provide them with new resources or revenue raising tools to manage them (Levi & Valverde, 2006, p. 416). Toronto was effectively stymied by a province that was unwilling to either generate or alter the necessary statutes to promulgate reforms or provide fiscal resources to its cities that typically rely on property taxes and user fees to provide services (Sancton, 2002; Siegel, 2005; De Sousa, 2006). Gumming up municipal finance opens a window for cities like Toronto to lean on private developers to foot a portion of capital for “urban revitalization” schemes.

There is complexity here, however. Eidelman (2011, p. 265) says that on paper, there are clear jurisdictional boundaries between what different levels of government do:

Federal powers pertain exclusively to port operations and shipping (seaports and airports), fisheries, Canada-US boundary issues, and aboriginal affairs; provincial responsibilities include regional transportation, natural resources, and housing; while land-use planning and local infrastructure fall under the purview of the City of Toronto.

But in practice, Eidelman (2011, p. 265) says these lines get blurred where housing and development issues, for instance, are rarely “decided upon without input from municipal governments.” Differences do exist between *urban* and *municipal*, as well, where *municipal institutions* are exclusively under provincial jurisdiction while *urban issues* simply refer to policy matters of significance to urban areas that are not necessarily under local control nor are they immune to federal interference (Berdahl, 2006, p. 27).

Ideally, more fluid relations between each level of government would engender greater consultation and input in the creation of policy. Paradoxically, though, more deliberation can enhance democracy by adding more voices while also exacerbating disagreement and gridlock. Hayek was very critical of centralized political authorities who take an overly streamlined “see a problem, pass a law” approach where they lean too heavily on the advice of bureaucrats who try to “fix society” (Payne, 2000, p. 47). Gridlock can be a bulwark against overly energetic central governments. So, supporters of it tend to encourage devolution or downloading of jurisdictional responsibilities over administrative matters from higher tier governments onto localities where more stakeholders (e.g.,

ratepayers, business associations, etc.) can deliberate and generate choices over how cities should change in ways that better resemble free markets (Liebmann, 2000, p. 49).

Someone like Hayek may be highly critical of the deleterious effects of state planning, but having people be more reliant on markets to improve quality, supply, and access to amenities and public goods can also bring potentially negative consequences. Consider the example of when the government captures *unearned increments*, a term referring to value that appreciates on a piece of land or real estate whose owner did not generate through any expenditure of labour or capital. In Toronto, density bonusing arose in the 1970s as a means for the city to extract unearned increments from real estate developers to help finance affordable housing, daycare facilities, and other amenities in exchange for permission to increase the maximum allowable development on a given site (Biggar & Friendly, 2022, p. 8). In their in-depth analysis, Jeffrey Biggar and Abigail Friendly (2022, pp. 9-10, 12) describe how when density bonusing, referred to as Section 37 contributions in the Ontario Planning Act, gained popularity among planners over the 1980s and 90s, a host of problems emerged:

- The development industry and municipal lawyers refused to accept that providing an unearned increment should be conditional for getting developments approved.
- Section 37 contributions rose and fell depending on whether Toronto's real estate development market ran hot or cold.
- Planners shifted to a development-led rather than a plan-led model focused on equity-based goals, which funneled Section 37 contributions towards investments in roads, streetscapes, public art, and other "desirable amenities" rather than affordable housing to boost property values.
- Budgetary austerity and a commitment to not raise property taxes left city councillors with few options than density bonusing to fund local projects.

When city budgets get stripped under conditions of austerity, city councillors lack enough predictable and constant sources of revenue to fund the types of affordable housing, including social housing, that the Ontario government's most recent budget report says is sorely lacking (Government of Ontario, 2021).

That social housing became a difficult struggle for the state to manage by the turn of the twenty-first century is an important example of the volatility of public financing schemes. Indeed, when Canadian cities suddenly gained jurisdiction over the administration of social housing in 2001, they struggled to raise the necessary capital – in lieu of additional fiscal support from the provinces – to finance the operating expenses that helps prevent the housing stock from falling into disrepair. “Revitalizing” social housing through public private partnerships then became attractive strategies for the state to approach public housing districts with the promise of *improving* the housing supply that it has let deteriorate through its own inaction and prolonged gridlock.

When grassroots activists and their representatives engage in struggle over the future of their neighborhood, whether in the context of the “revitalization” or otherwise, state officials – with their power over local resources and laws – are the primary agents they encounter. Given the importance of state intervention as trying to set limits around what the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” does, often in tension with what tenants and grassroots activists desire for themselves, the state will figure prominently in the ensuing analysis. The historical study of Lawrence Heights that I unpack below shows that the community and the state are entwined in a dialectical logic where the former presses the

latter to take particular action to realize its interests. But what often happens in our contemporary landscape is that the state reacts by recalibrating its policies and its approach to governance in such a way that shores up neoliberal policy regimes. The state goes about fixing the leaks in the proverbial roof that protects the spread of abstract space from being permeated by movements for differential space that remain in perpetual motion, alternately advancing their goals, being stalled, or getting transformed into something else.

I will now briefly lay out how the empirics of the case study help substantiate my claim that there are elements that suggest the potential of a passive revolution being underway in Lawrence Heights. Since it opened, Lawrence Heights has been stigmatized and excluded by surrounding districts, particularly the more affluent suburban homeowners in the neighboring Lawrence Manor. And it has been persistently problematized in the public sphere and policy circles as dysfunctional and physically deteriorated. Howard Moscoe, the city councilor for the Lawrence Heights area, declared in 2007 that “we’re going to eliminate the (public housing stigma)” (Donovan, 2007, p. B1). During a community meeting at a local school in Lawrence Heights, former TCHC CEO Derek Ballantyne said to the audience that the “housing stock is in bad shape and needs to be replaced,” adding that “by selling some of the land, the money can be used to reinvest in the revitalization” (Donovan, 2007, p. E6). Ballantyne’s statement is a facsimile of the post-Hurricane Katrina policy rolled out in New Orleans, Louisiana beginning in 2005. In the New Orleans case, predominately black residents who had lived in public housing, rented homes, or low-income trailers were first displaced into Federal Emergency

Management Agency (FEMA) trailer parks outside the city, and then informed by the state that their former housing structures (many of which were left undamaged by the floodwaters) were no longer considered “appropriate,” and would instead be torn down and converted into mixed-income condominium-rental units (Adams, Van Hattum, & English, 2009, p. 616).

Vulnerable and disadvantaged persons in the downtown Eastside area of Vancouver has likewise been the target of state strategies intent on altering the landscape to make it conform to the dictates and tastes of advantaged people and enhance its potential for capital accumulation. Murray (2011, pp. 1, 12-13) critiques how the state took its formerly preferred approach after WWII of instituting “universal” programs intended to provide a top-down hierarchically administered redress for local poverty, and replaced it with what it considered holistic and “from the ground up” strategies meant to be sensitive and attuned to local knowledges built on premises upon the “assumption that wealth and poverty could be made to live happily together, in close geographical proximity.” Apart from eliding the reality that the link between poverty and local spaces were always known to policymakers and not simply “discovered,” they simply replace the segregative planning strategies of the postwar years with a new basket of tools meant to physically and mentally control the disadvantaged to render space ideal for the privileged via: “(1) the physical removal of people (arrest/coercion), (2) the reinforcement of civil norms (subsistence provisions and harm reduction services), and (3) the redirection of individual conduct (employment and parental skills training)” (Murray, 2011, p. 12).

To accomplish the actions described in these examples, the state grinds these issues down on strategic and spatially selective fronts where it manufactures problems and solutions that get boiled down to “helping deficient communities.” The scaling down and drawing of explicit borders around what the state identifies as “problems to be solved” with their own prescribed solutions help reinforce the taken-for-granted-ness embedded in the discourse around “urban revitalization.” Writing about New Orleans, Klinenberg and Frank say that in the post-Katrina environment, the state formed strategic partnerships with the private sector to effectively loot government infrastructure by using public resources to displace disadvantaged people, funnel them into emergency housing outside the city, and demolish their housing to build up profitable socially mixed residential developments in their place (as cited by Adams, Van Hattum, & English, 2009, p. 630). This is what the state is doing in Lawrence Heights presently. What is of interest to us is the effects of grassroots activity that is deeply intertwined with the future of this area.

Indeed, the fact that Lawrence Heights has experienced prolonged isolation has contributed to its development of a robust activist counter-culture culture. The documentary evidence I show in the ensuing chapters draws out a history of stigmatization of Lawrence Heights tenants and mismanagement by the state in its position as a landlord. Tenants were excluded from decision-making processes affecting the community, distrusted by housing managers, and highly policed, fueling alienation that stimulated negative press coverage and further avoidance of the people living there by surrounding areas. These amorously related events, predicated on othering those living in Lawrence

Heights, may have helped over time to mobilize what is now a strongly activist centered culture predicated on coordinated care and independence. When the state informed the community that their neighborhood would be “revitalized,” the history of their struggles and their activist traditions were brought to bear on planners and city officials.

The empirical chapters focusing on Lawrence Heights reveal two interacting tendencies that point to the appearance of a passive revolution. First is the overwhelming level of authority and resources that the state has marshaled towards clearing the existing housing supply, and then bringing private developers who have been sold a portion of the land to then build entirely new housing based on social mixing. Accordingly, the planning uses massive capital to build new housing, amenities, retail, and other hard and soft infrastructure. Planners and city officials try to draw firm lines around what is possible in tension with what tenants and their grassroots organizers are demanding. Second, however, is the committed and powerful involvement of tenants during planning. Through surveys, town halls, and grassroots organizing on tenants’ behalf, Lawrence Heights residents have provided input on the new housing design, the proposed landscape, access to new jobs, career training, and funding for tenant-directed programs.

True to the idea of a passive revolution, these grassroots agents are forced to work with and against a state that is deeply committed to taking the same blueprint for “revitalization” for Regent Park and essentially transplanting it onto Lawrence Heights. The contours of this model reflect where the neoliberal paradigm has come to. Whatever visions that tenants may have of their future in Lawrence Heights, such ideas have been

harnessed to a particular model for “revitalization,” with their demands being filtered through what the state deems appropriate. Loopmans, Decker, and Kesteloot (2010, pp. 183-184) cite strategies that the state uses to keep social movements hemmed in, including:

1. Incorporating parts of the contending movement into its administrative processes.
2. Partially fulfilling the demands of the movement.
3. Discursively clouding what the movement is demanding via its public statements and access to the press.

Community involvement in the “revitalization” has tended, though not in all respects, to get absorbed into the city’s administrative machine. Demands voiced by the community for resources, moving assistance, making tenants priority hires for jobs created through the revitalization, must win approval by the state. Such demands are affirmed to the extent that they do not threaten the investments and building plans. Politicians, planners, and assorted wealthy and powerful institutions, including development firms, architects, city consultants, and real-estate bloggers overwhelm the media sphere with justifications for the so-called “revitalization” rooted in beliefs that improving the built environment will bring prosperity to those living there, along with luxurious new housing for potential buyers and renters. The community’s perspectives in the media are limited, ranging from support for the “revitalization” to anxiety about the implications it poses for the future. There is little space given to documenting the committed grassroots actions taking place between tenants and authorities daily.

Using Marxist State Theory

Given the prominence of the state's role in the Lawrence Heights "revitalization," I will use this section to explain how I am analyzing what the state is doing in this case. I use chapter three to explore the issue of the state and how I am using state theory in the analysis more deeply. For now, let me briefly summarize why I am using it in this dissertation. Political scientists have devised countless and often contesting interpretations of the state (see Lowi, 1992; Held, 2013). From this question, more longstanding debates arise that wrestle with the question of determining how the state behaves and engages with society politically. Political scientists often apply popular epistemological tools and heuristics to analyze this problem, such as behaviouralist and rational choice approaches, parliamentarism, and liberal pluralism, just to name a few (see Shapiro, 2002; Donovan & Larkin, 2006). While it is beyond our focus in this study to dive into these approaches in much detail, it can at least be said that they can yield crucial insights just as they possess potential limitations. Common analytical problems flare up when trying to strike a balance between understanding political activity as driven through interplays between structure and agency and how to frame things theoretically and abstractly without losing touch with the realities of political practice (Lewis, 2002).

For this study, I am taking a theoretical approach that borrows elements from Marxist state theory, which no doubt has limitations of its own, but is still set on wedding a persistent analytical connection between theory and the everyday realities of political practice where the direction of social change is something that is contested daily. As a way

of illustrating this reality, Marxist state theory tends to see what the state is and does as being a manifestation of struggle between people in different social classes. Marxist state theory arose, in part, because Marx himself “never attempted to set out a comprehensive and systematic theory of the state” (Miliband, 1989, p. 278).

At its best, Marxist state theory encourages us to resist the common tendency to assume the state is being controlled entirely by the capitalist class. Theda Skocpol observed in 1979 that “virtually all Marxists continue simply to assume that state forms and activities vary in correspondence with modes of production, and that state rulers cannot act against the basic interests of a dominant class” (as cited by Thomas, 2019, p. 8). Such thinking can start sounding conspiratorial (e.g., “corporations are controlling everything”). It also leaves little room for the oppressed to successfully provoke the state to act on its own behalf, which leaves dialectics to the wayside. That should give us pause. As Bertell Ollman (1998, p. 342) says, “[C]apitalism is completely and always dialectical.” Accordingly, Marxist state theorists often try to account for how the state can act in ways that run contrary to what the capitalist class desires. The state is, after all, bound up with the larger systemic need to hold class hierarchies in place and continue forcing the majority to live by selling their labour power. Among thinkers debating this subject, a popular idea arose in the 1970s suggesting the state possessed relative autonomy, where it could act on behalf of other class interests provided it still helps hold society together ‘in the long run’ (Tsoukalas, 2002).

Marxist state theorists have not resolved their differences since the debates hit their peak in the late 1960s and 70s through exchanges between Ralph Miliband and Nicos

Poulantzas, leaving some to conclude the whole endeavor is outdated and directionless. But when I began research on Lawrence Heights, the state's fingerprints were on everything of significance to the "revitalization." Representatives of the state were present in every community meeting, and I saw them being pressured by Lawrence Heights' tenants and associated collectives to make change on their terms. On this basis, I found Marxist state theory to be an explanatory aid for me to answer my larger question about how the grassroots movement in Lawrence Heights is reckoning with forces intent on "revitalization."

So, what is the state and what does it do? When Marxists offer definitions of the capitalist or bourgeois state, they usually see it either like Lenin did as a collective of institutions, bureaucrats, and personnel that operate over and apart from the rest of society, which must be overridden by a proletarian dictatorship (see Rothenberg, 1995). Rosa Luxemburg might say that Lenin is falling prey to provincialism, countering that fomenting a healthy democracy and class consciousness will gradually spread outwards and mobilize enough energy for a socialist alternative that will prompt the state to eventually melt away on its own (Luxemburg, 1976, p. 257).

These views proved influential on later Marxist theorizations of the state, which sees the state either as a discrete thing that exercises power or says we must de-mystify state activity to see it for what it is: underlying struggle between class forces. Wendy Brown (1992, p. 12) likewise proffers that the state is better seen as a landscape of action:

Despite the almost unavoidable tendency to speak of the state as an "it," the domain we call the state is not a thing, system, or subject but a significantly unbounded rain

of powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses and practices, cohabiting in limited, tension-ridden, often contradictory relation with one another.

Brown (1992, p. 12) goes on to make another salient point about the need to disaggregate the state even further to account for how state power inflicts control upon people disproportionately along racial and gendered lines, not just in terms of class hierarchies, doing so in ways that mutually reproduce certain forms of daily “constitution and regulation of subjects” while conflicting with others. I see this view as reaching closer to what is happening beneath the surface, where surface relations between formal institutions and civil society organizations reflect deeper struggles within and among social hierarchies. When the state acts to realize ends, it intervenes with actions and policies that affect daily life in different ways. State interventions can be bent towards accomplishing other ends depending on the direction that the struggle for life takes, including the consequent exertion of power along multiple lines and modes of resistance posed against them. And these processes add up to a dialectical logic at work.

To examine how this dialectical logic works when examining my data, I apply a theory of state action comprised of elements from other scholars (Jessop, 1990; Brenner, 2004, Glasberg, Willis & Shannon, 2017). A number of scholars suggest the state engages in actions that are variously strategically selective depending on the interests at play, target certain spaces disproportionately, and deploy influence through multiple sites of power, including formal state channels (e.g. the judiciary, bureaucracies) but also more indirectly through the press, think tanks, public forums. These elements suggest there is a fluidity to state action, which is why in the dissertation I use the term ‘dynamic

selectivities' to describe how the state operates. These comments show that state action can be set in other directions by social movement organizations, which is consistent with abstract space becoming permeated.

Overview of the Case Study

This dissertation consists of a single case study of the public housing neighborhood known as Lawrence Heights, which sits in North York, one of the six administrative districts of Toronto, Canada. The state built Lawrence Heights in the mid-1950s on farmlands it bought after WWII. Lawrence Heights rests northwest of central Toronto and is bounded, roughly speaking, by four major streets, including Yorkdale Road (northbound), Varna Drive (eastbound), Dufferin Street (westbound), and Lawrence Avenue (southbound). The neighborhood consists of two areas bisected by the Allen Road expressway. If you walk east of Flemington Road, you encounter public housing complexes comprised of low to mid-rise buildings broadly similar in design.

Beginning officially in 2007, the neighborhood is immersed in a three-phase-long “revitalization” engineered via public-private partnerships between the Toronto Community Housing Corporation – the social housing provider and representative institution for the local state – with private developers. These developers purchase a portion of the publicly owned lands and finance the cost of replacing the public housing with new condominiums, which re-house Lawrence Heights’ existing public housing tenants. Newer affluent residents sit in the other units and pay market rates.

Some visual imagery can help us better grasp the layout of Lawrence Heights. Figure 1 (*see next page) is a map of both Lawrence Heights and the large neighborhood of affluent homeowners in Lawrence Manor that sits beside it. Lawrence Manor has played an essential role in the evolution of Lawrence Heights. Its residents have traditionally shunned their neighbors who live in the public housing areas, even to the point of erecting literal fencing that separates the two communities. Lawrence Manor households stigmatized Lawrence Heights tenants, who throughout the 1970s became increasingly racially diverse on top of being income poor. The state has now applied a highly strategic model for “revitalization” onto Lawrence Heights and has justified this action by leveraging the area’s now long-standing reputation as “secluded, unsafe, and dysfunctional.” Members of Lawrence Manor have proven to be a disruptive presence. They opposed both the original Lawrence Heights development and the “revitalization” underway there now on the grounds that pronounced increases in density would have a flattening effect on property values.



Figure 1 - Map of Lawrence Heights and Lawrence Manor (Google, n.d.). Reproduced with permission.

Street-level images of Lawrence Heights show us the appearance and structure of the community as it has always existed and what it is supposed to look like after this process of state led change. The following sample of images communicates much about Lawrence Heights' physical structure and its framing for the wider public:



Figure 2 - Picture of 1 Leila Lane demolition site (TCHC, 2021). Reproduced with permission.



Figure 3 - Untitled photo of Lawrence Heights (CTV-News, 2019). Reproduced with permission.

Shown above, there is a photo of the 1 Leila Lane demolition site in Lawrence Heights. With the boarded-up building framed behind the fence, this housing complex appears for the viewer as condemned, which helps support the image of the “revitalization” as the “common-sensical” step forward. A google search of *Lawrence Heights* reveals neutral and attractive photos of the neighborhood, just as many other pictures come from news articles focused on incidents of gun violence. Such images represent the common media practice of connecting the picture with the content of crime stories: setting police tape in

the foreground and including other law enforcement imagery (e.g., police cars, officers, etc.). When such stories dominate media coverage of a neighborhood like Lawrence Heights, they can manipulate the wider public’s conception of an area that has already suffered from long-standing isolation. The publicized identity of Lawrence Heights becomes one associated with disorder and anomie, and that can energize the state and capital to push for “revitalization” as the rational step forward.

One can contrast these photos with the following sample of images marketing the Lawrence Heights “revitalization:”



Figure 4 - Untitled blueprint #1 for Lawrence Heights by Metropia (n.d.). Reproduced with permission.



Figure 5 - Untitled blueprint #2 for Lawrence Heights by Metropia (n.d.). Reproduced with permission.



Figure 6 - Untitled blueprint #3 for Lawrence Heights (Metropia, n.d.). Reproduced with permission.

This sample of pictures markets the schematics for the new Lawrence Heights and promotes the *new* housing units as chic in design. Christopher Hume (2018, n.p.)

describes the “revitalization” as intending to “weave Lawrence Heights back into the city.” Hume points out that the renewal represents a break with the now outmoded planning ideas popular after WWII, which informed the construction of what amounted to a secluded public housing district in Lawrence Heights. Those promoting the state-led “revitalization” could then look at the totality of the images shared here and say this is the rational way to go: new and sleek will replace outdatedness, isolation, and crime.

This dissertation explains that histories of political conflict between different classes and institutions interlock with systemic pressures to create growth and investment to culminate in the creation and eventual “revitalization” of Lawrence Heights. Below is a short timeline of key events that trace the evolution of Lawrence Heights

A short timeline of Lawrence Heights shows some key events that the dissertation will explore in the later chapters:

1600s - 1800s	1990 - 1970	1970 - 2000	2000 - Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before Lawrence Heights • Indigenous territories dispossessed through systematic land theft program by colonial settlers. • Toronto formally established by settlers in 1834. • British state provides stolen land tracts to settlers from abroad, including Mulholland family from Ulster County in Ireland who turn them into prosperous farmlands called the Henry Farms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawrence Heights Opens • Township of North York founded in 1922. • Lands that comprise Henry Farms are sold in 1949 to the federal government, eventually becoming Lawrence Heights. • Lawrence Heights is opened in 1959 to house low-income families struggling to find affordable housing during a lasting shortage after WWII. • The Lawrence Heights plan staunchly resisted by ratepayers' associations and residents in surrounding districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal government draws down its public housing program. • Resistance to Lawrence Heights presages longstanding stigmatization of the neighborhood by other areas, including neighboring Lawrence Manor. • Toronto begins prioritizing economic growth strategies oriented towards attracting transnational capitalist class, finance capital, tourism, and ramping up high end commercial and residential real estate. • Ontario passes legislation that leads to an amalgamation of six administrative boroughs into megacity version of Toronto . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following in step with perceived success of "revitalization" in Regent Park before it, same plan is announced for construction in Lawrence Heights in 2007. • Global economic crisis strikes in 2008, setting off renewed austerity commitments by governments, exacerbating difficulties to finance public services. • Socially-mixed "revitalization" commences in Lawrence Heights via public-private partnership. • Planning on "social development" aspects of "revitalization" continue in Lawrence Heights.

Figure 7 - Timeline of Key Events

This timeline gives us a window into the evolutionary path that Lawrence Heights has taken since the mid-twentieth century. Later chapters reveal the multiple political conflicts that help explain how and why the neighborhood eventually became a target for newfound investment. Examples include:

- Activists and returning war veterans pressing the state for affordable housing
- Lawrence Manor residents protesting the original Lawrence Heights construction and stigmatizing its tenants
- Discord between Lawrence Heights tenants and state administrators who distrusted and managed them paternalistically
- Lawrence Heights became progressively racialized which fuelled stigmatization

Systemic pressures on the state and capital to create growth worked in tandem and exacerbated these internal conflicts within Lawrence Heights, further bolstering those pushing for “revitalization.” The exploitation of spaces for value creation (otherwise called surplus) inform the history of Lawrence Heights (Harvey, 2001). Indigenous people were dispossessed from lands granted to settlers by the British crown. Growth ensued when settlers migrated to these territories from stagnating areas in Ireland and elsewhere in the United Kingdom. A portion of these lands became the site for Lawrence Heights, which was a new source of affordable housing that accompanied urban and suburban sprawl in the post-war period.

By the 1970s, the Keynesian postwar paradigm became mired in a crisis of stagflation which helped rejuvenate latent class antagonisms and resentments that found expression in a variety of ways, including anti-unionism, labour struggles, and violent anti-establishment protests, “culminating in the three-decades-long struggle for neoliberal

hegemony” (Fanelli, 2014, p. 12). Advocates presented neoliberalism as a new way to solve the problems of the 1970s, precipitating the rolling back of social protections and finding new avenues for the private sector to create a surplus. The case study will show that public housing districts like Lawrence Heights became targets to render into under-used spaces for surplus creation. First, Ontario initiated moves, like amalgamation and downloading responsibility for social housing responsibility onto its cities in the 1990s. Downloading left Toronto unable to fund public housing repairs and related servicing costs, giving socially mixed “urban revitalization” projects urgency as public-private partnership-based solutions to “revitalizing” its public housing supply. These spaces become a renewed source of surplus for architects, developers, construction workers, planners, retailers, real-estate investors, and condo-buyers. Capital flows into these communities, including Lawrence Heights and other inner-suburban areas Toronto like Scarborough and East York.

The Lawrence Heights “revitalization” sees the state and capital create abstract space, which arouses a countermovement for differential space. For this dissertation, neoliberalism will be the concept put front and centre because, in the context of state led action in Lawrence Heights, it is the philosophical lynchpin of the policies that have led to its unfolding. Our task then includes looking at how the community and its representatives in Lawrence Heights are asserting themselves in the planning – in the face of a mountain of capital and political power being poured into this “revitalization” – to

twist the proceedings to work as best as possible for tenants, to have a greater say over the use and distribution of resources and control their destiny.

Social Relevance of the Project

The merit of this project is evident in two important respects. First, I will be contributing to a long-standing debate among political scientists related to the problem of theorizing how states develop and implement policy (Hay, 2005; Carnoy, 2014). These debates center on understanding how the state produces policy in response to public demands for solutions to problems, which includes pressures from various social forces residing both inside the state – such as politicians and political parties – as well as outside the state, including interest groups, think tanks, and the media (Nordlinger, Lowi, & Fabbrini, 1988; Sabatier & Weible, 2014). This debate naturally attracts political scientists who apply scientific methods to make descriptive and causal inferences about decisions and actions related to the production and distribution of finite resources among groups (Keohane, 2009, p. 359).

My dissertation contributes to this debate by zeroing in on the nature of policy implementation by the state at the local level in Canada. Generally, scholarly analyses of Canadian urban politics center more on current events and making descriptive and normative claims rather than theorizing how urban politics functions beyond the institutional workings of federalism (Taylor & Eidelman, 2010). Theorizing policy-making in Canadian cities became urgent after budgetary constraints led the federal government in the 1990s to withdraw itself as the primary administrator of housing

policy. In so doing, “decision making as to where federal money was to be spent was largely decentralized to the provinces, municipalities, and even the private sector” (Leone & Carroll, 2010, p. 399). As such, since the mid-1980s, Canadian cities have tended to subscribe to neoliberal policy agendas where they straddle a problematic line as providers of affordable housing while also competing with one another for fiscal revenues, industry, and consumption flows in place of federal support (August, 2008, p. 88).

Many inter-disciplinary studies have broached issues that, broadly speaking, speak to how dynamics of contemporary urbanism inflict disproportionate harms upon the socially marginalized. Neoliberalism is a common fixture in these analyses, where the state commits to deregulation, austerity, and privatization while removing barriers to the continual commodification of new ideas and industries as paving a road towards societal benefits. Critics of neoliberalism insist it often does the opposite. Jessica Parish (2019; 2020) has keyed in on how the burgeoning wellness industry, personified by yoga studios, vegan restaurants, holistic medicine clinics, and the proliferation of green-space urban planning with the support of accommodative zoning laws as newfound structures to wall off gentrifying neighborhoods like South Parkdale and Roncesvalles in Toronto from people who do not fit the requisite lifestyle. Along this same stream of research, other scholars have “examined the link between urban regeneration and gentrification through new green spaces, transit, and other amenities” (Shokry, Anguelovski, Connolly, Maroko, & Pearsall, 2022, p. 222). The overriding pursuit by capital for new things to

commodify and render into trendy, technologically sophisticated, and expensive forms has the resulting effect of excluding those who cannot afford them.

Beyond the specific focus on gentrification and back to the subject of “urban revitalization” more broadly, much has been written about how local policies negatively impact the marginalized, but which also produce effects that cut across different social classes in ambivalent ways. Karen Murray (2015, p. 278) writes about the application of social-mixing policies in gentrifying eastern districts in Vancouver, encompassing the “Downtown Eastside, Grandview Woodland, and Strathcona,” is wound into processes that target disadvantaged populations as being “sub-optimally developed socially,” making them into raw material for profit. Those targeted are wrought through calculative milieus and operations, including socially mixed redevelopment planning and social development programs that valorize self-reliance and marketization, thereby rendering them into a source of profit and career advancement for authorities who put this in motion (Murray, 2015, p. 290). Writing about post-“revitalization” Regent Park, Kelly (2013, p. 175) interrogates the subject position of the arriving condo-owner who is associated with the “anticipation of a transformed neighborhood in which social integration is achieved,” but who also struggle with the implications of their presence as potential gentrifiers who may exacerbate tensions between classes rather do the opposite.

The discovery of such conflicting social dynamics speaks to a need for us to continue scrutinizing the creation, administration, and results of “revitalization” policies since observations may be made that challenge our assumptions. Within the existing

literature on contemporary “urban revitalization” schemes, there is a tendency for researchers to present neoliberalism as playing an overly deterministic role in shaping the involvement of all relevant actors, institutions, and collectives in these projects. Despite its pervasiveness and intensity, though, neoliberalism is not immune to resistance. As Mark Purcell (2016) says, neoliberalism can be resisted through mass public protests and the everyday rejection of market logic as the solution to all problems. I will offer evidence that documents how ordinary people and community-based organizations are trying to make change on their terms without being overwhelmingly coerced by the force of neoliberalism alone.

Further, I have encountered enough empirical evidence at this stage in my research that suggests neoliberalism has begun approaching limits in Canada just as it has done elsewhere in the world. The reality of this picture is messy. There has been a surge in recent years of authoritarian political leaders rising to power that is symptomatic of larger populist groundswells happening in many parts of the world (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). “These concerns came to a head in the 2018 Ontario provincial election,” writes (Budd, 2020, p. 171), “where right-wing populist leader, Doug Ford, won a majority government in Canada’s most populous province.” Populism is a term that refers to a variety of political movements that traditionally construct “a politics of salvation, with populist leaders offering solutions to a crisis or threat to “the people” created by “elites” in some form, where both “the people” and “the elite” are shifting signifiers” (Thomas, 2020, p. 136). Ford’s campaign, however, veered away from the typically xenophobic

and nativist appeals to frustrated white voters' anger towards "social or cultural change," and instead played on Ontarians shared and aspirational sense of fitting into a multi-ethnic middle-class which has been threatened by an overly intrusive government and expensive taxpayer funded initiatives (Budd, 2020, p. 178). By selling voters on this idea, Ford has pushed an agenda defined by austerity without limits (Fanelli & Luce, 2019).

As neoliberalism gets latched onto ideas like right populism, which is *typically* prone to affirming and promoting authoritarian style governance, illiberalism, and racism, these expressions of anomie can be seen as a signal suggesting the paradigmatic authority of neoliberalism is threatened. Given these considerations, it is reasonable to explore the possibility that urban groups and local political authorities on the far left can devise and implement policies more aligned with their goals than those on the right try to do.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations in terms of what this dissertation accomplishes conceptually and methodologically. Regarding the former, there are potential counter explanations that challenge the framing of Lawrence Heights as no less different in its effects as those described in the numerous other accounts of the "revitalized" Regent Park and others like it. Some scholars may just see my findings as evidence of an increasingly sophisticated softer-edged neoliberalism (see Wilson, 2015). Community involvement, in this view, sees planners, developers, and other officials engaging the community and acquiescing to some of their demands as a matter of absorbing costs so that the "urban revitalization"

can go forward (Alfasi, 2003; Weber, 2002). Tulumello (2016, p. 133) cites Baptista (2013, p. 605) who argues that

[S]cholarly critiques [. . .] of neoliberalism in urban studies [. . .] have an intellectual place of origin. [. . .] They also travel elsewhere [. . .] [and] may come to exert a form of hegemonic power that can prevent other concepts, analytical frameworks, and forms of critique to play a role in their own right; and, as a result, they may overlook or even distort the understanding of local conditions.

Neoliberalism is a mutable phenomenon, but it is not so encompassing that it is resistant to different ideas, nor are community organizers bereft of any agency in these matters.

A challenge with political science is figuring out how social change works without wedding ourselves to certain precepts, such as “assuming that how we are ruled is the central issue or that how we act is predetermined by processes that unfold behind our backs. The focus is on human agency and hence on purposive activity” (Magnusson, 2013, p. 35). Accordingly, this dissertation discusses the extent to which the community in Lawrence Heights is being responded to by the state.

Critics may, in turn, allege that my analysis of Lawrence Heights presents a distorted image of local conditions. Extrapolating the direction of social change in Lawrence Heights required me to decide how to interpret the facts collected. To do this, I relied on concepts and theories drawn from Marxist political economy and state theory.

The Chicago School sociologist Louis Wirth (1964) might challenge my account of the facts about Lawrence Heights. Wirth argues that urban living does not fit into Marxist epistemology’s conceptual boxes, where social change is commonly seen as being driven by class struggle and is wrought through processes of dialectical

materialism. For Wirth, the fragmented and ever-changing rhythm of urban life does not lend itself to the formation of class-based activity, nor is it a product of systemic pressures that operate surreptitiously. Urban lifestyles are fleeting but also given to standardization in terms of behavior. Wirth says urban life should thus be “understood on its own terms and not read off accounts of capitalism, industrialism, or modernity” (as cited by Magnusson, 2013, p. 55). But Wirth’s view of urban society assumes it arises organically and therefore naturalizes it, which encourages us to leave many unanswered questions about inequality and power.

Another common complaint applied to singular case studies of the type done in this dissertation is that it can be challenging to determine whether the findings are evidence of a broader social phenomenon or if they are overly particular to its context. As Zainal (2007, p. 2) says, “the drawback of a single-case design is its inability to provide a generalizing conclusion, in particular when the events are rare.” And yet, generalization is not always beneficial either as it can condition one’s thinking to only accept conclusions that fit with established narratives and concepts. This is an especially valid concern when performing work in the social sciences where judgements about social life are not always amenable to being fit into rigid forms of understanding. Presenting findings that challenge established frames and concepts as this dissertation is intended to do, particularly those associated with “common-sense,” can encourage us to rethink our assumptions about things.

Urban “revitalizations” of the sort underway in Lawrence Heights are common, and so there are multiple cases by which we can measure our results against other studies. Regent Park, for instance, remains the most written about neighborhood in Toronto among social scientists. Doing a single case allows researchers to present more new facts in one study rather than divide space evenly among multiple cases.

With Lawrence Heights being left relatively under the radar by scholars, this dissertation digs into this case in a similar vein as Ted Rutland’s (2018) text *Displacing Blackness: Planning, Power and Race in Twentieth Century Halifax*. Rutland’s book is a thorough examination of the racist and colonialist underpinnings of planning practices that led to the displacement of Africville residents, a population comprised in part of Black exiles from the American civil war and soldiers from the war of 1812, who were often funneled into housing projects in Halifax’s north end in the mid-twentieth century.

Beyond the issue of scope as regards the number of case studies that a study undertakes, there are methodological and research methods challenges evident in this dissertation that are worth reviewing. Concerns over breadth extend into my use of ethnography as a methodological guidepost, which is witnessing everyday events that affect other people’s lives and then shaping them into a coherent narrative that explains what is happening and why (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Through participant observation, this study gave a glimpse into everyday planning meetings conducted by the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION) and associated persons, which shed light on the types of political conflict that arose in relations between them and with

the state and other officials involved in the “revitalization.” But the range of meetings I witnessed in person was over a two-and-a-half-year span between 2019 up to summer 2021, which gave us a limited picture when we remember that “revitalization” planning began over a decade ago.

Focusing my observational research on the meetings conducted by LHION presents its own limits for analysis. It is a diverse network that has been deeply involved in the revitalization to represent tenants’ interests, but it is still one source. Had there been more time for research, I would observe events held by other organizations that are either involved with or independent from the network. Doing so would add more voices and perspectives to my existing data and may produce findings that contradict what I have already presented.

Another primary method used in this research has been analysis of archival sources that document how change occurred in Lawrence Heights over time. These sources give ample facts explaining how and why the district evolved in the way it has, both in the pre-revitalization era and in the still-unfolding period of redevelopment. But outside of primary and secondary sources that I reviewed which detailed facts about the “revitalization,” specifically, I was not able to get comparable access to the debates and conflicts dating back to when it was being planned in the mid-2000s had I been able to sit in on town hall meetings and the community meetings of the sort that I had the privilege of attending between 2019 and 2021. Had I begun the research earlier, attending such

planning meetings when the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” was still being shaped would have been a necessity.

I also conducted a limited set of interviews to provide additional facts about the revitalization that I would not necessarily have gathered from alternative sources. Beyond having interviewed a small number of persons, the data from them provided a limited range of viewpoints. A key omission here was direct interviews with members of the Lawrence Heights community. Apart from my facing challenges recruiting people who were willing to speak with me, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic made it doubly hard to contact and interview Lawrence Heights residents, in addition to being unable to build the meaningful relationships that create trust. For reasons of protecting privacy, the TCHC understandably does not share contact information for their tenants with people. As such, these interviews offered a selection of facts that more so complimented the other sources used rather than serving as a major component of this dissertation research.

Conclusion

Efforts by the those on the Left to realize change in this environment remain in conflict with other political pressures, including those with vested interests in protecting neoliberalism and the right that has enjoyed popularity following the 2008 crisis. When it comes to addressing urban issues, neighborhood groups, developers, businesses and investors, and local politicians and parties situated on the left, center, and right, naturally exert influence upon the state at the local level to help generate the change they desire. The state, in turn, responds to affordable housing shortages by augmenting zoning laws,

subsidizing developers, and partnering with their respective provincial and federal government or private firms to generate new housing or rehabilitate existing supplies of it. The local state's strategies in these cases may or may not satisfy the interests advocated by these groups. This case study will reveal that with the Lawrence Heights "revitalization," the state has been receptive in some respects to community demands. Still, neoliberalism continues setting firm limits on what is possible.

The next chapter will provide a review of literature about neoliberalism's impacts on state-led "revitalization" schemes. It shows how this project gives theoretical explanations and research outcomes to help address the 'resistance problem' evident in the existing literature. Chapter three will flesh out the theoretical framework drawn from concepts in Marxist state theory. I call this framework dynamic selectivities to be used at the end of each case study chapter to analyze the events described. Chapter three also concludes the table-setting portion of this project by explaining the methodology and research methods used for this study. Chapter four begins the story of Lawrence Heights by looking first at state policies enacted during the colonial era to control the territories that became public housing. Chapter five unpacks the building of Lawrence Heights in the mid-1950s, a milieu characterized by the predominance of Keynesianism and social welfare policies.

Chapter six documents the progression of stigmatization in Lawrence Heights and the struggles between its tenants with the state. The evolution of Lawrence Heights runs parallel with the spread of neoliberalism in Canada. Chapter seven brings us into the

“revitalization era” in Lawrence Heights, looking at how neoliberalism has influenced the direction of policies associated with this project. Finally, chapter eight goes into depth regarding the “revitalization” by Lawrence Heights tenants and their representative grassroots associations. The conclusion will reflect on what my findings say about the realities of community involvement in urban “revitalization” schemes that remain powerfully influenced by neoliberalism.

Literature Review: Neoliberalism and “urban revitalization”

There is no getting around the fact that the bourgeoisie still has the initiative in its struggle for (and in) space....The state and each of its constituent institutions call for spaces—but spaces which they can then organize according to their specific requirements... The critique of everyday life involves a critique of political life in that everyday life...is profoundly related to all activities, and encompasses them with all their differences and their conflicts; it is their meeting place, their bond, their common ground

– Henri Lefebvre (1996, p. 56, 92, 97).

Introduction

Lawrence Heights is undergoing the largest state-led process of destruction and reconstruction of its kind in Canada, an event it calls “urban revitalization.” Real estate blogs have promoted the “revitalization” as an opportunity to invest in chic new housing that doubles as a form of social assistance. “Removing the stigma from Lawrence Heights while creating a new vibrant mixed-income neighborhood is the main goal for the revitalization,” says Urban Toronto, “giving area residents a better quality of life and better prospects” (Johnson, 2013, para. 6). The City of Toronto’s Affordable Housing Action Plan (2010-2020) summarizes the state’s publicly stated intentions for Lawrence Heights. The plan employs all the common-sense mantras of present-day “urban revitalization” schemes, including mixed land use and socially mixed residential developments and social development plans (City of Toronto, 2009, p. 28-29).

Despite its importance, Lawrence Heights is a case study that has been given little coverage to this point outside of a few press reports and some limited scholarly accounts

(see Fiorito, 2013; Keenan, 2015). The “revitalization” is still in phase one of construction, leading critics to claim it is too early to gauge its impacts (Toronto Community and Housing Corporation (TCHC), 2020). On a more speculative level, the absence of scholarly attention on Lawrence Heights can be chalked up to the fact that the state is using the same model there for “revitalization” that it first used in Regent Park, which remains the most written about Toronto neighborhood among social scientists. Until Lawrence Heights enters the final stages of this state-led intervention, there could be a wait-and-see approach taken by scholars who want to gauge how much it resembles the Regent Park model.

However, much at these liminal stages can tell us whether what is happening in Lawrence Heights may or may not be falling in line with how social scientists have evaluated other cases of this kind. The rationalist public policy perspective paints “urban revitalizations” as flagship projects initiated through partnerships between local state authorities and large developers that help build globally competitive urban spaces. Others of this ilk conclude that the involvement by the impacted communities in planning “revitalizations” is limited, and there appears to be little that residents or local associations can say or do to alter that. More critical viewpoints see “urban revitalization” as a creative-destructive force that robs communities of their identities and revamps them along homogenously corporate lines (Mele, 2019; Rosa, 2018; Epstein, 2018). Others tend to affirm the common-sensical view of “urban revitalization” rather than challenge it, arguing that these projects improve neighborhood housing stocks, involve residents meaningfully in the planning, heighten security, and bring in businesses and previously lacking services

(Angulo, Sauvage, Tremblay, Ghaffari, & Klein, 2019; Chaskin & Joseph, 2011). What can we make of these conflicting research outcomes when embarking on an under-researched case study like Lawrence Heights?

This chapter reviews academic literature that explains “urban revitalization” movements, including telling us: what they are, how and why they arise, what they accomplish in theory, and how these projects unfold within different local contexts. In short, the chapter will give a comprehensive picture of a portion of the existing research about the subject of “urban revitalizations” to make clear how this dissertation contributes to existing work. This dissertation will advance the current literature on two fronts: theory and research outcomes.

Beginning with theory, a common premise offered to us by social scientists is that “urban revitalization” is a composite of state strategies rooted in neoliberal principles which have become institutionalized in the state and its associated agencies (Peck, 2004; Brenner, 2019). Let us focus on neoliberalism for a moment. A highly cited paper by Wendy Larner (2000, p. 7) argues that when scholars discuss neoliberalism as representing a broadly drawn set of policy reforms, they often take it for granted as being “initiated and rationalized through a relatively coherent theoretical and ideological framework.” Geographers have long insisted that *actually existing* neoliberalism is a concept that leads us to avoid the tendency of seeing neoliberalism as being imposed in a top-down fashion with unencumbered continuity, but that is instead perpetually incomplete, processual, and that is both reactive and subject to counter-pressure (Brenner

& Theodore, 2002). Similarly, Larner (2000, p. 20) says attention should be paid to “the historically specific and internally contradictory aspects of neo-liberalism, and the shaping of specific neoliberal projects by articulations between both hegemonic and non-hegemonic groups,” where resultant social “change is ongoingly contested.” Larner’s paper explores multiple understandings of neoliberalism, which fits with its indeterminate nature are. To focus too much attention on them here may lead us into a rabbit hole. Keeping neoliberalism’s indeterminateness in mind, I will limit myself to defining it in a way appropriate for my case study.

In one popular account from David Harvey (2007), neoliberalism arose as a revolutionary antidote to what were burgeoning threats to upper-class power that began gaining steam in numerous countries after the postwar capitalist order became consumed with crises beginning in the 1970s. The source of these threats was rooted in old fears, including the rise of fascism, communism, and the specter of another Great Depression after WWII, which after a brief period of relative prosperity, gave birth to a new wave of socialist and democratic pressures during the turbulent 1970s across Europe and in North and South America. Events helped precipitate this sea-change, including multiple oil price shocks in 1973 and 1979, the simultaneous rise of inflation and unemployment resulting in stagflation, and a repudiation of Keynesian welfare-state economics by political leaders and the capitalist class (Venn, 2002, p. 163).

That is, capitalism requires and can generate compound growth, but growth runs into limits. When that happens, recessions can occur, and the challenge for capital is to

circumvent the limits by moving them around and finding new ways to create value on top of the old ways. As growth slowed in the 1970s, negative impacts were felt among people across a range of social classes, where the “social compromise between capital and labour that had grounded capital accumulation so successfully in the post-war period” began fracturing, as illustrated by a narrowing of wealth inequality between the upper and working classes following collapses in asset values (property, stocks, and savings) (Harvey, 2007, pp. 15-18).

The ruling class took steps to re-assume its power, and restarting economic growth was a prerequisite. A bureaucratic led effort got underway in the late 1970s through the 80s and 90s by instituting reductions in taxes on income and investments, along with what Harvey--following Marx's conception of primitive (original) accumulation as a process of separating direct producers from their means of production--terms accumulation by dispossession. In a reformulation of this mechanism of capitalist development, a lever of capital accumulation in conditions of the neoliberal era, Harvey here refers to a series of structural reforms in macroeconomic public policy—globalization of capital, privatization of the means of social production, deregulation of markets, liberalization of commerce and trade — designed by the guardians of the world capitalist system, and mandated by the Washington Consensus as a means of liberating the forces of economic freedom from the regulatory constraints of the welfare-

development state (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001).² Specifically, regarding the new world order of neoliberal globalization (free-market capitalism) established in the 1980s, and the neoconservative revolution unleashed by it, Harvey has in mind the neoliberal policy agenda that includes the privatization of public services and a commitment of governments to austerity measures regarding welfare, and a weakening of the excessive power of labour unions (Harvey, 2007, pp. 12, 23, 65).

Now let us turn back to linking neoliberalism to the concept of “urban revitalization.” Many of the scholars discussed below make the case that contemporary “urban revitalization” models are outgrowths of these same processes, that is, the reinforcement of ruling class power in response to threats against it during the twentieth century (Keil, 2002). However, there is an important limitation of neoliberalism-based explanations of why “urban revitalization” arises and its effects. The limitation is rooted in a tendency among scholars to acknowledge neoliberalism’s overwhelming and lasting power to shape and determine urban life to the point that they give comparably less

² Elisa Van Waeyenberge (2017, p. 205) tells us that by the 2000s, it became apparent that the neoliberal policy experiment in the Global South failed to realize its projected benefits, and so moves were made to transition towards a post-Washington Consensus. Neoliberals recognized that the realities of persistent market failures – which are both a consequence of capitalism’s internal contradictions and which are also exacerbated by neoliberal policy – called for a more “extensive state intervention with the main aim of making markets work better.” According to Van Waeyenberge (2017, p. 211), in response to market failures, the issue for neoliberals

then became a quest for a particular institutional set-up (a ‘partnership’ between state and society across private profit and non-profit sectors) that would maximize benefits to society. Crucially, the state was to make sure that market failures are overcome without imposing ‘unnecessary’ costs on society. As a result, when state ‘capability’ was low, it was to rely, as much as possible, on the relative strengths of the private sector, the community, the family and the individual ‘citizen’ (Stiglitz, 1998b).

attention and afford less confidence to the capacity for social movements to force change in other directions.

Capitalism thrives on transforming all things into products that can be produced, exchanged, and consumed through the prism of market relations. Neoliberalism is about removing impediments to spreading capitalist social relations in this purest form. Ludwig von Mises, who was another early developer of neoliberal philosophy, insisted that the older liberalism had become corrupted by a belief that the state could perform a ‘middle way’ of interventionism that sits between free markets and planned economies, leaving us a choice between capitalism and socialism (Gane, 2014, p. 10).

The larger global embrace of neoliberalism helped transform cities. And cities, too, began committing to neoliberalism’s ideals and reshaped themselves, promoting de-industrialization, de-regulation, privatization, and a move away from more heavy-handed managerialist approaches to governing towards promoting entrepreneurialism wherever possible (Harvey, 1989). These processes became woven into the capitalist context of city life, giving life to urban-based movements that alternately resist and support neoliberal policy regimes. Neoliberalism is a potent force in cities where people are already so accustomed to markets as a pervasive presence in daily life.

Many sophisticated theories of neoliberalism insist it always remains a contested and uneven phenomenon. However, a problem within the literature is that researchers sometimes stretch neoliberalism conceptually into a phenomenon so powerful and omnipresent that it seemingly exerts control over a great deal of daily city life and the

struggles of the people resisting the diverse and complex forces of “urban revitalization.” Research outcomes that reveal what look like efforts by forces outside the state and other power centres to alter the course of an “urban revitalization,” or even resist its rationalist strategies outright, end up being refitted by the researcher into a seemingly ever adaptable neoliberal paradigm. This habit among researchers is what I call ‘the resistance problem’ in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. The resistance problem does not override the value of existing research. Much of it helps us de-mystify “urban revitalization” and reveal its connection to the structural imperatives of capitalism.

The other task to be done in this chapter is to analyze a selection of case studies of “urban revitalization” to evaluate their research outcomes. Reviewing these findings give us openings to identify and attenuate the resistance problem, making clear how forces from below can work daily to exert influence on the course that these large urban projects take. Comparing the findings of several case studies with my own allows us to assess whether my case deviates from claims made by other researchers.

Organization of the Chapter

The chapter has three sections beginning with a brief discussion about “urban revitalization” projects and how they have evolved into their latest form. The second section will explain the connection between studied these “revitalization” schemes and the dynamics of capitalism in its current neoliberal form. Bringing these ideas into the picture will help me explain how I address the resistance problem in later chapters. The

third and final section will review research outcomes from scholars that have examined “urban revitalization” movements to evaluate the conclusions commonly shared.

This literature review is a product of a year-long research and analysis process of a total of two hundred and sixty-eight sources cataloged in an Excel spreadsheet. The research database provided through York University library permits access to highly cited periodicals. Roughly one hundred titles were selected from these chosen periodicals and reviewed, whereupon the bibliographies for each were mined for additional works of interest. I also used google scholar to look up titles that cited these works, and numerous prominent sources were also found and reviewed through this procedure. I conducted searches to the point where essential titles for use in the dissertation continued surfacing, and I concluded that ending the search for new material was appropriate. A proportion of books and excerpted book chapters were selected, but the majority were peer-reviewed journal articles. This choice was made pragmatically since such articles are generally easier to access through online search engines. As well, peer-reviewed articles tend to provide overviews of the debates they are situated in.

Defining “Urban Revitalization”

This section will first explain what scholars have to say about “urban revitalization;” why it arises, what its proponents say it is supposed to accomplish in theory, and how it has evolved as a planning initiative. Planned intervention into what state authorities deemed to be distressed urban areas goes back to the nineteenth century and was limited to cities within and among large Western countries in the Global North. It is worth reminding

ourselves that the state's terminology to describe this form of intervention has been fluid over time. The state's preferred approach to this type of intervention has also adjusted in line with popular planning strategies of the time in question. There was a centralization of the "urban revitalization" phenomenon in Global North cities which lasted until the late twentieth century when these practices gradually began surfacing within urban areas in East Asia, Latin America, and post-communist countries in Eastern Europe (Lopez-Morales, 2015).

Contemporary "revitalization" models are thought to spur gentrification with political and private authorities constructing urban flagship projects to "make cities competitive for capital and tourism and invite limited participation from residents and non-profit groups in such planning" (Carmon, 1997, p. 135). The state employs several tactics to complete "urban revitalization" schemes with the language and intent of each being fit into rationalist planning frameworks, including: 1) subsidizing developers to build new inner-city housing in places facing deindustrialization and fiscal distress; 2) forming public-private partnerships to redevelop disinvested and spatially disenfranchised communities into socially mixed residences (Crump, 2002; Booth, 2005; Khare, 2016; Moore & Wright, 2017). The forming of public-private partnerships has been an integral component of "urban revitalization" schemes in Lawrence Heights, and in other places like Regent Park and Don Mount Court where the TCHC formed partnerships with private development firms to help cover expenses.

Understanding how “urban revitalization” schemes operate prompts us to engage with planning theories that helped shape them. For example, social-mixing refers to the mixing of people of different backgrounds into the same residential neighborhood along with criteria like “housing tenure, income, ethnic diversity, immigrant status, religious affiliation, level of government subsidy, occupation, household size, and/or age” (Walks & Maaranen, 2008, p. 294). Social mixing is rooted in schemes devised by paternalistic factory owners in nineteenth-century Britain set on improving the functioning of cities (August, 2008, p. 84). Social-mixing advocates believed poor people are amoral and can be ‘fixed’ by living alongside the affluent and ‘well-mannered’ (Sarkissian, 1976, p. 235).

But social mixing fell out of favor among other idealistic, even utopian-minded, planners. In the 1870s, English urban planner Ebenezer Howard conceived the Garden City, arguing that congested urban areas should be broken into “into compact urban groupings of 30,000 people on sites of one thousand acres, each confined by an agricultural greenbelt of five thousand acres” (Richert & Lapping, 1998, pp. 125-126). But like social mixing, Howard’s Garden City was intended to re-mold burgeoning populations of poor people living and working in industrial-age cities. Clevenger and Andrews (2017, p. 5) describe the Garden City model as a vehicle for realizing the agendas of Victorian reformers intent on civilizing working class people “in the service of British industrial and imperial power.” To this end, Garden City planning became infused with eugenics. According to Susan Currell (2010, p. 272), Howard was inspired by writings like Bruce Richardson’s (2004, sec. 5) 1876 piece titled *Hygeia: A City of*

Health where it is said near the end that “utopia itself is but another word for time; and someday the masses, who now heed us not, or smile incredulously at our proceedings, will awake to our conceptions.” Howard sought to unite the cultural amenities of urban living with pastoral countryside with its “natural healthfulness,” to remove workers from the “sunless slums” and resettle them into garden cities “to mould” them into healthy citizens (Clevenger & Andrews, 2017, p. 7).

Studies of what was more typically called “urban renewal” schemes in earlier periods tended to revolve around *slum* clearance and public housing construction, indicating the distinct influence of Garden City enthusiasts in the fields of planning and architecture. Such projects followed in line with the Victorian belief in the importance of segregating people according to their social status. When “urban renewal” took shape in the early to mid-twentieth century, countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Canada, and elsewhere cleared designated areas. They were then deemed by the state to be properly “rehabilitated” into new commercial districts with former slum occupants placed into subsidized residences (Carmon, 1999). Lawrence Heights came to resemble the same isolated structures that were inspired by Howard’s Garden City.

The concept of spatial fix can make sense of how public housing projects became sites for a new kind of state-led “renewal” predicated on social mixing. David Harvey (2001) describes a spatial fix as a response to the surplus absorption problem. The problem is a constantly recurring issue facing capitalists who are compelled to invest in productive activities to create a surplus, a portion of which must be re-invested into

additional activities so that the process continues anew. What happens is that barriers to new investment arise all the time whenever growth slows down. Capital cannot find new avenues to invest in, and workers cannot sell their labour. When surpluses of labour and capital cannot be combined in profitable ways, cessation occurs in the pursuit of compound economic growth. Capital gets exported into new outlets where value production can resume profitably, and a temporary fix occurs (Harvey, 2001).

The thinking that drove “slum” clearance in the early twentieth century follows a pattern beginning with nineteenth-century planners, architects, and business leaders witnessing urban environments’ degradation, worsening unemployment, and mounting unrest. As a result, they came to see disadvantaged people as a threat that needed to be dispersed and controlled. Authorities channeled investments into infrastructural development and residential environments to re-mold the disadvantaged into “proper citizens” and create new sources of value (Harvey, 1978).

The later decades of the twentieth century saw inner-city “slum clearance” and “renewal” give way to a newer model defined as “urban revitalization” when the former came under intense scrutiny. Waves of state-led interventions into urban environments fostered creative destruction by building suburbs, retail centers, and downtown commercial districts with simultaneous construction of segregated public housing whose residents became alienated from surrounding areas (Keating, 2000, p. 384). Over time, critics started assailing the modernist orientation of these schemes that remained connected to the old model of publicly financed “urban renewal.” They desired a “break

with the idea that planning and development should focus on a large scale, technologically rational, austere and functionally efficient ‘international style’ design” and instead “should be approached with a much greater eclecticism of style” (Harvey, 1987, p. 262). Critics like Jane Jacobs argued that “slum clearance” produced new hovels in their wake in the form of public housing complexes, and that expressways to the suburbs ripped through formerly energetic communities.

Jacobs also believed strongly in mixed-use development, arguing that “a balanced mix of working, service and living activities provides a lively, stimulating and secure public realm” (as cited by Louw & Bruinsma, 2006, p. 1). Social mixing was a vital component of Jacobs’ proposals:

Planning for vitality must aim at unslumming the slums, by creating conditions aimed at persuading a high proportion of the Indigenous residents, whoever they may be, to stay put by choice over the time, so there will be a steadily growing diversity among people and a continuity of community both for old residents and for newcomers who assimilate into it (Jacobs, 1961, p. 409).

But these ideas became swept up in the 1980s by the logic of capital which pushed the competitiveness of central cities and entrepreneurialism to the fore of urban policy where states began deploying “revitalization” as a preferred strategy to address the surplus absorption problem (Zuberi & Taylor, 2017).

“Urban Revitalization:” Bringing Social Mixing (Back) In

Renewed interest by the state in mixed-use development took hold by the late 1990s (Fraser & Nelson, 2008). This fervor for mixed-use development coincided with renewed attention given to social mixing, especially for re-shaping what authorities deemed

to be “failed” segregated and single land-use based public housing (Metzger & Webber, 2018). As a result, mixed-income housing developments became popular among “governments in Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom” to accomplish what they term poverty “de-concentration,” that is, the breaking up of neighborhoods populated by primarily disadvantaged residents (Kleinhans & Van Ham, 2013, p. 101).

Mainstream public-policy-oriented studies have tested the extent to which the aims of “urban revitalization” movements, as expressed by their advocates, measure up to the effects they generate in practice (Marra et al., 2016; Van den Hurk & Hueskes, 2017; Panetta, 2019). The planning language describing the goals of “social-mixing” employs contemporary-sounding jargon that nevertheless resembles the Victorian era belief that “the working masses” can be rendered more “civilized” provided the built environment around them is properly structured:

Existing literature theorizes that the presence of higher-income households may lead to: 1) increased social capital for low-income residents; 2) direct or indirect role modeling of social norms for work and behavior; 3) informal social control leading to safer and more orderly communities for everyone; and 4) gains for the broader community through enhanced engagement of political and market forces (Vale & Shamsuddin, 2017, p. 58).

True to the Foucauldian notion of governing people *at a distance*, such language expresses the faith in the capacity for social mixing and “revitalization” to re-mold disadvantaged people who were formerly concentrated together into pursuers of social capital who will no longer require close management by the state. Chaskin and Joseph (2011, p. 232) describe the ideal type of a socially mixed development as “promoting the

possibility for people of different backgrounds, interests, resources, and priorities to live together simply as neighbors—a version of what Iris Mason Young describes as “the being together of strangers.” Stefan Kipfer (2016, p. 613) criticizes the mainstream perspectives on social mixing as lacking critical judgement, arguing that “social mixing is often hoped to facilitate paternalistic social control: disciplining “problem populations” by subordinating them to role models: the new inhabitants.”

Having explained the rationales behind social mixing deployed in public housing communities, the political and economic imperatives that bring it into being can be explored. Social scientists describe the pressures that globalization wrought upon political officials and capitalists in the 1990s to free up the mobility of people, information, and capital – a phenomenon with implications for how the local state functions and governs. Using a regulationist perspective, Geddes (2005, p. 360) describes key elements of local state restructuring that accompanied changes in the post-Fordist mode of regulation and production: “These are a shift from welfare to workfare; from government-centered political management to a mode of governance which stresses local entrepreneurial leadership and public-private co-operation; fiscal austerity; and economic promotion through a range of local supply-side policies.” As states at the local level committed to these strategies, they negated alternative publicly funded solutions to addressing social issues as the former became deemed necessary to respond to competitive pressures rather than as a matter of political choice (Kern, 2007).

Competition between cities to attract the transnational capitalist class was thus attributed greater significance by local political authorities. One strand of such policies to attract the middle classes back to central city spaces involves an “attempt to reduce socio-spatial segregation and strengthen the “social tissue” of deprived neighborhoods” (Lees, Slater, & Wyly, 2013, p. 199). Social mixing and public-private-led “revitalization” are strategies states are using to generate more surplus by stimulating middle-class migration into areas they formerly tended to avoid (Tabb, 2014, p. 88). The embrace of social mixing within neoliberal policy regimes was primed as a solution for critics of the formerly popular “slum clearance and urban renewal strategies” of the post-WWII era, exemplified by Regent Park, which was vilified as a failure of city planning (Kelly, 2013, p. 181). Sharon Kelly (2013, p. 181) challenges the paternalistic and racist view of social mixing in Regent Park that positions incoming condo dwellers as deliverers of stability for a racialized “community in crisis,” an inference that erases the political gains that organizers and existing residents in the area have wrought over decades.

Neoliberalism in Urban Politics

Social scientists have commonly identified neoliberalism as a central force stimulating “urban revitalization” movements. They connect trends in post-industrial cities promoting these types of beautification initiatives: attracting domestic and international financial capital, new urbanist forms of civic boosterism, place-marketing, enterprise zones, tax abatements, public-private partnerships, and policies supporting enhanced tourism and burgeoning service economies (Mayer, 2007).

For our purposes, the most helpful approach to understanding neoliberalism has been developed over the last twenty years by a cadre of geographers, sociologists, political economists, and environmental studies experts, among others. From this perspective, neoliberalism is a mutable phenomenon unfolding unevenly across spatial and temporal lines and is embedded in ways that differ from place to place. Brenner and Theodore (2002, p. 350) argue that neoliberalism is a doctrine that presumes market forces “operate according to immutable laws no matter where they are unleashed,” and that rests on “the belief that open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development.” The idea is to see neoliberalism less as an ideological monolith but as a historically produced and path-dependent phenomenon that functions according to the spatial and temporal context in which it originates and can have effects that collide with its objectives.

Geographers encourage us to see neoliberalism as persistently in flux. “The uneven geographical development of neoliberalism, its frequently partial and lopsided application from one state and social formation to another,” writes David Harvey (2006, p. 148), “testifies to the tentativeness of neoliberal solutions and the complex ways in which political forces, historical traditions, and existing institutional arrangements all shaped why and how the process of neoliberalization occurred.” Despite its uneven application, Harvey says neoliberalism has ideological coherence, which suppresses collectivist alternatives. And that always amounts to the reinstatement of class power and

removal of barriers to capital accumulation (Albo & Fanelli, 2018, p. 3). Moreover, neoliberalism pushes cities to the front of the drive for national competitiveness. Consequently, there has been a pattern of national and regional programs inducing reform at the local state scale (Boyle, McWilliams, & Rice, 2008, p. 314).

Social scientists have drawn links between the transformational impacts of globalization and neoliberalism and other macro phenomena with the heightening importance of cities. As geographers like Neil Brenner (2000, p. 361) wrote at the turn of the millennium: “Throughout the world economy, urban regions are key sites in and through which this multi-scalar reconfiguration of capitalist spatiality is currently unfolding.” Such thinking informed scholarly efforts in the new century to “conceive neoliberalism in specifically geographical terms,” which also called for a “careful mapping of the neoliberal offensive—both in its heartlands and in its zones of extension—together with a discussion of how “local” institutional forms of neoliberalism relate to its more general (ideological) character” (Peck & Brenner, 2002, pp. 381-382).

The idea is to make neoliberalism a more dynamic concept as a verb that can adapt to social pressures outside traditional power structures. The term variegated neoliberalism is “concerned with the reproduction of market rule as a multi-sited, unevenly developed, relationally interpenetrating and more-than-the-sum-of-its-parts process, under which ‘internal’ forms and ‘external’ relations are jointly constituted and continually transformed in a contradictory mutually recursive dialectic” (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2013, p. 1094). The dialectical form of neoliberalism as a process leaves

room to incorporate the element of potential and actual resistance to its unfolding and how this can alter it into a different form or even contribute to its undoing (Larner & Craig, 2005).

The formulation of neoliberalism as mutable and dialectical is preferable to seeing it as static as this better mirrors daily life. Institutions and ideologies often conflict with one another, and some adapt to change while others dissolve. During the late 2000s, when peak neoliberalism gave way to crisis in 2008, many predicted an end to the paradigm. They became hopeful that burgeoning resistance to neoliberalism would give way to an alternative (Walks, 2009). The roots and effects of the 2008 turmoil have been made the subject of numerous scholarly works that document the spread of unemployment, collapsing production and trade, and general malaise that followed its beginnings (Aloui, Aissa, & Nguyen, 2011; Chodorow-Reich, 2014).

When the crisis hit in 2008, there was hope within the Left that it would, in turn, spark uprisings against neoliberalism when the 2010s unfolded. Revolts did happen in countries like Greece in 2015 and in the United States with the Occupy movement in 2011 (Brown, 2020; Worth, 2018). The 2010s, however, also gave rise to another form of neoliberalism termed *neoliberal authoritarian populism* characterized by “Trump in America, the rise of the United Kingdom Independence Party and then the Brexit Party in the UK, and the election of far-right populist governments in Italy and Brazil” (Brown, 2020, p. 575). There is no doubt that neoliberalism has persevered and adapted to widespread pressure and change. But one should be cautious about potentially

overlooking what is happening in the time span of the 2010s at more micro-scales of political activity. If neoliberalism is a verb that unfolds unevenly in different contexts, there is cause for us to seek evidence of successful alternative political movements within other socio-spatial circumstances.

Paradoxically, acknowledging that neoliberalism is a powerful force that conditions people's hearts and minds, which it no doubt is, can likewise foment a belief that it cannot be adequately challenged or replaced with something new. Philip Mirowski (2013, p. 28) once concluded that neoliberalism survived the 2008 crisis because it has "sunk its roots deep into everyday life, almost to the point of passing as the 'ideology of no ideology.'" David Wilson argues in a similarly encompassing way that "neoliberalism poses nothing short of a "new reality" that seeks to "re-entrepreneurialize' cities physically and socially" (as cited by Hackworth, 2008, p. 7). Roger Keil (2009, p. 232) says that "neoliberal subjects of all kinds co-construct, sustain and also contest a now normalized neoliberal social reality." It is useful, I think, to recall Foucault's (1998, p. 101) statement that "discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart." That is, the more pervasive neoliberalism becomes in its effects – both positive and negative – it becomes a more exposed subject for debate and scrutiny, potentially undermining it as much as reinforcing it.

Policies that comport with neoliberalism as a set of normative principles have been widely administered since the 1980s, producing intense effects on people's lives.

Albo and Fanelli (2014, p. 9) describe a neoliberal policy matrix, consisting (among other things) of inflation control, lower taxes and deregulation to induce spending and investment, the liberalization of capital and goods trading, and commodifying public assets and services, translating into keeping wage growth below productivity increases, monetarist shock therapy and inflation targeting by central banks, limiting social services spending, export-led growth strategies, and a concomitant projection of personal responsibility and individual culpability as virtues.

Austerity has become a weapon for formalizing neoliberal principles through policy by shaving down the scope and size of government to make them mirror the business world. New Public Management became the new government credo where, since the 1980s, writes Aucoin (1998, p. 648), where “decision-making authority over the management of multiple government operations was increasingly delegated, deregulated and decentralized” (as cited by Shields & Evans, 1998, p. 75). Similar to how public equity firms enter companies to “trim the fat,” government agencies are committed to privatization, outsourcing and contracting out, and instituting new user fees for public services (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, p. 9).

Even in periods of economic crisis and recession, rather than expanding the social safety net for people struggling with job losses and debts, governments have found ways to double down on austerity and channel people towards market-based solutions to their problems. Nik Theodore (2020, p. 1) argues that there has been an alignment between post-2008 crisis austerity politics and more extended activities associated with neoliberal

urbanism whereby states in Europe and North America tend to now govern “through austerity, in part by displacing crisis to lower spatial scales.” Under the pretense of “budgetary tightening,” public sector workers and the urban poor in cities become “targets of state interventions aimed at reregulating urban life through the extension of market-like social relations” (Theodore, 2020, p. 8).

Though this situation sounds bleak for the left, if you ask these same experts, they will insist that individuals still possess the agency to mount political resistance to neoliberalism in the post-2008 era. Anyone doubting that should remember that resistance movements have arisen throughout history and cut across many political and ideological boundaries. In the 1970s, “poor people’s movements” rose to challenge “exploitative labour relations, restrictions on the right to organize and bargain collectively, and racial – and gender – based oppressions” (Fanelli & Hudson, 2020, p. 257). Resistance was mounted, in turn, against the perceptible leveling of inequity between classes during this same period as manifested by the work of urban growth coalitions – the “development interests, financiers, business elites, and politicians” – which for decades advanced “their own interests over those of others, such as unemployed workers and anti-poverty groups” (Fanelli & Hudson, 2020, p. 260). These coalitions have used subsidies, tax incentives, and other measures to ramp up private sector real-estate development, prompting the construction of expensive residences and downtown office space, boosting white-collar employment, leading cities like Toronto to earn the status of “global city” (Kipfer & Keil, 2002). A global city is seen as being

competitive in terms of its ability to attract inflows of capital, skilled labour, tourists and accommodate multiple cultures under the pretense of being advanced along economic, technological, and social lines. How might we gauge the extent to which the deployment of policy by states that are intent on *remaking* neighborhoods in its own image are confronted by pressures from below? Let us examine some research outcomes of different case studies on this issue to investigate this question.

Evaluating Research Outcomes of “urban revitalization”

Of the works examined, a portion made neoliberalism in state-led “urban revitalizations” a central component of the analysis, while others look at the issue from different vantages. The following reviewed studies by social scientists of various disciplines offer answers to questions such as:

- How do original residents feel about what has happened to their neighborhood post- “revitalization”?
- How involved were they in the planning?
- How much have old and new residents interacted after the state has completed its reconstruction objectives?
- Does “revitalization” fulfill the objectives promoted by social-mixing advocates?
- How much resistance have authorities faced while implementing these projects?

Specific keywords are prominent in the reviewed works: gentrification; contradictions; social polarization; network-building; social control; role-modeling; exclusion; privatization; neoliberalism. Conclusions can be drawn about a set of research outcomes that I have reviewed related to “urban revitalization” movements.

Scholars have raised concerns that “urban revitalization” and social mixing lead to gentrification through the back door (August & Walks, 2012). Studies looking at the

redevelopment of central city neighborhoods in cities like Toronto and Chicago suggest that social mixing creates neighborhood relations defined by “mistrust, superficial contact, and separate life-worlds between resident and incoming groups, rather than integration, inclusion, or understanding” (Walks & Maaranen, 2008, p. 295). So-called “revitalizations” in Toronto and Vancouver, argues Shaw (2008, p. 1698), “suggest that the neighborhoods involved were somehow devitalized or culturally moribund. While this is sometimes the case, it is often true that very vital working-class communities are devitalized through gentrification.” Shaw continues by saying that the long-term solution should be to remove biases that permit disinvestment to occur. Still, gentrification remains an attractive lubricant for change by spurring building repairs and increasing property tax bases so “local governments can fund improvements to streets and services” (Shaw, 2008, p. 1700). Another study of socially mixed redevelopments in London, England, finds they amount to gentrification as evidenced by lacking interactions between newcomers and locals and “few shared perceptions of community” (Davidson, 2010, p. 524).

Such results speak to the prevalence in these studies of contradictory effects produced through social mixing when it is made a component of state-led “urban revitalizations,” namely, limited evidence of enhanced social networks between socially integrated groups and commonly occurring polarization between classes based on criteria like income and race (Graves, 2011; Sautkina, Bond, & Kearns, 2012). Rowe and Dunn

(2015, p. 1258) say that within the Regent Park “revitalization” in downtown Toronto, social mixing

enjoyed considerable support from residents of both tenures and that participants were nearly unanimous in their view that the redevelopment had improved the safety and appearance of the neighborhood. However, resident satisfaction diverged by tenure regarding the physical condition of units and buildings and with management and maintenance.

Brail and Kumar (2017) found that in Regent Park, opportunities for resident engagement in the “revitalization” were deemed uneven by those surveyed. These researchers concluded that the most significant contributing factor towards residents feeling satisfied was the physical reconstruction of the area (Rowe & Dunn, 2015). The relocation process also concerns residents in that they could move away from the site for several years and then return to a place they no longer recognize; such concerns extended to “feelings of tokenism and lack of ownership where neighborhood outcomes are concerned” (Brail & Kumar, 2017, p. 3785).

The literature also reveals a tendency among researchers to use survey data to test whether the effects of “urban revitalizations” predicated on socially mixed developments work to alter residents’ behaviors in ways that conform with what political authorities desire. Many studies have looked at the HOPE VI initiative that originated from HUD (the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development) beginning in the early 1990s. HOPE VI represents the same top-down deployment of money and technocratic expertise towards “revitalizing” subsidized housing neighborhoods in the United States into mixed-income developments (Jones & Popke, 2010). An analysis of

social mixing in the HOPE VI program finds little “evidence that socioeconomic outcomes for low-income residents may be improved through social interaction, network building, and role modeling” (Joseph, Chaskin, & Webber, 2007, p. 369). Social networks in HOPE VI sites “are diminished in comparison with prior conditions in public housing. There is very little interaction with homeowners in relocation sites, and considerable resistance by homeowners” (Greenbaum, Hathaway, Rodriguez, Spalding, & Ward, 2008, p. 202). In one study of a HOPE VI neighborhood in Boston undergoing state-led change, “it was the lower-income former public housing residents who were primarily involved in creating neighborhood-based social ties, providing and receiving social support, and enforcing social control within the neighborhood, rather than the higher-income newcomers” (Tach, 2009, p. 270).

Other studies find that communities are asserting themselves forcefully in the face of “revitalization.” An analysis of a “revitalization” program in Minneapolis, Minnesota, found that local authorities made significant efforts to involve citizens and community organizations in planning and service delivery formerly under control by state institutions. Within this case study, the participation of these groups could simultaneously lead them to reproduce “neoliberal priorities and policies at a highly localized level; at the same time, this involvement does not necessarily eliminate possibilities for community organizations to challenge and revise a neoliberal revitalization agenda” (Elwood, 2002, p. 121).

Neoliberalization in the form of privatization in the context of post-1997 crisis Hong Kong saw the state accelerate its goals of privatizing and “revitalizing” public housing and other creatively destructive projects to help reinvigorate the pro-corporate business environment (Chung & Ngai, 2007). They conclude that “neither destruction nor creation occurs without resistance from below” and these strategies forced grassroots organizations to “rethink the existing role of the state in protecting the masses against rich oligopolies in Hong Kong” (Chung & Ngai, 2007, p. 65). New forms of protest arose among different social actors who built new alliances of resistance (Chung & Ngai, 2007, p. 66). Given the variance in the geographical location of these various studies, it is essential to remember that these different outcomes can be driven at least in part by their respective political cultures and histories, making it difficult to get a full picture of them within this brief review.

These research outcomes speak to the stakes involved with communities directing urban change on their terms rather than subjecting themselves willingly to the alienating force of abstract space. Conflicts over space become conflicts over values, and whether it is *value* in the capitalist sense that deserves priority in the production of space. Does this override other values rooted in social well-being? “It is in space, on a worldwide scale, that each idea of ‘value’ acquires or loses its distinctiveness through confrontation with the other values and ideas it encounters there” Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 416). The case studies reviewed here also show the extent to which supposed “urban revitalizations” are complex events for communities and their grassroots representatives to confront, given

the resources and power behind them. The state under neoliberalism uses these “revitalization” schemes as surplus-producing projects to attract capital within chaotic “geographical forcefields of global capitalism,” what Lefebvre referred to presciently in 1979 as a “generalized explosion of spaces” (Brenner, 2000, p. 373).

Discussion and Conclusion

The task now is to clarify what this chapter does to help us explain how this dissertation contributes to the existing literature. This task involves summarizing what these reviewed research outcomes tell us about the connection between “urban revitalization” and neoliberalism and my questions about how these schemes affect people. This section will also iterate what existing studies say about the potential for grassroots movements to shape these projects or even resist them outright.

On the matter of gentrification, this is a problem that frequently arises in the reviewed literature, and it will be at the forefront of the case study for this dissertation. “urban revitalization” advocates focus much attention on austerity and cash-strapped governments, and this treads the neoliberal line of framing users of the welfare state, like public housing residents, “as a drain on scant resources, while levels of inequality, poverty, and homelessness continue to increase” (Brown, 2020, p. 577). Langegger (2016, p. 1805) says, “this is how the gentrification of space operates; the rhythms of public space are changed to reinforce and reproduce gentrifier norms and practices.” As social services continue to be cut down in one area, suffering people living in or around it

are pushed into different localities, which become targets for privatization and other state-led schemes. Their residents are either made to conform or risk being alienated.

One may see the results of “urban revitalization” in places like Regent Park and various HOPE VI sites as confirming the idea that these projects reinforce neoliberalism’s hegemony. Supposed “revitalization” in Regent Park

took shape through political dynamics that were driven by housing administrators, downtown politicians, consultants, developers, and local ratepayer groups and included a micro-politics of engaging NGOs and select residents. The project (with its social development flank) is, in contrast to the original Regent Park, not a substantial territorial compromise, however. It tries to manage isolated resistance and preempt conflict, not grant material concession to organized housing movements. In fact, while during the 1970s and 1980s, diversity planning underwrote not only gentrification but also continued social housing production, today, it serves to break up and privatize existing housing districts without adding to the public housing stock (Lehrer, Keil, & Kipfer, 2010, p. 87).

Larner and Craig (2005) argue that such public-private partnerships often rely on luring locals and grassroots organizers into taking professionalized roles to help sell these projects to the broader public. They write, “these new strategic brokers might be considered as prime exemplars of Polanyi’s (1957) ‘enlightened reactionaries’ seeking to re-embed market society relations, or as pragmatic improvisers who unwittingly contribute to the hybrid, contested “rolling out” of neoliberalism” (Larner & Craig, 2005, p. 405).

Where does this leave us going into the next chapter? This review identifies a tendency shared among scholars who look at neoliberalism in “urban revitalizations.” The tendency is to make less room than is satisfactory for the everyday instances in which the neoliberal paradigm (in the form of local state strategies) is challengeable and

for projects like “urban revitalizations” to be re-directed in ways responsive to demands from below and from the left more generally. In this moment of political fracturing and turmoil, where popular movements see openings for making change, is the current paradigm more challengeable than scholars of neoliberalism would have us believe? The next chapter will help attenuate the inability of theories of neoliberalism to resolve the resistance problem by introducing a theory of state action.

Dynamic Selectivities and Research Methods

Introduction

The task now is to find a way to conceptualize the complex process by which state strategies for “revitalization” are being implanted onto Lawrence Heights. There are many conflicting interests at play. The state is confronted by grassroots political organizations and resident groups, local business and development associations, and big developers and architectural firms brought on as partners for these “revitalization” projects. These groups do not possess equal resources and capacity to realize their respective visions for change.

As discussed in the previous chapter, a common conclusion made in the scholarship on “urban revitalization” is that these projects serve as a neoliberal-driven fix to the ongoing problem of exploiting new sources of value when others are dried up. In this regard, “urban revitalization” has become a shiny tool in the state’s arsenal, a taken-for-granted set of mechanisms that *regenerate* a formerly less valuable urban space that tangentially invites voices from these spaces into the planning stages. Civil servants descend on the space in question and begin what they call “community engagement” to listen and respond to the concerns of residents living there. The state sees this process in ideal terms as an expeditious way to get the project approved and started.

How does the state facilitate “urban revitalization” in the way it does, given its centrality to neoliberalism as a processual phenomenon? Rather than abiding by the classical liberal role of ‘night watchman’ or trying to correct for market failures and

provide public supports as per embedded liberalism, the state under neoliberalism is the central agent that clears remaining barriers to marketize all activities of daily life. But state action is not the only dimension of this process. Proceeding with “urban revitalization” does engender debate and conflict, including “community engagement,” that does not only serve an expeditious function for the state. In this scenario, among many others in the context of daily life, the state can be confronted with movements that can alternately help advance, alter or resist a neoliberal agenda. The goal for now is to present a framework to help make sense of how these processes work and establish my approach to gathering the data that I will analyze using said framework.

This chapter will serve two practical purposes for setting up the case study analysis that will proceed through chapters four through eight. The first purpose of this chapter is to present a theoretical framework that will help me analyze the complex social dynamics that comprise essential elements of my case study. Secondly, the chapter lays out the methodology and research methods used to collect and interpret my data.

The first half of the chapter presents a theory of state action in which the state is considered dynamically selective in how it behaves in relation to multiple social forces. This conceptual framework, which I call dynamic selectivities, lets me analyze the political conflicts that influence the course that “urban revitalization” takes within the contexts of neoliberalism, and the counter-movements ranged against it. This chapter also gives a theoretical grounding for our main endeavor with this research, to explore the types of political conflicts that the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” has produced.

Using dynamic selectivities as an interpretive lens will help me confront the limitation of neoliberalism-based explanations about why “urban revitalizations” arise and their effects. To reiterate, the shortcoming identified in the above literature review is the temptation of scholars to see the dynamics of “urban revitalization” through the lens of unrestrained capitalist development. And yet, there are other social pressures and non-systemic factors which intervene in the process and require consideration. Crucially, such exertion of force by the state can strengthen bonds within communities, in the sense of shared and spatially bounded awareness of social identity and spirit, as much as they can change them or shake them apart. Something as destructive as the “revitalization” of a city neighborhood can arouse concerns and resistance to it within the community and interested parties outside it. It also stimulates their demands to modify it to fit their vision, which creates conflicts.

The second half of this chapter lays out the research methods used to accomplish the analysis. The collected data looks at discussions between people that have taken place in the past – which amount to archival sources – and get experiential data by observing deliberations and talking to those who can give added insights that archival sources alone cannot offer. Further, I explain my use of ethnography as the most appropriate methodology to apply in my study of Lawrence Heights. Ethnography involves the researcher gathering firsthand information about people by witnessing and questioning participants’ involvement in political activities (Lambert, Glacken, & McCarron, 2011). The objective is to present a narrative of the past and present of Lawrence Heights.

Regarding access in ethnographic research, reflexivity must be part of the conversation. “Lipson (1991) says reflexivity acknowledges the presence of the researcher alongside the social actors (research participants)” (as cited by Lambert, Glacken, & McCarron, 2011, p. 23). I am a researcher who does not live in Lawrence Heights, a community of primarily racialized working families, and I have never lived in social housing. I am not a racialized person. I belong to a legacy of settler colonialism—which eliminated the wider presence of Indigenous persons on the lands that became Canada, including those on which Lawrence Heights now sits. My background is defined by a comfortably privileged suburban upbringing where I enjoyed remarkable good fortune. As an outsider, I must commit myself to report faithfully on the events I am witnessing and interpreting their meaning within larger systems of political and economic change. I am grateful to have been invited to witness and record information about these gatherings and be made privy to the crucial political work done by organizers and participants. While several other privileged university students were sometimes present at these meetings, I felt it was essential to maintain a non-descript presence and not speak up during discussions to ensure I experience and not influence the proceedings.

This larger chapter consists of four sections which set us up to engage with the case study afterward. The first section begins with a short overview of Marxist state theory and the strategic relational approach constructed from the former and provides the constituent elements of dynamic selectivities. The second section delves more fully into how dynamic selectivities operate. The state is conceptualized as a landscape of social relations that

manifest as actions done in strategic and spatially oriented ways, which can be permeated by actors across multiple domains of power to pressure it into realizing different ends. Once dynamic selectivities has been explained, the third section bridges the discussion into the more practical issues concerning methodology selection and unpacking how the data for the case study was selected and from what sources. The conclusion illustrates how the research design of this study will work in tandem with the analytical tools for analyzing the data, including dynamic selectivities and the various concepts borrowed from Marxist political economy.

Bringing State Theory into the Picture

This section begins the task of fleshing out my chosen theoretical framework which is intended to make sense of the policies and the associated dynamics of social struggle and interest mediation among groups involved in an “urban revitalization” scheme. To do so, I will shed light on the state’s important role in advancing the policy-making process. With its authority exerted through policymaking and enforcement, fiscal resources, and the actions of the executive, legislatures, courts, and bureaucratic agencies, the state warrants special attention.

The dynamic selectivities framework combines complementary elements of Marxist state theory that give us tools for interpreting our case study, providing a theoretical representation of the state’s multi-faceted role in policy creation. For concision, this chapter focuses on those ideas in the Marxist state theory literature that significantly influenced those theorists whose concepts collectively shape the dynamic selectivities

framework. These analytical threads include theories of policy formation, social movement action, and state theory.

The strategic relational view of the state took shape in the 1980s primarily through the work of sociologist Bob Jessop. The ideas that comprise this approach were borrowed most heavily from Nicos Poulantzas and Antonio Gramsci (Kelly, 1999, p.109). Poulantzas (1976/2014) theorizes the state as part of a larger structuralist conception of society. Structural Marxists use conceptual systems that explain systematic patterns of behavior that underly and motivate the activities that constitute everyday life. The structure exists much like a language does, only that it takes the form of a mode of production. While the form and content of the forces and relations that comprise the mode of production can alter, the structure itself never dissipates. Thus, there is a feudal mode of production, just as there is also a capitalist mode of production. A mode of production consists of three interlinked levels or structures, designated as economic, ideological, and political, with the state residing in the last of these three.

In defining the state's relationship to society, Poulantzas says power does not reside in the state but is waged through class struggles over interests and resources (Aronowitz & Bratsis, 2006, p. 23). "Class struggle," in other words, "traverses the very institutional materiality of the state" (Kelly, 1999, p. 110). Bob Jessop (1990, pp. 269-270) says roughly the same thing, arguing that "the state as such has no power – it is merely an institutional ensemble...The power of the state is the power of the forces acting in and through the state." In Poulantzian terms, class struggle produces the

structural effects that mediate between structures and determine the range of actions a given class can undertake. Social classes conflict with one another, and these dynamics reverberate through the economic, ideological, and political structures. Openings or limits become set on activities that can be conducted within the realm of these structures depending on the trajectory that the class struggle takes.

Beyond saying what the state is, what does it do? It would be simple to assume the state does whatever the capitalist class wants it to do. Poulantzas presents a theory that explains what happens when the state acts contrary to what we might expect. From this standpoint, the state behaves relatively autonomous concerning the capitalist class, which means, at least in the short run, it can do things that capitalists do not like. However, in the long run, the state tends to act to keep the capitalist mode of production intact. Doing so makes it hard to differentiate when the state is acting contrary to the dominant class only in the short-run (to keep society from bursting apart) or is engaging in a long pattern of systemic change that undermines that class further.

Dynamic Selectivities State Theory

Having explained ideas that inform the strategic relational approach, we can now unpack the approach itself. This approach suggests the state is non-residual and non-essentialist in that it is not something that exists outside or above the rest of society nor has a fixed form (Kelly, 1999). Poulantzas (1976, p. 74) says along these lines that the state is not a *thing* with any power but does not negate its existence as a social fact by explaining it as the material “condensate of a relation of power between struggling classes.” Jessop says,

however, that there must be better accounting for how the state's activities play out in associations and political parties at different levels – from the macro (e.g., global, national) to more local levels where things get messier, and you can witness “struggles and strategies besides class interests influence state policies” (Kelly, 1999, pp. 111). What tends to take shape in people's minds, argues Jessop (2015, p. 76), is a “common sense” view of the state as a unified ensemble of institutions “whose socially accepted function is to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on the members of society in a given territorial area in the name of the common interest or general will of an imagined political community identified with that territory.” For Jessop, underneath the “common sense” idea of the state as a set of formal institutions, one can see it for what it is: a social relation that becomes a landscape for competing for claims to political gains.

What does the strategic element mean in the strategic relational approach? Jessop says first that while the institutions and practices we associate with the state are not unified in any a priori sense, they can achieve partial unity depending on a contingent alignment of accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects (Kelly, 2000, pp. 228-229). The strategic relational approach accordingly combines ideas drawn from Antonio Gramsci, regulation theory, and systems theory to account for how capitalist societies are prone to developing coherence and balance through economic, political, and ideological mechanisms. An accumulation strategy defines an economic growth model, such as Fordism in the early through the mid-twentieth century, where success is conditional on extra-economic preconditions – political and regulatory mechanisms

intended to organize a balance between classes to create some measure of stability (Jessop, 1991). That stability is subject to counter-pressure and flux.

The strategic relational approach avoids class reductionism by focusing on how institutions have substantive impacts on how policy strategies are selected and affect class interests. To this point, hegemonic projects describe coordination among political leaders, intellectuals, public institutions, the media, and others to solidify a partial unity of the accumulation strategy, the state form, and the prevailing social order. Following Gramsci, Jessop (2002) insists that counter-hegemonic movements can arise and attain support from sympathetic political parties and other institutions. Still, counter-movements run against the obstacles that deliver material concessions to the public and condition their attitudes to perpetuate existing rule. Strategically selective policies and messages provided by institutions buttress the creation of “economic, political and ideological conditions necessary to accumulation in specific conjunctures,” which are capitalist to the extent that they protect conditions for accumulation and non-capitalist when those conditions are not realized (Barrow, 1993, p. 57; 161).

I stress that such unity among these spheres of action is a partially stable phenomenon. Yes, it can alter in response to counter-hegemonic pressure, so there is a fluidity to how it can look and operate in different spatial and temporal contexts. But I also do not want to underplay *what* makes the structures that organize political and economic activity so formidable and capable of exerting force. Robert Latham (2000, p. 3) says that “it is the body of law, juridical practices and penal codes that make a national

legal system; the set of educational institutions, codes, and principles that constitute a domain of education; and the nexus of economic rules, mechanisms, and regimes that sets the terms for an economy.” The problem with structuralist state theory is that it poses its ideas in such abstract ways that it can obscure what structures look like in reality. The strategic relational approach is no exception. Such theories need explicit descriptors of empirical evidence that can explain the workings of these structures.

To this end, one can examine the social conflicts that happen over the governance of capital’s contradictions which leads to a “mix of temporal fixes, spatial fixes, spatio-temporal fixes and institutionalized compromises that help to stabilize, albeit provisionally, the circuit of capital and wider social formation” (Jessop, 2006, p. 162). Prevailing trends in “urban revitalization” schemes reveal a shift from government to governance – where there is less emphasis on governments intervening on absolute terms as far as policy and subsidization are concerned – and more so on “partnerships between governmental, para-governmental, and non-governmental organizations in which the state apparatus is first among equals” (Jessop, 1997, pp. 574-575).

These potential benefits for urban analysis aside, the efforts made with the strategic relational approach to avoid class reductionism and locate the primary source of state action with institutions have complications when it comes to political agency. Jessop says individual agents have no free will because their actions are linked to structural positions in institutions and their capabilities in them (Kelly, 1999). However, when systems are overwhelmed by counterforces, there is an “obvious (historical) role

for agency” (Kelly, 1999, p. 114). In response, successful counter-hegemonic movements must attain a certain threshold of an internal structural organization before overwhelming a system. So individual agency may not be so crucial a missing piece in the strategic relational approach as a state theory.

The strategic relational approach also incorporates the concepts of space and scale into its purview. Neil Brenner says the state has powers that “have been dispersed, decentered and fragmented,” with national state institutions now believed to operate “in a multi-scalar institutional hierarchy where the geography of state leverage is more malleable” (Allen & Cochrane, 2010, p. 1072). Brenner (2004, p. 72) says that “state space is best conceptualized as an arena, medium, and outcome of spatially selective political strategies.” It is crucial to break with the tendency to see the state in rigid terms as a national entity, and instead analyze “the ongoing reterritorialization and rescaling of political-economic relations under contemporary capitalism” where such strategies are deployed, and in which the leverage of state institutions at multiple scales has been rendered more fluid (Brenner, 2004, p. 30). To this point, Brenner (2004) says strategic selectivity is limited. It cannot appreciate how policies are made or selected to register certain interests within defined spaces, nor how multiple levels of state activity activate such actions. Brenner’s notion of spatial selectivity is thus a part of the dynamic selectivities framework to overcome the limits of relying on strategic selectivity alone.

This theorization gives us a two-sided explanation of the spatial and scalar configuration of the strategic relational approach, with a side relating to policy, strategy,

and space and another about scalar hierarchies among states and their various institutional forms. Brenner (2009, pp. 36-37) says policy strategies used in the present-day neoliberal era to remake urban spaces involve different institutions and goals than what tended to prevail when Keynesianism Fordism dominated advanced capitalist societies. Rather than balance urban and infrastructural investment across wide territories, these societies mobilize policies to expose different spaces to competitive pressures and attract global investments (Brenner, 2009). Urban policies get spatially targeted to “accelerate the circulation of capital, to reproduce the labour force, to address place-specific socioeconomic problems and/or maintain territorial cohesion” (Brenner, 2004, p. 453). Spatial targeting can heighten gentrification pressures in neighborhoods where capital and people flow inwards to take advantage of affordable circumstances. Over time, these inward flows push rents and the costs of living upwards, displacing the poorest people outwards into spaces that are not subject to the same level of targeting.

It is helpful, then, to look at the state as a social relation that is also spatially-fluid, which undertakes activities affecting social life within broader or narrower contexts, producing effects at other spatial registers. When capital flows into localities, it can get channeled into what are territorially fixed resources that can be profitable in the long run but these are practices that operate in tension with the proclivity to render capital mobile, enabling it “to escape territories in which social relations have become problematic and profitability insufficient” (Gough, 2014, p. 200). A takeaway here is that capital can get

attracted into Global City spaces that have fully embraced new urbanism and the creative class. Still, investments often get unevenly targeted and spatially clustered.

A paradoxical result occurs with simultaneous deterritorialization and re-territorialization. The former refers to the enlargement of circuits of capital, including the removal of investment from specific spaces because they are no longer profitable. Re-territorialization speaks to the investment of capital in profitable enterprises, in fixed and immobile socio-spatial configurations in the form of business, housing, and services where accumulation can occur (Brenner, 2004, p. 33). It follows that state managers seek and exploit spaces for accumulation by generating investment, production, and settlement into new territories until they become depleted as reservoirs of value.

These events work in tandem with a re-jigging of hierarchies among state institutions where authority and leverage get thrust onto specific scales of political authority against others. On this point, processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization reveal that the global restructuring which neoliberalism has sped up has broken the primacy of the national state, concurrently enhancing supranational and subnational scales of political authority (Theodore, Peck, & Brenner, 2011, p. 11).

Put briefly, the national state in the neoliberal age has withdrawn or devolved its authority over certain regulatory jurisdictions and accumulation strategies onto sub-national counterparts, both to limit the expense of its resources and to conform to the norms of smaller government enforced by supranational authorities. Likewise, subnational authorities are now more commonly responsible for implementing spatially

selective strategies to attract capital, often with fewer resources. Such moves appeal to de-territorialized capital seeking investments in spaces within which subnational and regional states are eager to encourage private developments, given the costliness of public investment in fixed assets.

To this point in the chapter, dynamic selectivities are meant to illuminate policymaking and implementation being strategically selective – and thus affected by the type and the degree of alignment between accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects. There is also the role social movement organizations play and how their relative level of internal organization and access to resources, and the government's attention can affect these outcomes. It is wrong to assume that forces that reside outside social movements' overly determine these processes. But I want to push the envelope and think about how other underlying forms of political power and domination can impact urban change in ways that disproportionately affect specific populations.

Marginalized populations are typically categorized as women, the disabled, racialized persons, and otherwise oppressed people who cannot conform to the disciplinary functions required for capitalist societies to operate, namely wage labour, the need to afford life's necessities, and difficulty escaping debt bondage. Stretching the strategic relational approach in this way allows us to be more theoretically comprehensive while also speaking to how systems of domination get challenged. Marxist theory, upon which Marxist state theory is based, has been critiqued by some for giving disproportionate attention to social class compared to the factors of gender and

race as constitutive elements of larger critiques of capitalism (see Geschwender & Levine, 1994). Others, like Kevin Anderson (2011), say Marx produced significant writings on race and class about the American Civil War that have received too little attention. Similarly, Heather Brown (2014, p. 50) says that while Marx's work has elements of Victorian ideology within it, "there is much of interest on gender and the family scattered throughout his work" (see also Belkhir, 1994). Within the landscape of Marxist *state* theory, specifically, theorists have expressed less enthusiasm about incorporating gender and race into a working conception of the state.

A team of sociologists has put forward a strategic relational theory of the state that incorporates how the state both exacerbates the oppressive living conditions inflicted upon historically marginalized populations while also being enterable and susceptible to redirection by counter-forces from multiple fronts. Davita Glasberg, Abbey Willis, and Deric Shannon term this state theory: multi-sites of power. Relationships of dominance do not work in a top-down fashion between the state and society but "through power working on subjects rather than over them" (Allen & Cochrane, 2010, p. 1072). Put another way, authorities exert control over marginalized persons disproportionately depending on who they are through the proverbial neutral enforcement of rules, laws, etc.

With their multi-sites of power formulation, these sociologists wrestle with some familiar problems. They accept Jessop's notion that the state is fundamentally a social relation – which de-reifies the idea of it as a thing that exists above us – but they also must consider its materiality. Glasberg and Shannon (2015, p. 23) describe the state "as a

multidimensional structure that includes not only the legislature, but also the judiciary, the executive, and administrative state agencies vested with the power to implement and interpret policy on a day-to-day basis.” The state is affected by groups involved in policy development and implementation, and thus seen in the multi-sites of power formulation as “permeable and fluid, able to affect and be affected by organized struggles from below as well as from elites” (Glasberg, Willis, & Shannon, 2017, p. 37). In other words, this state theory makes room for the possibility of a challenge from social movement organizations.

Adding the multi-sites of power component to the strategic relational framing of the state encourages us to draw even wider boundaries around how we understand its behaviours. The powerful sites, in this case, refer to multiple institutional terrains, including the media sphere, classrooms, think tanks, public forums, and the list goes on. In these areas, policies are taken apart and interpreted – and in spheres that have a wider reach than others, such as the state and the media – they are framed into consumable images for public consumption. Framing can amplify peoples’ biases to make them susceptible to seeing a policy in ways that do not capture its actual intentions and effects.

Research Design and Methodology

As will be shown in the ensuing chapters, the case study presents facts to be collectively analyzed using theory, with dynamic selectivities playing a crucial role. James Bryce says that “political science has to be constructed out of historical facts as a building has to be reared out of the stones which have been quarried and placed on the ground” (as cited by

Skemer, 1991, p. 359). Since the research covers an expanse of time ranging from the mid-twentieth century when Lawrence Heights opened to the midst of the state-led “revitalization” in the present, this study uses the methods of analysis of archival texts and participant observation with supplementary use of interviews (Moore & Savage, 2002; Wengraf, 2001).

Of the possible choices for a methodology, ethnography aligns with the objectives of this dissertation. Ethnography is

essentially descriptive, or perhaps as a form of story-telling...The ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions; in fact, collecting whatever data is available to throw lights on the issues with which he or she is concerned (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, pp. 1-2).

With ethnography being the guidepost for the research portion of this dissertation, the methods include archival research, observing meetings between community organizers and local state officials, and interviewing relevant sources. Accordingly, my research efforts have been centered on respectfully observing and capturing records of people’s experiences in and of the changing neighborhood of Lawrence Heights. Their stories help to tell us what to conclude from the case study.

With ethnography, it is crucial to “adopt an approach that respects the nature of the social world, which allows it to reveal its nature to us” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 12). It is impossible to capture the entirety of the experiences of those connected to the case study. Using theories and hypothesis testing are tools to help me make sense of the experiences I have recorded through research.

Research Methods

Interpreting and relaying people's experiences in Lawrence Heights and threading a neighborhood history gives insights into the political conflicts this renewal project has created. The methods include documentary analysis, participant observation, and interviews. Documentary sources give us a fuller picture of the history of Lawrence Heights and the political dynamics that led up to the “revitalization.” When visiting an archive, the researcher does not know what content they will discover ahead of time. One is best off taking an inductive approach to the work and avoid seeking evidence to confirm a pre-determined hypothesis (Harris, 2012). The opinion of political scientists is that archival records tend to help explain events “rather than more significant long-term phenomena documented with larger, more statistically valid bodies of data” (Skemer, 1991, p. 361). But archival records, however seemingly particularistic, can help us develop our understanding of how things operate by unearthing things we have not seen before (Trachtenberg, 2006, p. 36). Archival work can reveal things that challenge our prejudices.

The challenge with archival research for political science becomes figuring out what types of records to search for, determining how many documents are needed to make a viable claim about a given political event or set of circumstances, and combatting selection bias. To this last point, social scientists are “more attracted to and convinced by accounts that accord with the expectations about events contained in the concepts they deploy and the theories they seek to test” (Lustick, 1996, p. 605). Selection bias rears itself when a non-random selection of cases describing an event leads the researcher to make

inferences “based on the resulting sample, that are not statistically representative of the population” (Collier, 1995, p. 462). Ian Lustick (1996, p. 615-616) describes strategies intended to override selection bias, including choosing “a school of thought whose implicit theoretical presuppositions run counter to the hypothesis,” and explaining claims from other researchers who employ different primary sources for their study.

More practical concerns about choosing archival sources speak to how I have tried to combat selection bias. Collecting data about the evolution of any neighborhood will require a researcher to exclude and overlook some sources while prioritizing others. I sought textual records at the Toronto Municipal Archives to find archival sources about Lawrence Heights. Using the archives’ search engine, I found a sizeable and manageable collection of sources by simply using the keyword: ‘Lawrence Heights,’ which revealed 132 results. Excluded results included photographs, maps of Toronto Transit Commission transit routes, and stories with only passing references to Lawrence Heights.

Those sources that discussed political issues about Lawrence Heights were included in the study and were collected and photographed at the municipal archives. Sources are dated from the late 1950s when Lawrence Heights was built until the early 2010s when the “revitalization” was planned, promoted, and contested in the public sphere. The sources include local reports from municipal officials, planning memos, letters, and petitions to government and associated bureaucracies from concerned residents, business owners and community organizations relating to community issues and the “revitalization.” These sources attune us to why the TCHC has embraced the “urban revitalization” model made

popular when imposed on Regent Park and applied to Lawrence Heights, and shines light on various opinions about it (both supportive and critical) that have been expressed by other stakeholders.

Other documentary sources got collected via the York University Scott library database. Municipal government records and monographs help me trace the history of the case study terrain. Archived news articles on Lawrence Heights found through library databases such as Lexis-Nexis date between the mid-1950s to the present. Online searches yielded magazine articles and urban planning and real estate trade journals that discuss Lawrence Heights. News and magazine sources reveal how the neighborhood – its affairs and its people – has been disseminated publicly in ways that vary between being illuminating and stigmatizing. Trade journals allow us to see how the new Lawrence Heights is being planned and advertised as a prime destination for market housing and commercial businesses.

In chapters six and nine, I use my stock of collected news articles to conduct two separate critical discourse analyses (CDAs) that help further to document the trajectory of change in Lawrence Heights. More importantly, this type of analysis establishes the form and content of media coverage of Lawrence Heights over time. In the first case, I look at articles dated between 1970 and 2004, where I present patterns in the coverage that play up what is a stigmatizing and prejudicial view of Lawrence Heights as a disordered neighborhood. The second CDA builds on where the first left off, revealing codes that show the varying perspectives on the “revitalization,” primarily those held by residents in the

site and those in the surrounding districts. These articles also quote public officials who use the press to drum up legitimacy for its plans for “revitalization.” These CDAs complement my efforts to unearth political conflicts between the various actors and institutions with interest in the “revitalization.” They can prove helpful for answering questions asking things like: “How do (more) powerful groups control public discourse?” and ‘How does such discourse control the mind and action of (less) powerful groups, and what are the social consequences of such control, such as social inequality?’” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 355 as cited by Bradimore & Bauder, 2011, p. 644).

On top of these resources, I use publicly available documents from the Canadian government focused on Lawrence Heights. I gathered and analyzed records stored in the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) online database to help with the broader analysis of Canadian public housing districts. A research agreement was made between me with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), granting me access to internal documents on the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” that included minutes and reports from meetings and planning between various stakeholders. Sources from the TCHC give insights into the state’s engagement with Lawrence Heights residents who are confronted with forces that are uprooting their district.

To complement the information in these archival sources, I also provide descriptive statistics depicting the demographic change in Lawrence Heights over the several decades of its existence. The statistics used were drawn from the University of Toronto’s Computing in the Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS) Canadian Census Analyzer.

The statistical data incorporated into this study describes the ethnic origins of persons living in the census tract that corresponds to the area encompassing Lawrence Heights (5350286.00) within Toronto (census tract number: 535). Showcasing this data provides more understanding about who has lived in this area, where they come from, and reveals stark differences in the ethnic makeup of people living in a subsidized housing district that has long been isolated and stigmatized. But there are limitations. For example, the tract in question (286) is not bordered around Lawrence Heights alone but also incorporates census respondents living within 43.726079 (latitude) – 79.45147 (longitude) from Yorkdale-Glen Park, Downsview, Eglington-Lawrence, and Briar Hill (GeoCoder.ca, n.d.).

Outside textual sources, experiential-based data was gathered through participant observation of meetings among Lawrence Heights residents and grassroots organizations. These include notes taken from being a participant and witness to discussions between members of the Lawrence Heights community, including the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION) with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) planners and bureaucrats who serve as local government representatives. I attended community meetings promoted by LHION and other Lawrence Heights affiliated groups that detailed the political struggles experienced by public housing tenants in Toronto. “Observation and participation (according to circumstance and the analytic purpose at hand) remain the characteristic feature of the ethnographic approach” (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2001, pp. 4-5). With ethnography, the idea is to get a deep sense of the personal stories, conflicts, and negotiations between persons and

associations involved in the case study that would not otherwise be obtainable without being granted in-person access to these proceedings.

Interviews became a supplementary method rather than a central reservoir for data collection in this dissertation. Reasons for why interviews were a less prominent feature in the analysis boiled down to practical limitations. Initially, staff members with the TCHC suggested they would help organize surveys in the complexes in Lawrence Heights for residents to answer questions about the revitalization. But these plans were stalled until the winter season arrived, and the TCHC could no longer authorize surveys to be conducted in the neighborhood's buildings. On top of this, I drew up a list of contacts to interview from diverse fields associated with the revitalization, including urban planners, consultants, architects, journalists, etc. But I struggled to get people to commit to speaking with me, and this problem became magnified when the COVID-19 pandemic struck in the middle of the fieldwork phase of my dissertation. With the pandemic having upended people's daily lives, this did little to help targets commit to being interviewed. I compensated by relying more on my other methods for data.

I conducted a handful of interviews, which more so resembled free-flowing conversations, with persons involved in the revitalization from different angles, including two TCHC staff members, two historians involved with the North York Historical Society (NYHS), and an organizer involved in LHION and other community organizations. Interviewing persons from different entry points in the "revitalization" discussion gives us a broader understanding of the challenges, successes, and conflicts that a sizeable project

like this is likely to generate. But more than anything, these discussions helped complement the more extensive participant observation sessions and the documentary research, on top of the secondary sources that contributed most of the data for this project. Ultimately, those select few people who agreed to speak with me assisted immensely in providing me with new facts about the Lawrence Heights neighborhood and the situation of “revitalization” that it remains immersed within.

Conclusion

Let us bridge this discussion on dynamic selectivities into our case study for a moment. Advocates of “urban revitalization” frame it as an instrument to *upgrade* public housing communities which the wider public often biasedly sees as microcosms of failed government policy, a view the media and other sources have amplified. This view of “revitalization” plays on fears of the *other* for long periods, often understood as disadvantaged populations. In this way, the people living in Lawrence Heights become a source of “raw material” that the state and its associated partners in the private sector and civil services exploit for-profit and manipulate through the processes of “community engagement,” the tearing down and rebuilding of the housing supply, and the enrolling of tenants into job training programs, related social services, and as priority hires for newly arriving businesses (see Murray, 2015). The multi-sites of power concept helps us understand how and why these exploitative processes are occurring and consider the content and purpose of political activity coming from other directions. Using this dialectical approach, I also examine the grassroots activism occurring within Lawrence

Heights that is working to dictate the terms upon which these seismic changes are happening to the extent that the state is willing to negotiate.

Each facet of the dynamic selectivities framework can be said to fit into my holistically dialectical approach to analysis in this dissertation. With strategic selectivity, for instance, Bob Jessop (2001, p. 1225) is at pains to show how the state in the strategic-relational formulation comes to take the form of an ensemble of institutions and agents that can attain a measure of “structured coherence,” depending on the tide that class struggle takes over time (see Harvey, 1982). True to the spirit of dialectics, such structured coherence of state forms, accumulation strategies, and hegemonic projects are always subject to flux and substitution when perforated by counterforces. I am looking at the conduct of state intervention, including the construction, usage, and effects of policies, as either reflecting structured coherence or signifying a challenge to it.

Despite its complicated makeup, the concept of spatial selectivity has a similarly dialectical flavor. Strategic and spatial selectivity are products of structuralist thinking, which necessitates drawing boundaries around how different aspects of social life are understood to operate. Spatial selectivity revolves around viewing political activity as transpiring across and through multiple spaces and scales. Brenner (2000, p. 364) warns us against taking a zero-sum view of geographical scale, referring to “the notion that scales operate as mutually exclusive rather than as co-constitutive territorial frameworks for social relations.” Rather than viewing scalar activity as interlinked and as co-constituting territorial-based social change, a zero-sum outlook reifies them into static

entities (including localization, regionalization, nationalization, etc.) frozen in geographical space (Brenner, 2000, p. 367). The idea, then, is to guard against seeing scalar activity as being locked into performing specific functions within a larger system and instead try to grasp them as fluid and mutually affective.

The multi-sites of power concept builds on the strategic and spatial selectivity of political change by zooming in and out to look at how actors, institutions, and activity networks alternately collide and affect one another. Any such entity carries varying interests and orientations, any of which can prompt changes in how policies are devised and administered within strategic and spatially specific contexts. As a component of the dynamic selectivities framework, the multi-sites of power concept alerts us to how policy development can be a process that is stalled or moved along and altered through policy-learning circles and institutions and manipulated and shaped for the public, which itself can as easily be excluded from these activities entirely.

Together with strategic and spatial selectivity, multi-sites of power can be wound into Gramscian thought concerning struggles against hegemony. A counter-hegemonic front can be waged in theory as a frontal assault on the state, otherwise called a war of maneuver, intended as an attempt to destroy and radically restructure an existing political order (Gramsci, 1971, p. 229). A more common path for a counter-hegemonic struggle to take, however, is through a war of position, where the idea is not to attack the overwhelming power of the state but instead go after the dominant culture. A war of position is a gradual permeation of the dominant sources of cultural production, that

being universities, schools, churches, and the media sphere, by a counter-hegemonic movement. A counter-movement can alter the public's broader perceptions of morality, their tastes, and their ideas about how society is to be structured politically and economically.

With a war of position, the idea is for the counter-hegemonic movement to overhaul society from within to the point that it incapacitates the hegemonic order posed against it. As the public becomes mobilized, policy strategies can be devised and used to realize a counter-hegemonic victory. One can avoid the violence of confronting the state as per a war of maneuver, but a war of position requires long-term effort and cunning. A war of position is "concentrated, difficult, and requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 239 as cited by Smith, 2010, p. 41). In our current moment, hegemony as defined by neoliberalism and the ever-pervasive spread of abstract space is difficult to overturn. Broader counter-hegemonic movements may get stalled, but they can also expose holes in the existing order and exploit pockets to carve out differential space. Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 411) writes:

As the underpinning of production and reproduction, abstract space generates illusions, and hence a tendency towards false consciousness, i.e. consciousness of a space at once imaginary and real. Yet this space itself, and the practice that corresponds to it, give rise, by virtue of a critical moment, to a clearer consciousness.

So long as abstract space imposes a certain homogeneity and inequity on a populace, it always arouses a level of recognition and resistance towards it.

The concept of dynamic selectivity lets us appropriate strategic selectiveness, spatial selectivity, and multi-sites of power into tools for analysis. It allows us to see how political struggles play out locally and are affected by synchronic and diachronic events happening elsewhere. Political conflicts can take shape along multi-dimensional lines, as the multi-sites of power suggest. Locally, conflicts ensue over political representation, interests, and resources. They can either complement or obstruct one another and are vulnerable to absorption by forces possessed with greater power and leverage. One can use these ideas to search for and analyze evidence of conflicts that counteract hegemony and tilts policymaking in other directions.

The dynamic selectivities state theory will figure in the case study analysis chapters, which begin after discussing methodology and research methods. But true to what I have said to this point, state intervention – and dynamic selectivities by extension – is of secondary importance in the forthcoming chapters. Dynamic selectivities is meant to clarify how and why the state is intervening in ways that have affected Lawrence Heights over time. Of more significant consequence to us is what the community is doing within the larger tension between abstract and differential space creation. To bring this all to fruition, chapter four brings us to a pre-capitalist setting to explain the arising of an appropriate political-economic context in which public housing districts like Lawrence Heights were eventually built. Dynamic selectivities will then be used to bookend chapters five, six, seven, and eight to give explanations for how the state has engaged people living in Lawrence Heights and vice versa, along with the strategic, spatial, and

multi-sites of power axes. Such analysis complements the emphasis throughout these chapters on the politics of the community before the “revitalization” to now.

In addition to the theory, the methodology and research methods fleshed out in this chapter will become crucial for drawing out and engaging with the data presented going forward. Ethnography, that being the fleshing out of a story describing a social environment and culture, underpins the choice of methods that provide us with the data needed to tell this story. The ensuing chapters will explain the origins and evolution of Lawrence Heights. Through archival and secondary sources, participant observations, and a set of interviews, the case study will reveal why Lawrence Heights was built, how it developed, and detail why it is undergoing revitalization. The story is about everyday people working to direct their own lives in a structured setting that requires them to engage heavily with the state. Exploring these power dynamics is a worthwhile undertaking, especially given the stakes for people living in a neighborhood revamped in front of their eyes.

With this qualitative research design plan in place, I will document a history of political struggle and change in Lawrence Heights that will be analyzed using concepts from Marxist political economy in tandem with the dynamic selectivities state theory framework developed in the previous chapter. Dynamic selectivities will shed additional light on what is happening when the state engages with the community in Lawrence Heights, how it strategizes to realize different social demands and interests and helps to manipulate public opinion through the media and other institutions. In this vein, ideas like the spatial fix, primitive accumulation will help illuminate the types of systemic forces at

play in capitalist societies – neoliberalism being of central importance – confronting political movements and ordinary people.

The state does not outright determine what happens, nor does neoliberalism operate unimpeded. These are conflictual processes. And this gets to the heart of my central research question, where this dissertation aims to grasp the forms of political conflict that have arisen during Lawrence Heights' development as a community in flux.

Tracking the Settler Colonial Legacy of Lawrence Heights

Cities have been seen as the “ultimate avatars of . . . progress, representing the pinnacle of technology, commerce, and cultural sophistication,” at the same time as they have obliterated the Indigenous landscape of the past

– Coll Thrush (as cited by Freeman, 2010a, p. 21)

These issues are so important. The use of space. People needing space to meet in the community. I have thought a lot about xenophobia and racism. When we are looking at a neighborhood where historically there hasn't been a lot of investment and that was sort of pulled back. Who is responsible? We can look at the historical foundations of Canadian society, including settler colonialism, white supremacy, capitalism, militarism, and violence.

–Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) staff member, personal communication, November 26th 2019

Introduction

When planning for the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” started gaining traction in the early 2000s, public statements by some officials and other interested parties revealed their belief in the need to break with the area’s history and construct something new and ideal in its wake. Former Toronto City-Councillor Howard Moscoe said of the Lawrence Heights revitalization: “We're going to eliminate the (public housing) stigma” (Donovan, 2007, p. B1). Derek Ballantyne, once the chief executive of the TCHC, has said that Lawrence Heights needs to be “re-planned and rethought” (Campbell, 2008, p. A10).

Public housing projects like Lawrence Heights were manifestations of multiple and overlapping political and economic pressures that are systemic. These pressures refer to the imperatives generated and acted upon throughout history by some populations who

extend their reach into ever more territories to develop and accumulate a surplus. The legacy of settler colonialism in Canada is one such case. This chapter connects the historical events associated with the settler-colonial advance in Canada and Toronto, settling on and selling the land that eventually became Lawrence Heights in the mid-twentieth century. The systemic pressures responded to by European settlers share parallels with how the state went about constructing Lawrence Heights. As I argue, each of these endeavors involved the state setting terms and limits by which surplus can be produced and accumulated, and doing so by dictating how the most oppressed among us can live.

The Lawrence Heights “revitalization” is conveyed in public circles as representing a break with the past. Nevertheless, it cannot be dis-embedded from its history of political struggle between the state and its often-oppressive treatment of the tenants living in Lawrence Heights. The history of settler colonialism flows as an undercurrent during these events. Tracing colonialism involves looking at how the state settled in territories dispossessed from the Indigenous population, papering over the territory with capitalist social relations and a nation-state underpinned by the Protestant religion. Lorenzo Veracini (2010, p. 3) reminds us that the settler colony desires to naturalize its presence in its originally expropriated territory.

This chapter establishes when, how, and why Lawrence Heights was constructed. First, it traces a narrative of colonial settlement, first in Canada and then in Toronto, a process defined by settlers’ exertion of authority and domination over the Indigenous population. Next, the discussion looks at European settlement by Irish farmers on the same

lands that the state eventually bought to build Lawrence Heights. This section documents the creation of a community of settlers, which serves in this chapter as a local story and context for the transition that took place in Canada towards capitalism and liberal democracy. From there, the discussion moves ahead in time to the years leading up to the eventual sale of the farmland that became the site for Lawrence Heights. The systemic pressures of surplus creation and domination drove the pattern of settler colonialism to establish and strengthen capitalism.

The state facilitates value creation. But dealing with its contradictions – and any related obstacles – have historically been addressed by the state using the political means of policy and coercion. Such inconsistencies arise in crises, which adds additional pressures on the state in social despair and unrest. In response to the pressures wrought upon the state by economic crises, persistent housing shortages, and the necessity for growth, one step it took to address them was by devising public housing for low-income families. In managing these challenges, the state dictated the terms and rules by which public housing tenants can live – and to a greater extent than others – to keep society structured hierarchically according to class. Looking at postwar France and its colonies, Henri Lefebvre realized that strategies of colonial rule were transubstantiated and applied to the urban spaces of imperial centers to manage labouring classes in ways conducive to capital accumulation (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013). Extrapolating how Lawrence Heights arose lets the events taking place there now be better understood later on.

The analysis draws out the historical development of Toronto (formerly York) as a settler colony in a pre-capitalist context into capital accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects. The chapter incorporates settler-colonialism into what Bob Jessop describes as the formation of a partial unity between capital accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects of social control throughout history (Kelly, 2000). However, such unity is only partially stable because the existing order is always subject to change and flux. For example, the construction of the public housing neighborhood Lawrence Heights was a product of limited efforts by the Canadian state in the mid-twentieth century to mitigate the destructive effects – and manage the associated political pressures of a particular phase of capitalism. Jessop would say this phase in Canada is marked by the development of industrial capitalism and a commitment by the state and capital to embedded liberalism.

Canada's Settler-Colonial Origins

Canada's colonial legacy represents a longstanding effort by Europeans to extend their reach and capability to create and control surplus to exploit new land and labour. A clearer picture of what occurred broadly in Canada lets us zero in on events that led to the building of Lawrence Heights.³

³ There are stories hidden in the urban landmarks all around Toronto. Lawrence Heights is one example. It derives its name from Lawrence Avenue, one of the four roads bordering the area. Lawrence Avenue was named after Jacob Lawrence, a farmer born in 1822 who settled in then Upper Canada. Jacob built a sawmill on the east side of the Don River in 1845, and for a two-year period (1854-1856) he bought and operated a tannery from a local character named James Davis (Hart, 1968). James constructed and ran a guesthouse that was a favourite among Mackenzie rebels during the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837-

In the early seventeenth century, the colony of New France (Quebec) became set along the coast of St. Lawrence. Establishing New France involved the initial collision between settlers and Indigenous peoples.⁴ The colonial relationship between these two populations was defined significantly by war and alliance making of the French with the Haudenosaunee (whom the French pejoratively called Iroquois) against the Wyandot (whom the French called the Huron). The Haudenosaunee comprises an alliance of five nations into the League of the Iroquois “(the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and

1838; as Hart (1968, p. 87) tells us, James was once so floored by a speech given at a prohibition meeting he went home, poured all his alcohol into his garden and ridded it from his guesthouse which subsequently became known as the Temperance Inn. As for Jacob, he sold his tannery to James Hugo in 1856 and then continued to work before dying years later in 1885. Their presence in this segment of rural Upper Canada was preceded by a long line of mostly Methodist farmers who settled in the area.

⁴ Terminology is important when it comes to discussing Indigenous politics, in large part because terms denoting group classification can just as easily reproduce prejudices rooted in the colonial mindset as well as obfuscate differences within groups. Alan McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn (McMillan & Yellowhorn, 2009, p. 3) say that the term Indigenous is no more useful or conceptually limited than its often-used counterpart Aboriginal:

“Aborigine” is itself a noun derived from the Latin phrase *aborigine* which means “from the beginning.” In this instance, “aboriginal” is an adjective that modifies “people,” a noun, to produce the phrase “Aboriginal People.” In one context it may adequately acknowledge the people who were present from the beginning of history. However, such a reference may become imbued with ambiguity because of the priority given to one perspective of history. It encompasses too many diverse cultures to have more than a very general utility. If the term “Aboriginal People” seems problematic, phrases such as “Native People” or “Indigenous People” are no clearer. “Native” typically denotes a condition of birth. People are native to the culture, city or nation of their birth, therefore anyone born in Canada is native Canadian. “Indigenous People” is the phrase usually associated with international discussions and protocol agreements. Unfortunately, it is often lumped in with words that sound like cognates but are not; a quick glance at the dictionary reveals that “indigene” and all things “Indigenous” are nestled too comfortably between “indigence” and “indigent.” “Indigenous People” may quickly come to mean the impoverished people of the undeveloped world. As general categories go, neither is better or worse than the other. Like all generic phrases, they invariably disguise diversity for the sake of convenience.”

Marie-Celine Charron (2019, p. n.p.) an expert on Indigenous affairs and member of the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach says “the term “Indigenous” is increasingly replacing the term “Aboriginal,” as the former is recognized internationally, for instance with the United Nations’ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the term Aboriginal is still used and accepted.” Following in step with these considerations, the term Indigenous will be employed in this dissertation whenever it is needed for general classification.

Mohawk) were later joined by the Tuscarora from the south, forming the historic Six Nations” (McMillan & Yellowhorn, 2009, p. 67). “Both the Huron and the Haudenosaunee are Iroquoian,” writes Carpenter (2001, p. 33), “linguistically and culturally. The Huron, however, were not part of the Five Nations Haudenosaunee.”

The causes of war between the Haudenosaunee and Wyandot and the French’s role (and later also the British) played in shaping its direction are still being debated. One prominent theory of the conflict sees economic surplus production and distribution as driving the ‘Beaver Wars’ that persisted on and off during the seventeenth century. This theory suggests the market for furs was the driving force, arguing that the Haudenosaunee sought to “increase their sources of supply of pelts so they could obtain European goods, and eliminate their rivals to gain dominance of the trade” (Lackenbauer, Moses, Sheffield, & Gohier, 2010, p. 19). The French subsequently formed intermittent trading and military alliances with nations under attack by the Haudenosaunee, including the Algonquin, the Innu (Montagnais), and the Wyandot (Belshaw, 2015).⁵

⁵ “Contact with the French in the early seventeenth century brought great changes to Huron life and in time led to their downfall. Initially, the exchange of beaver pelts and other furs for iron tools and other European goods was so profitable for both sides that the beaver were soon nearly exterminated within Huronia. The Huron were forced to turn to the Algonquians to the north for furs. As the principal trading partners of the French, the Huron were intermediaries, blocking the Petun and others from direct access to European trade. The Huron exchanged corn and European goods for large quantities of furs that they obtained from the Algonquians and took to French settlements on the St. Lawrence each year. However, such trips were dangerous, and attacks by the Iroquois became increasingly common” (McMillan & Yellowknife, 2009, p. 84-85).

The 'Beaver Wars' theory can complement Jessop's conception of the partial unity between an accumulation strategy, state forms, and hegemonic projects. Ojha (2003, p. 1273) describes the pre-capitalist context of seventeenth-century New France:

The discovery of Canada and appropriation of Indigenous Nations sovereign authority and land rights ushered in the mercantilist era during which commercial and religious interests guided the process of appropriation of natural resources which later changed into appropriation of land through the establishment of the western system of political governance and cultural values.

This passage gives us a sense of the dominant accumulation strategy centered on the mercantile expansion of export-based wealth through trade in furs and other commodities implemented in the colony. Roman Catholicism was the belief system of the French settlers and served as a hegemonic moral authority that regulated the labouring classes. Jesuit missionaries and officials alike spread the faith to try and control the Indigenous and fortify relations of bonded labour predicated on the enforcement of a hierarchy predicated on white supremacy, patriarchal authority, Indigenous dispossession, and the eventual flourishing of capitalist social relations.⁶

Let us take a moment to further unpack the defining features of the settler-colonial project in Canada. Glen Coulthard (2014, pp. 6-7) summarizes them pointedly:

⁶ Stories told of the early days in the Atlantic colony that eventually became Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, include an account of the last days of Grand Chief Henri Membertou (1510-1611) of Mi'kmaq Nation descent. The missionaries sought to re-program the Indigenous populations for the ends of the colony:

The old chief, Membertou, had now come to the end of his long career. The Jesuits tended him most kindly. Father Biard placed him in his own bed. He made a most edifying end; the only sign of relapse being a wish to be buried with his heathen forefathers, which however he allowed the Jesuits to overrule (Mulvany, Adam, & Robinson, 1885, p. 20).

A settler-colonial relationship is one characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power—in this case, interrelated discursive and nondiscursive facets of economic, gendered, racial, and state power—has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority.

Coulthard is outlining the multiple discursive and nondiscursive sources of power through which settler colonialism gets outwardly expressed in the domination of others. On the nondiscursive side, colonialism requires access to territory in which resources can be monopolized to create a surplus that can be re-invested to start the process again.

For settlers, power is also discursively wound into hierarchical notions of race and gender through which they justified stealing land from the Indigenous and subjugating them. An inherent feature of colonization is that those committing it “must dehumanize and fear those it wants to enslave” (Federici, 2004, p. 222). Discourses concerning race serve as instruments by which settlers justify their brutalization of other human beings whom they classify as being beneath them, and thus settlers assume the role of a “civilizing force.” For Stuart Hall (1997, p. 7), race is a floating signifier in that it is not necessarily a biological fact, but is a concept for classification that denotes shifting relations of difference that can uphold unequal relations of power. In the context of settler-colonial relations, “race as a principal of classification operates to sort out the world into its superiors and inferiors along some line of biological or genetic race” (Hall, 1997, pp. 3-4). Gender, too, operates as a roaming signifier as it relates to conditions between settlers and the Indigenous in Canada. Julia Emberley (2001, p. 60) writes:

European bourgeois and patricarchal domestic relations (governed by the “rule of the father”) in the nineteenth and early twentieth-century family and household shaped the very terms of British colonial and Indigenous contact and served as the model for British colonial relations with aboriginal peoples in Canada.

These signifiers that classified settlers and the Indigenous along racial and gender lines proved instrumental in advancing the settler colonial project, just as the French and British began clashing with one another while simultaneously acting to subjugate the Indigenous and steal their territory.

Indeed, despite the challenges the French faced as far as subjugating Indigenous people, the pressure exerted by the French and the incoming British proved difficult for the Indigenous to counter. British Protestants moved in from the American colonies. They clashed with the French, and through associations like the Hudson’s Bay Company, feudal and mercantilist authorities worked to alter and coerce Indigenous lives in the fur trade context. As Bourgeault (1983, p. 47) tells us, mercantilism as a system represents “the transitory stage between feudalism and the formation of capitalism.” For Bourgeault (1983, p. 48), the fur trade was feudalistic, with the Indigenous being a “primary source of labour for mercantilism, were transformed from producers of goods and services entirely for collective use, into a peasant or serf labour force bound to particular trading posts, with the commanding officer (on behalf of the merchant capitalist) functioning as a feudal lord.” Let us go further and zero in on how Toronto evolved from stolen Indigenous territory that was reconfigured by settlers into a source for surplus creation, capitalist social relations, and Protestantism as the official religion of the colonial state.

Colonial Origins of Toronto

The area that encompasses Toronto rests on the border of Lake Ontario in the southern end of the province. Johnson (2013, p. 59) notes that Indigenous people have persistently lived in Toronto “since at least the last Ice Age about 11,000 years ago.” Such timelines remain disputed, especially those drawing on the Bering Strait theory, which suggests a single flow of people traversed a vanished land bridge between Alaska and Siberia roughly 13,000 years ago (Hilleary, 2017). Victoria Freeman (2011, pp. 210-211) refers to the widespread belief that suggests Indigenous people have always been in North America, where in the traditional Anishinaabe story, ancestors followed the megis shell from the North American east coast to Madeleine Island, Wisconsin with some Anishinaabeg leaving to occupy different points along the path, including “the peninsula that later became the Toronto Islands.” At the point when white settlers, including missionaries and traders, began visiting areas north of Lake Ontario in the 1600s, it has been estimated there were roughly 65,000 Indigenous people living in the area for centuries. It was, says Johnson (2013, p. 59), variously controlled by the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, including the Mississauga, “an Anishinaabe-speaking nation most closely connected to the Ojibwe” (see also Rogers & Smith, 1994).

The land that settlers began calling *Toronto* was to hold strategic significance for them as a center for trading and information exchange, especially given its proximity to important waterways. The name Ontario, for instance, comes from a “Huron-Wendat or Haudenosaunee word translating to ‘handsome lake’ or ‘great lake’ (Johnson, 2013, p. 60).

Prior to their contact with settlers, the ancestors of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation lived on the territories north of Lake Superior and the land near Georgian Bay (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, n.d.). The conflict between Indigenous nations during the seventeenth century would see different groups striving for control over these areas. The Haudenosaunee first expelled the Huron from Southern Ontario between 1649 and 1650 and continued their offensives against the Mississaugas and their allies, which in turn succeeded in driving the Haudenosaunee back towards their homelands south of Lake Ontario (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, n.d.). The Humber River, which lies on the west side of Toronto with the Don River lying to the east, is one of the numerous major rivers running north to south and draining into Lake Ontario, where the entire Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River made a network of waterways that facilitated travel and trade, “spanning the interior of North America to the Atlantic Ocean and Northern Canada to the central United States” (Johnson, 2013, p. 60).

The meaning of Toronto’s name as a territory is also debated, with its multiple meanings reflecting its significance as a channel for people, goods, and information. Toronto is derived from the Mohawk word “Tkaronto,” meaning “the place in the water where the trees are standing” (Mills & Roque, 2019, n.p.). “Toronto” – which is the word settlers affixed to the area that eventually became a metropolis – is most commonly interpreted to mean “meeting place.” However, speakers of different Iroquoian languages disagree on how the word Tkaronto is translated, with some saying it refers to the reflection of trees that grew on the edge of Lake Ontario. In contrast, others insist it refers to wooden

stakes that the Wendat and then the Haudenosaunee put into water to create fish weirs in areas along the Toronto Passage, which was a sizeable portage route linking Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe and the northern Great Lakes (Fortier, 2022, p. 264). Settlers sought to wrest control over the Toronto Passage as it possessed strategic importance for the booming fur trade, given that travelers could use it as a shortcut to bypass canoeing through the rough waters in the Great Lakes (Fortier, 2022, p. 262).

Accordingly, settlers undertook a campaign to remake Toronto in its ethno-nationalist image through a campaign driven by alliance-making, manipulation, conflict, and theft. This Toronto-centric event was itself precipitated by the larger takeover of the relevant territories by the British over their French adversaries. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Haudenosaunee started seeing Britain as a more dangerous adversary than the French when accessing furs and controlling trade routes (Elliot, 2006). Written in 1885, the *History of Toronto and County of York, Ontario* describes how the Haudenosaunee allied with the English because British colonialists offered better prices on goods than the French (Mulvany & Adam, 1885/2021, p. 5). The armed struggle between these groups lasted through the eighteenth century. Finally, the French were superseded by the English, who “intended white settlement to be a process of building individually owned family farms” (Dehli, 1990, p. 113). Like the French, the English tactics for colonizing North America were set on creating a nation-state of white settlers. Ultimately, France ceded control over Quebec to the British by 1763. The Constitutional Act of 1791, passed

by the English Imperial Parliament, divided Quebec into Upper Canada (now Ontario) and Lower Canada (now Quebec), under British crown control.

These events were to have significant ramifications for what was to happen in Toronto. Before the Constitutional Act of 1791, British colonial authorities sought to take over the territory of Toronto now bound within Upper Canada. Indeed, it was in the 1780s, during the aftermath of the American Revolution, that the British Crown saw a need “to secure communication and supply lines to their western outposts and to unite the settlements along Lake Ontario from Kingston to Niagara” (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, n.d.). In 1787, Deputy Surveyor General John Collins was sent from Quebec to inspect and purchase land occupied by several Indigenous populations along Lake Ontario (Smith, 2013). A segment of this territory lay at the mouth of the Humber River, which was a “site of several village settlements and the entrance to an important route into the northwest used by the Huron, Mississauga and Haudenosaunee” (Firth, 1962, p. xxxi) (as cited by Dehli, 1990, p. 112).

During the seventeenth century, the Seneca of the Haudenosaunee League largely controlled the area before being supplanted by the Mississauga. Subsequently, the Mississauga were confronted by British settlers who rid themselves of French interference. A digitally archived text by writer Henry Scadding from 1887 documents how this territory was marked by a fur trading post on the shores of the Toronto Bay formally named Fort Rouille, “in compliment to Antoine Louis Rouille, Count de Jouy, Colonial Minister of France” (Scadding, 1887, p. 13). Scadding (1887, p. 13) says the

name Rouille fell into disuse, and it was more commonly known for denoting the “canoe-landing nearby, for the “pass at Toronto,” and the post became commonly known as Fort Toronto.” Subsequently,

the Mississaugas’ once vast territory on the north shore of Lake Ontario had been acquired by the British through a series of problematic land surrenders, including the 1787 Toronto Purchase agreement (declared invalid in 1794—one year after the founding of York—and “reconfirmed” in 1805 with a surreptitious increase in the amount of land surrendered) (Freeman, 2010a, p. 24).

Crown administrators did doubt the legality of the Toronto Purchase. Still, they then proceeded to buy 250,830 acres of land for 10 shillings while the Mississaugas received exclusive fishing rights in Etobicoke Creek (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, n.d.).

The deception was an integral part of these proceedings. Donald B Smith suggests that “English negotiators did not explain that the intention of land treaties was for settlers to gain exclusive use in perpetuity of the land, nor that English forms of individual property rights would supersede aboriginal forms of communal use” (as cited by Dehli, 1990, p. 113). John Graves Simcoe, a British Army general and Lieutenant Governor arrived at Toronto in 1793, determined it should be the capital of Upper Canada, but resolved that it should be “called York, in honour of the King’s son Frederick, who, it will be remembered, was Duke of York” (Mulvany & Adam, 1885/2021, p. 9). Victoria Freeman (2010b, p. 62) writes that:

once the Mississaugas agreed to surrender their land, they became people of the past, no longer necessary to a settler present or future, people who most settlers believed would not become part of the modernity of British North America, and who were seen as impediments to the colony’s development.

The Toronto Purchase proved to be another key event in the fortification of a settler state in Canada that worked to separate the shared history and stories between Indigenous and settler peoples onto separate planes, a “symptom of the legacies of colonialism” (Freeman, 2010, p. 10). Indigenous scholar Karla Jessen Williamson (as cited by MacDonald, 2017, para. 18) says: “We must move beyond the false notion that Canada was founded by the French and the English, recognizing that we started off with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit.” As more settlers flowed inwards under the authority of the British Crown, their prevailing laws, customs, and religious beliefs became reified, leading to a form of material, cultural, and spiritual erasure of Indigenous people and their ways of life.

After the founding of York, the nineteenth century saw Upper and Lower Canada become a confederation in response to the fallout of the war of 1812 and the rebellion of 1837-38. These events follow in lockstep with the processes of primitive accumulation and Indigenous land theft in other settler colonies. The build-up of a so-called “modern” state and society had the instrumental benefit for settlers relegating colonialism to being “a thing of the past,” through which a shared recognition and understanding of Indigeneity gets lost within the broader public consciousness. Naomi Metallic speaks to this erasure, arguing that in a truly “reconciled Canada there would be a renewal of our treaty relationship, a recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, and a renewed nation-to-nation relationship” (as cited by MacDonald, 2017, para. 3). In their wake, settlers in Canada eradicated systems defined by the fur trade and semi-feudal governance and the

usefulness of Indigenous labour and alliances, ushering in liberalism, federalist style government, and industrial capitalism.

In 1834, York was re-named Toronto and incorporated into the larger county of York – in part to distinguish it from both New York and the many other areas named York (including the county) (Firth, 1966). The Indigenous community had been removed and often herded onto reserves. There were not insignificant numbers of others who would come to populate urban districts and become subsequently excluded from provision-based policies enacted by the federal government in the twentieth century and beyond (Andersen & Denis, 2003; Pictou, 2020). In the nineteenth century, an influx of immigrant settlers sought concessions of land in York from the British Crown that they could farm on. A portion of these lands became the site for Lawrence Heights.

Lawrence Heights in North York

The story of Lawrence Heights has its origins in an initial theft of a set of land tracts by the British state, which became subsequently occupied by a family of settlers known as the Mulhollands. Emigrating from Ireland to York in the nineteenth century, the Mulhollands were given land tracts by the British government. Lawrence Heights was eventually built on these same lands. This section shows how this family became exemplars of settler-colonialism and whose path through everyday life aligned greatly with the larger systemic processes of surplus creation and the oppressive governance systems that safeguard them. Such pressures involved producing agricultural surplus and

disciplining exploited populations for their labour, which required making communities that suited these imperatives.

Situated in North York, the lands that Lawrence Heights rests on were formerly part of an insular community of farmers whose lines of ancestry go back to the original Indigenous dispossession and settlement of Toronto explained above. Graeme Wynn (1979, p. 51) explains that the British state began distributing land lots to incoming settlers in Ontario, noting that by “1825, the total population was approximately 150,000; sixteen years later it was approaching 450,000.” The northern hinterland of York (before York became Toronto in 1834) comprises the land that now encompasses the municipality of North York (Firth, 1996). It was named North York after its incorporation into the county of York in 1922. It remained a sparsely populated farming community in central Ontario until the mid to late twentieth century (Hart, 1968). On the site where Lawrence Heights was constructed in North York, the state’s emphasis in the 1940s was to build up this farmland into a more dynamic source of surplus-value creation by responding to what were then intense affordable housing demands by low-income families. By the mid-twentieth century, the state responded to these same pressures by dispersing land and resources to people and capital for settlement and surplus creation.

Having drawn this broader picture, let us zoom in to see how this history of settlement and surplus creation unfolded. A member of the North York Historical Society says Lawrence Heights sits on lands labeled lots six and seven (concession two) in North York by the British state in the nineteenth century. Each land plot was two hundred acres

in size and is located north of Lawrence Avenue between Bathurst and Dufferin Streets (close to Yorkdale) (NYHS, personal communication, May 11th 2020).

Lot six was granted to Dr. Christopher Widmer, who served in the Peninsular War of 1807 to 1814. Lot seven was given by the British state to William Yeoman in 1796 and passed through several owners before being bought by Henry Mulholland in 1814, a farmer and bricklayer who emigrated from the Ulster province of Clones, County Monaghan in Ireland to York's northern frontier in 1806 (Innisfil Township Council, 1951, p. 78). Henry had been one of the first city councilors for his home district, and he helped build a Methodist church and schoolhouse in his community. He fought on the side of the United Empire Loyalists as Captain in the 3rd York militia against the Americans in the War of 1812 in the battles of York, Stoney Creek, and Lundy's Lane; he was married to Jane Armstrong, and in 1814 they built a farm and settled with their family of ten children (Spragge, 1941).

The need for states and capital to produce new circuits of production, distribution, and consumption of commodities helped drive emigration out of parts of the United Kingdom beset with crises, unemployment, and famine during capitalism's formative years. The establishment of the colony in British North America thus created a lifeline for European settlers in a spatial fix (Harvey, 1978). When surplus-value production stalls in a given space and context, and unemployment and crises ensue, you look for new areas to create a surplus – and this same problem gets moved from place to place. This passage

from *Hints on Emigration to Upper Canada; Especially Addressed to the Middle and Lower Classes in Great Britain and Ireland* gives more insight:

This is a subject for the deep and anxious consideration of Great Britain, whose interest it is to provide consumers for her manufactures. The poor at home cannot afford to become purchasers, but by locating themselves in the British Colonies abroad they soon acquire such capital as enables them to consume the various articles of export, and thus to contribute not only towards the increased employment of the manufacturers of England, but of the various classes of shipbuilders, provision merchants, sailors, etc., engaged in conveying manufactures to the Colonies. And as to Ireland, where, though purely agricultural, her population exceeds the power of employment, it is an obvious advantage to occupy the overplus of *her* people also, in those more distant tracts which invite the notice of the husbandman, and allure him by their fertility (Doyle, 1831/2019, p. 9).

Encouraging farmers to make their way to the colony, Doyle (1831/2019, p. 15) said further the “people of Upper Canada are blessed with a fine healthy climate and fruitful soil.” Overall, English-speaking Canada was essentially the product of nineteenth-century mass emigration from England, Ireland, and Scotland that inundated a small eighteenth-century population base (Houston & Smyth, 1990, p. 9). Indeed, in “the three decades between the Peace of Waterloo and the onset of the Great Irish Famine in 1845,” Houston and Smyth (1990, p. 9) write, “half a million Irish traveled to British North America. They constituted 60 percent of the total inflow.”

Among Irish migrants to Upper Canada, the Mulholland family were likely exemplars of what the first waves of settlers at that time tended to resemble in that they were affluent enough to escape socio-economic strife in Ireland. According to Houston and Smyth (1990, p. 15):

The emigrants who left Ireland for Canada in the early part of the nineteenth century were not a representative cross-section of the Irish population...The high cost of passage selected emigrants of higher socio-economic status, and the Protestants of Ulster and the scattered southern enclaves formed a disproportionately large fraction. In short, the earliest immigrants were derived from among the better-off, and only in time would poorer elements be added to the mix.

The influx of Irish farmers into these stolen lands reflected a broader nation-building project that increased in intensity over the nineteenth century. This process included the institution of Protestantism as the nation-state's de-facto religion and accordant erasure of their shared history with the Indigenous, who became signified as a lesser race who were without God. Speaking of nineteenth-century Canadian "pioneers," Rev. W.T. Gunn declared, "In the beginning, God created Canada" (as cited by Valverde, 1991, p. 118).

Mariana Valverde (1991, p. 118) quotes Gunn in full:

Races and centuries passed till men [i.e., Europeans], seeking westward a Continent they knew, found their way a continent they knew not...So through the nineteenth century slowly the pioneers came, hewed down the forests, laid the foundations of homes and law and order and righteousness, secured for themselves and their successors religious liberty and responsible government, mapped out the land and bound its scattered Provinces into one Dominion coast to coast.

Henry Mulholland exemplified the pioneer lifestyle, traveling to Ireland two or three times to convince Irish farmers in Ulster to emigrate to the colony where they could settle and farm, bringing several friends and associates with each trip (Innisfil Township Council, 1951, p. 78). While traveling aboard *The Lady of the Lake* on a return trip from Ulster through the Straits of Belle Isle in 1833, Mulholland and other passengers drowned after their ship struck an iceberg (Hart, 1968).

Thomas Mulholland inherited his father's estate and accumulated significant tracts of land in Innisfil, King, York Township (located southwest of what is now identified as North York and east of Etobicoke) and Toronto (Hart, 1968, p. 203). The NYHS says that Thomas purchased lot seven in the northern part of York (now North York) along with lot six in 1840 (which the Crown originally granted to Dr. Widmer in 1817) (NYHS, personal communication, May 11th 2020). The following map illustrates the division of these lands as of 1878:



Figure 8 - Map of North York (NYHS, 2018). Reproduced with permission.

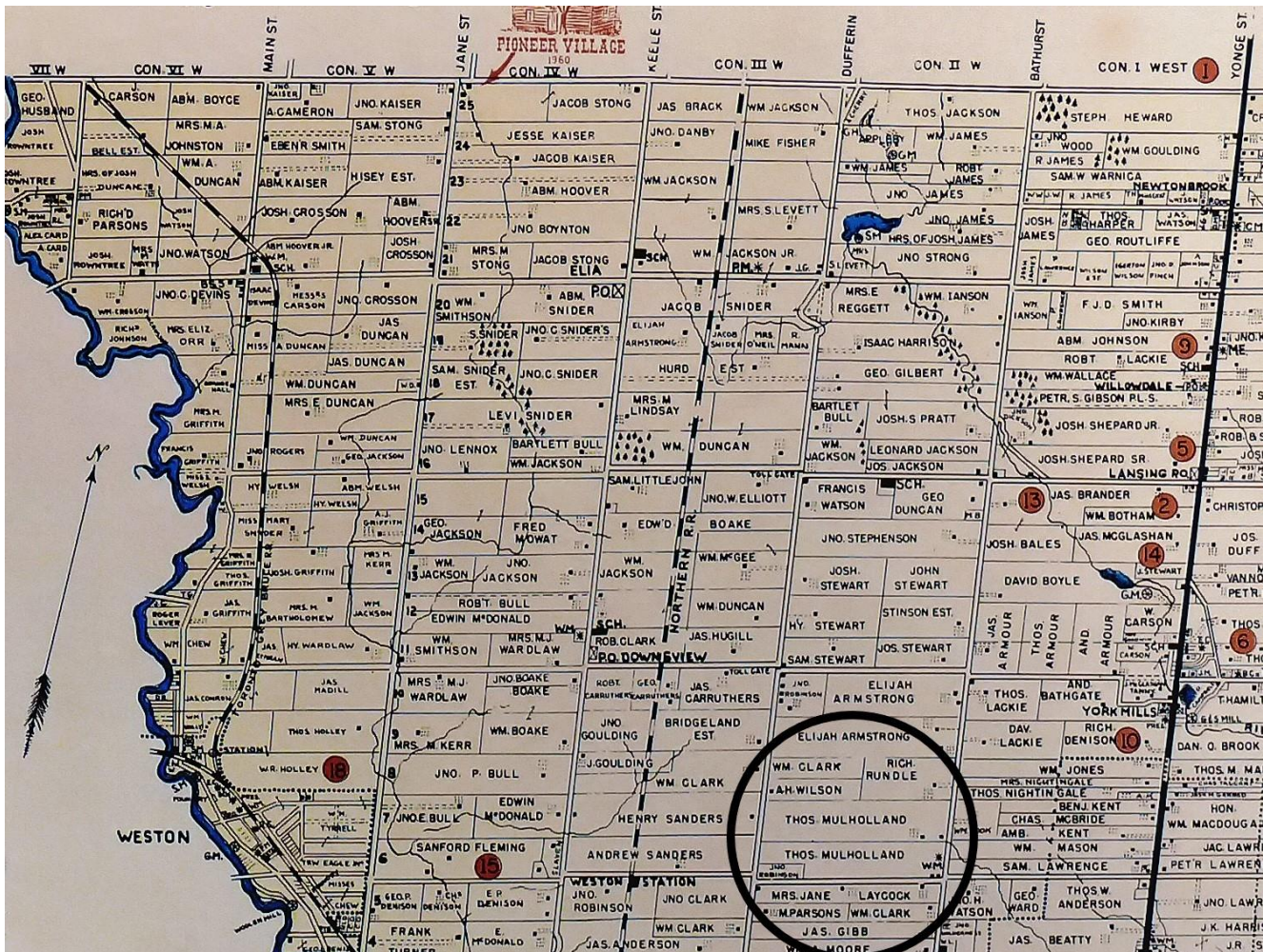


Figure 9 - Close-up image of Mulholland family owned lands (NYHS, 2018). Reproduced with permission.

Like his father, Thomas Mulholland was a Methodist and patriotic settler who participated in the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion on the loyalist side (Innisfil Township Council, 1951). Jane Mulholland, daughter of Henry Mulholland, married James Stewart, and they settled on a property that extended south to Lawrence East (NYHS, personal communication, May 11th 2020). Their daughter, Louisa Stewart, married George Stewart Henry, Premier of Ontario, between 1930 and 1934. After George died with little

money, Louisa and her son took it upon themselves to build up their property into a successful farm and showplace that became the Henry Farms (NYHS, personal communication, May 11th 2020).

These formerly Indigenous-owned land tracts, including the Henry Farms, were bought up by developers in the 1940s. In the 1950s, they became the lands that the Canadian government selected to be Lawrence Heights. These lands, which produced an agricultural surplus in the nineteenth century, were remade in the twentieth century into suburban real estate. It was a move intended to help address the same recurring surplus absorption problem that once promulgated the move of Irish farmers onto the same lands. This time, the territory was re-constituted from farmland into a site of suburban sprawl and new value creation in the form of a new public housing program.

Colonial Context of Lawrence Heights

This final section will show how the creation of Lawrence Heights represents a deployment of strategies enacted by the Canadian state to create communities that were amenable to generating surplus value and took measures to remove political barriers that stood in the way of this objective. In a similar fashion, settlers sought to create a white-dominated state where lands were made into engines of agricultural surplus, which required that they first dispossess the Indigenous and then instantiate capitalist social relations, safeguarded by juridical structures and other societal customs, rules, and norms. These actions contributed to keeping social hierarchies intact.

Looking at the context in which Lawrence Heights arose in the 1950s, the state constructed sprawling urban and suburban districts to create new sources of value. Still, it confronted political challenges that appeared after the Great Depression and WWII in the form of housing shortages, social unrest, and related pressures to make society more equal along class lines. The state responded by warehousing low-income families in newly constructed public housing, dampening political agitation while leaving the class hierarchy fortified.

The section will now zoom into the local level to explore the building of Lawrence Heights but will also withdraw outwards to look at events at broader levels to make a more cohesive narrative. The context is that settlers transitioned from semi-feudal and pre-capitalist relations into a twentieth century defined by rising industrial capitalism, federalism, and liberalism. Between the 1930s and the early 1950s, several important events took place, including the Great Depression, WWII, the post-war housing shortage in Toronto, and expanding industrialism and residential and commercial real estate.

A primary objective of the state is to help mobilize land, labour, and capital to produce commodities. It was now low-income workers that became a *problem* to be moved around, re-housed, and managed through public housing. Canadian public housing

refers to dwelling units built, owned and administered by government and managed directly by government or appointed housing agencies. This form of subsidized housing targets low-income individuals and families, and rents are determined as a percentage of total household income, which is usually 30 percent (Fallis, 1995; CMHC, 2011) (as cited by Grise, 2016, p. 71).

Using eminent domain, the (then named) Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation bought the lands encompassing Henry Farms in the inner suburbs of North York (centered around Lawrence Avenue West, between Bathurst Street and Dufferin Street) in the 1940s. The CMHC then created an architectural division that planned and supervised the construction in the 1950s of several large public housing projects to address Toronto's housing shortage that began during the Great Depression (City of Toronto, 2010a, p. 3).

Lawrence Heights, the largest among them, comprises low-rise apartment buildings, single-family homes, and townhouses (Sewell, 1993, p. 103). It was, in fact, a large slice of what was far too small a supply of de-commodified housing. According to the Ontario Association of Public Housing Authorities (1964, p. 39):

When the federal government terminated its emergency shelter program in 1948 and its veterans' rental housing construction program in 1949, it had only a small scale public housing program to assist low-income families despite the fact that the severity of the post-war housing shortage continued into the mid-1950s (as cited by Bacher & Hulchanski, 1987, p. 159)

The housing crisis itself was largely a product of the Great Depression (1929-1933), capitalism's most significant twentieth-century crisis. By the early 1930s, "virtually all aspects of the housing system had ceased to function normally. Conditions throughout the housing market deteriorated rapidly" (Hulchanski, 1986, p. 21). This fallout brewed interest among builders, social workers, architects, activists, and trade unions in public housing as a strategy to combat the depression's effects; these groups collectively viewed "public housing as an excellent way to reduce unemployment and to meet the shelter

needs of low-income people” (Bacher, 1987, p. 50). Advocates insisted that public housing would boost private sector activity by providing “employment for construction workers, architects, engineers, contractors, and manufacturers while serving to establish a minimum standard of shelter for all that would protect the general health of the community” and assist disadvantaged people (Bacher, 1987, p. 51).

The consensus among several housing policy scholars suggests Canada’s public housing initiatives failed to assist the disadvantaged and the homeless to the extent that advocates intended. The first problem was that the government – when it came to housing policy – was wary at the time of intervening in people’s affairs beyond a minimal extent:

Direct intervention in housing was not part of the generally accepted role of government. Only once before, following the First World War, did the federal government initiate a housing program. The 1919 Federal Housing Loan program was a minor and insignificant excursion into the housing field. Though conditions changed dramatically by the mid-1930s, the governments of R.B. Bennett and, following the election of October 1935, that of William Lyon McKenzie King, maintained a similar attitude concerning the role of government in housing. They favored a minimum role and preferred home ownership over rental tenure.

The passage continues:

Since it was thought that the emergency conditions would soon pass and since that the housing problem was due to the immediate economic crisis, they therefore believed that there was no need to initiate long-term programs. “I should be very sorry,” explained one Member of Parliament, “to see the government go into a general [housing] policy of socialism based on the general conditions of today” (Hulchanski, 1986, p. 22).

Hulchanski speaks to the unease expressed by political leadership within the state for de-commodifying a portion of the housing supply. In the face of public pressure to offer

more comprehensive and plentiful non-market housing options for struggling families, the state discredits these calls for action as overzealous state planning.

In Toronto, public housing policies were predicated on housing low-income families in need and clearing residential areas deemed afflicted with substandard housing. The year 1934 saw the release of the Report of the Lieutenant Governor's Report on Housing Conditions in Toronto. The Bruce Report identified multiple neighborhoods in Toronto as being "slums," which were deemed appropriate targets for razing with new public housing supplies to be built in their wake (Brushett, 2001).

The depression, however, signaled a major crisis for the existing order. It would become one of several catalysts for changing the government's tune when it came to devoting more resources towards its housing problem. For instance, the federal government went ahead and passed the National Housing Act in 1938 to bolster housing construction. However, it still resisted making provisions and guidelines allowing municipalities to construct affordable rental housing (Bacher, 1987, p. 53). Reform (or embedded) liberalism took shape as the dominant ideology after WWII, legitimizing greater state intervention in the private sector (Ruggie, 1998). Just as important was the ramping up of industry, trade, and immigration flows within capitalist societies (particularly the victorious allies) after the war.

In the same way that colonial settlement in Toronto became a source of new land for English and Irish settlers to exploit, the twentieth century saw the building up of the suburbs and the renewal of inner-city spaces after WWII. These became spatial fixes,

targeting and rebuilding under-developed areas into surplus-value creation centers.

Toronto ramped up real-estate development in response to a rapid expansion of Fordist based “industry during the war, which brought improvements in local finances but also increased pressures on the city’s housing stock, and a surge of population growth in municipalities outside Toronto” (Friskin, 2007, p. 63).

In 1944, the Final Report of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning, otherwise known as the Curtis Report, “denounced the current state of Canadian housing and federal housing policy and called for a courageous federal housing policy that assured every Canadian family decent accommodation” (Brushett, 2001, p. 75). This report coincided with war veterans and activists (prominent names included Humphrey Carver and Albert Rose) demanding the government provide subsidized housing options to low-income families and the homeless (Carver, 1948, p. xiii; Rose, 1980, p. iii). The state created a limited federally led social housing program with two primary delivery models for assisted living, including public housing and limited dividend. The latter was mostly reserved for seniors, and both had cost-sharing arrangements with the provinces (Suttor, 2014, p. 102). Coordination between the federal and provincial governments on public housing was joined by Toronto, reflecting the spirit of cooperative federalism that prevailed at the time (Cameron & Simeon, 2002).

With metropolitan governance, the year 1953 proved key. This was the year when Toronto initiated the formation of Metropolitan government. At this time, Toronto was set on overtaking Montreal as Canada’s premier city, just as Ontario was committed to

strengthen its urban-industrial base and provide the massive funding for infrastructure (sewers, roads, electrical grids, etc.) to complement and support residential, commercial, and industrial urban and suburban development (Brushett, 2001, p. 22). Metropolitan government was a means to realize these imperatives in that Toronto was dealing with overcrowding and suburban flight due to large migrations of people that had filled its wartime industries, in addition to a relaxing on immigration controls by a federal government committed to a postwar liberal order (Brushett, 2001, p. 22). Because the Greater Toronto Area was an assemblage of townships adjacent to the city, these jurisdictional boundaries made it difficult to coordinate and raise the necessary capital to “finance and undertake the expansion of hard urban infrastructure to serve Toronto’s rapid growth” (Suttor, 2014, p. 104).

Consolidating these areas permitted the collectivization of capital to ensure “serviced land and orderly expansion of the suburbs” (Suttor, 2014, p. 105). The formation of Metropolitan Toronto became an umbrella of six local governments, including Toronto, Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke, East York, and York (Kipfer & Keil, 2002, p. 238). There was a territorial compromise of sorts. Kipfer and Keil (2002, p. 238) tell us that (on the one hand) the metropolitan structure allowed the inner city tax base to get milked for financing suburban infrastructure, while (on the other hand) it also permitted the spread of public transit and public housing into new suburban neighborhoods – despite resistance from homeowners and local politicians. Newfound suburban dwellers were afforded housing and transportation routes into and out of the

inner city for travel to and from work. More residential developments could be produced and serviced with the infrastructure in place, helping these townships flourish. Fanelli (2016, p. 21) summarizes the strategy in full:

The Metropolitan Toronto Act established a two-tier order: a senior (Metropolitan) regional level and thirteen lower-tier municipalities. While regional-level governance concerned itself with transit and roads and long-term land-use planning, borrowing and assessment, lower-tier municipalities concerned themselves with more immediate community-oriented services such as fire and waste disposal, licensing and public health standards, recreation, policing, emergency medical services, electrical distribution and social welfare assistance. In some instances, regional and lower-tier governments integrated land use planning, transportation infrastructure, sewage and wastewater, although the “old” City of Toronto picked up more than 60 percent of the costs of regional development. The idea was that as suburban municipalities expanded their property tax base, Toronto proper’s burden would decrease as other municipalities would then be able to expand their networks of services and infrastructure in a coordinated way. Thus at the heart of this two-tier structure was a redistributive element.

CMHC and Ontario built social housing on assemblies of serviced public land in the 1950s, including Lawrence Heights in North York, Rexdale, Jane and Finch, Malvern, and elsewhere (Suttor, 2014, p. 105). Held up as a relief for the city’s housing problems, Lawrence Heights became the first subsidized housing development borne through cooperation between all three levels of government (Pratt, 2004, p. B03).

Public housing was not merely a form of emergency housing for the poor. Instead, its “proponents wooed voter support by emphasizing the economic benefits it would bring to the city. The housing scheme, they said, would (a) increase the attractiveness of the city to potential investors, (b) remove physical barriers to the redevelopment of downtown property for more profitable uses, (c) increase the city’s tax base, and (d)

reduce the cost of city services” (Friskin, 2007, p. 65). The goal was to clear away the land and alter that part of North York that was long populated by white Methodist farmers and make it into a site for industrial and commercial capitalism to thrive.

Lawrence Heights and other public housing communities did provide shelter for destitute single persons and families. The program was limited. There was an overwhelming need in Canada for public housing in the 1950s. Production fell far short of expectations, with less than three-fifths of one percent of all housing completions over the 1950s being public housing units, most in Ontario (Brushett, 2001, p. 153). Public housing thus excluded more people than it served. It was “such a small-scale program that it had little impact even where it existed. In general, families receiving welfare were ineligible for public housing” (Bacher & Hulchanski, 1987, p. 159). Even during the heyday of welfare state politics, Canadian policy still overwhelmingly focused on stimulating private sector housing (Careless, 2020). This trend makes sense because Canada was defined by a Fordist accumulation strategy, cooperative federalism, and a hegemonic order underpinned by reform liberalism.

In essence, the CMHC and the province of Ontario permitted the construction of Lawrence Heights with the local government providing administrative support and the necessary infrastructure to make it all work. However strong the ties of cooperative federalism were in the postwar period, changes in intergovernmental relations will loom large as this story moves closer to the point when Lawrence Heights became a target for “revitalization.” Provincial-municipal relations in Ontario are rooted in the Baldwin Act

of 1849 which was intended to break up the formerly centralized structures of local governance set up by Upper Canada in 1793 where large areas known as Districts (with *appointed* administrators) had control over taxation and funding solutions to local problems, leaving things out of the hands of local taxpayers (“Effective local government began with Baldwin Act in 1849,” 2022). With the Baldwin Act, the Districts were replaced with counties (made up of cities, towns, and villages) to be governed by elected local councils, leading to the beginning of responsible municipal government in Ontario (Siegel, 2004, p. 181). Though the Baldwin Act was intended to restructure local governance along more democratic lines, it has traditionally been interpreted in judicial settings “in line with the classic Dillon’s Rule” or “creatures of the province doctrine” where a municipality cannot take action without provincial legislation allowing them to do so (Siegel, 2004, p. 190).

Ontario does ultimately have one of Canada’s most decentralized provincial-municipal structures (Fanelli, 2016). By the 1990s, Toronto would undergo yet another round of municipal restructuring towards amalgamation, a move intended to augment and streamline service provision, which fit with the provincial action to download responsibility for matters like social housing onto the cities (Sancton, 2006). As the next chapters will reveal, even with decentralization and persisting pressure for a “New Deal for Cities,” Toronto would struggle to address its problems without the requisite legal and financial means (see Levi & Valverde, 2006, p. 411). The challenging position facing Toronto with lacking fiscal support from both Ontario and a federal government that has

typically kept its distance from city affairs would be crucial ingredients for making Lawrence Heights a target for “revitalization.”

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the legacy of settler colonialism in the development of Canada and Toronto has resonance in the context of the development of Lawrence Heights in the twentieth century. The colonial project saw settlers engage the Indigenous in a campaign of alliance-making, fraud, and theft of their territory. Indigenous lifestyles, belief systems, and cultures were leveled while facilitative state action built up new myths, laws, and capitalist social relations while whitewashing Canada’s colonial legacy. Valverde (1991, p. 17) tells us that Canadians’ “self-image as healthy-citizens of a new country of prairies and snowy peaks contributed both to twentieth century nationalist ideas and the success of the purity movement, one of whose symbols was pure white snow.” Protestantism, private property rights, and the curation of pioneer mythology evolved into the building of industrial cityscapes with majorities of subordinate wage-labourers who became affixed to white nationalist patriotism and an aversion to anything prejudicially classified as representing social disorder, including public housing neighborhoods.

Let us briefly flesh out some critical details that help tell this story. The Indigenous peoples that settlers encountered were perceived as a source of labour for their mercantilist-based economic system and were used selectively as allies when they, meaning the French and British, went to war against one another for control over

resources and territory. Once the British gained supremacy and the Indigenous became less of an asset for them, settlers began stealing their land and eradicating any semblance of a shared history. Subsequently, with facilitative action by the state in England, as described with the tale of the Mulholland family and the creation of North York, there began a building up of settler-based communities on a foundation of agricultural production, religious observance, and capitalist social relations.

In the mid-twentieth century, the context of the dominant accumulation strategy, state form, and hegemonic projects had evolved into being defined by Fordist style production, a cooperative arrangement between the federal and provincial governments, and a commitment to embedded liberalism. The state and capital exploited disadvantaged persons for their labour. Still, authorities also faced political pressure to house those who suffered most from capitalism's contradictions and struggled to afford market-provided housing. Public housing was part and parcel of efforts by the state and the business class to create new sources of surplus-value and avoid another Great Depression. Inner-city slums got cleared, and residential and commercial development increased and spread to the suburbs. Lawrence Heights became the largest public housing site in the inner suburbs of North York, and the newly formed metropolitan government administered and managed it.

Settler colonialism jumpstarted the creation and spread of abstract space through socio-spatial relations on the territory that became Lawrence Heights, beginning with the settlers and the Indigenous populations they drove off the land, and eventually among

capitalists and other authorities with the oppressed. These relationships form the basis of a burgeoning tension between those committed to exploiting others for gain and those who became exploited, namely the working poor who became shuttled into projects like Lawrence Heights. The next chapter shows how relatively advantaged people and associations rejected the community, which was forced to persevere when the project was built and occupied. The isolation experienced by Lawrence Heights tenants helps reveal how the community grew strong and developed an activist culture that would prove crucial when the state began pressing forward with “revitalization” in the late 2000s.

Exploring Lawrence Heights: The Era Before “Revitalization”

The stigma attached to project living is also acute with some. To hear it referred to as ‘the jungle,’ ‘the camp,’ ‘poverty village’ or simply ‘OH There!’ hurts personal pride, makes them feel inferior and produces the depressing hopeless feelings that are the common attributes of alienation.

– W.R. Delagran on ‘Life in the Heights’ (1966, p. 18).

Introduction

The above passage comes from W.R. Delagran, a social worker and member of the North York Welfare Department, who published several reports for local political authorities during the 1960s. In this passage from *Life in the Heights*, Delagran cited the testimony of persons living in Lawrence Heights during its early existence. Here, tenants expressed feelings of isolation and pain rooted in an awareness of being collectively stigmatized for living in public housing. Their statements point to a pervasiveness of harmful assumptions about Lawrence Heights that have become deeply ingrained among Torontonians for decades and formed part of the basis that the state used to justify its “revitalization” plan – to eradicate such stigma.

This chapter delves into the late 1950s when Lawrence Heights opened up to the late 1960s as enthusiasm for public housing waned in Canada. The purpose of which is to show how Lawrence Heights came to be associated by outsiders with stigmatizing attitudes about public housing communities. I will show how such erroneous assumptions combined

with the isolating physical design of the district as forces that exacerbated Lawrence Heights' widely purveyed reputation as a place that represents "failed public policy." This chapter incorporates more of the concepts discussed in the literature review, including modernist urban planning ideas like the Garden City and social mixing. The idea is to see how these ideas impacted the lives of the people living in Lawrence Heights and get a deeper sense of how it evolved into an isolated community that faced significant ostracization from outsiders. How have Lawrence Heights tenants and state authorities interacted? What political associations arose within Lawrence Heights?

As in other public housing districts, the relationship between the state and neighborhood residents in Lawrence Heights is uniquely deep-seated. For public housing tenants, the government typically performs what on the surface are a series of roles and responsibilities, behaving alternately as a landlord, social service provider, and police force (Morris, 2008; Mazerolle, Ready, Terrill, & Waring, 2000; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009, p. 119).⁷ But what we perceive as formal state activity on the surface of things is a manifestation of struggle between class forces where the powerful seek to hold their position over others. In such environments, public housing residents can feel like they are treated more like second-class citizens rather than simply as tenants (Juravich, 2017). This chapter shows that perceptions of Lawrence Heights took shape throughout its early

⁷ In their study of Regent Park, Kipfer and Petrunia (2009, p. 119) refer to the unusually persistent and damaging presence of the police in the daily lives of tenants, writing that "the territorial stigmatization of Regent weighed heavily on residents' efforts to maintain a sense of solidarity and dignity, resist police violence, and supplement formal incomes with self-help initiatives."

existence as a public-housing site in the mid-twentieth century through persistent and synchronous action by the combined force of the government, affluent homeowners in the surrounding districts, and the news media. These social forces were instrumental in creating a dominant view of Lawrence Heights as a public housing neighborhood defined by isolation and deficiency. By the late 1960s, public housing in Canada underwent discrediting in the annals of legislative assemblies and in the public sphere generally (Hulchanski, 1986, p. 4). An opening was created for a new paradigm to arise based on the provision of different types of social housing, and eventually social mixing, that began taking hold in the 1970s which we will get into more in chapter seven.

The chapter consists of three sections. First, I document how the physical design of Lawrence Heights followed in step with once popular Garden City planning ideas which contributed to its isolated character. The second section starts by pulling back and clarifying how public housing programs were informed by Keynesianism as a guideline for housing policy in the mid-twentieth century. From there, I turn the focus back inwards to show how the changing structure of local government in Toronto helped facilitate the complicated financing and structural arrangements that made the building of Lawrence Heights possible. The third section moves into the social conflicts that helped animate the processes of public deliberation and formal approvals that were required before Lawrence Heights could be built, and which also colored the way surrounding communities contributed to stigmatizing this new public housing district. Finally, my conclusion will set up chapter six where neoliberalism comes to the fore in a context in which Lawrence

Heights continues to be heavily stigmatized by people living outside it as well as institutions like the news media.

Lawrence Heights: Post WWII Context

At the time Lawrence Heights was built, national-level public housing policy was made and administered in a strategically selective context defined by Keynesianism, welfare state policies, and cooperative federalism. Canada's brand of Keynesianism was intended not to radically intervene in market affairs, says Neil Bradford (1999, p. 32), but to "fine tune a mostly booming economy through tax cuts, investment incentives and automatic stabilizers," the last of which can be classified as welfare policies (for example, unemployment insurance, old age security, and child allowances).

During this period, devoted Keynesian authorities (policymakers, technocrats, administrators) tended to give the impression that what they were doing was taking a discrete set of abstract policy instruments, analytical tools, and concepts and then actualizing them concretely within defined spaces to apply fixes to problems concerning economic slowdown and poverty that they *discovered* (Murray, 2011). Using a neo-Foucauldian perspective, Karen Murray (2011, p. 9) argues that this distinction between the abstract and the concrete is a false dichotomy, where what public authorities do is always interwoven and devoted to *producing* space, ordering how it is to be understood conceptually and materially shaped, and determining the ends that it is to accomplish. Take the example of Leonard Marsh, a Keynesian social scientist whose ideas reflected the eventual trajectory of the formerly popular model for "urban revitalization,"

predicated on “slum clearance” and the building of modernist style public housing complexes. The following passage is worth quoting in full:

In *Report on Social Security for Canada*, Marsh contends, in Keynesian fashion, that unemployment would foster low incomes; low incomes would equal low spending; low consumerism would equal low economic growth; and low growth would equal low competitiveness. Income redistribution via state interventions would stave off poverty, produce employment, and maximize consumerism in ways that would enhance democracy. At the core of his thinking is the heterosexual, two-parent family, which Marsh regards as a pivotal consumption machine. He considers mothers, in particular, as key consumers. They would be the ones purchasing school supplies, children’s clothing, paying for recreation activities, and so on. But the “absence of poverty” alone would not assure spending. People need reasons to buy. They need goods and services to purchase. Marsh therefore called for “bold acts of income mobilization” at the local level to promote mass consumption. Marsh recognized that no one template would be applicable in all parts of Canada, but he was certain that in some places, including some inner-city spaces, it would be necessary to create schools, libraries, and recreational facilities, and, if need be, to erase “eyesores,” “blighted areas,” and “slum dwellings.” The latter concerns underscore Marsh’s emphasis on housing redevelopment, which he expands upon more fully in his *Report on Housing and Community Planning* (Murray, 2011, p. 12).

Using these Keynesian principles, Marsh sought methods for re-engineering spaces considered by the state to be “economically under-performing” into more effective generators of aggregate demand, which boils down to augmenting people’s capacities and willingness to produce, buy, and consume commodities. For Keynesians like Marsh, fulfilling this task relies on the instantiation of the patriarchal nuclear family as the “morally acceptable” means for social reproduction (see Porter, 2003). As noted in the above passage, it also involves leveraging public resources to encourage the clearance of blight and replace it with amenities and public goods that are commensurate with reaching economic growth targets and creating ideal citizens.

On the matter of public housing development during the height of Keynesianism in Canada, it became yet another set of policies, concepts, and strategies through which the government re-engineered space to realize greater economic growth and “mould” its inhabitants to better fit a heteronormative ideal. But this process required the establishing of new governance systems and public financing arrangements. In 1946, former Prime Minister Mackenzie King formed the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (later renamed the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC), which intended to finance public housing buildings and provide a government-backed guarantee for private mortgages. As a result, Canada’s public housing was built primarily between the 1950s to the early 1970s, with almost half of all units erected in Ontario (Murdie, 2002). Beyond financing public housing construction, the CMHC never played an active role in managing the “portfolio and has instituted relatively few controls over its operation. Through Federal, Provincial, Territorial ... agreements, responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the program is vested almost exclusively with the Provinces and Territories” (CMHC, 1993, p. 6).

Lawrence Heights should be seen as an outgrowth of what was happening in the post-WWII Canadian context. At that time, there was an expansion of industry and commerce in the province and in Toronto as a budding metropolis on the one hand, and the correlative growth of public administration and policy, urban planning authorities, and metropolitan governance on the other. With technocratic Keynesianism on an upward swing, the growing power attributed to such experts in the setting of Ontario and Toronto

demonstrated how a city's expert and political orders could be constitutive of each other, with the planning and building of infrastructure by government and the private sector creating the contexts for applying expertise, which, in turn, justified expansion of the city's administrative functions (Bocking 2006, p. 51).

The Ontario government in 1944 created a Department of Planning and Development and passed a Planning Act in 1946, "which required cities to establish planning bodies responsible for producing official plans. The planning act set the agenda with objectives including empowering municipalities "to buy land and build infrastructure and public housing, and systems of subdivision control" (Sorensen & Hess, 2015, p. 417). Within Toronto, this interest in planning led in 1942 to create the City of Toronto Planning Board, instituting a strategy to "coordinate the development of the Metropolitan Area as "one geographic, economic, and social unit" (Reeves, 1992, p. 10). Administration of the planning board and its policies won support from Canada's socialist party (the Canadian Commonwealth Federation) as well as Toronto's urban elites to address the physical and moral problems of the city by using widespread solutions (Lemon, 1986).

After the war, the state confronted serious problems: warding off another Great Depression, resolving a widespread housing shortage, and responding to demands for affordable shelter, especially for low-income families. To address these issues, planners, experts, and politicians in Ontario and Toronto realized they needed a structure of metropolitan governance endowed with the resources to build the infrastructure to service growing residential and commercial areas (Friskin, 2007). The creation of Metropolitan Toronto in 1953 became the government of Ontario's response to these multiple problems (Sorensen & Hess, 2015, p. 419). Metro could borrow more cheaply than the

single municipalities and townships could do on their own because Metro had a broad and affluent tax base and solid credit rating. Colton (1980, p. 134) writes that

One of Metro's principal powers was its exclusive authority to issue government debentures or bonds for its own projects and for all the capital undertakings of the thirteen constituent communities and their boards of education. In 1953 local governments in the region had spent about \$30 million on capital projects, some of it raised at unfavorable interest rates. Metropolitan government altered the equation radically. The volume of capital spending was increased twofold in its first year of operation and more than threefold by 1957. Funds were procured at rates of interest as much as two per cent less than those prevalent for many communities prior to 1953. When interest rates climbed after 1956, Metro's aggregate borrowing power remained of irrefutable use in securing preferential borrowing terms.

By issuing bonds, Metro paid the costs of building infrastructure in un-serviced subdivisions. Metro's ability to borrow in the New York money market thus helped it solve "the problems of clean water supply and inadequate sewage disposal (particularly into Toronto's rivers, which had become open sewers), and thousands of septic tanks were eliminated" (Bocking, 2006, p. 61).

The CMHC purchased the land for Lawrence Heights cheaply "at \$16,000 an acre and held it until the growth of Toronto caught up and surrounded the empty acres," after which Metro initiated the process of building the project using private sector contractors (Haggart, 1958, p. 8). A statement from then Chairman of Council of Public Works from 1960 said Lawrence Heights

was all made possible by the foresight and wisdom some ten or twelve years ago of the federal-provincial partnership in acquiring this very substantial block of land at a fraction of the price it would cost today. The Metropolitan Corporation's contribution to the project involved bringing metropolitan services such as sewers, water and storm drainage to the property at very substantial cost and entering into of the original agreement that the Metropolitan Corporation would

contribute, under the old formula, to the difference between \$25.00 per unit of taxes and normal taxes to the local municipality (as cited by Yardhouse, 1961, p. 2).

The CMHC's land purchase was coveted, but development had to wait until the appropriate infrastructure was in place. As *The Globe and Mail* reported, the "scarcity of serviced land in Metropolitan Toronto pushed land prices to prohibitive heights for such projects" ("Way Cleared for Start: Board Backs North York Housing," 1955, p. 5). There is an element of spatial selectivity in these decisions. The state-built Lawrence Heights on farmlands in the inner suburbs of North York because it was cheaper to do so than in the inner-city and was an under-exploited space for real-estate development. Politicians and planners opposed building more public housing on expensive inner-city land reserved for more profitable enterprises (White, 2016, p. 21).

Clashing Interests and Images of Lawrence Heights

Metro did succeed at building the infrastructure to service suburban areas as sites for new developments. With these measures in hand, state planners then faced opposition to the proposed construction of Lawrence Heights by residents in Lawrence Manor and residential political organizers who were advancing various stigmatizing images of what they considered Lawrence Heights to represent, and who would be living there. Indeed, when it came to the proposed development of Lawrence Heights in the mid-1950s, a series of reports appeared in the *Toronto Daily Star* and the *Globe and Mail* between 1954 to 1959, documenting efforts by the Lawrence Manor ratepayers'

association to stop it or move it elsewhere. Let us again cite the Chairman of Metro's Council to the Minister of Public Works who summarized the political conflict:

This project, being of the magnitude which it is, encountered very substantial resistance from residents living in a pretty wide area adjacent to it. The Metropolitan Corporation in conjunction with Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Department of Planning and Development carried on extensive negotiations extending over about two years with a number of ratepayers' associations, the Planning Board of the Township of North York and the Municipality of North York before the local municipality would approve the rezoning incidental to the project (as cited by Yardhouse, 1960, p. 2).

The movement that was opposed to the construction of Lawrence Heights ultimately failed in its efforts. But once it was built, the state itself identified what it viewed as a tenant body living in Lawrence Heights that would fail to live up to the ideals imagined by planners and other officials who had initially bought into the premise that public housing environments could succeed at "re-moulding" their occupants. According to internal records, bureaucratic managers saw their role in managing Lawrence Heights' tenants under the pretense that they were simply providing shelter and services for people who could not afford market-rate housing or access other goods and services on their own because of their "behavioral faults" and lacking capabilities. A report for Metro titled *A Proposal for the Introduction of Social Services into Low-Income Neighbourhoods with Specific Reference to Public Housing Projects* says the following:

Recent research in Lawrence Heights has made it abundantly clear that the social aspects of public housing have been seriously neglected. Although there were very few complaints about the accommodation or actual physical layout, the respondents' considerable apathy towards the general quality of the population living here. A more careful selection of people admitted to public housing would

no doubt go a long way towards correcting this situation, but it leaves the needs of the most desperate unmet.

The report continues:

Selection control has its place but an adequately staffed Social Services Unit would increase a projects capacity to contain and help those who require it, i.e., those who need more than adequate shelter to cope with their problems... There are many who will argue that such a specialized service is unnecessary – all it would really succeed in doing would be to set a project population apart and make them different. The subscribers to this view give lip service to the myth of equality.

“Actually,” the report adds:

the argument is designed to maintain the status-quo and keep them in a situation offering limited opportunities. It’s ridiculous to argue that low-income populations have the same job opportunities, that they are as well-fed, clothed and provided for medically. The children cannot hope to enjoy the same educational, cultural and recreational chances of their more affluent counterparts in the middle-income homes. Giving these families the opportunities available for the middle income should therefore be our long-term goal (Delagran, 1967, p. 1).

Such thinking concludes these tenants have no choice but to be wards of the state until they make enough money and behave more like a middle-class heteronormative ideal with stable two-parent families.

Lawrence Heights represented what Leonard Marsh – Canada’s own version of John Maynard Keynes – envisioned as a model for “rehabilitating” low-income communities. Karen Murray (2011, p. 13) paraphrases Marsh’s intentions with using state planning to “rehabilitate” a community of low-income persons and families known as Strathcona, which at the time was regularly denigrated as a slum neighborhood in Vancouver, British Columbia:

Substandard living conditions were destructive to what Marsh regarded as a key component of civic existence: “morale.” Building a sense of purpose and optimism about the future would require the demolition of existing housing stock in Strathcona and the complete rebuilding of the neighbourhood based on rational planning. The symbol of this imagined community, exhibiting an esprit de corps, was the tripartite “community facility” comprised of schools, health services, and a “neighbourhood house” that, collectively, would cater to the two-parent, heterosexual, male-breadwinner family.

There is not a far jump between what Marsh envisioned for Strathcona with what the state intended to accomplish with Lawrence Heights. On what was formerly farmland, Lawrence Heights became populated with housing complexes, schools, health care facilities, and other amenities with the objective of fomenting a sense of shared loyalty – an *esprit de corps* – among them.

Interviews with early Lawrence Heights residents share the views of some who feel appreciated for being provided better shelter than they had previously. And others described being alienated from their surroundings and feeling inferior:

[a]bout 75 percent of the respondents who ‘migrated’ like it better than where they lived before mainly because of the superior accommodation...Some desire to live a quieter and less public life than is permitted here; others see the area predominately populated by alcoholics, mismatched couples, ill-suited parents and loud, rough-tongued children and teenagers who do not seem to be attached to anyone Delagran (1966, p. 13).

For some, Delagran continues, the move has meant separation from friends and relatives and isolation from facilities they have grown to accept as part of a community, e.g., hospital clinics, cheap shopping, movies, and good economical transportation. For others, Delagran (1966, p. 12) adds, “it has made them aware of being set apart; being different from those who live on an ordinary street. Encounters with these ‘outsiders’ often

confirmed their fear of living in a ‘camp’ or ‘jungle’ where an inferior breed of person lives.” Such phrasing denotes a sense of enclosure, which is due in large part to how state planners conceptualized Lawrence Heights to realize a nineteenth century utopian vision called the Garden City, which had elements of eugenics, patriarchy, and religiosity baked into its foundations.

Lawrence Heights: A Garden City Is Born

Lawrence Heights was constructed through an amendment made in 1949 of the National Housing Act, permitting the state to construct low-rent complexes subsidized with public money. That same year, the CMHC purchased 250 acres of land in the Bathurst-Wilson area of North York, which was one municipality among 12 embedded within what was then called Metropolitan Toronto. Half of these CMHC owned lands were used to build the private residential neighborhood of Lawrence Manor, and the other half became Lawrence Heights (“A Fine Public Housing Project,” 1954, p. 6).

Lawrence Heights was one of several public housing complexes built on the outskirts of Metropolitan Toronto in the mid-twentieth century, otherwise known as the inner suburbs (Sewell, 1993, p. 103; Hulchanski, 2010).⁸ Comprising 90.4 acres of real estate on the north side of Lawrence Avenue West between Bathurst and Dufferin Street, Lawrence Heights was completed in 1959 with 1,081 units provided to low-income

⁸ In addition to Lawrence Heights, the other public housing districts constructed in the inner suburbs around this time included: O’Connor Heights, Scarlett Woods, and Warden Woods (Sewell, 1993, p. 103).

families chosen through an application process. The entirety of the project cost \$13,000,000 to build, with the CMHC covering 75 percent of the costs, with Ontario paying 17.5 percent and Metropolitan Toronto paying the remaining 7.5 percent (“Happy with Lawrence Heights,” 1958, p. 8). Upon opening, rents paid by occupants varied between \$60 to \$90 monthly, depending on the size of their unit and their total income (“Happy with Lawrence Heights,” 1958, p. 8). According to a sliding rent scale, rents for tenants were partially subsidized by the state depending on the measure of a household’s monthly income.⁹ Such a housing tenure is described as rent-geared-to-income.

The architecture of Lawrence Heights formed a partial basis for helping foster an image of the area as being alienated from what surrounds it. CMHC architect George Wrigglesworth originally intended for Lawrence Heights to include “twelve-story cruciform buildings in the Le Corbusier style” (Sewell, 1993, p. 103). But the building

⁹ Currently, the City of Toronto offers a detailed explanation for how it provides the subsidies for rent-geared-to-income housing occupants:

Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI), or subsidized housing, is made available by the City of Toronto to make rent affordable for households. In most cases, RGI rent is 30% of a household’s monthly Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI). The AFNI is determined annually using each household member’s Notice of Assessment (annual income tax return). If you receive social assistance, the rent is based on the rent benefit set by the Ontario government (City of Toronto, n.d.).

This explanation from the city is followed by an incidental sounding note in the same document about the lacking supply of subsidized housing for people struggling during a still serious affordable housing crisis.

Currently, the number of people needing subsidized housing is greater than the number of units available. As a result, there are significant wait times for an applicant to receive housing. We encourage applicants to consider Rent-Geared-to-Income housing as a long-term housing plan, not an immediate solution to housing needs or emergency situations. If you require emergency shelter, contact Central Intake at 416-338-4766 (City of Toronto, n.d.).

Despite subsidized housing being a form of assistance that would appear tailor-made for providing people with immediate help, the reality of lacking supply has the city trying (curiously) to convince people to only apply as part of their long-range planning. Consequently, people are being re-directed towards emergency shelter options – typically reserved for those who would otherwise be forced to live in the elements – as the *only* immediately accessible means for urgent help.

site's proximity to the Downsview Airport made the construction of high-rises too dangerous given the flight-path risks where jets could collide with taller housing structures ("Tri-Party Meet Sparks Shouting Match," 1959, p. 11). The complexes that were built had a density of "ten units per acre, and even though that density could easily be built as detached houses on thirty-foot lots, many units are located in three-story walk-up structures. Others are in row houses, set in blocks of six or eight units, and still others in four-story apartment buildings" (Sewell, 1993, p. 103).

The architectural design of the housing in Lawrence Heights, meanwhile, was greatly influenced by Ebenezer Howard's conception of the Garden City, which promoted the building of compacted and communal urban environments with plenty of green space (Hall & Ward, 2014). Howard was a product of nineteenth century utopianism whose Garden City idea was premised on his belief that an ideal community could be built through a melding of town and country (Richert & Lapping, 1998). Howard saw in the Garden City a patriarchal and religious-themed understanding of "town" and "country" and what they represent, which if melded would combine the best elements of "man" and "woman" while eschewing their faults. In Howard's words:

As man and woman by their varied gifts and faculties supplement each other, so should town and country. The town is the symbol of society – of mutual help and friendly co-operation, of fatherhood, motherhood, brotherhood, sisterhood, of wide relations between man and man – of broad, expanding sympathies – of science, art, culture, religion. And the country! The country is the symbol of God's love and care for man. All that we are, and all that we have comes from it. Our bodies are formed of it; to it they return. We are fed by it, clothed by it, and by it are we warmed and sheltered. On its bosom we rest. Its beauty is the inspiration of art, of music, of poetry. Its forces propel all the wheels of industry. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge. But its fulness of joy and

wisdom has not revealed itself to man. Nor can it ever, so long as this unholy, unnatural separation of society and nature endures. Town and country must be married, and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilisation (Gold, 2008, p. 70).

According to Gold (2008, p. 71), “Howard proposed limiting each Garden City to 32,000 people. It was suggested that they would be built as comprehensive units on greenfield sites, at a distance from any parent city, and separated from it by an inviolable green belt.” The thinking for Howard went that if planners committed to his principles, the Garden City would represent that patriarchal fusion of the authority and technological sophistication characteristic of the city with the nurturing and romantic countryside.

The patriarchal utopianism of the Garden City concept was also enjoined with eugenics, another late nineteenth century movement. Over the 1920s and 30s, French industrialist Alfred Dachert constructed ‘The Ungemach Gardens Foundation,’ a Garden City in the suburb of Strasbourg, intended to help families raise children in “sound conditions of hygiene and morality” (Currell, 2010, p. 273). The Ungemach Gardens was said to combine two popular ideologies of the day, the British Garden City movement and the philosophy of the international eugenics movement as typified by people like Ellsworth Huntington of the American Eugenics Society who argued for the “segregation of defectives” (Currell, 2010, p. 275).

In moves that echoed the reasoning of early twentieth century eugenicists, the public housing developers who were responsible for Regent Park and Lawrence Heights opted to warehouse disadvantaged people in Garden City styled complexes that were relatively closed off from surrounding areas. They were placed in “buildings in park-like

surroundings, segregating pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and providing an architecture that assumed a set of universal needs on the part of the tenants” (Milgrom, 2000, p. 44). To cut through the planning lingo used here, planners took the eugenicist-minded approach of clustering Lawrence Heights tenants together, whom they deemed to be “defective,” to wall them off from outsiders who wanted little to do with them. Once it was built, Lawrence Heights was left with only four connecting roadways to other districts that allowed vehicles to pass through.

The Garden City design choices inculcated a commitment by the state to isolate Lawrence Heights from outsiders, reflecting the objective of modernist planning of the period to make subsidized housing appear homogeneous, sterile, and as much like a warehouse as possible. In the report titled *Life in the Heights*, W.R. Delagran describes the neighborhood not in sociological terms of a ‘community’ (based on a collective awareness of a shared social identity) but in terms of a geographical terms of a locality in purely functionalist terms:

It has only limited access from the north, east and south. The western approach passes through a well-established middle-income area and is sealed off to road traffic at the border between public and private homes. There is nothing here that is calculated to arouse the interest of anyone travelling the main traffic arteries. A cursory examination of a map, however, shows it to be an anomaly in the suburbs. This is confirmed by the visitor, not because of unpaved streets, shoddy homes or absence of landscaping. These features so often associated with low income housing are conspicuously absent, in fact the apartments and homes have been arranged with more imagination and more concern for their occupants than the average suburban tract (Delagran, 1966, pp. 1-2).

This is the real difference, as Delagran sees it, in that the buildings reflect a settlement pattern not exclusively dictated by the value of the local real estate.

Houses and courts are interspersed with open space. The roads are winding and wider than the average street so that visibility is good and traffic accidents are few. First impressions make it easy to classify these dwellings with their painted panels, coloured walls and remarkable sameness as ‘barracks living,’ but this is a superficial view, for the buildings are not structurally different from any other (Delagran, 1966, p. 1-2).

State-sanctioned policies permitting Lawrence Heights to take form as a ‘Garden City’ did indeed work to alienate the physical structure of the community from surrounding areas. It also reflected a preoccupation held after WWII by political authorities in Toronto and elsewhere with devising solutions to problems found in industrializing cities that go past practical matters like waste disposal and smog (Bocking, 2006). Politicians and planners implemented policies and projects

often motivated by their belief in a close relation between the urban environment and the physical and moral health of its inhabitants. Even larger ambitions, of course, have been evident in the history of planning: the restoration of the relation between country and city, as interpreted by Ebenezer Howard through his Garden City concept (Bocking, 2006, p. 53).

Such thinking informed the rapid growth of suburban housing in North York between 1953 and 1964, even as the population of the City of Toronto declined slightly during this period (Kaplan, 1967, p. 44).

Nevertheless, sprawling suburban style-housing was never what Howard envisioned with the Garden City concept. Using a crude gendered binary, Howard described the city in gendered and masculinist terms as an engine that could solve everyday problems, but which could be productively merged with the warmth and femininity of rural life:

The Garden City is not a suburb, but rather the antithesis of a suburb: not a mere rural retreat, but a more integrated foundation for an effective urban life...” Rather, Howard saw this city as a practical means to reform society. In fact, he stated that “the town is the symbol of society – of mutual help and friendly cooperation of fatherhood, motherhood, brotherhood, sisterhood, of wide relations between man and man – of broad expanding sympathies – of science, art, culture, religion” (Oshima, 1996, p. 14).

The Garden City was intended to provide a reformist alternative to the suburb’s social and economic homogeneity. These lofty ideals were certainly not applied by authorities in the construction of Lawrence Heights, which became isolated and homogenous in terms of class. Initial reports in the *Toronto Daily Star* welcomed the construction of Lawrence Heights as a partial solvent for Toronto’s housing shortage for low-income families (“Metro’s Housing Plan,” 1955, p. 6; “Slow Rise House Block,” 1957, p. 6; “Metro’s Housing Bargain,” 1955, p. 6). But by the early 1960s, the tone had already started to shift from enthusiasm to disparagement. One report says Lawrence Heights and Regent Park now represent “the old look in public housing,” a “huge project that is a community in itself and unto itself, tending to shut-in people who live and to shut out the people who [do not]” (“The New Look in Low-Rent Housing,” 1961, p. 7).

In a sense, state policy managed to both isolate Lawrence Heights tenants from contact with outsiders, while also hampering the formation of cohesiveness among them. A major problem was that Lawrence Heights was bisected into having a ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ side by the William R. Allen Roadway to link automobile traffic between North York and downtown Toronto. According to one observer, because Lawrence Heights was split in two by the William Allen Expressway, roadway access was further limited,

hampering the neighborhood's "ability to develop as a cohesive borough... The school board deepened the fissure, says [former city councillor Howard Moscoe], by bussing kids from Lawrence Heights to schools remote from the area while closer facilities went wanting for students" (Pratt, 2004, p. B03). This bussing policy, too, reflects the eugenicist mindset of state officials. In their view, if children from so-called "defective" tenant families are overly clustered within classrooms, such schools will not operate effectively. Such policies, which date back to the early 1960s, had lasting damage on facilities in Lawrence Heights like the Bathurst Heights Secondary School which closed in June 2001 due to lacking enrolment, with Moscoe suggesting "the less official reason was to eliminate the school's bad reputation" (Pratt, 2004, p. B03). In a sense, eugenics got refracted into the content of the bussing policy.

The William-Allen Expressway was, furthermore, wound into the originally planned Spadina Expressway through the 1940s and 50s. As a proposal for construction in Metropolitan Toronto, the Spadina Expressway gathered steam by 1959 (the same year Lawrence Heights was opened) and was

to be a roughly ten-kilometer stretch of controlled-access highway connecting the new northern and north-western suburbs with the city core. Its northern terminus would be at Highway 401, an inter-city expressway built by the provincial government in the early 1950s across the entire metropolitan area, so the Spadina was intended to serve intercity travelers going in and out of Toronto as well as metropolitan commuters coming in and out of downtown (White, 2014, p. 33).

At this time, a vigorous campaign called "Stop the Spadina" was mounted by a group of Torontonians who pressured the state to halt the building of the Spadina Expressway. The

trajectory of this campaign revealed a parochial streak among some prominent voices within its membership.

Of the voices that comprised the “Stop the Spadina” campaign, then Toronto resident Jane Jacobs was one of the loudest. Jacobs, who was associated with the new urbanism movement, joined with other academics and professionals to oppose the Spadina Expressway on the grounds that it would have “dumped a great deal of traffic into the heart of many Toronto residential neighborhoods,” including Jacob’s own neighborhood called the Annex (Wellman, 2006, p. 219). In the *Death and Life of American Cities*, Jacobs (1961, p. 366) says the following:

Theoretically, city expressways are always presented as means for taking cars off of other streets, and thereby relieving city streets of traffic. In real life, this works only if and when the expressways are well under capacity use; left unconsidered is the eventual destination, off the expressway, of that increased flow of vehicles. Instead of serving as bypassers, expressways in cities serve too frequently as dumpers.

The Stop the Spadina campaign helped persuade Ontario “Red Tory” premier William Davis to kill the expressway planning by June 3rd, 1971, concluding that

If we are building a transportation system to serve the automobile, the Spadina Expressway would be a good place to start. But if we are building a transportation system to serve the people, the Spadina Expressway would be a good place to stop (Wellman, 2006, p. 219).

But for all the concerns that major voices like Jacobs had for keeping vehicular traffic and pollution low in residential neighborhoods in the downtown, she and others involved in the Stop the Spadina movement seemed to have little to say about what the William Allen Expressway did to people living in less advantaged districts like Lawrence Heights.

Indeed, the only completed section of the Spadina Expressway is what *became* the William-Allen Road. Chronically congested with moving vehicles, the William-Allen Road “slices through the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood like a traffic-heavy maw” (Mehler-Paperny, 2010, n.p.). Writing in *The Local*, a Toronto-based magazine, Shawn Micallef (2020) notes that the divide formed by the Allen Expressway created its own mythology, with the west side being called “America” because it had no resources and underserved housing and the east side called “Canada” with a relatively greater amount of public resources, including public schools, a health centre, and recreation centre, and other amenities. The fact that the area was bisected, says Micallef (2020), area residents were compelled to travel north and south as opposed to east and west.

Not only were Lawrence Heights tenants forced to live with the negative impacts of urban and suburban sprawl, which precipitated expressway construction, the neighborhood became disparaged in the public sphere as a remote warehouse for low-income families. A significant reason for this was there was too high a demand for non-market (or de-commodified) housing in Toronto for too little supply in the post-war years and far too few options compared to market-rate housing (Pawson & Kintrea, 2002). Thirty-eight housing units were added to Lawrence Heights in 1961, far beneath the one thousand per year that Metropolitan Toronto Council promised. The council blamed the shortfall on lacking fiscal support for these developments from Ontario and the federal government (“In Three Years, 38 homes,” 1961, p. 6). Toronto-based public housing thus came to disperse and segregate low-income families in the metropolis’s inner suburbs

(Murdie, 1994). The state's provision of de-commodified housing responded to activists and veterans who occupied government buildings to pressure the state to build more affordable housing after WWII ended (Downsview Community Legal Services, October 19th 2019).¹⁰ But the amount of public housing built in Toronto since Lawrence Heights proved was limited, and it reduced options for non-market housing for families.

Comparatively, the construction of market rate (as opposed to non-market housing) was ramped up significantly in the inner suburbs. Indeed, suburban sprawl contributed to the growth of North York in the mid-twentieth century as an inner-suburban outpost of Toronto. This was a development borne out of major structural advancements over the 1970s and 1980s that positioned Toronto as the country's primary business and financial center, a move that corresponded with Ontario superseding Quebec as Canada's most economically dynamic province. Jon Caulfield (1994, p. 42) gives a robust explanation of these changes, first zeroing in to the local level, describing rapid metropolitan growth in Toronto as consisting of an attack of high-rise developments, rising office towers, and expressway construction in the downtown, with concurrent and rapid urbanization of the city's outskirts where "farm fields became subdivisions, shopping and industrial malls re-placed pastures and woodlots, and highways sliced through once-drowsy ravines as apartment towers rose beside them." Caulfield (1994, p.

¹⁰ The remarks cited came from experts speaking about landlord-tenant relations from Downsview Community Legal Services. They delivered a talk for public housing residents at Unison Health and Community Services in Lawrence Heights where they answered tenants' questions about their rights around issues like evictions, rent adjustments and the revitalization.

42-43) then zooms out to identify larger aggregate forces dating back to the nineteenth century that helped precipitate these local events:

- Entrepreneurial Toronto banks
- Development of northern Ontario resource industry and shift in foreign investment flows away from Europe into the United States with Toronto as head-office and primary Canadian outpost
- In late twentieth century Toronto becomes Canadian headquarters for corporate administration, international finance, and commercialism
- Major fiscal investments in public and private investments in housing construction
- Ontario funded public works to strengthen urban-industrial economic base
- Municipal authorities used zoning and planning instruments to stimulate growth

The augmentation of the city thus assisted Toronto's metropolitan growth into a national magnet for capital and labour. Lawrence Heights became a product of this reconfiguration of farmlands on Toronto's outskirts, where new subdivisions were built.

Conclusion

Strategically, the state-led construction of Lawrence Heights is representative of the Canadian state's mid-twentieth century commitment to highly rationalistic forms of state planning. Rationalism, when applied to planning doctrine, takes a logically rigid view of cities as a "differentiated spatial grid of observable and compartmentalized facts, functions, and processes that could be manipulated (i.e., improved) through scientific management" (Mele, 2000, p. 637). Christopher Mele (2000, p. 637) clarifies that rational-minded planners conceive of disadvantaged communities "from outside and above" where the distance lends itself to viewing these areas as parts of larger systems where local histories are rendered inconsequential in favour of employing "an ends-

dictates-the-means” strategic approach to “reconfigure the urban landscape” to prime it for the future. In the case of Lawrence Heights, however, it was a new neighborhood for low-income families constructed through rationalist planning frameworks from the ground up. Lawrence Heights was to be a manifestation of utopian minded enthusiasm for the Garden City wherein the structure of the environment would compel disadvantaged occupants to fit a middle-class two-parent standard in futurity.

There are elements of spatial selectivity here with the state’s actions as well. The state targeted farmlands it owned in North York as the site to build Lawrence Heights. These lands were to that point an under-exploited container for value creation and presented a site on which a Garden City experiment could be conducted. John Gold (2008, p. 70) says that twentieth century urban utopians saw what they disparaged as urban slums as being holdovers from the Victorian age which they equated with oppression, alienation, and disconnection with country-life and nature. Planners sought to do what Howard suggested and re-marry town and country by building Garden Cities. With Lawrence Heights, planners followed the Garden City Movement strategy that “favoured the strategy of building new settlements as oases of sanity on greenfield sites” (Gold, 2008, p. 70). The provincial and local governments in Ontario and Toronto relied on the complex metropolitan governance structure in place to ensure that less developed lands in North York and other underserviced areas would have the necessary infrastructure in place to permit the building of projects like Lawrence Heights.

Despite its utopian premises, the conceptualization and construction of Lawrence Heights did much to isolate its tenant base with the William-Allen Expressway cutting right through the district, and its inward facing structure and limited openings for roadways, effectively walling it off from other neighborhoods. Paradoxically, Lawrence Heights' design contributed to the isolated experiences of its tenants despite the idea held by its planners that its self-contained structure would foment moral lifestyles within its tenant base.

Using the multi-sites of power idea, this chapter also shed light on multiple sources of conflict and struggle that characterized Lawrence Heights' initial planning stages and post-construction. When the site was first proposed, residents and ratepayers' associations in surrounding areas tried to stop it. The state used its powers to construct Lawrence Heights despite the resistance, and the project was met with initial enthusiasm in the media and elsewhere. As documented in this chapter, the initial optimism expressed by the media and the government turned towards deprecating Lawrence Heights and Regent Park as well, on account of these districts being so isolated. The chapter also refers to how planners perceive the tenant base living in Lawrence Heights, as subjects "requiring assistance" until they conform with the middle-class heteronormative ideal. For the tenants themselves, Lawrence Heights became an environment characterized by oppressive and paternalistic state supervision.

When the Garden City model got applied to Lawrence Heights, it was an attempted affirmation of Ebenezer Howard's ideas which were originally designed to be

an antidote to the problems that arose out of the industrializing cities of the late nineteenth century. Indeed, the Garden City “was a vision of communally owned land, a cooperative society that would free residents from horrific living and working conditions,” that would combine “the advantages of city and country” (Schuyler, 2002, pp. 8-9). Not only was it embedded in eugenics and patriarchal modes of thinking, but the Garden City concept also rested on an overly functionalist premise. Howard believed that so long as an environment was created that was limited in scope and population, that was encased in an agricultural greenbelt with all the necessary industry for life within it, that people would come to live a harmonious lifestyle (Schuyler, 2002, p. 6). Using religiously charged language, Howard saw the Garden City as capable of pouring “a flood of light on many social problems” while also illuminating “the relations of man to the Supreme Power” (Ward, 2002, p. 27).

Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 97), writing in the late 1960s, recognized as Howard did a lacking harmoniousness and broken connection between humans and nature in city life, arguing that

Spaces are strange: homogeneous, rationalized, and as such constraining; yet at the same time utterly dislocated. Formal boundaries are gone between town and country, between centre and periphery, between suburbs and city centres, between the domain of automobiles and the domain of people. Between happiness and unhappiness, for that matter.

In Lefebvre’s eyes, the answer to the alienation and hollowness of city life is not functionalist planning and environmental determinism. The solution must be rooted in a critique of capitalism because it is a homogenizing force that stimulates production of

abstract space that looks identical when held up against what is understood to be profitable. Geographers use the term abstract space to describe a hypothetical space which has elements that are unchanging and alike, given to total ease of movement between any point within that space (Mazur & Urbanek, 1983). Total homogeneity.

The spread of abstract space is how Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 49) conceptualizes the dissolving of borders between town and country:

The dominant form of space, that of the centres of wealth and power, endeavours to mould the spaces it dominates (i.e. peripheral spaces), and it seeks, often by violent means, to reduce the obstacles and resistance it encounters there.

The motor of successful resistance is not going to be the state, or among officials in urban planning departments, as their efforts must be set on attaching the production – or changing – of space to the objective of creating surplus. The problem of being constrained by convention can be elaborated further by looking to Nietzsche. A major influence on Lefebvre, Nietzsche discusses possibilities for thinking and action that goes beyond good and evil, and thus moves past conventional morality and what is believed to be right and wrong (Simonsen, 2005, p. 4).¹¹

¹¹ Lefebvre (1991, p. 391) refers to Nietzsche when discussing how it is that the tendency towards homogenous spatialization can be upset provided there are energies present that are intent on breaking with convention:

Spatial practice is neither determined by an existing system, be it urban and ecological, nor adapted to a system, be it economic or political. On the contrary, thanks to potential energies of a variety of groups capable of diverting homogenized space to their own purposes, a theatricalized or dramatized space is liable to arise. Space is liable to be erotized and restored to ambiguity, to common birthplace of needs and desire, by means of music, by means of differential systems and valorizations which overwhelm the strict localizations of needs and desires in spaces specialized either physiologically (sexuality) or socially (places set aside, supposedly, for pleasure). An unequal struggle, sometimes furious, sometimes more low-key, takes place between the Logos and

It follows that resistance is potentially more fruitful when rooted in thinking that tries to free itself from the limits that abstract space imposes, which is where the idea of differential space comes from. Lefebvre, channeling Marx, realizes that the overwhelming restrictiveness of abstract space helps energize human passion and desire to live differently, more freely, and often more harmoniously along social lines and with nature, where one can choose to live under freer circumstances rather than being limited by them. Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 52) writes:

Thus, despite - or rather because of - its negativity, abstract space carries within itself the seeds of a new kind of space. I shall call that new space 'differential space,' because, inasmuch as abstract space tends towards homogeneity, towards the elimination of existing differences or peculiarities, a new space cannot be born (produced) unless it accentuates differences.

True to the idea of differential space, Lefebvre does not draw firm limits around what it can look like. The key is to think of space being rendered differently when it is freed from convention.

During an interview for a magazine called *Villes en Parallele* (Cities in Parallel) Lefebvre spoke of how first nature, referring to what is contained in the natural environment penetrates and becomes an essential feature of second nature, which encompasses what is produced (think of cities) and typically *imposed* on first nature:

The concept of the urban came to me in Bologna in the centre of the city, where there is not a single tree, but it is entirely mineral, entirely stone and water, not a single tree. That is second nature totally outside of first nature, where first nature penetrates the second and blooms; it is very beautiful. There isn't yet a city where the elements, notably mineral and vegetable, are arranged like a work of art. Or, if

the Anti-Logos, these terms being taken in the broadest sense – the sense in which Nietzsche used them (as cited by Simonsen, 2005, p. 4).

that is done, it is spontaneous, but it is not yet arranged (Burgel, Burgel, & Dezes, 1987, p. 28).

These comments give us some clues as to what Lefebvre perceives as to how spaces of difference can be realized in thought and action. That is, space can be arranged in ways that do not so much instrumentalize natural elements as much as allow them to flow organically and be holistic features of that space, similarly to how water flows in rivers through a place like Bologna and becomes an essential part of it and simply is beautiful rather than being made to look so for the purposes of capital. In this way, space can be arranged in ways that emphasize different objectives, like mutual caregiving, pleasure, or otherwise. The drive among persons to live and think on their own terms, and shape space to that end, will factor greatly as the discussion on Lawrence Heights continues in the next chapter.

Neoliberalism and State Administration in Lawrence Heights

“They treat you like you don't exist in society when you are on the outside. But on the inside, you are home.”

– Lawrence Heights resident (as quoted in *The Toronto Star*)¹²

Introduction

Chapter five provided a timeline of change that explained how and why Lawrence Heights was constructed. It showed distinct continuities with how the state behaved with respect to expropriating the formerly Indigenous inhabited territories, followed by the establishment of capitalist social relations and formation of a state-controlled society governed by the principles of private property rights, liberalism, and the moral authority of Protestantism and a white nationalist ethic. In the twentieth century, the state responded to similarly systemic imperatives by building public housing to manage poor people and stabilize what had become an industrial capitalist society. Chapter five discussed how oppressive forms of state power reinforce social hierarchies that can inculcate an inferiority complex within low-income public housing residents. It explained how and why Lawrence Heights arose. But over sixty years passed between when it was built in the 1950s until the 2007

¹² The resident was quoted in Laura Pratt's extensively researched report on Lawrence Heights from the September 26th, 2004 edition of *The Toronto Star*.

announcement of the state-led “revitalization.” What occurred during this period that led the state to announce its decree that the community needs to be rethought and rebuilt?

This chapter looks more closely at the history of relations between the state and the people who had lived in Lawrence Heights since its opening in 1959 and follows this chronological thread until roughly the end of the 1990s when the force of neoliberalism reached its peak. In so doing, references will be made to what are numerous material manifestations of the state’s authority, including as a police force, tax collector, landlord, and public service provider, to name a few, all of which can be mistaken for representing the essence of the state. To get at the crux of the state, you have to peel back its materially existent layers where it no longer resembles any one thing but a terrain of activity where authority gets leveraged over one class by another in the struggle over how resources are produced, distributed, and controlled. Borrowing from Perry Anderson (2013, p. 11 *emphasis in original):

[T]he secular struggle between classes is ultimately resolved at the *political* – not at the economic or cultural – level of society. In other words, it is the construction and destruction of States which seal the basic shifts in the relations of production, so long as classes subsist.

The central message of this chapter is that the state’s authority has been repeatedly wielded over the tenants living in Lawrence Heights, often in oppressive and destructive ways, where the purpose is the political disciplining and organizing of people into productive relations for capital that always mutate depending on how labour and money can flow in and out of space.

If we see the state's authority as something wielded through the underlying prism of class struggle, there is always resistance against the state's authority wherever it is applied. Drawing from Varda Burstyn, (1983, p. 47), we can see state power as something that is grasped and wielded, a "ubiquitous and powerful source of economic, social and political regulation." The ubiquity of state power also speaks to it being largely "intangible except for the occasions when it is expressed as violence when it is expressed as violence, physical coercion, or outright discrimination, all of which are important but not essential features of either kind of domination" that are more amorphous and less perceptible but no less oppressive (Brown, 1992, p. 15).

Let us turn back to Burstyn (1983, p. 68) who says that any talk of the state

with respect to any given problem must begin with a grasp of its ubiquitous and, when confronted with any sort of opposition, sinister and repressive presence in all spheres of life—from the factory creche to the factory manager, in the schools, offices, hospitals – in a word, everywhere.

Despite its ubiquitous and dominating qualities, state power encounters resistance all the time, which can take countless forms, including the rejection of certain laws and regulations where transgression amounts to "nothing less than the affirmation of negation" (Pickett, 1996, p. 451). Pickett (1996) goes on to say that when one transgresses the state's orders, it tries to reinforce them or set new and stronger rules on top of the old ones to fortify its power further. Such resistance can also be set on reformism – where laws are not rejected outright – but efforts are instead directed towards making demands on the state to use its power over laws to disperse public resources towards ends that oppose societal domination.

Rosa Luxemburg (1970) warns us not to misinterpret reformism as signifying greater democratization of society. Pressures to reform society by leveling class disparities in terms of access to resources – namely private property rights under capitalism – invariably run into the quagmire of a state that organizes capitalism politically, on the one hand, and property relations that encompass the juridical organization of capitalism on the other (Luxemburg, 1970, p. 24). Naturally, the state is intent on holding this structure together, resisting movements set on bringing down the wall protecting the social relations constitutive of capitalist societies, and substituting them with the social relations that comprise socialist societies.

In Luxemburg's (1970, p. 24) words, the state's "wall is not overthrown, but is on the contrary strengthened and consolidated by the development of social reforms and the course of democracy." Coming from an anarchist perspective, Judith Butler similarly relates to how the state strives to shore up this wall of authority that still has holes that can be exploited by movements challenging it, arguing that

the state is always in the process of re-instituting its effect of permanence, and that critical interventions can be made at the various sites where that re-institution takes place. In other words, that re-institution is not guaranteed, and that lack of guarantee can be exposed by strategies we call anarchist.

There is a dialectical tension here that will remain of interest to us when examining how the state engages with tenants and their grassroots representatives in Lawrence Heights and vice versa. We can view the state-led "revitalization" as a prime example of the state shoring up its authority through ostensibly "reformist" activities. The task, then, is to understand how grassroots energies have gotten involved in the "revitalization," and

evaluate the structural barriers they have encountered on some fronts and have broken through on others. For now, we remain in a firmly pre- “revitalization” context where the objective is to grapple with how relations between the state and tenants in Lawrence Heights changed over time.

For decades, the state has expressed its authority repeatedly in the context of Lawrence Heights, stifling the capacity for tenants living there to build a prosperous self-governing community on their terms. Instead, tenants are treated as problems to be managed, exacerbating their alienation. Moreover, when the demographics of Lawrence Heights became more diverse along racial lines, tenants were subject to additional prejudices, with the news media and the larger society rooted in a colonial mindset. In sum, these events help contribute to what was the making of Lawrence Heights into a “revitalization” target. Luxemburg (1970, pp. 20-21) reminds us that while the state exists for the ruling class, it “should not be understood in a rigorous absolute manner, but dialectically.” As a topography of multi-directional and conflicting relations, its power is constantly altered by forces intent on variously resisting, safeguarding, and turning it towards other ends, which manifest through everyday interactions between people.

With these considerations in mind, let me set up what this chapter is set to accomplish. The first section explains Canada’s public housing program's maligning at the end of the 1960s and its impacts on public housing districts under Ontario’s control. After which, the discussion looks at the administrative authority the state wields over Lawrence Heights and how its tenant base became progressively more racially diverse

over the late twentieth century. The investigation shifts to looking at how a community arose holistically within Lawrence Heights but which was undermined by a state that repeatedly sought to discipline and control them. Lastly, a critical discourse analysis of a sample of news stories focused on Lawrence Heights will show how the media helped frame an image of the community, strengthening the case for “revitalization” later.

Public Housing Under Fire

Several developments in the realm of Canadian public housing policy at the turn of the 1960s help explain how the community in Lawrence Heights became undermined by public discourse. In the mid-twentieth century, the state began constructing what is now collectively referred to as “social housing,” consisting of the “entire stock of government-assisted housing,” which by the 1990s amounted to roughly 650,000 units in Canada, or 6.5 percent of the total housing supply (Smith, 1995, p. 906). Social housing development in non-profits, co-operatives, and public housing became a newfound strategy for the state to help address problems that gained increasing attention after WWII, including unemployment, housing affordability problems, and homelessness (CMHC, 2005, p. 6).

The federal government amended the National Housing Act (NHA) in 1949 to create its public housing program (CMHC, 1987, p. 9). Unlike non-profit or housing cooperatives, public housing is entirely rent-g geared-to-income, where tenants typically pay rents that swallow up between 25 to 30 percent of their earnings. Thus, non-profit and housing cooperatives form the third sector in contradistinction to the private and state

sectors (Dreier & Hulchanski, 1993, p. 45). Non-profit housing consists of rental housing developed by non-profit corporations supervised by a volunteer board of directors. A portion of non-profit units houses rent-geared-to-income tenants, while the rest pay rents at market rates (Industry Canada, 2002). Cooperative housing consists of low to moderate rental units controlled by members who vote in decisions that affect their residences, and they have no outside landlord (Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, n.d.). Unlike public housing which is designed to serve exclusively low-income families, cooperative housing is comprised of different income classes.

Canada's public housing program was meant to be a temporary form of assistance for low-income families and not to compete with market-rate alternatives (Dennis & Fish, 1972). To this point, "between 1949 and 1963, only 12,000 public housing units were built (an average of 850 units a year)" (Hulchanski & Shapcott, 2004, p. 2). Bacher (1986, p. 8) discusses how the state manipulated its public housing program to afford itself maximal political advantage while doing as little as possible for everyday people:

The 1949 program was not successful in creating much accommodation; it was a masterful political stroke. Under the 1949 legislation, a complicated federal, provincial, municipal formula was devised. Consequently, public housing projects had to go through an estimated eighty steps before actually being constructed. This ensured that only where political demands were strongest would any public housing actually be constructed.

Public housing was used to placate those interest groups that were pressuring legislators to assist people whom were unable to afford to own or rent market-rate housing (Bacher, 1986, p. 8).

Ultimately, not enough public housing was built to satisfy demand. The complexes that were built became silos for people with few options. In 1969, the federally commissioned Hellyer Task Force critiqued “the physical adequacy and quality of life” in large public housing projects (CMHC, 1987, p. 10). The task force concluded that public housing was poorly designed and isolated from surrounding communities that wanted little to do with them. Despite an increase in federal aid for increasing the public housing stock, “the number of low-income families, individuals and elderly people in need of assistance remained high. There were increasing social problems being experienced in large-scale projects, prompting a sustained anti-public housing reaction from the public” (CMHC, 1987, p. 10). Public housing construction subsequently wound down, while non-profit and cooperative housing construction notched upwards because these social housing options made better use of private capital (CMHC, 1987, p. 10-11).

The state’s revised approach to social housing provision became apparent in the 1970s. After electing a minority government in 1972, the Liberal party sought credit for its affordable housing strategies (Van Dyk, 1995, p. 824). The federal government turned away from federally funded public housing to non-profit housing. NHA amendments in 1973 thus permitted the federal government to directly fund, without provincial involvement, the building of third sector housing “built by non-profit societies as well as non-profit housing corporations established by municipalities for that purpose” (Hulchanski, 2006, p. 14). The preferred method of providing housing for low-income families was “significantly reformed in the 1973 amendments” to the NHA; “the era of

social housing commenced with a focus on small-scale, community-based non-profit and cooperative associations” (Van Dyk, 1995, p. 818). Where did this leave the public housing program? Following an evaluation between 1969 and 1974, the state amended the NHA in 1974, which decreed that the existing public housing stock would continue to be managed by provincial authorities.

Ontario Housing Corporation and Public Housing

Lawrence Heights became undermined by public discourse at the same time as the public housing program in Canada was being discredited by the federal government. The federal government’s decision not to support expanding the existing public housing supply affected how the provinces administered it. Ontario found that public housing prompted hostility from wealthier neighborhoods in Metropolitan Toronto. In 1965, the Ontario Housing Corporation talked about building public housing for a higher income class range because “rocketing land values are putting homeownership out of reach of more and more people” (“Public Housing at Whose Expense,” 1966, p. 7). But suburban homeowners protested about “projects being built near them, and councils have grumbled about swelling welfare rolls, burgeoning school population and demands for social services for what have always been considered city problems” (“Public Housing at Whose Expense?” 1966, p.7). The Ontario Housing Corporation began gradually steering away from building public housing after 1976, largely due to the public’s negative perception of existing housing projects (Baker, 1981, p. 5).

Lawrence Heights: In Focus

Since opening in 1959, Lawrence Heights quickly became a relic of what the state saw as a problematic endeavor. What were the implications of these shifts in the state's attitude towards public housing for those living in it? Our attention will now turn to understand how Lawrence Heights evolved from the 1970s until the late 1990s to address this question. Significant socio-political changes occurred during this time in Lawrence Heights along race, gender, and class lines.

It is helpful at this juncture to provide a broad chronological picture of the changes that have taken place in Lawrence Heights from its beginnings up to now. Doing so clarifies how the current chapter, which takes us sixty years into the past, fits into a coherent narrative that culminates with the upheaval in Lawrence Heights. The following table shows facts drawn entirely from this case study, which help spell out the specific narrative of change I am presenting:

Timeline of Change in Lawrence Heights (1959 to 2020)

<i>Year</i>	
1959	Construction of housing complexes in Lawrence Heights is complete and opened to the public.
1961	Thirty-eight extra units added to Lawrence Heights but fall well short of what Metropolitan Toronto Council promised.
1965	Ontario Housing Corporation discusses building more public housing but encounter resistance from suburbs.

1966	North York Welfare Department publishes report about Lawrence Heights. Tenants alternately describe feeling satisfied with the physical housing quality but also express feelings of alienation and isolation.
1967	Passage of Immigration Act, stimulating inflows of people from wider numbers of countries and regions, and solidifying hierarchy of migrants.
1969	Former minister of Transportation Paul Hellyer organizes Hellyer Task Force which releases report critiquing Canada's public housing program.
1970	Ontario Federation of Citizens' Associations presses the Ontario Housing Corporation to overturn day-to-day management of public housing over to tenant groups but are stonewalled.
1970-2004	Pre-"revitalization" news coverage of Lawrence Heights tends to play up stigmatizing view of the neighborhood as being <i>disordered</i> .
1971	In response to protests, the Ontario government suspends construction of Spadina Expressway that would cut into affluent Toronto neighborhoods. William-Allen road is permitted to split Lawrence Heights down the middle without public opposition.

1971	Multiculturalism Act passes, intended to stimulate inflow of high and low skilled workers in rising service sector and heighten immigration levels in areas outside Europe. Policy changes that coincide with the reconfiguration of Toronto into a “global city” characterized by heightened services sector requiring inflows of low and high skilled workers from elsewhere.
1971-1986	Black households gradually become over-represented in Ontario administered public housing neighborhoods, including Lawrence Heights, compared to the rest of the Census Metropolitan Area.
1972-1974	Federal liberal government steers funding away from public housing towards other social housing forms. Provincial government maintains control over public housing administration.
1976	Ontario Housing Corporation follows federal government's example and winds down public housing construction due to negative public perceptions of it.
1995-2003	Mike Harris led Ontario government institutes so-called Common-Sense Revolution which helps intensify government's commitment to public-sector austerity, low taxation, privatization, and public-private partnerships as strategies to enhance growth.
1997	Ontario passes City of Toronto Act (Bill 103) to facilitate Metropolitan Toronto amalgamation, dissolving the city's six constituent municipalities into a megacity version of Toronto.

1999	Toronto City Council report documents city's struggles to finance social housing expenses without necessary provincial support. Harris-led Conservatives institute cuts to Ontario cities for social housing, public transit, etc.
2001	Ontario Municipal Act is passed, creating new sphere of municipal responsibilities downloaded onto them by the province. Social Housing Reform Act passed same year, placing jurisdiction over social housing administration onto cities.
2002	Approval given to Regent Park “revitalization” commencing public-private partnership to raze and construct new housing, amenities, and infrastructure in this Toronto-based public housing neighborhood.
2004-2020	News coverage describing the “revitalization” in generally positive terms. Other articles describe concerns over lacking infrastructure to support enhanced density.
2005	The Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network forms as grassroots oriented collective of tenants and local organizations which becomes instrumental presence in “revitalization” planning.
2007	Lawrence Heights “revitalization” formally announced. The “new” Regent Park serves as blueprint. Planning discussions commence between city officials with tenants.

2008-2012	Major economic crisis strikes world economy followed by prolonged recession.
2011	Lawrence Heights “revitalization” secondary plan completed.
2015	Construction of “revitalization” phase one begins in tandem with ongoing “community engagement” between planners and tenants.
2020	COVID-19 pandemic arises, slowing up construction as lockdowns take effect.

Figure 10 - Timeline of change affecting Lawrence Heights

As the timeline alludes to, the state widened its migration flows and permitted an economic reshuffling of capital and labour out of Toronto variously helped re-shape the demographics of the Lawrence Heights’ tenant base where it became progressively less white and European over time, becoming much more ethnically diverse by the mid 1980s. Simultaneously, the public discourse surrounding Lawrence Heights became more aggressively stigmatizing, feeding off the wider prejudices that the wider public expresses about public housing and people from non-white ethnic backgrounds. With the Ontario government also committing itself to a neoliberal policy agenda defined by lower taxes, privatization of public assets, and streamlining public service provision. Districts reliant on public money like Lawrence Heights slowly became deprived of resources. These factors, in summa, set the table for the eventual “revitalization” plan to get deployed. These adjustments in state policy, including the introduction of “revitalization”

planning into Lawrence Heights, became insulated by the ongoing pervasiveness of prejudicial attitudes held by people who fear and resent those who do not fit the image of the white middle-class heteronormative ideal. The state then affirms these prejudices by taking the position that public housing tenants must be closely managed and “reformulated” to better align with middle class ideals and the needs of capital for disciplined wage labourers.

Given the importance of race as a defining element of this chronology of Lawrence Heights as we move deeper into the late twentieth century, it is fruitful to reintroduce Stuart Hall’s impression of race as a floating signifier and connect it with theories of racial capitalism, which together complement the conceptual approach of Marxist political economy that is framing this study. Race in the context of Lawrence Heights became attached to a discursive set of bigoted and pervasively diffused set of signifiers where public housing areas are seen as bleak, dangerous, and whose residents are simply receivers of public assistance who are rendered as lesser than the white middle class ideal. Hall (1997, p. 8) says that signifiers

refer to they systems and concepts of the classification of a culture to its making meaning practices. And those things gain their meaning, not because of what they contain in their essence, but in the shifting relations of difference, which they establish with other concepts and ideas in a signifying field.

These signifiers create an erroneous sense of shared meaning among wide numbers of people who come to resent, fear, and ignore one another. According to Melamed (2015, p. 77), capitalism itself thrives on “displacing the uneven life chances that are inescapably part of capitalist social relations onto fictions of differing human capacities,

historically race.” In so doing, racially charged signifiers clouds the integral function that disproportionate harms inflicted upon non-white persons serve for the ongoing health of capitalism. People come to fear, stigmatize, and resent one another instead of cooperating to address substantive problems.

Let us take a closer look into how race has been signified in ways that mystify (and thus safeguard) key processes of capital accumulation by reviewing the factors that made Toronto into a global city, a process that involved a socio-economic and cultural reshaping along race, ethnic, and class lines. Grasping how Toronto became a global city will then enable us to see how the changing demographics of Lawrence Heights over time is reflective of bigger tectonic shifts in immigration patterns and policy, capital flows, labour market trends, and barriers to housing affordability in Toronto and Canada.

Robert Murdie (2011, p. 1) references two major periods of mass immigration in Canada. The first being a wave of European migrant farmers in the early 1900s who were attracted to the offer of free land by a government that opened the Western half of the country simultaneously. The second wave of migrants flowed into Canada as well from the 1950s onwards, beginning with Europeans until barriers were lowered to people from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and beyond. The barriers in question were a product of Canadian immigration policy having “overtly distinguished between preferred and non-preferred races from 1876 until the 1960s” (Thobani, 2000b, p. 16). This discriminatory hierarchy categorized “preferred races (initially British and French, and later, other European nationalities) and non-preferred races (from Asia, the

Caribbean and Africa),” which limited access to citizenship until the 1960s and 1970s (Thobani, 2000b, p. 36). Canadian immigration policy switched in the late 1960s “from a preference for “white” immigrants to a points system based on criteria such as educational qualifications, occupational skills, and language ability. [The *1967 Immigration Act*] allowed people from all countries of the world to apply for entry to Canada, regardless of ethnic or racial background” (Murdie, 2008, p. 3).

Similarly, the passage of the *1971 Multiculturalism Act* was promoted by the state to encourage and facilitate the full participation in Canadian society by “cultural minority groups” (Dewing, 2009, p. 3). Beyond its officially stated purposes, this turn in Canadian immigration policy towards multiculturalism was supercharged by the “increased demand for both high- and low-skilled employees in the emerging service sector, more emphasis on family reunification and humanitarian migrants, and reduced immigration from Europe” following the region’s post WWII economic recovery (Murdie, 2011, pp. 5-6).

Mirroring Hall’s idea of race as a floating signifier, Thobani refers to how

the discourse of “cultural” difference has come to encode “racial” difference, and to signify membership in the national/racial community... The [Immigration Act] expressed a reorganization of processes of racialization in a period when increased immigration from the third world had become critical to providing the “cheap” labour needed for economic expansion. The category “immigrant,” meaning literally a geographical “outsider” in the first instance, continued to be ideologically defined by the [Immigration Act] as a “social” and “cultural” outsider to the nation: the racialized category immigrant drew upon the historical status of non-preferred races as outsiders, and re-codified it as immigrants who were to remain “outsiders” (Thobani, 2000a, p. 18).

As Stuart Hall might put it, the *Immigration Act* and the *Multiculturalism Act* helped socially construct a racial hierarchy that became naturalized through the officialdom of

government legislation. In this vein, migrants from preferred and non-preferred parts of the world could be put through a process to obtain citizenship in exchange for providing surplus labour for capital.

The effects of these broader changes in immigration policy and labour market trends became pronounced in Toronto, which by the 1960s was undergoing a transition from a former industrial hub to the global city that it is now. This watershed moment saw the city undergo a post-industrial makeover and become increasingly gentrified. Its labour market gradually catered more to white-collar professionals than blue-collar workers in the city, moving away from providing industrial warehousing and wholesaling employment towards retail and services (Darden, 2006, p. 148). Major banking centers and retail got built up in the downtown core, with greater employment and demand for central-city dwellings pushing up land values and stimulating the de-conversion of what was formerly plentiful multi and single-occupancy homes into condominiums (Suttor, 2014, p. 136). Industry subsequently migrated out of the downtown core towards inner suburban municipalities like North York that were no longer to be defined by agricultural production and farming (Chellew, 2019, p. 26).

Immigration patterns fluctuated too. In the early twentieth century, Jewish, Italian, Portuguese, and Chinese migrants tended to settle in Toronto's inner city, with places like "The Ward" near the Old City Hall being a once bustling hub for Jewish and Chinese merchants (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003, p. 6). Beginning in the late 1940s, the Ward became reshaped by private development with a slice of publicly owned lands set aside

for new civic spaces (Ross, 2017, pp. 72-73). Indeed, by 1955 construction began on the New City Hall and Nathan Philips Square, where the Ward gradually vanished, a process that streamlined the resettlement of Jewish migrants away from the inner city into highly segregated suburban enclaves and the relatively more forceful displacement of Chinese families further north near Queen and Spadina which became the new Chinatown by the year 1970 (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003, p. 6). These events became a facsimile of the proliferation of condominiums throughout Toronto's downtown core and reflected a trend of gentrifiers coming to favor neighborhoods that were former hotbeds for Asian and European migrants (Hiebert, 2000, p. 28). Just to give one figure that helps explicate this pattern of intense densification, Ross (2017, pp. 302-303) claims that the population living in the downtown core doubled by 200,000 residents between 1976 and 2016.

The spatial distribution of migrants thus got flipped in reverse, where new entrants tended to settle in Toronto's inner suburbs and on the city's outskirts rather than in the inner city. Robert Murdie (2011, p. 7) gives a multi-sided explanation for what was a dramatic change in the spatial distribution of migrants beginning in 1971, arguing that the movement of lower-waged employment opportunities from the inner city to the suburbs coincided with the gentrification of inner-city neighborhoods that made affordable housing in adequately serviced areas no longer an option for most newcomers. Looking at the Yonge Street Corridor, which refers to property located on or in close proximity to Yonge Street, the "longest street in the world," there was by the late 2010s a proposed sixteen hundred stories of (mostly) luxury condominiums as brownfield

investments were planned for that area, raising the concern of Toronto's chief planner who wondered aloud if redevelopment in the area needs to be paused (Ross, 2017, pp. 302-303).

There is variance in terms of migrants' access to housing, especially among Asians, including lower-income refugees from Vietnam and Sri Lanka, relatively well-educated entrants from India and mainland China, and wealthy Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan who more easily become homeowners in suburban districts compared to these other groups (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003, pp. 152-153). Relatedly, there has also been a historical tendency for migrant groups settling in Toronto, particularly "European Jews, Italians, Portuguese, and Greeks," to become spatially clustered "where most of their cultural and religious institutions, businesses, and services" tend to be located (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003, p. 148). Between 1971 and 2006, groups of lower-income migrants from different parts of Africa, Central and South America, Asia, and the Caribbean also became spatially concentrated in the cheaper-to-rent high-rise apartments and public housing districts in Scarborough, North York, and northern Etobicoke for reasons including the desire for cultural and socio-economic proximity and to escape racial discrimination from others, particularly from inner city gentrifiers who were hostile to the ethnic diversity that Canada's multicultural turn was intended to celebrate (Hulchanski, 2010, p. 21).

To this point, ostensibly positive immigration policy initiatives exacerbated precarious working and living conditions faced by low-income migrants settling in

Toronto, particularly Caribbean women. The state initiated three successive policy programs, including the Caribbean Domestic Scheme (1955-1967), the Foreign Domestic Workers Program (1981), and the Live-In-Caregiver (LCP) (1992), a revised version of the Foreign Domestic Workers Program (FDWP) that began in 1973 (Darden, 2006, p. 153). Such programs function as recruitment devices for migrant laborers to live and work in Canada but also restrict Black men from the Caribbean in favor of single Black women, requiring them to disconnect from familial roles as caregivers in their own families and become “resources that nurtured white Canadian families” (Darden, 2006, pp. 161-162). Caribbean migrant women become a readily exploitable source of labor relegated to these spheres of work, helping fuel the circulation of capital and surplus. Simultaneously, their presence as members of domestic labor programs gets wound into the fictions of Canada as a bastion of liberal multiculturalism that is hospitable to global south workers that it invites.

The flow of migrants into Toronto from regions outside Europe and Asia peaked by the 1970s (Murdie, 2011). Lawrence Heights experienced a migratory flow that mirrored the broader immigration patterns accelerated in the city. The following table (next page) shows changes in the ethnic origins of Lawrence Heights tenants between 1971 and 2011, comprised of numbers drawn from archived census data. The data in question shows answers from respondents in the corresponding census tract (5250286) for Lawrence Heights. The table includes several categories that require some exposition. For instance, census respondents from the British Isles are put in a single category as they

encompassed a dominant proportion of people in this tract, as revealed in the numbers from 1971, before steeply dropping over the following decades until 2011. The ethnic category “Black” was no longer present in the statistics from 2006 onwards, and so it was replaced with the category of North Americans. But one can see the rising numbers of racialized persons in the tract by looking at other categories.

Changing Demographics in Lawrence Heights (1971-2011)

	British Isles	European	Indigenous	*Black	Caribbean	Latin, Central and South American	African	Arab and West Asian	South Asian	East and Southeast Asian
1971	1795	1895	5	35		30				
% of Total	48%	51%	0%	1%		1%				
Total	3730									
	British Isles	European	Indigenous	*Black	Caribbean	Latin, Central and South American	African	Arab and West Asian	South Asian	East and Southeast Asian
1986	680	1720		210						
% of Total	26%	66%		8%						
Total	2610									
	British Isles	European	Indigenous	*Black	Caribbean	Latin, Central and South American	African	Arab and West Asian	South Asian	East and Southeast Asian
1996	200	1620	10	690	60	115	230	45	80	130
% of Total	6%	51%	0%	22%	2%	4%	7%	1%	3%	4%
Total	3180									
	British Isles	European	Indigenous	North America	Caribbean	Latin, Central and South American	African	Arab and West Asian	South Asian	East and Southeast Asian
2006	415	1920	10	370	290	110	695	20	45	290
% of Total	10%	46%	0%	9%	7%	3%	17%	0%	1%	7%
Total	4165									
	British Isles	European	Indigenous	North America	Caribbean	Latin, Central and South American	African	Arab and West Asian	South Asian	East and Southeast Asian
2011	315	1830	95	355	505	230	490	120	215	380
% of Total	7%	40%	2%	8%	11%	5%	11%	3%	5%	8%
Total	4535									

Figure 11 - Demographic changes in Lawrence Heights. Percentages calculated by author. Source (CHASS, n.d.)

Like other public housing neighborhoods in Metropolitan Toronto, the table shows that the ethnic origins of Lawrence Heights tenants became increasingly

diversified between the 1970s and 1990s. Before the passage of the *1967 Immigration Act* and the *1971 Multiculturalism Act*, immigration policy was driven by the principle of “ethnic suitability,” which established a hierarchy of migrants with those higher up the chain gaining entry over those below them, starting with British and Americans, Northern Europeans, Southern and Eastern Europeans, and an effective restriction of people from Asia and Africa (see Ralston, 1999, p. 34). Looking at the above table, the numbers of Europeans in Lawrence Heights remain fairly high relative to the other listed groups. But people from the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, and Asia begin climbing precipitously from 1996 onwards.

The flux in immigration policy, real estate developments and economic growth helped precipitate greater ethnic diversity among people living in North York, where Lawrence Heights sits. Before the end of WWII, North York had a measure of cultural and racial homogeneity in that it was made up almost entirely of Methodists, with the British being the largest population; thousands of newcomers poured in after the war, including “Italians, Germans, Poles, French, Dutch and Belgians, Russians, Ukrainians, Scandinavians, Asians, and other Europeans,” spurring greater diversification along ethnic and religious lines (Hart, 1968, p. 274). Moreover, the Yorkdale Shopping Centre’s opening in 1964 prompted even greater immigration into towns like North York, which was commonly described before the war as being comprised of white Protestants (Hart, 1968, p. 274).

Rising numbers of African-Caribbean tenants in Lawrence Heights are a cheap source of exploitable labor for the industry and service sectors in Toronto but also tend to lack “the resources to buy a house or move into private rental housing” (Murdie, Preston, Ghosh, & Chevalier, 2006, p. 16). These groups’ lack of financial resources narrowed their range of choice and ability to pay for affordable housing. The problem was worsened by the structural changes that made Toronto into a global city, including the gradual phasing out of manufacturing and industry and phasing in of services, tourism, and rising gentrification pressures in the inner city. The inflow of low-income African-Caribbean families into Toronto thereby became a fixture in an emergent relationship between visible minorities, immigrants, and multiple forms of deprivation experienced in emergent pockets of poverty and distress in the inner suburbs “populated principally by these groups,” including public housing complexes in North York and Scarborough (Ley & Smith, 2000, p. 42).

Public housing districts controlled by the Ontario Housing Commission, which the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (MTHA) ran as the administrative body at the local level, saw Black households become considerably more overrepresented between 1971 and 1986 compared to the rest of the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) (Murdie, 1994, p. 445). Robert Murdie says this outcome relates

to the relative recency of black Caribbean immigration to Toronto, the disproportionate number of female-headed single-parent families within Toronto's black population and supply, cost and discriminatory constraints within Toronto's rental market. The most likely explanation for the observed concentration of Afro-Caribbeans in suburban MTHA housing is a form of “constrained choice” that emerged in the 1970s when newly built public housing units in the suburbs

corresponded with a demand from recently arrived Caribbean immigrants for low cost rental housing (Murdie, 1994, p. 445-446).

With constrained choice, Murdie (1994, p. 438) suggests those most desperate for housing will accept the first offer for affordable housing, while those who are more financially secure can wait longer and obtain better housing consequently. Such trends increase “the odds of poor visible minorities of each group ending up in the lowest-cost, least-desirable neighborhoods from which they cannot afford to escape, including in social housing in the inner suburbs” (Walks & Bourne, 2006, p. 274). Toronto, meanwhile, adopted the slogan “Diversity is Our Strength” in the late 1990s (Siemiatycki, 2018, p. 195). This message promoted the growth model for a global city that requires vast numbers of low-wage workers commuting from inner suburban housing to do jobs throughout the six administrative districts (that together) now constitute Toronto post-amalgamation. These workers were seen as integral sources of surplus labor and were overrepresented by visible minorities who tended to struggle to move out of lower-cost neighborhoods.

Political Struggles in Lawrence Heights

Policy was being adjusted in the 1960s and 1970s to safeguard and fasten shifts in the relations of production through widening migration flows, rendering inner city spaces into magnets for tourism, services, and real estate capital, with accordant re-distribution of lower-cost housing and settlement of disadvantaged workers onto the outskirts of the burgeoning global city version of Toronto. Relations were also changing between the

state and the tenant base in Lawrence Heights along often oppressive and conflictual lines. Lawrence Heights were being punished for not befitting the middle-class ideal, keeping them in geographically locked surroundings and restricting their efforts to build self-governance structures.

Over the 1970s and into the 1990s, Lawrence Heights tenant base was drawn from diverse regions, including the Caribbean, Latin America, West and East Africa, across Asia, and Europe. While global in this sense, the neighborhood nevertheless remained geographically isolated. A report on Lawrence Heights by Toronto city planners documents how its circular landscape of roadways helps cement its outlying status:

The Lawrence Heights neighborhood is structured around a ring road (Flemington Road and Varna Drive) that serves as the primary street network in the neighborhood. Housing in the neighborhood includes singles, semi-detached houses, townhouses, and small walk-up apartment structures ranging from 1 to 4 stories in height. Much of this housing addresses courts that are accessed from the ring road. Flemington Park is a 3.5 ha park, distributed unevenly through the neighborhood. Flemington Public School sits in the middle of the neighborhood and the Bathurst Heights Secondary School site is on the southeast edge of the neighborhood, on Lawrence Avenue West. The Allen Road bisects Lawrence Heights; aside from Lawrence Avenue West, the neighborhood has just two crossings – a bridge at Flemington Road and an underpass at Rane Avenue (City of Toronto, 2010b, p. 14).

These various housing structures that comprise Lawrence Heights sit in courtyards that possess the only entry point and exit onto Varna Drive, which serves as a twisting distributor road (Beradi, 2018, p. 27). The Garden City layout of Lawrence Heights exacerbates its separateness from the outside:

Unlike the grid pattern that is used across the rest of the city, the roadways in Lawrence Heights are a labyrinth of twists and turns, dead end-streets, and cul-de-sacs, giving way to the moniker “Jungle” or “Jungle City.” The neighbourhood is designed around a series of open spaces and parkettes, which are linked together

by footpaths that diminish pedestrian contact with public streets (Beradi, 2018, p. 27).

Despite being geographically isolated, Lawrence Heights residents have persistently fostered a shared sense of community and institutions of self-governance amongst themselves. The area has its community center, food bank, health center, public schools, churches, and parks. In the Toronto Municipal Archives, there is one undated document from a file with materials dated between “1987 to 1994” that describes the constitution for the Lawrence Heights Tenants’ Association (LHTA), a group acting on community concerns that may undermine tenants’ wellbeing. LHTA’s duties include:

To carry on activities designed to assist the welfare of its members... To carry on social activities to extend the friendship and acquaintances of the members... To establish connection or relationship with other groups or organizations interested in the welfare of our association... To eliminate juvenile delinquency in Toronto by providing good healthy entertainment... To acquire and maintain a Community Centre... To function solely as a non-political, non-partisan, non-sectarian association... General membership may be accorded to any person who is a tenant of the Lawrence Heights Project... To see that existing membership is satisfied... To visit the sick, and assist to dispense good cheer... To be responsible for seeing that recreational facilities and activities are provided for the children of Lawrence Heights... Promote and report all favourable happenings to the newspapers, periodicals, etc... (The Lawrence Heights Tenants’ Association, n.d., n.p.).

Conflictual relations between tenant collectives and the state became a feature of political life in Lawrence Heights. These are the surface distortions that give materiality to what is going underneath, where the state’s objective is to discipline working people to serve capital. In the case of public housing tenants, the state behaves particularly aggressively with a class of people it views as not conforming with its ideals. The

political structure (the domain of state activity) functions to “keep society from bursting apart” by organizing the dominant class while disorganizing subordinate ones (Jessop, 2006, pp. 198-199). In 1970, a resident of Lawrence Heights and member of the Ontario Federation of Citizens’ Associations advocated that the Ontario Housing Corporation take steps to turn management of public housing projects over to tenants but said that it was “offering only powerless positions on housing advisory boards” (Allen, 1970, p. 15). Political officials in Scarborough and Toronto said they “distrust many tenant and neighborhood associations” (Allen, 1970, p. 15). Similarly, the Metro Housing and Social Services Committee chairman concluded that “most local associations have no legitimate claim to speak for people they say they represent” (Allen, 1970, p. 15). In this instance, advocates for tenants’ self-governance ran up against the state’s authority which insisted they require paternalistic treatment.

Historical examples reveal how the state’s treatment of Lawrence Heights’ tenants functions to hold them in a constant position of subordination, backed by its capacity to evict them with force. The *Toronto Daily Star* documents a public complaint made in 1970 by tenant representatives in Lawrence Heights and five other public housing projects in Metro that complained the OHC was pressuring them into signing new leases with no room for negotiations (“Public Housing Tenants Protest Harassment,” 1970, p. B3). Objecting tenants drafted their lease says the report, which would permit tenants to prevent the OHC from evicting them without reason and that they would be able to call in

contractors to do home repairs when the OHC refuses (“Public Housing Tenants Protest Harassment,” 1970, p. B3).

There were agents within the state that were sympathetic to the concerns of tenants in OHC-controlled public housing districts during this period. A letter from 1979 by three elected members of North York City Council said the following to the then Minister of Housing:

We are writing to protest the procedures that have recently been introduced by the Ontario Housing Corporation wherein OHC residents are subjected to a degrading process of verifying their total monthly income. Under these regulations, if copies of cheques are not provided, this can result in an automatic termination of their tenancy. The source of income form that OHC is providing for its tenants is reprehensible. Its content would appear to suggest that all OHC tenants are neglecting to declare their entire income. The onus of proof is being transferred from OHC to the tenant. It is as if all tenants are assumed guilty until they prove that they are indeed innocent. Surely, the Ontario Housing Corporation can come up with a more humane way of dealing with tenants, without impinging on their personal freedom and human dignity (Moscoe, O’Neill, & Foster, 1979, n.p.)

Many low-income families are forced to apply for a limited number of public housing units. Those fortunate to pass the application must rely on the state for shelter because the market would otherwise put them at risk of homelessness, and they tend to be treated punitively as wards and not just as receivers of short-term help.

Oppression and Stigmatization

A strong and politically active community did develop within Lawrence Heights. Still, the state undermined its tenants by treating them with skepticism and contempt.

Moreover, exogenous forces beyond the state magnified the stigmatization experienced by these tenants. The news media and politically active residents in the Lawrence Manor

area contributed to the negative publicized image of Lawrence Heights over the later decades of the twentieth century. In this case, the changing demographics of Lawrence Heights' tenant base along racial lines accentuated stigmatization. This section is devoted to exploring this process.

The relationship between the media and the wider public is complex, with the media tasked with reporting on the day's events. Since Lawrence Heights opened, the news media has reported intermittently on events there. Still, the press also frames stories in ways that harm disadvantaged people by placing specific perspectives authoritatively on a pedestal – in the form of experts, civil servants, academics, etc. – while crowding out the voices of the oppressed (Schirato, Webb, & Danaher, 2020). Such stigmatizing discourses flow outwards from media circles into outside communities, encouraging people to ignore such public housing districts and make racist assumptions about them. In the 1970s, the neo-Nazi “Western Guard” distributed agitation propaganda within Regent Park to try and form a base of working-class Torontonians (James, 2017, p. 10). R.K. James (2017, p. 10) points to a failed incursion into Toronto by the New York-based vigilante group, the Guardian Angels, which chose Regent Park for a series of “patrols” there during its stay between 1982 and 2006.

Analyzing how the media discusses a neighborhood can attune us to how selective framings can influence how the public understands it and how policies affect these areas. For example, Liu and Blomley (2013, p. 119) conclude that media reports can privilege outsiders “over insiders, with the neighborhood constituted as a problematic space and its

residents as passive victims. The effect is to further the stigmatization of an already marginalized neighborhood, and to accentuate the disempowerment of its residents.”

To help explore these concerns, I collected a sample size of close to fifty news reports dated between 1970 to 2004, which I coded with keywords identified in the process of reviewing them. The search was conducted for this period, specifically, as articles published after 2004 tended to investigate revitalization planning.

The sample of reviewed articles dated between 1970 and 2004 was retrieved through online searches for stories on “Lawrence Heights” in a database of major Canadian newspapers, including titles, abstracts, and full text for each selection. My search revealed articles in *The Toronto Daily Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *The Toronto Star*. Keywords were recorded when they appeared within articles in their titles, abstracts, and full text. However, keywords were not counted more than once when appearing multiple times *within* articles. Therefore, the following codes and their occurrences are broken down in the table below in five-year intervals.

Codes:	Occurrences (on a per article basis):
<i>Government action (federal, provincial, local)</i>	18
<i>Policy</i>	12
<i>Meetings on community matters</i>	20
<i>Positive views of the neighborhood</i>	4
<i>Discussions of race</i>	15
<i>Gun violence</i>	15
<i>Murder</i>	15
<i>Fear</i>	11
<i>Police</i>	24
<i>Police brutality and harassment</i>	10
<i>Low-income families</i>	6
<i>Criminals</i>	6
<i>Assault and robberies</i>	11
<i>Police raid/sweep</i>	7
<i>Crime</i>	11
<i>Drugs (drug dealing, illegality, etc.)</i>	17
<i>Anger/angry</i>	8
<i>Eviction stories</i>	3
<i>Warrants</i>	3
<i>Tenants' rights violated</i>	6
<i>High-risk/troubled neighborhood</i>	9
<i>Single-parent families</i>	4
<i>Two-parent families</i>	1
<i>Safety</i>	6
<i>Stigmatized</i>	1
<i>Black community</i>	6
<i>Lacking social services</i>	2
<i>Police/security patrols</i>	7
<i>Mentions of 'jungle'</i>	7

Figure 12 - Themes discussed in news media articles on Lawrence Heights

Patterns are evident in the reporting done by major news publications on Lawrence Heights. The codes show that several stories discussed public policy and government action (and inaction) regarding improving the quality of social services in the area, including subsidized daycare, adequate public education, and associated anti-drug abuse and crime prevention programs for at-risk youth. Some reports elaborated on the violation of tenants' rights by authorities, including the police, the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, the Ontario Housing Corporation, and the Canada Mortgage and

Housing Corporation – and these stories cited members of the community and organizations like the Lawrence Heights Residents’ Association and the Federation of Metro Tenants’ Association. Few reports touched on the problems of stigmatization that neighborhoods like Lawrence Heights must fight against, especially when surrounding residents have fenced themselves off it. Media attention tends to fixate selectively on the most sensational events involving violence and drug use:

Just the same, some who make their homes inside the Lawrence Heights fence aren't convinced it's a bad place to be. Aya Alamin, a mother of six in her mid-40s, has lived in the housing project since 1992. Even as she casts an eye across her front yard, strewn as it is with crushed bleach bottles and Tim Horton's cups, she's generous with her praise. “It's a very, very beautiful area,” she says... “The people of Lawrence Heights are very kind,” she says. “You don't see yourself living in government housing when you're here; you see yourself living in a mansion” (Pratt, 2004, p. B03).

More often, the news media produce stories about Lawrence Heights that frame and reinforce a publicized image of it as being a community defined by disorder and hostile relationships between tenants and the state (in its various roles) along racialized lines. This tendency speaks to the prevailing tendency for people to be “more interested in and more reactive to negative information” (Eberl, et al., 2018, p. 213). Beyond repeating the old trope of “it bleeds, it leads,” the framing of negative news stories tends to be fitted by journalists into convenient binaries – as either a problem or a crisis or as a success and a benefit – which makes them easily consumable for the public (Bleich, Stonebraker, Nisar, & Abdelhamid, 2015). Such framing fits with the idea that news “is essentially biased as a “medium of the negative” in embracing abnormality, negativity, crime, or conflict” (Fleras, 2011, p. 13).

Most stories between the 1980s and 1990s focused on police contact with tenants, town hall meetings between “angry residents” complaining about brutality by the police and by the state as an obtrusive landlord, and the need to address what media consumers are encouraged to assume is rampant drug-use and illegality. Part of the uptick in stories centering on gun violence has to do with the continuous coverage of a high-profile murder at a bakery in downtown Toronto in 1994 by four suspects who were Lawrence Heights tenants. The news media does justify coverage of such events because they inform readers on matters relating to public safety. However, the disproportionate attention paid to these events and their connection to Lawrence Heights encourages readers to absorb a one-dimensional view of the community. As Liu and Blomley (2013) warn, such journalism disempowers residents by framing them as passive victims of a reactive state that positions itself, in turn, as trying to “correct misbehavior” by tenants.

Further, some stories highlight police harassment and the brutality of tenants. In instances when state policy failures are marked as a contributor to these problems, Lawrence Heights tenants are portrayed as living in public housing because they cannot achieve a middle-class ideal. Take this statement from Toronto mayor John Sewell:

What's more, says Sewell, Lawrence Heights was flawed by the good intentions that spawned it. The project was designed to provide starter housing, with the idea that people would stay until they got on their feet, and then move on. “But as we found out,” says Sewell, “people don't move on. Particularly if they're poor, they don't have any opportunities to move on. No one (realized) that, in society, there are a lot of people, who, for structural reasons, weren't going to make it into the middle class” (Pratt, 2004, p. B03).

Sewell is right to identify the importance of structural causes as helping prolong the residency of many Lawrence Heights tenants. Crucially, though, these longstanding patterns in the reporting on events in Lawrence Heights help build its image among government agencies and public policy circles as a priority/high-risk/troubled neighborhood, colloquially called ‘jungle.’

Additional sources complement the view that the state’s relationship with its public housing tenants became defined by supervision and a lack of trust – trends that fed alienation and conflict within the tenant population. In 1984, then city-councillor Howard Moscoe wrote to the chief of police demanding a clean-up of the drug trade in a building in Lawrence Heights, noting that “Ontario Housing has largely washed their hands of the matter, their attitude being that this is a police matter” (Moscoe, 1984, p. 2). In reply to Moscoe, a police staffer says tenants complained about drug trafficking in the neighborhood, and is a situation that is “constantly monitored by the Uniform Officers in that specific zone and the plainclothesmen” (Crawford, 1984, n.p.).

Neoliberalism on the Horizon

The image of Lawrence Heights developed and propagated by the media as a troubled unsafe neighborhood did indeed help encourage the City of Toronto to eventually identify it as a target for “urban revitalization” in the twenty-first century. There was a gradual absorption of neoliberal philosophy within public housing administrative structures in Toronto. Before a “revitalization” can proceed as part of a neoliberal policy agenda, it gets precipitated by gridlock, referring to an incapacity for public services to be provided.

When gridlock occurs, capitalists have openings to privatize public assets and deliver services for profit. Accordingly, the public discourse of Lawrence Heights projected it as representative of a bygone era of well-intentioned planners, politicians, and technocrats who constructed inefficient and wasteful public housing districts.

When subsidized housing becomes redeveloped through public-private partnerships, capital seizes the opportunity to invest in the recreation of districts that become widely seen as dysfunctional and unsafe. Urban security became a prominent urban policy concern in the early 2000s, along with the ‘creative city’ discourse as popularized by Richard Florida (Leslie & Hunt, 2013, p. 1172). For people like Florida (2002), policy tools like tax subsidies, deregulation, and permissive zoning law changes can attract members of the so-called creative class: hi-tech entrepreneurs, engineers, professional managers, bohemian artists, and taste-makers, and these individuals re-engineer *priority* neighborhoods in their image. On Toronto’s embracement of urban security, Leslie and Hunt (2013, p. 1172) write:

Following numerous incidences of gun violence, policy officials became concerned with the growing spatial concentration of poverty and the links between poverty and crime. As a result, they designated a number of neighborhoods “at-risk” or “priority” neighborhoods and began targeting these areas for strategic interventions.

The decision to designate thirteen Toronto neighborhoods as “at risk” was complemented by a landmark document published by the United Way in 2004. This report found that “poverty in Toronto has become concentrated by neighborhood areas more so than was the case 20 years ago,” with “high rates of poverty and diversity” noted as indicators

(Sriskandarajah, 2020, p. 2). Hulchanski (2010, p. 21) says that Toronto's inner suburbs in Scarborough, western North York, and northern Etobicoke were perfect containers for low-income persons to migrate into as many census tracts include two contrasting urban forms, namely cheaper to rent "high-rise apartments on the major arterial roads and single-family, more traditional suburban housing on quieter residential streets." All thirteen of the priority neighborhoods are in the inner suburbs, and the Regent Park model is intended to be the guidebook for reshaping them.

Conclusion

The direction Lawrence Heights took on the way to becoming a target for "revitalization" was one informed by a mixture of systemic pressures brought on by the contradictions of capitalism and the construction of a publicized image of the community diffused by the media and by the state that defined it within the realm of public discourse as a failed experiment in public policy. The state has tended to brutalize Lawrence Heights tenants, developing heavily securitized relations with them based on the prejudicial understanding that they fail to conform to a middle-class ideal. This chapter gives additional evidence to explain why Lawrence Heights was attributed the label of "priority neighborhood" by the state, which would subsequently declare it being in need of "urban revitalization."

The dynamic selectivities framework helps us to unpack these developments further. When Lawrence Heights became a target for "revitalization," the thirst for surplus by the state and capital drove the strategic widening of immigration flows to people of more racialized backgrounds. Low-income workers, especially migrants, were

faced with few affordable housing options. Public housing in Lawrence Heights gradually became a destination for low-income families from diverse regions around the globe. These events were spatially and strategically dynamic.

Canada's public housing program became maligned by bureaucratic agencies and the state as an affordable housing policy strategy over the late 1960s and early 1970s. Concurrently, the news media engaged in a longstanding practice of selectively framing Lawrence Heights as a site of turbulence. Stories involving violence and other social pathologies fed the public appetite for stories appealing to people's fears, curiosities, and prejudices. These events helped prompt the Lawrence Heights "revitalization" in the early 2000s, which the next chapter unpacks.

What do these claims tell us about the ongoing struggle for differential space on the part of the Lawrence Heights community? Public housing districts like Lawrence Heights is that it is viewed as a warehouse for the oppressed and gets wound up with people's prejudices rooted in classism and racism. The public discourse circulating about Lawrence Heights fueled perceptions that it is to be excluded, feared, and avoided. Over time, "revitalization" becomes the common-sensical policy strategy: render Lawrence Heights into a more effective site for surplus creation and abstract space.

The struggle on the part of the community to build up differential space and hold sway over spreading abstract space fits as well into the story I am telling for how and why Lawrence Heights has become a site for what could be an advancing passive revolution. In this chapter, the case is made that the state has persistently sought to hold

tenants in an aggressively supervised position. But among tenants, everyday resistance has also been galvanized against the punishing actions of the state, helping germinate a vigorous activist climate. The remaining chapters will elaborate more on how “revitalization” planning led to strongly interventionist grassroots action meant to torque the direction of planning to better fit their own vision, even as the state also works to fortify neoliberalism’s hegemony.

Neoliberalism and Lawrence Heights’ “Revitalization”

Nothing disappears completely, however; nor can what subsists be defined solely in terms of traces, memories, or relics. In space, what came earlier continues to underpin what follows.

– Henri Lefebvre (1996, p. 229)

Introduction

The previous chapter served as a bridge between the pre-neoliberal era and the neoliberal era, forming our historical narrative of change in our case study neighborhood of Lawrence Heights.¹³ The crisis of 2008 was an event of seismic importance in the new century. The crisis originated out of the collapse of a poorly regulated U.S. sub-prime housing market before subsequently expanding to the international political economy (Blackburn, 2008; Tooze, 2018). The post-2008 recession and recovery prompted a shake-up of the neoliberal grip over political and economic life in different parts of the world. Perry Anderson (2017, n.p.) describes anti-systemic movements present in Western Europe, some of which arose before 2008 with others taking shape afterward,

¹³ Periodizing history into eras can simply be a useful heuristic that helps draw lines around specific blocs of time within which a course of events help drive social change before being supplanted by others that twist the contours of change in other directions. Hence, periodizing connotes moments of transition that have historical significance. But there are debates about the value of periodization (Westra & Zuege, 2001). Often, such debates center on the extent to which one can draw firm boundaries around how history proceeds where change can just as credibly be understood as taking varied shapes depending on what occurs in one context that is invariably layered within multiple other contexts.

but all of which gained strength as a response to *this* crisis and whose orientations vary wildly between being on the political left and right:

<u>Right-Wing</u>	<u>Left-Wing</u>
France (Front National)	Spain (Podemos)
Netherlands (Party for Freedom, PVV)	Greece (Syriza)
Austria (Freedom Party of Austria)	Ireland (Sinn Fein)
Sweden (Sweden Democrats)	Britain (Momentum)
Denmark (Danish People's Party)	
Finland (True Finns)	<u>Between Left/Right</u>
Germany (Alternative for Germany, AfD)	Italy (5 Star Movement)
Britain (UKIP)	(Right-wing on immigration and tax policy)
Italy (Northern League)	(Left-wing on opposition to cuts to education and labour market deregulation)
Greece (Golden Dawn)	

Despite being strongly opposed to one another politically, these movements are all reactions to the structure of the neoliberal system, which finds its starkest, most concentrated expression in today's EU, with its order founded on the reduction and privatization of public services; the abrogation of democratic control and representation; and deregulation of the factors of production (Anderson, 2017, n.p.).

The anti-systemic movements in Europe that gained strength after the 2008 crisis remind us of how susceptible neoliberalism is to resistance, including in contexts where it has been entrenched for so long. Take the case of Chile, which has repeatedly been held up as the model for neoliberal-driven growth in Latin America. Chile underwent mass protests in 2019. The triggering event was an increase in subway fares, which dovetailed into demands for revisions to a constitution that originally mandated "the privatization of pensions, health, education, and the like" (Harvey, 2020, p. 2). Ecuadorians, meanwhile,

have long lived under the thumb of structural adjustment policies by the International Monetary Fund, which have imposed austerity, privatization, along with liberalization of trade and finance so that the public balance sheets of their client states (Ecuador in this case) get re-structured so that their loans from the IMF get paid back (King & Samaniegob, 2020, p. 543). As in Chile, protests swept through Ecuador in 2019 with people angered over new taxes and the abolition of fuel subsidies, measures that were products of ongoing structural adjustment in the country (Harvey, 2020, p. 2). More importantly, structural adjustment is intended to embed neoliberal policy regimes within these client states. After all, Chile had originally undergone structural adjustment going all the way back to when Pinochet overthrew the democratically elected socialist president Salvador Allende in 1973 (Harvey, 2006, p. 147).

When neoliberalism faces such resistance, wherever it occurs, counter-resistance forces are readily mobilized to hold its policy regimes together wherever it is under threat. By 2012, after the crisis of 2008 was no longer spiraling, all G20 member governments opened their markets further to capital, guaranteeing the availability of cheap credit, monetizing public assets, and prioritizing “permanent austerity” (Albo & Fanelli, 2014, p. 20). The proliferation of hard-right political movements can indeed be anti-systemic as Perry Anderson describes. With their outward rejection of the status quo, such energies are paradoxically more capable of safeguarding neoliberalism than their counterparts on the left. Looking directly at Canada, far-right movements have arisen in ways confirming what Wendy Brown (2018, p. 73) declares below:

Neoliberalism indicts the social as a fiction through which equality is pursued at the expense of the spontaneous order generated by markets and morals. It indicts the political as pretending to knowledge and making use of coercion where, in fact, ignorance prevails and freedom should reign. A depoliticized and anti-regulatory state that also provides support for enhanced claims of the personal sphere is forwarded as the antidote to these dangers. However, the effect of this antidote is to de-democratize political culture and to discredit norms and practices of inclusion, pluralism, tolerance, and equality across the board.

Immediately after 2008, the Canadian government was faced with anti-austerity actions with the G20 protests in Toronto in 2010 and militant strikes in Quebec in 2012 (Fanelli & Albo, 2014, p. 24). In response, the Quebec government passed Bill 79 that outlawed student strikes, making it illegal to protest without police permission and outlawing the wearing of masks and face paint, mirroring the passage in 2013 of Bill C309 at the federal level, which similarly restricts protestors from hiding their identities (Fanelli & Albo, 2014, p. 24).

More recently, Canadian right-wing populism has gained force, beginning with the Reform Party (1987-2000) that evolved into the People's Party of Canada in 2018. As Brian Budd (2021, p. 152) documents, this evolution involved a tapering down of formerly exclusionary positions on immigration policy and the accommodation of multiple cultures, gradually revising "their programmatic appeals through an embrace of neoliberalism as part of a purposeful strategy to try and extend their national electoral viability under Canada's single-member-plurality electoral system." Budd (2021, p. 155) cites Cas Mudde's definition of populism as an "ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite,' and which argues that politics should be an expression of the

volonté générale (general will) of the people.” In order for right populism to get effectively wedded to neoliberalism, it helps to shave down the harder edges of its typical policy agendas (like curtailing immigration, demonizing multiculturalism, appealing to white nationalism, etc.) to attract a wider swath of potential voters. The merging of a softer-edged right-wing populism with the de-democratizing force of neoliberalism is exemplified by the election of Conservative party member Doug Ford into the office of Premier of Ontario in 2018. As Budd (2020, p. 172) argues, Ford’s campaign rested on erecting a binary between the “good and pure,” referring to (primarily suburban) middle-class taxpayers, and the “corrupt elite” in the form of technocratic urbanites:

Ford largely avoided the type of nativist and xenophobic rhetoric of populist leaders in the United States and Western Europe, and instead offered a conception of ‘the people’ using an economic and anti-cosmopolitan discourse centered upon middle class taxpayers and opposition to urban elites.

As adaptable as neoliberalism is, it can signify its weakening as much as its perseverance when it gets latched onto a right-populist ideology. When a state becomes more authoritarian, it typically signals that its ability to govern at a distance is enervated.

In this post-2008 context, it can be said that people are channeling energy into political movements that are forcing neoliberalism to adapt. The crisis may have illuminated the sorts of resistance that neoliberalism has encountered since its beginnings. Only now, the volume has been turned up. This moment of struggle and dissatisfaction with politics has created gaps for a place-based movement. Such a movement can be mobilized at the grassroots level and can assert itself in the “revitalization” planning.

Place-based activity can alter the relationship between Lawrence Heights and a state that has engaged with people living there in oppressive ways.

The effects of the 2008 crisis were not as widely felt in Canada as elsewhere, with its economic downturn being a shorter span “and milder than many of its G7 counterparts” (Fanelli & Evans, 2013, p. 7). This was primarily due to Canada's banking system's monopolistic structure and relatively conservative nature. The ‘big six’ banks have long dominated the banking landscape, which, most importantly, gathers its retail banking deposits with a focus on not becoming overly leveraged (Pauly, 2014, p. 163). With a relatively safe mortgage market where almost half of all mortgages were insured, including high down payments and non-deductible mortgage interest, it was “cautious bank management, intensive supervision, tax policy and government sponsored insurance” that reinforced one another (Pauly, 2014, p. 163-164). When a recession did strike, the federal government was positioned to use fiscal policy to keep the Canadian economy afloat. And yet, after a short recovery period, the federal and provincial governments generally opted to return to “a long-term pattern of fiscal austerity” dating back to the 1980s. Austerity disciplines labor and keeps surplus circulating among the wealthy (Evans & Albo, 2011, p. 15).

Depending on where you look, the post-2008 era may lead to a staying of the course for neoliberal policy regimes. But within the context of my case study, urban “revitalization” planning processes are not entirely driven by the intent and effects of austerity, privatization, and disciplinary neoliberalism. The years following 2008 opened

up *possibilities* for progressive change since economic crises can function as disruptive mechanisms. This has traditionally been the case when crises of capitalism occur when the prevailing paradigm cannot offer viable solutions when problems arise. For example, when the Great Depression struck in the 1930s, fascism subsequently arose in Western Europe as an alternative model for organizing society. It was also after the defeat of fascism during WWII that Keynesianism was birthed to be a stopgap against future depressions and a means of energizing capitalist growth. Politics and economic affairs may thus turn in wildly different directions towards populist revolt or some mix of right- or left-wing movements that may merge into a new paradigm. Our primary concern is investigating how Lawrence Heights is putting itself forward in the ongoing “revitalization” in ways that can challenge neoliberalism.

This chapter begins by looking at Lawrence Heights’ neoliberal foundations. The central message of this chapter is that the trajectory of neoliberalism in Canada pressured the local government to redevelop Lawrence Heights along neoliberal lines. Local officials and their developer partners have articulated a vision of “revitalization” policies that position neoliberalism as the corrective to the stigma of public housing districts. The first section looks at changes in social housing policy during the 1990s. This decade saw Ontario download responsibility for public housing onto municipalities. For Toronto, this occurred simultaneously as its municipal structure was amalgamated as a political decision to support conservative politics (Keil, 2002). The TCHC found itself burdened with a widening backlog of maintenance costs and accordingly saw amalgamation and

downloading as a pretense to create “service delivery efficiencies” and “redevelop” its public housing districts (see Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009, p. 121). From here, the discussion stays in the local context of Toronto to explain the state’s vision of “revitalization” is made amenable to the softer-edged neoliberalism that took shape in the early 2000s. The final section unpacks how Lawrence Heights became an objective for the state to *correct* what it describes as a stigmatized and dysfunctional neighborhood.

Neoliberalism and Social Housing

The 1990s was a critical period in Canada’s neoliberalization of social housing policy. Policy changes affected Ontario’s public housing administration, and these effects reverberated to the local level in Toronto. Canada’s neoliberal turn became typified by Ontario’s governing strategies between 1995 and 2003 under the Mike Harris-led Progressive Conservative Party, which held sway with what they termed a ‘Common Sense Revolution’ (see Keil, 2002).

During an interview with Steve Paikin (1994, n.p.), Mike Harris spelled out his goal for Ontario with the Common Sense Revolution, which among other things, involved getting the government out of the way of the capitalist class:

In a situation where you’re the highest taxed, most heavily regulated, where our private sector job creators and investors are saying, “Ontario is not a good place to do business,” you better fix that just as quick as you can.

Harris’s political platform, as spelled out here, would have dire implications for Ontario’s public housing program. In the same interview, Harris said we would “get government out of owning all this housing, to institute shelter subsidies” (Paikin, 1994, n.p.). Though

Harris preferred shelter subsidies over public housing, the subsidies themselves dried up after the Ontario government instituted cuts across the board in 1995, despite “the steep increase in rents” (Mahoney, 2001, p. 265). Milton Friedman, a poster child for neoliberalism, wrote critically of public housing and rental subsidies alike, arguing that they contribute to the paternalization of the relationship between governments and people receiving social assistance rather than encouraging the private market to develop more housing where enhanced supply could put downward pressure on rental costs (Friedman & Friedman, 1990, p. 109). But neoliberalism (as a set of policy prescriptions) is always processual, unfolding unevenly *in veritas* and differing in its content depending on the spatial-temporal context (Larner, 2000, p. 20). Going forward with the Common Sense Revolution in the mid-1990s would see Harris working to re-configure the local political infrastructure to make it amenable to the objectives of austerity and intensifying the privatization of affordable housing production activities.

A series of policy changes were to sweep through Ontario during the 1990s, which embodied Harris’s Common Sense Revolution principle of *virtuous self-reliance* (Keil, 2002, p. 596). They mainly involved shrinking and streamlining the public sector, including a 21 percent cut in municipal welfare benefits in 1995, hundreds of local governments amalgamated, a reduction of 21,000 provincial full-time social service jobs, and the legalization of sixty-hour workweeks (predicated on an unwillingness to listen to public and private sector union demands) (Keil, 2002, p. 589). These moves followed in step with cuts to “affordable housing income supplements, employment programs, youth

recreation service and settlement programs for new immigrants” (Viswanathan, 2010, p. 263). By 1998, the Mike Harris-led government amalgamated Toronto despite significant public opposition to it (Sancton, 2006, p. 127). The Harris government implicitly targeted Toronto under the pretense that the provincial budget needing balancing (with funding support for big cities being a costly expense) and that provincial income taxes needed to be lowered by 30 percent (Boudreau, 1999, p. 771).

Amalgamation was a strategy ostensibly aimed at cost savings by reducing service overlap in Toronto and surrounding municipalities. Boudreau (1999, p. 772) says,

The rationale was that amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto would save money by eliminating duplication of services in the former two-tiered municipal structure; it would eliminate competition between existing municipalities and thus free the way for economic growth; and it would disentangle the complex two-tiered structure, thus increasing accountability to taxpayers.

The backdrop that informed the passage of the City of Toronto Act was characterized by strife and competition between two opposing models for local governance, with big-city Toronto on one side and suburban North York on the other:

While the former sought to deal with growth pressures by increasing density requirements, expanding public transit and using the property tax base to fund a range of social services, the latter suburban version was an example of fiscal conservatism, the dominance of the automobile and private services provisioning (Fanelli, 2014, sec. 20).

Initially, conflict over the City of Toronto Act was intense. Supporters maintained that it would attract foreign investment and would reduce service “duplication and red-tape,” while opposers, like spokespeople for the Citizens for Local Democracy (C4LD), said that despite the province’s authority to alter municipal structures, “it lost its legitimacy

because it was rushed through the legislature without prior public consultations” (Boudreau, 1999, p. 774). But the forces supporting amalgamation and the suburban model for urban governance would carry the day, culminating in the 1998 mayoral election victory of neoliberal-friendly candidate Mel Lastman who swept into office in Toronto after already having been mayor of North York between 1973 and 1997 (Fanelli, 2014, sec. 20). Ontario subsequently passed the City of Toronto Act (Bill 103) in 1997, which was administered in 1998 to facilitate the Metro Toronto-based amalgamation, leading to the dissolving of the former Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto with its six constituent municipalities, including North York, East York, Scarborough, York, Etobicoke, into a single-tier City of Toronto (Farooqui, 2016).

The consolidation of these municipalities into the so-called “mega-city” version of Toronto helped precipitate what is now happening in Lawrence Heights. Amalgamation was fundamentally about disciplining Toronto, which Conservatives painted as a fiscal mess possessed with lengthening welfare rolls, high unemployment, and a real estate market characterized by back-room deals between local officials and developers (Keil, 2000, p. 768). These issues were exacerbated by preceding events that hit Toronto, including the collapse of its real estate market in 1989, followed by a deep recession in the early 1990s, setting off fiscal crises in all the municipalities that comprised the old Metropolitan system (Kipfer & Keil, 2002, p. 240).

As Roger Keil (2000, p. 765) tells it, the former territorial compromise that underpinned the Metropolitan system beginning in 1953, where inner city taxpayers

financed the growth of the suburbs, had gotten flipped in reverse following amalgamation in 1997. With the new system, Ontario refused to integrate urban, suburban, and exurban districts into an effective regional governance system, allowing wealthier tax bases (whom the Conservatives did not want to antagonize) in the exurbs to wall themselves off from inner-city concerns (Kipfer & Keil, 2002, p. 241). Concurrently, the province made cuts to its transfer payments on top of downloading costs for social housing, public transit, and other programs onto municipalities, adding more stress to their property tax bases (Kipfer & Keil, 2002, p. 241). In so doing, Conservatives were laying the foundation for neoliberal policy regimes by rendering the local government less capable of managing its existing obligations.

To this end, amalgamation did much to further de-democratize the planning process in Toronto. It replaced the former official planning processes that characterized the Old City of Toronto “where new official plans were produced through messy public consultation processes” with stakeholders from these formerly multiple townships who represented a range of local concerns (Kipfer & Keil, 2000, p. 32). By making the city larger, amalgamation “diminishes the ability of neighborhoods and individual citizens to influence local decision-making” (Lewis & Murphy, 2015, p. 3). It was under the veneer of removing “red-tape” that amalgamation permitted the adoption of a new Official Community Plan which saw *select* decision makers – politicians, bureaucrats, developers, and business interests, etc. – present a vision for a future “competitive city” which included identifying “priority areas for development,” and set “priorities for capital

expenditures,” culminating in the publishing of a report titled “The Vision for Toronto” in the summer of 2000 (Kipfer & Keil, 2000, p. 32). By this measure, Lawrence Heights’s future became less of an extra-local concern and more so a priority area and opportunity for a lucrative public-private partnership on Toronto’s radar.

The new City of Toronto became purposed to better attract members of the creative class as per Richard Florida by adopting a global city multiculturalist orientation where it could compete with other so-called global cities for investments, an educated workforce (the so-called “creative workers”) and tourist dollars” (Lehrer, Keil, & Kipfer, 2010, p. 83). Toronto City Council fully endorsed the *executive decision-maker-approved* Official Community Plan that was “required to deal with global economic competition, new municipal responsibilities, and the changing social fabric,” which was characterized by “economic development policies, purely symbolic multiculturalism, and revanchist law-and-order policies” (Kipfer & Keil, 2002, p. 28). For people like Florida, any suggestion that industrial and manufacturing sectors can be lured back to the big cities is a fool’s errand. Attracting the so-called creative class stimulates a holistic force for “urban revitalization” that puts less onus on governments to foot the bill for this objective, which was a view Toronto adopted wholesale.

Again, amalgamation proved to be smoke and mirrors. It was formally about making cities larger, robust, and more autonomous where the province downloads jurisdictional control over formerly provincial concerns onto these same cities. But amalgamated cities like Toronto did not necessarily have the requisite money required to

handle new jurisdictional responsibilities. When Toronto began struggling to pay for services, such as public housing, in its post-amalgamation context, this opened opportunities to turn to private partners for help while also realizing the aims of the Official Community Plan.

Look at what happened when Toronto assumed responsibility for social housing that was formerly controlled by the Ontario government. First, the CMHC devolved control over social housing onto provinces in 1996 under the auspices of then deficit-obsessed finance minister Paul Martin (Hackworth, 2008, p. 12). Then Ontario passed the Social Housing Reform Act in 2001, putting it under control of municipalities (CMHC, 2005). But even after being made larger through amalgamation with a streamlined service provision system, Toronto was still left with a limited revenue base to pay for these same services. A city revenue fact sheet published on the City of Toronto's website in 2016 details the sources of its budget numbering \$11.8 billion, the main one being property taxes followed by user fees, the Municipal Land Transfer Tax (MLTT), the Third Party/Billboard Sign Tax and provincial and federal transfers (City of Toronto, 2016). Ontario initiated downloading, knowing that cities cannot legally run budget deficits, putting further pressure on them to cut spending.

In the absence of a large revenue base and more transfers from senior governments, Toronto struggled to support the existing social housing supply after downloading took place, much less build more of it. Indeed, after their election, the Harris administration canceled an additional 17,000 units. Minutes from a Toronto City

Council meeting from 1999 reveal the city's struggles to finance social housing expenses without provincial support, noting that "the worst predictions of amalgamation are unfolding at this present time, namely the provincial government downloading significant new responsibilities to the City of Toronto without any additional funding" (Toronto City Council, 1999, p. 50). The result "has been for local governments to think more of cost-cutting than of increased service" (Lewis & Murphy, 2015, p. 4). Hackworth and Moriah (2006, pp. 515-516, 520, 522) offer a timeline summarizing these events:

- Liberal Finance Minister Paul Martin announces that "housing for the poor" is no longer a responsibility of the federal government
- Mike Harris-led Ontario instituted Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA) in 2000, formalizing the downloading of public housing management onto newly created 47 local service districts that overtook control from the province
- Most Ontario-based housing providers are affiliated with municipal governments that lack the taxing authority to create revenues to finance expenditures associated with maintaining the housing supply
- SHRA also stipulated that local service districts invest part of their funds in the provincial-level Social Housing Services Corporation (SHSC), which was set up to provide legal advice and management support, stripping resources that could otherwise go towards servicing public housing tenants
- The TCHC, the largest and most entrepreneurial of these service providers, began selling portions of its public housing portfolio to provide rental space for commercial tenants and transfer parcels of its supply to private developers to build market-rate housing and condominiums

What this timeline describes empirically is a process of gridlock, which in this case refers to a gradual drying up of public money that should be devoted to servicing public housing. Once public money goes away, typically, private interests and money swoop in.

Gridlock is then what occurs when states become incapable of addressing social problems with public resources. Service providers feel the squeeze. Austerity becomes prioritized, along with the commodification of public goods through privatization.

Devaluing the existing built environment in Lawrence Heights would work as a precursor for an effective spatial fix. In Harvey's words:

For capital has to build a fixed space (or "landscape") necessary for its own functioning at a certain point in its history only to have to destroy that space (and devalue much of the capital invested therein) at a later point in order to make way for a new "spatial fix" (openings for fresh accumulation in new spaces and territories) (Harvey, 2001, p. 25) (as cited by Jessop, 2006, p. 148).

Toronto's public housing districts were made into targets for "revitalization" primarily through a gridlock process. The gridlock was evident after the passage of the Social Housing Reform Act by the Mike Harris-led Ontario government. Toronto saw resources dry up for local social housing providers in the province, which was done under the pretense of granting the cities more autonomy. Hackworth (2008, p. 17) notes that the province's withdrawal of funds for social housing expenses was not met with any measures for local providers to raise more money. Indeed, provincial transfer cuts rendered Toronto and other cities financially strapped, a problem made worse by booming demands from people wanting infrastructure improvements, particularly for housing and transit (Albo & Fanelli, 2019, p. 271).

Other legislative moves helped fortify gridlock. In 2001, Toronto invoked the Ontario Business Corporations Act to establish the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), the city's largest social housing provider that operates as an arms-length institution with the local government as its sole shareholder (Ogilvie & Zetea, 2014, p. 6). Under the city's auspices, neoliberalism became the guiding mantra by which the TCHC would manage the public housing districts that form a portion of its overall

social housing supply. The TCHC witnessed its growing maintenance backlog and saw devolution and Toronto's amalgamation as a window: "to create cost and service delivery efficiencies," "reinvent public housing," (TCHC, 2002) and "re-examine the possibility of redevelopment and regeneration" (Regent Park Collaborative Team, 2002) (as cited by Lehrer, Keil, & Kipfer, 2010, p. 86).

Devolution, in effect, did not empower the local state so much as hasten the larger process in Canadian cities to build public assets into globally competitive sources of private real estate investment. The objective is to integrate "local decision-making within the overarching strategic priorities of the central state" (Butler, 2012, p. 96). Without more tools to raise revenues, development projects become a means to "generate charges and to widen the tax base. Provincial states aided this process by deregulating municipal planning controls" and keeping regional planning bodies unobtrusive (Albo & Fanelli, 2019, p. 271-272). Public-private partnerships became a means to initiate development projects while resolving funding shortfalls. What public housing districts in Toronto would become is an ideal vehicle for the state to help relieve the growing maintenance backlogs attached to these areas by selling portions of them to private developers, and this became the schematic for "urban revitalization."

Amalgamation, downloading, and gridlock were political and institutional ingredients that fueled the targeting of public housing districts for "revitalization." But they were complimented, as well, by the spread of hegemonic discourses in the mid-2000s that painted Toronto's public housing districts as "priority neighborhoods." First,

the United Way of Greater Toronto published a report called *Poverty by Postal Code* in 2004, “highlighting a widening gap between Toronto’s rich and poor over the previous two decades, and an increasing spatial concentration of poverty” (Leslie & Hunt, 2013, p. 1175). The government started marshaling significant institutional power in 2005, with the Strong Neighbourhood Taskforce (composed of United Way and the City of Toronto, with the support of the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the private sector) put forward the first and most explicit call for ‘targeted intervention in specific neighbourhoods’ to de-concentrate poverty (Saber, 2017, p. 55).

During this same period, the news media also devoted intense coverage to the so-called Year of the Gun in 2005, where stories on gun violence identified participants and victims as tending to live in neighborhoods of spatially concentrated poverty, ramping up support for the state to intervene in these areas (Leslie & Hunt, 2013, p. 1175).

These discourses have utility for the state. They create a form of subjective inversion where vulnerable people *become* threatening people in the wider public sphere, with state intervention becoming the commonly accepted solvent. Karen Murray (2011, p. 284) accordingly describes the deployment of biopower upon disadvantaged people through human development research initiatives, government task forces, and the like, which help justify invasive forms of state intervention and “whose *raison d’être* required the existence of densely clustered vulnerable populations” (Murray, 2011, p. 291 *emphasis in original). Following the events of 2004 and 2005, Toronto officially listed thirteen priority neighborhoods – areas that the state associates with spatially concentrated poverty – which were targeted for “revitalization” through public-private

partnerships between the TCHC and private development firms (City of Toronto, 2019; see Loxley & Hajer, 2019). Having gotten approval from the city, the TCHC-led redevelopment of the Regent Park neighborhood started taking shape in the mid-1990s. It would become the blueprint for similar initiatives in the other priority areas.

“Urban Revitalization” and Neoliberalism

In the 2000s, neoliberalism in Ontario shifted from a hard-edged blunt tool into a more technocratic, expertise-driven, and superficially inclusionary form. Explaining this transition helps to demonstrate neoliberalism’s capacity to adapt to changing environments and survive against political movements posed against it. It also helps us comprehend how this sea change in local politics helped legitimize the city’s efforts to undertake broad changes in its public housing districts as part of its larger smart growth agenda affixed to the Official Community Plan.

Governance by the Harris Conservatives gave way to a softer touch style of neoliberalism under the Dalton McGuinty Liberal administration after their 2003 election victory. But it was hardly a blow to the existing order. Inclusionary neoliberalism, as Albo (2018, p. 23) calls it, amounted to Liberals selectively halting ‘irresponsible tax cuts for a few’ while decisively locking in the Harris era cuts to Ontario’s public sector. In 2005, the Liberals formed a Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal to target public assets to undergo privatization (Albo, 2018, p. 23).

These trends bled into Toronto’s approach to redeveloping the public housing complexes in its priority neighborhoods. Alternatives to the Regent Park “revitalization”

were suppressed by the media, NDP city councilors, grassroots organizations, and politicians, including then Toronto Mayor David Miller (Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009, p. 129). In 2010, Miller provided similar support for reinvestment in Lawrence Heights (TCHC, 2010a). Planning began gaining traction locally. As a strategic initiative, it benefited from amalgamation and provincial downloading, further hardwiring a commitment to austerity and privatization into City Hall.

The Lawrence Heights “revitalization” plan was adapted from the same one applied in Regent Park in inner-city Toronto. Back in 1887, Engels offered a famous critique of the bourgeoisie’s “solution” to the housing problem, where the problem of lacking affordable housing is not identified in the contradictions of capitalism but instead gets “moved elsewhere,” where workers keep getting moved into wherever profitable housing can be constructed (as cited by Lehrer, Keil, & Kipfer, 2010, p. 88). In a critique of the Regent Park “revitalization” that aligns with much of the extensive scholarship on this issue, Lehrer, Keil, and Kipfer (2010, p. 88) connect it with the same operational mindset of the old bourgeois reformers, arguing that it seeks to “disperse, hide and micro-manage low-income populations with pre-functionalist design, income mixing, and ownership housing instead of concentrating them in large, homogenous and visibly segregated housing tracts, as in the postwar era.” My objective is not to make a detailed side-by-side comparison between Regent Park and Lawrence Heights to see how much the latter aligns with the former. The goal is simply to explore how state strategies

applied to the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” possess features of neoliberal policy regimes.

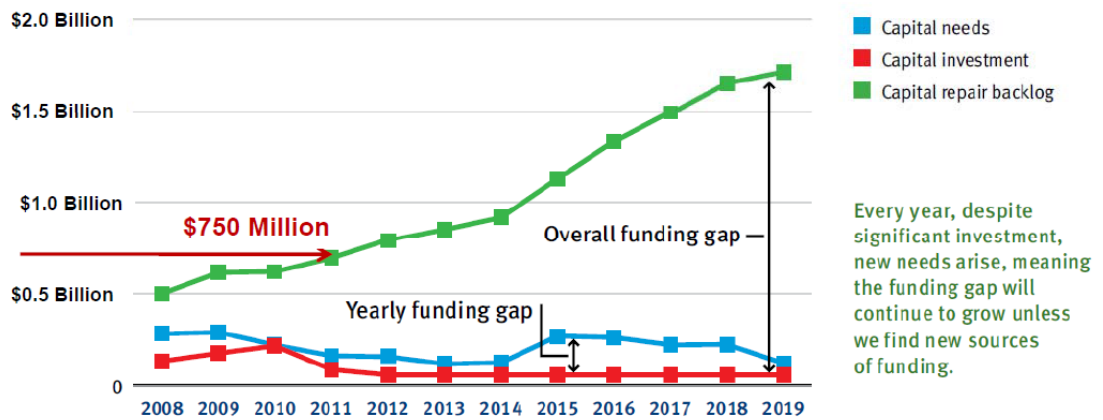
Political gridlock is a crucial ingredient here. The Harris Conservatives won re-election in 1999 and “made more funding cuts to Ontario municipalities for social housing, public transit, and other areas for which cities had shared responsibility with the province” (Maley, 2019, pp. 507-508). The TCHC was forced to work with less money. The organization said in a report that “tenants have complained for years about the woeful state of their units. Since the province “downloaded” responsibility for social housing to the city in 2001, TCHC has lacked the money to keep up repairs” (as cited by Donovan, 2008, p. A8). Reduced funding for TCHC-managed public housing districts like Lawrence Heights exacerbated the deterioration of the housing supply. The TCHC hosted a community forum in 2011 that drew attention to the massive capital and repair backlog that would speed up its decay. Figure 13 (see next page). shows that the cost of repairs and housing maintenance was expected to rise exponentially after 2008 if steps were not taken to close the gap between available funding and the level of needed investments. Considering its funding gap, the TCHC instituted a ‘Housing Works Real Estate Investment Strategy’ centered on ‘Repair, Replace, Retrofit and Revitalize.’ The TCHC identifies its thirteen priority communities to apply this strategy, each of which consists of townhouses and low-rise units in a “poor state of repair” and all having “intensification potential” where intensification refers to the redevelopment of Toronto’s priority public housing districts to add more people and traffic.

(TCHC, 2011d, p. 6).

Lawrence Heights Revitalization Why Revitalize? The Funding Gap

Toronto Community Housing

TCHC Portfolio – Massive Capital and Repair Backlog



Strengthening Places

Toronto Community Housing – Community Management Plan 2010-2012

Figure 13 - TCHC portfolio illustrating funding backlog (TCHC, 2011d, p. 5). Reproduced with permission.

The Lawrence Heights plan had three central components: the destruction and building of a new housing supply, upgrading what planners call hard infrastructure (e.g., roads, sewers), and social infrastructure, including parks, schools, and community centers. These features became selling points where not only the housing gets replaced, but a *new social environment* is offered as a seemingly irrefutable choice for the future. The figures shown on the next page illustrate the planning process. Collectively, these images show the planning following a linear process comprised of successive phases of the study, discussion, and decision-making between the TCHC with tenants, local

institutions, including the Toronto School Board and other non-profits, and the final revision and approval coming from municipal legislative bodies.

These diagrams shown below reveal that the first phase of planning consisted of the TCHC engaging in discussion with the community between 2008 and 2010, culminating in the finishing of a secondary plan in 2011 that won eventual approval.



Figure 14 - Community forum #6 presentation (TCHC, 2011b). Reproduced with permission.

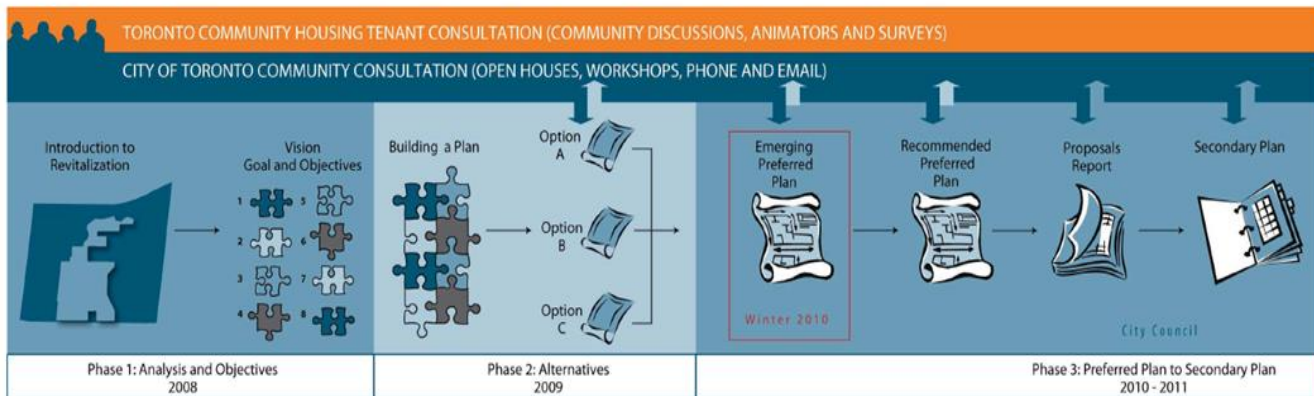


Figure 15 - KPMB Community Design Workshop Presentation (TCHC, 2013, p. 2). Reproduced with permission.

Approval passed through two stages, first by North York City Council and then by Toronto City Council (TCHC, 2011c). In this case, the secondary plan stipulates changes in policies governing land use, including housing, utilities (e.g., lighting, sewer systems), and transportation. Lawrence Heights has gotten folded into a larger plan for reconstructing the entire area bordered by Lawrence Avenue and sitting on both sides of Allen Road. The Lawrence-Allen Secondary Plan area is pictured below from a 2013 workshop by KPMB Architects and Page + Steele / IBI Group Architects, the firms that the TCHC has partnered up with:

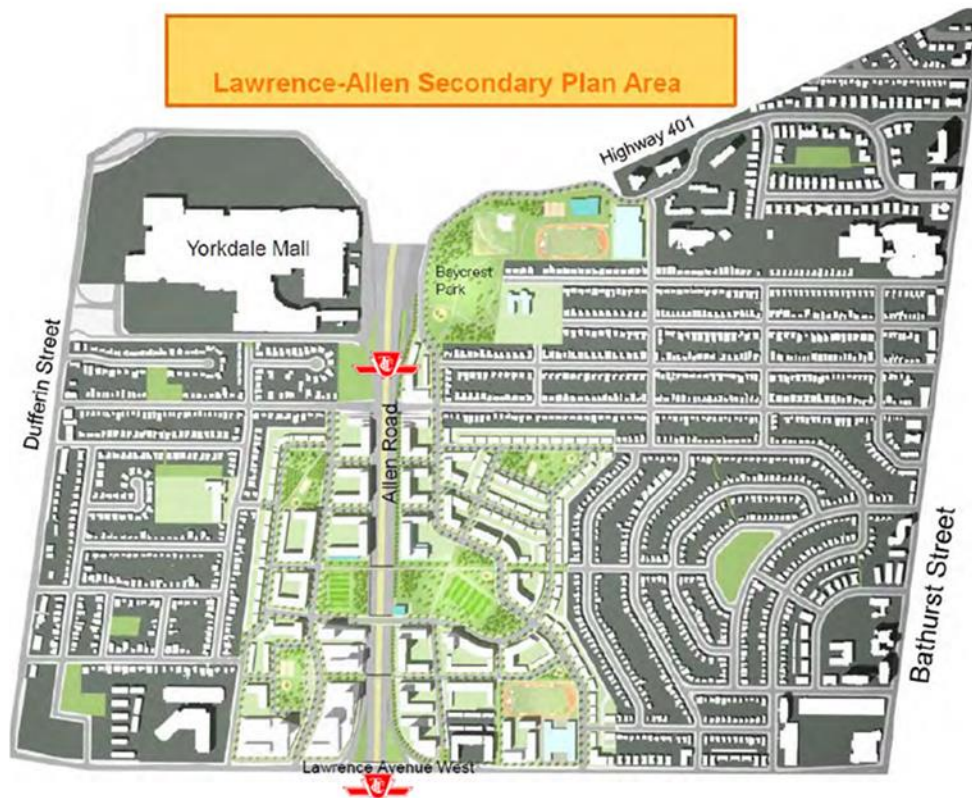


Figure 16 - Lawrence-Allen Secondary Plan Area (TCHC, 2015, p. 5). Reproduced with permission.

The above map shows the Lawrence-Allen area as consisting of several communities – with Lawrence Heights being split between both sides of the Allen Expressway. There are also several parks, major retail centers, and public buildings. The scale of this secondary planning area has created openings for expensive private entities to get involved with the local government to *render* the area more commercially profitable.

Urban Strategies, a global urban design and planning consultancy firm, has “worked with the City of Toronto’s Parks, Forestry and Recreation department and Scott Torrance

Landscape Architects to complete the Lawrence-Allen Public Realm Master Plan”

(Urban Strategies Inc., n.d.).

“Revitalizing” the Housing Supply

The entirety of the Lawrence Heights Development Plan is to take shape over twenty years through the course of four phases of construction, with the centerpiece being the replacement of 1,208 existing rent-gear-to-income homes for the more than 3,500 residents, along with the construction of “an additional 4,092 market condominium and townhouse units” (Heights Development, 2015, p. 4). Implicit in these discussions about the basic construction plans, as well, is the notion that the existing public housing supply in Lawrence Heights is to be replaced but not expanded. To do so, in this view, is to enhance the same stigmas that continue afflicting the initial development.

Phases one through four of the Lawrence Heights plan involves building a “mix of TCHC and market buildings and townhouses,” with phases two and four being on the east side of Allen Road while phase three is on the west side (City of Toronto, 2019b, p. 13). Phase one construction began in 2015 to be completed over 7 to 10 years, “and involves the building of the Yorkdale Condominiums (1A on map), and Yorkdale Condominiums 2 (1B on map) will be the first two buildings constructed in phase one. The next components of phase one include 175 market and 57 TCHC rental townhouses as well as a new public Park (1C on map 1)” *(see below) (Heights Development, 2015, p. 4). The TCHC’s website says planning for the subsequent phases is still underway, and requests for proposals (RFPs) for phases two and three get issued in 2021 (TCHC, 2021).



Figure 17 – Phase One of Lawrence Heights Plan (Heights Development, 2015, p. 4). Reproduced with permission.

Let us zoom in on 1A and 1B shown directly above. In that case, a clearer picture shows public housing residents are being re-located into new RGI units sitting adjacent to other buildings consisting of new market-rate condominiums. The planners will say that the TCHC rental housing is meant to be indistinguishable from the market-rate units. Placing TCHC tenants into the same attractive housing as condominium buyers helps boost the plan's legitimacy. But it is misleading to suggest public housing tenants and newcomers are fully integrated. The image below indicates that market-rate buildings are separated from the TCHC units via a common green space or mews. An official with UNISON Health and Community Services in Lawrence Heights notes that when TCHC residents were made aware of this new living arrangement by planners, they began fearing being ostracized by newcomers (UNISON, personal communication, October 21st 2020). Social mixing may exacerbate the isolation experienced by Lawrence Heights residents from Lawrence Manor and other neighborhoods. The difference being their isolation will be transposed *within* the community rather than outside it.

Block 1A + 1B Site Plan

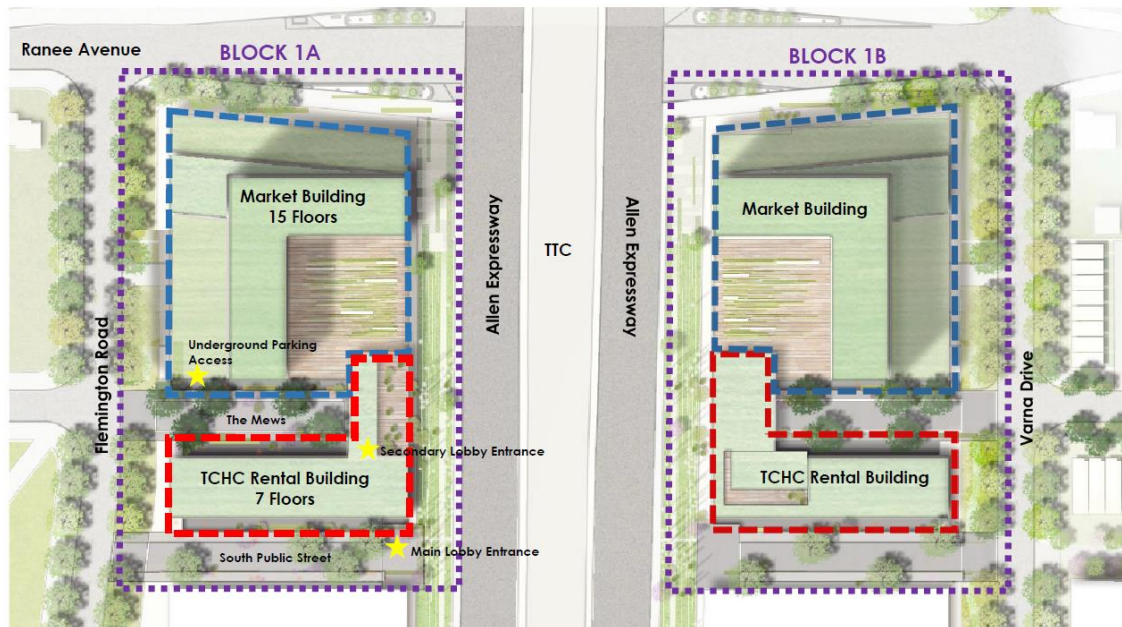


Figure 18 - Blueprint of Block 1A + 1B Site Plan (TCHC, 2014, p. 4)

Throughout each construction phase (1 through 4), the existing public housing structures are getting torn down, requiring temporary re-location of residents from each neighborhood section depending on what portions of the housing are being re-built in each phase. As with Regent Park, the Lawrence Heights plan was set to replace all existing social housing units and allow all tenants to return to the area when the new housing gets built, a policy referred to as “right of return” (Tyndorf, 2005).

Right of return proved in some respects to be a bait and switch. TCHC staff revised the policy after phase 1 of the Regent Park plan got underway, stipulating that tenants “had to be in ‘good standing’ to be able to return with varying definitions of what that meant (can’t be in arrears, can’t be dealing drugs, can’t have ‘anti-social behavior’)”

(Metcalf Foundation, 2021, p. 16). Some Regent Park tenants undergoing temporary displacement complained that they ended up being moved to far-flung neighborhoods during construction (Goffin, 2014). A report in *The Guardian* notes that temporary relocation often stretched on for years, with some Regent Park tenants choosing not to suffer through another move and deciding to stay in their new surroundings instead (Hayes, 2016). By the summer of 2021, three hundred and seventy-five households either waived their right to return, moved out of TCHC-controlled public housing, or died while being temporarily displaced (Metcalf Foundation, 2021, p. 14).

The stipulations in the right of return policy also conflict with the idea of social mixing which was central to the Regent Park “revitalization.” What social-mixing advocates say is roughly the same thing that urban planners and other technocrats were saying in England in the 1930s who believed that “slum” areas “condemned their inhabitants to ‘a travesty of existence’” (Garside, 1988, p. 35). In 1930, a professor of Hygiene and Public Health at the University of Birmingham remarked that “slums produce something more than bad health – they make bad citizens” (as cited by Garside, 1988, p. 35). While planners today do not tend to employ such caustic language, the verbiage of social mixing is still paternalistic and cloaked in environmental determinism, where so-called bad citizens can be re-molded to fit a “healthier” image provided they are made to live closer to the middle-class. According to Uitemark (2003, p. 531):

It is frequently suggested by planners and politicians alike, that a policy that promotes ‘social mixing’ could strengthen the social tissue of a disadvantaged neighborhood, thus saving its inhabitants from living in an environment that

allegedly inhibits social and economic integration (as cited by Lees, 2008, p. 2453).

But with the right of return policy, Regent Park tenants who were deemed unfit for the “revitalized” neighborhood were pre-emptively stonewalled from returning to cleanse the area for middle-class newcomers.

In moves intended by planners to redress the problems of the *right of return* policy between the TCHC and Lawrence Heights tenants, the decision was made to temporarily displace residents to an outside district or into vacant homes in other parts of the community. Accordingly, the TCHC declared it would cover moving costs and give five months’ notice before moving them and that tenants have the right to return to their new units so long as they remain in good standing with no increase applied to their monthly rental costs (TCHC, 2017, pp. 2-3). Giving Lawrence Heights residents the option to stay in vacant units within the same neighborhood was a major sticking point in early discussions with tenants and other stakeholders between 2008 and 2010. This upset people on the public housing waitlist because the TCHC was forced to keep these units reserved for temporarily displaced residents rather than new applicants (TCHC, personal communication, November 26th 2019).

For persons being denied placement in Lawrence Heights units during the construction phases of “revitalization,” it does not help that social housing construction has dried up for decades in Ontario, much less Toronto, leaving a major supply shortage. On its website, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP, 2021, n.p.) says the local government should acquire more land via eminent domain to build more social housing

supply given that the supply of it has not expanded since the 1990s, and waitlists for units have reached upwards of twelve years or more as of 2021. There is a longstanding pattern at work here. Frederic Engels (1970/2021, p. 67) wrote back in 1872 that the state represents nothing but the organized and collective authority of the possessing classes, landowners, and capitalists alike. Even if individual capitalists cannot be moved to palliate housing shortages, the state itself “will not do much more” (Engels, 2021, p. 68). De-commodified housing is simply less of a priority when lands can otherwise be used for more expensive market housing.

However, the scale and costs of the “revitalization,” despite its potential for creating windfall profits, raise the question of how it was financed, especially given that the TCHC has operated under austere conditions since its creation. The process of strangling Lawrence Heights of additional funding cleared the path for the same neoliberal policy regime to be applied just as it was in Regent Park and Rivertowne in East End Toronto (Donovan, 2010, p. A1). One blogger asked why the TCHC could not just renovate the existing homes in Lawrence Heights rather replace them (Fleming, 2008). Officials would counter that the money for renovation is not there and that the funding and repair backlog is too large. As former TCHC CEO Derek Ballantyne said about the Regent Park plan that social mixing developments are a necessity given the problem of stigmatization that infects any area with too high a concentration of public housing units (Daly, 2005, p. B01).

During a 2011 forum, TCHC planners said that renovation of existing units was not possible because the idea was to correct the original planners' mistakes with Lawrence Heights. These planners argue that "revitalization" creates a "mixed community, [improves] connectivity, and avoids creating isolated neighborhoods...Each building should include a mix of social and private housing" (City of Toronto, 2011b, p. 31). In 2011, the policy strategy, including the financing plan for Lawrence Heights, came together for the city to approve (Mehler-Paperny, 2010, p. A16). Indeed, once the Lawrence Heights plan was folded into the more significant Lawrence-Allen Secondary Plan designs, both of which required approval from the city, the official justifications given for it by the TCHC were bolstered further, given the money and the interested parties involved.

A significant portion of the financing for the Lawrence Heights "revitalization" comes from the private developers that form the other side of the partnership with the government. TCHC put out a call seeking real estate developers, and in 2013 it selected two firms: Context Development and Metropia, which formed a joint venture called Heights Development Inc. that became the partner in the "revitalization" (Heights Development, 2015, p. 4). With a private partner aboard, financing the replacement RGI housing units (1,208 total) became possible. According to documents from the early years of the planning, all new rent-geared-to-income housing must be funded entirely by "revitalization revenue" since the agency's funding gap leaves it with no money to invest in construction (TCHC, 2011d, p. 28). The TCHC's lacking funds was made repeatedly

apparent in reports from the local government, with one noting that “revenues from private market sales and leveraging long-term financing” would front the “costs of replacing the social housing units, given that there is currently no existing federal/provincial funding program to support replacement housing capital costs” (City of Toronto, 2011a, p. 8). Through what was classic austerity politics, the provincial and federal governments abetted this public-private partnership by withholding public resources from social housing providers like the TCHC.

Rather than rely on the city for financial assistance to fund the roughly \$350 million for constructing the RGI housing, the TCHC, in turn, has relied on its primary “revitalization” revenue source: selling land assets (City of Toronto, 2010c, p. 5). TCHC-controlled lands are interwoven with tracts owned by the Toronto District School Board and the City of Toronto, which forms a total of sixty-five hectares of publicly owned land (City of Toronto, 2010b, p. 3). The TCHC built its replacement RGI units using the money it accrued from selling a portion of its lands to Heights Development, which in turn is building market units on the properties it purchased (TCHC, 2011d, p. 1).

These large private developers bring their reputation and building expertise to the “revitalization” partnership with the government and their significant financial resources. Metropia’s (2021) website advertises the firm’s multiple awards, its numerous real estate and investment experts, and its involvement in several upscale developments in Yorkville, Pickering, in addition to Lawrence Heights in North York. Context (2021),

meanwhile, is supported by Waterloo Capital, a private investment fund with access to capital from selected accredited investors.

Comparatively, social housing providers like the TCHC have continued operating with fewer resources since the late 1990s. NDP member Teresa Armstrong (2017, p. 1520) remarked in the provincial parliament that “social housing providers have had to rely mainly on ad hoc provincial capital initiatives and use funding from limited capital reserves to complete much-needed capital repairs.” The persistent emphasis here is on lacking funding as a precursor to government gridlock, which fuels “revitalization” pressures that get applied to public housing communities.

David Harvey (2015) says that one of the problems with urbanization is that city neighborhoods have since the 1970s become more homogenous, whether in Sao Paulo, Santiago, Mexico City, New York, or Istanbul. Naturally, state officials and their developer partners need the “revitalization” to be profitable and not just provide housing for social housing tenants. The project conforms with the ideas of architects, planning consultants, and developers who intend to make Lawrence Heights resemble other upscale neighborhoods. Consider the sleek architectural styles incorporated into these housing designs for Lawrence Heights (*see figures below) in the inner suburbs of North York, and one can see similar-looking developments popping up all over downtown Toronto. A few examples include the Canary District and Corktown, King-Parliament, and the enhancing densification of St. Jamestown (Urban-Toronto, 2020).



Figure 19 - Blueprint for new park and retail in Lawrence Heights (TCHC, 2013, p. 37). Reproduced with permission.

For those responsible for designing the new residences in Lawrence Heights, there are strategic intentions where the state mirrors what has been done with similar schemes elsewhere. By luring more affluent residents, the idea is to make the neighborhood a more attractive space to absorb capital and labour. Lawrence Heights has long been deprived of necessary services, like grocery stores and banks (Moloney, 2010, p. GT10). But once “revitalization” planning started, Lawrence Heights was suddenly talked about as having ‘major potential’ as a “strong community, great location, [and] under-used space” (TCHC, 2011d, p. 4). Planners employed the language of social mixing, describing the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” as being intended to build a “healthier, safer” neighborhood [and] improve “relationships with [the] broader community” (TCHC, 2011d, p. 5):



• Employment and Skills Development

- New employment and education opportunities, not just construction



Figure 20 - New retail in Lawrence Heights (TCHC, 2011d, p. 14). Reproduced with permission.

Making Lawrence Heights into a space that can resolve the surplus absorption problem, which is always a temporary fix, is a process that also requires making social housing residents into ‘appropriately neoliberal subjects’ (Harvey, 2010). More affluent residents move in and impose moral supervision over social housing occupants, removing threats to the sanctity of a middle-class lifestyle.

Infrastructure and Financing

The government and its private partners have also channeled a lot of resources and planning towards “reshaping” the hard and social infrastructure within Lawrence Heights. Building a socially mixed community is predicated on increasing the existing capacity for the area to absorb surplus value and labor. Part of this task with the Lawrence Heights

revitalization involves upgrading the roadways to counter what planners insist is a contributing factor to the housing complexes being isolated and difficult for vehicles to enter and exit. Additional through-streets were said to be the necessary solvent. The following image reveals the planning for the new street network:

Master Plan - Street Network

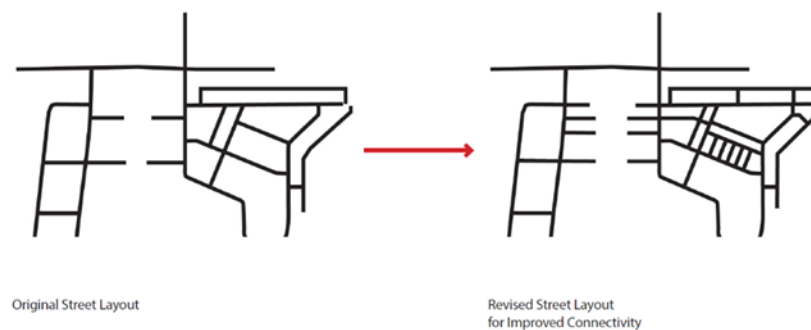


Figure 21 - Diagram of the new street network (TCHC, 2013, p. 13). Reproduced with permission.

The revised street layout was described by planners as needed for the *intensification* of Lawrence Heights, making it conform to new urbanism and smart growth. A 2018 letter from Josh Colle to North York Community Council asks for more support for Lawrence Heights to have streetscapes that are more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists, supporting the creation of community gardens and greenhouses, and the types of initiatives that promote human-scaled urban design (Colle, 2018). Such diversity planning follows the adoption of softer-edge neoliberalism by Toronto's local administration. Subsequently, progressivism and environmentalism became nominally melded to the agendas of big business and real-estate developers. TCHC staff members

have voiced their commitment to progressive causes, including developing more green space and cycling lanes in Lawrence Heights to help combat climate change (TCHC, personal communication, November 26th 2019).

Along with roadway re-construction, planners delivered a report to the North York Community Council in 2010 detailing a public infrastructure plan totaling \$240 million for libraries, childcare and sewers, which, when combined with the cost of replacing the rent-geared-to-income housing units (\$350 million), amounted to a price tag of \$590 million for the entire “revitalization” – excluding the private market units to be built on the same lands (Mehler-Paperny, 2010, p. A16). While the TCHC did form a master plan for infrastructure in all four phases, securing funding has been challenging (City of Toronto, 2011b). With the Regent Park plan, Toronto assumed the whole costs of social infrastructure, including the building of parks and community facilities, and entered into a cost-sharing agreement with the TCHC to cover hard infrastructure rebuilding since the high land values (they sold portions to their private partners) and intensification opportunities permitted the TCHC to foot 40 percent of the bill (City of Toronto, 2010a, p. 10).

To build Lawrence Heights in its original form, the government benefited from purchasing the lands in North York at a bargain compared to more expensive land costs in the downtown Toronto area. But with the “revitalization,” the location of Lawrence Heights in the inner suburbs presented a financing problem that went in the reverse direction. Lawrence Heights is more expansive than Regent Park in the inner city and

traditionally has had “multiple landowners both public and private, and the land value is lower, with less opportunity for intensification” (City of Toronto, 2010a, p. 10). Before “revitalization,” the lands comprising Lawrence Heights were separate tracts owned by the TCHC, the City of Toronto, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), and RioCan, a real-estate investment trust.

An added issue with social infrastructure is that it affects the entire Lawrence-Allen area, which has led to complications over brokering plans for infrastructure building. Who will pay for it when the TCHC’s lands cannot be sold to private interests for as much money? With jurisdiction split among multiple landholders, can negotiations be settled? Beyond Lawrence Heights, there are

school properties (Baycrest Public School, Sir Sandford Fleming Academy, Flemington Public School and Bathurst Heights Secondary School) [which] are all owned by the Toronto District School Board... The City of Toronto owns a number of parks located with the Study Area. Finally, the remainder of the land is owned by private landowners including Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care and shopping centres that include Yorkdale Shopping Centre, Lawrence Square Mall, and Lawrence Plaza (City of Toronto, 2011a, p. 14).

The TDSB agreed to coordinate with planners for a long-term vision centered on turning Bathurst Heights lands “into a mixed-use site with a new secondary school, residential apartments and potential for other community facilities, such as an aquatic centre and childcare” (City of Toronto, 2010c, p. 69). Overcoming financing and jurisdictional challenges regarding the social infrastructure portion of the Lawrence Heights plan is not purely done because the need is there. Officials in charge want to cement it as the common-sense path forward.

For Lawrence Heights, the TCHC agreed with the city to get infrastructure funding for phase one, including new road construction. Still, each subsequent phase requires negotiation and approval (North York Mirror, 2011). Toronto City Council decided that the TCHC should submit business plans to public finance officials before each successive phase of the “revitalization” to determine what is feasible (City of Toronto, 2010a, p. 2). Apart from the challenges associated with building some new sectors of infrastructure while upgrading others, the plan has faced public criticism coming predominately from homeowners in the areas surrounding Lawrence Heights. For these critics, the Lawrence-Allen area cannot handle the proposed levels of intensification precisely because the existing infrastructure cannot support it (Grant, 2010, p. A14; Sajecki & Ervin, 2010).

Another critical aspect of the social infrastructure modules in the Lawrence Heights plan is the development of community support, job training, and public arts and culture programs. At the center of this element of the planning for phase one has been creating and implementing the Social Development Plan (SDP). The SDP was yet another ingredient adapted from the Regent Park “revitalization” model (TCHC, 2007, p. 16). Toronto City Council directed public administrators to work in tandem with the TCHC, “Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION), community partners, residents, and other City Divisions including Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS), and Economic Development and Culture” to create an SDP for Lawrence Heights (City of Toronto, 2010a, p. 3). The TCHC describes the overarching goal of

social development as helping Lawrence Heights residents overcome the challenges they face “such as social exclusion and isolation - realized through stereotypes, prejudices, and other misconceptions about the neighborhood” (TCHC, 2012a, p. iii).

Initiatives like the SDP stress inclusivity, where residents become part of a mobilization of resources and expertise. It becomes the common-sense solution for what the wider public sees as a plagued community that needs to be better affixed to the neoliberal ideals of looking to markets as the avenue to resolve problems, disciplined wage-labor relations, and aligning to the same roughly middle-class standards that the government (in alignment with capital) is intending to realize within Lawrence Heights through social mixing. The broad strokes of the SDP focus on delivering “education/school programs and initiatives, community supports and services for newcomers, health care programs, food security initiatives, accessible legal support, and services that are youth, senior, and gender-oriented” (TCHC, 2012a, p. 12). Assisting Lawrence Heights residents with employment opportunities is of prime importance to the SDP’s architects. Through their partnership with TESS, SDP organizers intend to connect

residents to available jobs and employment services through various forms of communication, including the internet, TESS offices, and local agencies. 2. Offer specific training and education in areas that have consistent job opportunities (for example: customer service, carpentry, electrical). 3. Ensure literacy, language (ESL), basic education, life skills training, and work experience programs are available to whoever needs them (TCHC, 2012, p. 44).

Looking at the Lawrence Heights policy regime, including the SDP, strictly for its strategic benefits for officials and decision-makers, there is a connective tissue between it and the ideas of neoliberal thinkers like Milton Friedman. In their 1979 book *Free to*

Choose, Milton and Rose Friedman (1980/1990) argue that public welfare provision is self-corrupting. It compels people to depend on the state as if it were a parent. They lose their desire to work as self-determined individuals and make a living through cooperative market relations. The official statements about the “revitalization” communicate a similar message: public housing districts are stigma-ridden, and people living there are unhappy. A vision gets conjured whereby residents, developers, and public officials work together to re-engineer the built environment and its people to function more like a typical inner-city neighborhood with more private market activity.

Despite this view’s emphasis on individual freedom as paving the path to a better life, it encourages daily life to become increasingly defined by corporate service provision, transactional relationships, and looking to businesses to resolve social problems. An enforced order of middle-class professionalism is required, leading to the appearance of a free society. For developers, the objective is to finish the plan, and the expense of providing social infrastructure programs and community engagement is a proper lubricant. The “revitalization” plan is formidable on the neoliberal side, but the community has a say in these matters, as shown in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter explains why the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” began and details its formally neoliberal features. The dynamic selectivities framework can help us understand the planning as strategically motivated to bring stakeholders together to *rebuild* the

neighborhood's housing and infrastructure. Underlying this event is the notion that "revitalization" can temporarily fix the surplus absorption problem.

Regarding spatial selectivity, the turn towards post-industrialism and neoliberalism in Toronto helps underscore how the Lawrence Heights plan affects the *spatialization* of poverty at the local level. The "revitalization" is reinforcing the movement of private capital away from Toronto's urban center out into inner-ring suburban districts. Hulchanski (2010) says that since the 1970s, inner-city Toronto neighborhoods that were formerly characterized by high levels of poverty have slowly been gentrifying after de-industrialization took hold. For decades, often-low-income migrant workers and their families flowed into Lawrence Heights and other inner suburban districts in "Scarborough, western North York, and northern Etobicoke" (Hulchanski, 2010, p. 21). The objective now with "revitalization" is to encourage a new flow of affluent people into Lawrence Heights so that the neighborhood better conforms with the image the state prefers.

The government in Toronto is making the inner suburbs a significant target for "revitalization" projects. Of the thirteen listed priority neighborhoods identified on the website, nearly all of them are inner suburban districts: Lawrence Heights (North York), Crescent Park (former borough of East York), Dorset Park (West Scarborough), East Eglinton-Kennedy Park (lies between Toronto and Mississauga), Victoria Village (North York), Kingston-Galloway (Scarborough), St. Jamestown (East End Toronto), Jane-Finch (North York), Malvern (Scarborough), Scarborough Village, Steeles-L'Amoreaux

(Scarborough), Westminster-Branson (North York), Weston-Mount Dennis (Toronto) (City of Toronto). The City of Toronto lists Neighborhood Improvement Areas that need “additional investment to combat specific problems such as higher-than-average crime or a shortage of services” (City of Toronto, n.d., n.p.).

The idea here is not to close the book on what this case study represents. This chapter has mapped out the strategic motivations underpinning the “revitalization,” where the intention is to consolidate the neoliberal project further. There are multiple sites of power at work in the conduct of these events. However, communities are critical sites that can direct social change. It is the case that Lawrence Heights has a strongly neoliberal influence acting upon it, as this chapter has shown. Still, a considerable grassroots movement has been engaged in this process.

Regarding the tension between the spread of abstract versus differential space and the related defense of hegemony and arising of a passive revolution, this chapter discusses events that appear to turn Lawrence Heights towards fulfilling exactly what the purveyors of abstract space desire. Such interests are set on re-engineering the built environment and prompt an influx of different classes of residents into the district. Neoliberal strategies implemented by the state to this end are meant to coordinate and condition people’s socio-spatial relations in ways that foster greater rates of surplus creation. There are multiple systems at work in the aggregate, including strategic policymaking, spatial reorganization of the built environment, and the discursive

promotion and public deliberation of the “revitalization” through the press and elsewhere. They are all whirring in motion to bring the project from a vision into reality.

This chapter has thus shown how public and private power complement one another in defense of hegemony. In the next chapter, I will show how a grassroots movement is reckoning with the fact that this site is undergoing tumultuous change that falls outside their capacity to control, including the destruction and rebuilding of the housing stock, encouraging an influx of residents possessed with more varying incomes, and the building of greater capacity and number of retail and private services. And yet, I will also demonstrate that grassroots energies have carved out pockets of differential space, primarily by leveling pressure at local officials and planners to fulfill its own demands related to social infrastructure.

Vision into Reality: A Community Wrestles with Change

“People are at a cautious point. They're going to be skeptical...Do they really care about us?”

– Lawrence Heights resident (Campbell, 2008, p. A10)

Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the neoliberal dimensions of the Lawrence Heights “revitalization.” It explained how the government in Toronto has been targeting its public housing districts for socially mixed redevelopments through public-private partnerships. Such projects got energized by local political movements that projected public safety fears onto thirteen priority neighborhoods. These events became political fuel for the state to identify under-invested spaces that can serve as temporary remedies for the surplus absorption problem. In the eyes of government officials, public housing complexes fit the bill for “revitalization” because they have been publicly stigmatized as dysfunctional, costly to manage, and deprived of investment. They are also located primarily in the inner suburbs, where land is cheaper and has intensification potential.

Within Lawrence Heights, however, there is a politically active culture present, with many organizers asserting themselves in the “revitalization” planning. This chapter shows how this grassroots political strength is borne out of and mounts a challenge against the struggles residents have experienced in their dealings with the local government and being traditionally isolated from surrounding areas. The government has

responded in kind with action that (to an extent) is sympathetic to what grassroots actors demanded. By this measure, grassroots energies have wrested some control over resources (e.g., health and wellness services, job training, and employment programs) and have independently and proactively responded to everyday neighborhood issues concerning housing and safety, etc. The message from the grassroots movement involved in the planning is that “revitalization” should serve some community-led ends despite its embeddedness in neoliberal policy regimes.

Identifying this presence of positive grassroots activity in the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” planning challenges our typical assumptions about resident involvement in these sorts of neighborhood *makeovers*. Neoliberalism is still the dominant force in how it commodifies more avenues of daily life and creates corporatized and homogenous neighborhoods. Planning remains set on using the language and strategies of “revitalization” to make Lawrence Heights into a renewed engine for capital accumulation. But it is important not to misread the assertion of agency by the community as something that gets swallowed up and twisted into whatever redresses the surplus absorption problem.

One should also consider how changes in the Canadian political economy are impacting grassroots involvement in the “revitalization.” Its first phase gained steam in the ten years of recovery and austerity that followed the crisis of 2008. Out of the despair, social dislocation and discontent fueled populist movements, with some set against neoliberal policy regimes while others operated in tandem with them. In this spatio-

temporal context, organizers in Lawrence Heights are continuing to make demands on the government during “revitalization” planning despite ongoing austerity.

This chapter has three sections. The first section looks at political conflicts that have erupted during the “revitalization” process. These include those mounted against the plan which failed to stop it. The second section will show that the language and strategies associated with the “revitalization” have been legitimized through multiple sites of power, including the news media and the provincial parliament. The final section looks at involvement by the community through a representative body known as the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION) through its proactive dealings with the state along three key dimensions: the Social Development Plan (SDP), housing, and community safety. The section also shows how the province has been less committed to devoting resources to “revitalization,” a trend that aligns with its embodiment of right-populist and neoliberal ideas that amplify one another.

Grassroots Resistance to “Revitalization”

The people living in and around Lawrence Heights have a range of feelings about the “revitalization,” falling along a spectrum from resistance to mixed feelings, with others expressing enthusiasm and hope. One can connect these emotional responses with the long history of multi-sided oppression that has characterized Lawrence Heights since it opened. When planning for the “revitalization” picked up steam around 2008, TCHC staff and other local agency members began conducting door-to-door engagement with residents, large town hall meetings, and surveys. A member of the non-profit group

Pathways to Education says the tenants in Lawrence Heights had little initial enthusiasm for the “revitalization.” Several young people feared it was a conspiracy by Lawrence Manor residents to banish them from the area (UNISON, personal communication, October 21st 2020). These concerns were understandable given the history of Lawrence Heights being largely ignored by surrounding neighborhoods since the 1960s.

Lacking enthusiasm for the “revitalization” is apparent when one examines the reaction to it by residents in the greater Lawrence-Allen area. Many individuals, including some within Lawrence Heights, mounted a political campaign against it. The Bathurst-Lawrence Four Quadrants Neighbourhood Alliance (4Q) had hundreds of members who voiced their opposition to the planning. They reasoned that more residential and vehicular traffic would put undue stress on lacking existing infrastructure, threatening property values and quality of life. Rallies to block the “revitalization” were advertised through poster campaigns:

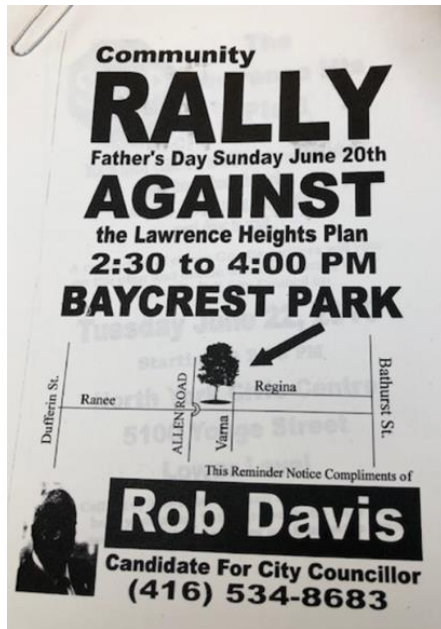


Figure 22 - Poster #1 advertising community rally (n.d.). City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 301, Series 1680, File 1348. Reproduced with permission.

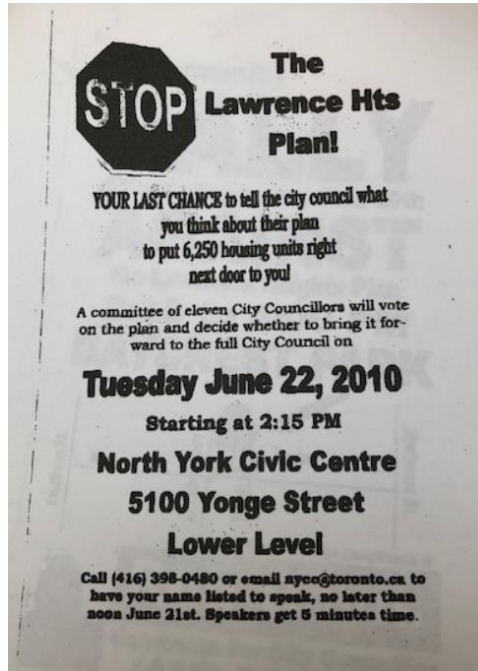


Figure 23 - Poster #2 advertising community rally (n.d.). City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 301, Series 1680, File 1349. Reproduced with permission.

As these images show, resident-led opposition to the “revitalization” applied pressure to local politicians voting to approve the secondary plan would set the construction phases in motion. One archived email contains a report from 4Q, which documented survey results showing that “not one respondent answered they strongly agreed that community groups in our district have been well consulted” (Nitkin, 2010, n.p.). News stories quoted Lawrence-Allen area residents and public officials who opposed the plan (Poisson, 2010, p. GT4; Alcoba, 2010, p. A15). But some “revitalization” advocates argue that these opponents forbid closer contact between them and the residents of Lawrence Heights. According to one TCHC planner:

People say they are concerned about the increased density and concerns over traffic but that’s not really why they are concerned. In 2007-2008, when revitalization conversations began, the greater Lawrence-Allen area was invited to hear about the vision, and the neighbors would come to these huge meetings that would happen at the local high school and there was a clear distinction where ‘we are the fancy people that sit one this side of the gymnasium’ and when these people start asking good and valid questions about how our neighborhoods could be more integrated and our children can play together in new parks and [these other] people were very clear that this wasn’t their vision. I think some of these concerns around traffic and those sorts of things are masking the reality that ‘we don’t want to play with the people on this side of the fence for other reasons’ (TCHC, personal communication, November 26th 2019).

With such statements, “revitalization” advocates position themselves as working on behalf of the Lawrence Heights community in opposition to the plan’s bigoted opponents. Ethically inclusionary planning works to the advantage of political officials and other big moneyed interests as it lends a human face to the process.

Another feature of inclusionary planning in Lawrence Heights is the community animator program. Community animators are Lawrence Heights tenants who work with

planners to organize forums, enhance engagement, and work as translators for other tenants (Lawrence Heights Local Immigration Partnership, 2011, p. 14). When animators win accolades like the Urban Leadership Award from the Canadian Urban Institute, as they did in 2011, we see how they also provide an additional layer of legitimation for the “revitalization” (TCHC, 2011). It is not as if the state purely instrumentalizes animators in any absolute sense. They do essential work in informing other tenants who may otherwise be left less aware of what is going on with the planning. But let us again quote the member of Pathways to Education who says:

There’s a dark side to the animators’ program in the sense that after everything for the revitalization was passed by city council, there’s a sense that the animators’ program just seemed to disappear into thin air. And that left a lot of residents wondering, did you just use us? (UNISON, personal communication, October 21st 2020).

Both the strategies used by the state to deal with resistance against the “revitalization” during the late 2000s and early 2010s and the forces that opposed building the original Lawrence Heights in the mid-twentieth century were two sides of the same coin. These strategies saw planners engaging widely with multiple communities and coordinating resources to get the necessary approvals. In this fashion, the planning process seems democratic but is set on rigid goals that have to satisfy those who possess the most resources and decision-making power. The construction and subsequent “revitalization” of Lawrence Heights were initiatives considered too valuable to be hindered by the opposition – especially given all the benefits they afford to private builders, architects, state officials, and businesspeople.

Creating a Vision for “Revitalization”

Resistance to the “revitalization” by residents in the greater Lawrence-Allen area was met with a multi-sided strategy by planners, the local state, and its private partners. And part of this effort involves constructing a publicized vision for change that becomes attributed the label of being *common-sense*. Once again, we can see the media as a useful vehicle that helps the state complete this objective. The table on the next page analyzes the content of forty-four news and magazine articles on Lawrence Heights published between 2004 and 2020. The year 2004 was chosen because it marks the beginning of discussions on the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” in press circles. Recurring themes were identified while reviewing the articles, and each piece was coded whenever its content reflected one or more of these themes. Each code was used once per article to avoid skewing the results.

The following table shows a high percentage of articles describing the “revitalization” in a favorable light, with talk of removing the “stigma of public housing.” Public officials are generally supporters of the plan. And several articles raise concerns about added density putting too much weight on infrastructure and upsetting the community’s social fabric. But just as many articles underscore the diminishing

Recurring themes	No. of occurrences	Percentage of total
Positive view of the revitalization	15	34.09%
Officials promoting revitalization	12	27.27%
Officials opposing revitalization	2	4.55%
Negative view of the revitalization	7	15.91%
Documenting history of Lawrence Heights	11	25%
Concerns about infrastructural stress	11	25%
Poor quality of housing in Lawrence Heights	9	20.50%
Stigmatization/crime/drug-use/mentions of ‘Jungle’	28	63.64%
Resident-based opposition to revitalization	5	11.36%
Residents’ favourable view of revitalization	5	11.36%
		Total
		<i>N</i> = 44

Figure 24 - Analysis of news articles on Lawrence Heights between 2008 and 2020

quality of Lawrence Heights’ housing. But an even more significant number of articles talked about the neighborhood’s reputation as being dysfunctional, with the implication being that a makeover is warranted (63.64%).

Former Liberal party member Peter Milczyn (2018, p. 1530) remarked in the Ontario parliament about the need to take Lawrence Heights and other social housing neighborhoods, describing the need to

reinvest in them, to take the old housing stock and, in some cases, refurbish and retrofit what exists, and, in many cases, take the amount of land that is there and create new housing, replace the old housing stock and add more housing to build up those communities.

More statements in the Ontario legislature speak to how neoliberal policies in the 1990s and 2000s accelerated gridlock and lacking maintenance of the public housing stock in Lawrence Heights.

You have to remember that this was a downloaded service of the Harris government that the McGuinty government has had for five years and has done virtually nothing with. The state of repair has decayed over each and every one of those five years to where it is now in an atrocious and abominable state. I challenge any of the members to go into those housing places, to go into Jane-Finch, to go into Regent Park, to go into all of those places where people live-Lawrence Heights-and look at the state of the infrastructure (Prue, 2008, p. 1720)

In this scenario, the community in Lawrence Heights had little choice but to welcome the influx of capital. The official involved with Pathways to Education describes visiting homes in Lawrence Heights:

When you go into some of these buildings – and let’s say it’s thirty degrees plus – and they’re trying to keep some windows open. Some people have their front door open. They’re sitting in their apartments in shorts and no shirts. There might be a couple fans going and you begin to see the un-livable conditions in some of these communities. When you hear people tell you stories about how whenever it rains their basement floods. People talk about mould issues within their properties and how long it takes to get those issues rectified. I went into one families’ home – and to be completely honest here – one of the things I noticed when I got in the front door there was it seemed like there were dozens of cockroaches (UNISON, personal communication, October 21st 2020).

This quote speaks again to how the degradation of the housing stock in Lawrence Heights progressed to the point that nearly any *solution* was considered a welcome one.

Confronting Change

A tenant engagement strategy is common for “revitalization,” with the goal for planners being to develop a secondary plan that will win City Council approval. The TCHC has conducted over twenty-seven engagement sessions in the Lawrence-Allen area since 2008, and they included over 2,500 residents and stakeholders, whose concerns included: intensification (number of new units), creating of new parks and facilities, maintaining community character, and avoiding displacement (City of Toronto, 2010, p. 11-12).

Survey results from a tenant consultation session shown in the images below reveal what residents prioritized and demanded from the TCHC in the new housing agreement. The listed priorities that tenants care most about include creating employment, education, and job training opportunities. The fine print on the bulletin board says: youth apprenticeships, the integration of educational programs for residents, and giving them priority placement for construction jobs during the “revitalization.”

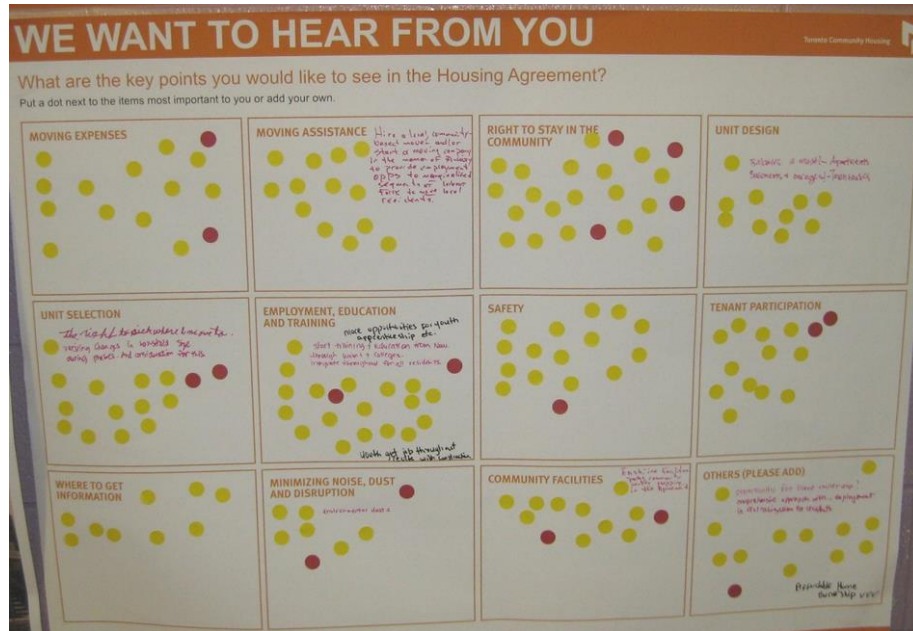


Figure 25 - Survey results from Lawrence Heights residents #1 (TCHC, 2011c). Reproduced with permission.

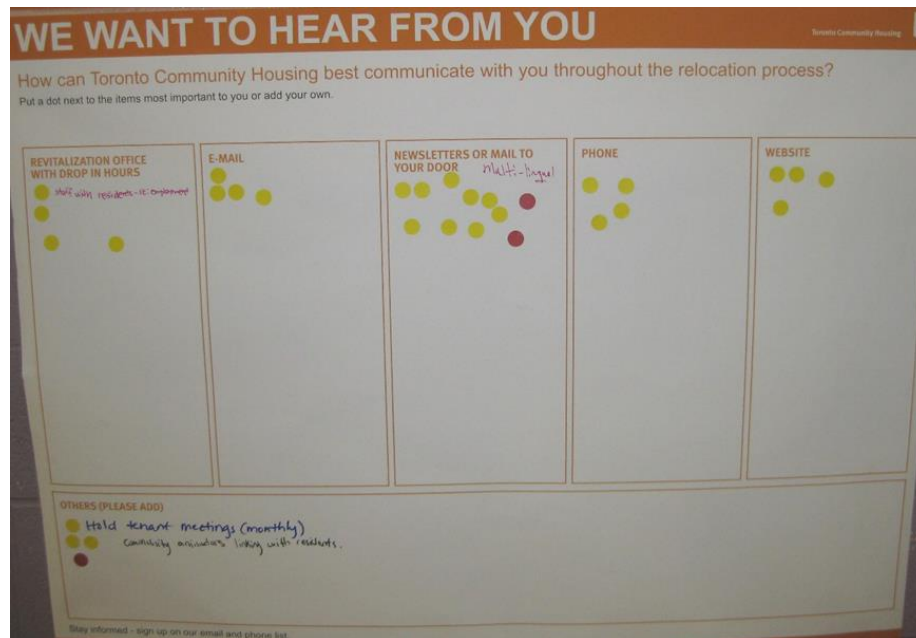


Figure 26 - Survey results from Lawrence Heights residents #2 (TCHC, 2011c). Reproduced with permission.

Additional factors include tenants asking for assistance with moving during temporary displacement and into the new units, the right to stay in the community during construction, the right to select their new units, permitting variance in household size, and enhancing neighborhood safety and tenant participation. These priorities crystallized into the approved secondary plan, including the SDP and the rule that tenants are protected against displacement from the neighborhood during construction. Resident participation in forums and surveys is a way of holding the local government accountable. Nevertheless, the state dictates resident involvement: planners draw up the surveys and set the boundaries around priorities.

Grassroots Engagement

Our attention turns to the work done by LHION with its resident members and organizers in coordination with city officials and planners. This is partly due to their intimate involvement in the planning and because I was allowed to sit in and witness deliberations during their meetings throughout 2019 and 2021. While this work only covers the last few years of LHION's involvement in the planning, it reveals genuine political efforts to permeate the wall of abstract space that seeks to flatten and absorb any challenges.

Let us unpack what LHION is, what it does, and why its work contributes to a grassroots effort to exploit holes in the existing order and determine the future more on their own terms. The local government describes LHION as follows:

Made up of various City divisions and community agencies, the Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network (LHION) was established to enhance and increase local employment planning, service coordination, provision, and access

to local services. It strengthens the partnerships in the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood among our service providers. The workgroup has sponsored various events, such as the Youth Opportunity Fairs, Youth In Policing Initiatives, Community Awareness Fair, and more (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. 47).

A volunteer-based community network of organizations that first arose in 2005, LHION has a membership base of forty-plus agencies, tenants, and grassroots organizations. Any network of this size becomes bureaucratized the larger it gets. The network essentially becomes absorbed as an extension of the government. It follows that persons working within LHION are taking a passive revolutionary direction, striving for change while working in and through the organized and processual locus of city government.

To this point, for LHION to work with the city, it must have an internal governance structure, leading to less decentralized decision-making. The network has co-chairs and other elected officers, tenant leaders, etc. In its work with the local government, there are moments when the network makes decisions that will affect tenants' interests. A persistent concern in studying this partnership is determining the extent to which the state uses its involvement with grassroots associations to legitimize the "revitalization." As one report says, the non-profits that comprise LHION

work together with the city, TCHC and local resident organizations addressing community priorities through issue-specific workgroups including community safety, employment and training, education, food justice and youth outreach – all supported by a steering committee with representatives from each workgroup (BePart, 2010, p. 8).

LHION has been working with the city since the "revitalization" planning started. As a component of the social infrastructure side of the plan, the SDP connects tenants with prospective employers, job opportunities and training, scholarships, community art

programs, and other tenant-led initiatives to be subsidized with public funding. Toronto City Council directed public administrators to develop the SDP in cooperation with LHION, the TCHC, tenants, and divisions, including Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) and Economic Development and Culture (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. 1-3). This collective is known as the Community Steering Committee (CSC) (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. i).

Neoliberalism and the SDP

There are three key dimensions of LHION's involvement with the "revitalization," including the SDP, housing, and community safety. Let us begin with the SDP, which is the bedrock of the government's social infrastructure investment plan. The SDP has neoliberal dimensions to it. When officials discuss the SDP, they frame it as a community-driven effort to help remedy the systemic disadvantages that Lawrence Heights tenants have long experienced. In this sense, the SDP is a strategic policy instrument that the state uses to mobilize support for "revitalization" by enveloping it in the language of inclusivity and being tenant driven.

The brochure that advertises the SDP puts the voices of resident collaborators in the driver's seat, noting, "from *our perspective as residents*, meaningful employment can significantly improve our economic and social well-being" (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. 42, *italics added by author). The document acknowledges that the community's

identity is potentially threatened by revitalization but that the provisions included in the SDP can ameliorate this problem (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. 13). Further, it says

ongoing stereotypes about our neighborhood are fed by the current condition of the existing housing. Being isolated from the city, victimized, and stigmatized has created psychological barriers between the Toronto Community Housing buildings and the surrounding neighborhoods. New housing types will help us get rid of these misconceptions and bring us together as a mixed community (City of Toronto et al., 2012, p. 14).

Once Lawrence Heights is identified as beset with such problems as these statements suggest, the SDP promises well-resourced and community-derived solutions so long as the neighborhood commits to letting private developers purchase a portion of the land and build socially mixed housing. Some of the formal solutions offered in the SDP pamphlet include:

- Academically focused programs for children and youth
- Adult education with English language and literacy programs
- Create opportunities for residents to share “good news” stories about the community
- Opportunities for employment and volunteer opportunities for residents and leaders to promote community safety
- Establish satellite police station/support initiatives to end racial profiling
- Maintain community animator program and resident involvement in the “revitalization”
- Support food programs and community gardens
- Advocate for new pedestrian/bike lanes/parks
- Promote local job hiring/connect employers with tenants/promote life skills and ESL training/resume building

Regarding the SDP, LHION has demanded and taken control of important resources provided by the state for community building. What stood out during the community meetings I attended was the extent to which LHION holds public officials

accountable while also maintaining productive working relationships with those present, even when these same officials struggled to produce abundant resources.

During a meeting on June 27th, 2019, speakers discussed how revenue generated through the public-private partnership could deliver microgrants. These grants provide money to support resident-led enterprise projects since the TCHC cannot give funding in advance. Money has been distributed towards initiatives like those in the SDP, but the public-private partnership has a revenue stream that allows these things to be possible rather than public subsidies. LHION members voiced concern over how Ontario's then-recent budget cuts would impact their progress with financing their objectives (LHION, 2019a). The group arranged to meet every Wednesday to spread the word about the SDP to tenants, including going door-to-door, linking employers with tenants, and compiling information for a TCHC report (LHION, 2019a).

During another meeting at the Lawrence Heights Community Centre on September 26th, 2019, a local government official announced the securing of seventy-five thousand dollars as part of the SDP to be devoted towards grassroots-led initiatives (LHION, 2019b). In an earlier meeting, a LHION member questioned an official on the degree to which use of the money was to be free of government interference. The same official assured them that the money would be dispersed to the Career Foundation, a registered non-profit charity that the community chose as its trustee, once LHION nominates a neutral party to ensure the funding is going to where "the community wants it to" (LHION, 2019c). The same official followed up in a later meeting in the new year

We've gone through the priority setting, gone through the community consultations, going to events, going to interview people, the listening and learning from past documents that we created. Now we have put all that together, and now that money's been transferred to Career Foundations in North York, there's already been some hiring that's happened (LHION, 2020a).

This example reveals some of the challenges that arise when organizers and local officials work according to bureaucratic norms. Because both parties are large and complex, extra accountability layers are inevitably raised when a powerfully resourced local government provides money to a network of volunteers. At a gathering in Lawrence Square Plaza, one of LHION's co-chairs spoke of the network's commitment to bridging gaps between agencies like the TCHC with tenants in cooperating on planning initiatives (LHION, 2020b).

Beyond the rhetoric of cooperation, LHION's volunteer members took proactive steps to realize the aims of the SDP. At LHION's General Membership Meeting (GMM), members and community animators insisted that tenants must be made aware of what the SDP offers them. Meeting participants talked about promoting a job fair for October 2019 that was open exclusively to TCHC tenants, including Lawrence Heights and the nearby Neptune community east of the Allen Road. Speakers at the meeting also talked about needing to promote the news that fifteen thousand retail jobs were being produced in Toronto, many in shopping centres with employers connected with the SDP, including those near Lawrence Heights – the Lawrence Square Mall and Yorkdale Mall – and Dufferin Mall in Brockton Village (LHION, 2019b).

LHION holds the local government accountable for its promises to deliver on the provisions of the SDP. And Toronto has cooperative officials seated at the table. During LHION's GMM, members pressed the official to explain how much of the "revitalization" workforce comprises Lawrence Heights tenants. These attendees were assured that tenants are to be given first priority during hiring (LHION, 2019b). This official describes the government's approach to gauging the effects of the SDP between 2012 to 2018 as a process of "looking backwards and then forwards," performing dialogues with the community to see if they listened to them enough, and to see what can be learned from the SDP model that was first deployed in Regent Park (LHION, 2019b). Such assurances remain promises for government officials to keep, and the onus lies with volunteers in networks like LHION to continue holding them accountable.

History, Housing, and Neoliberalism

Observations can be drawn from community meetings that reveal more of the gainful work done by LHION on behalf of tenants regarding housing issues. One LHION member raised serious concerns over how the TCHC dealt with Lawrence Heights tenants during temporary re-location during "revitalization" construction. The member argued during a meeting that residents have been re-located with little notice and being disrespected (LHION, 2020c). These tenants, particularly those deemed by officials to be over-housed, have complained of intimidation, being made to feel like cattle, and being given threatening letters (LHION, 2020c).

A community animator said the temporary-displacement policy for the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” is messy because the TCHC is facilitating the movement of applicants on their social housing waitlist. The TCHC is doing this to move over-housed tenants into appropriately sized units and reduce the number of people waiting on available housing for bigger families (LHION, 2020c). The TCHC has an inadequate supply of social housing units, which means too many people are funneling into a system ill-equipped to service them. Another speaker noted that the TCHC removed the option for tenants to choose where they want to live during their temporary displacement, and so you can wind up in an area that is not of your choosing. A LHION member responded that the network would make the TCHC aware of these complaints to ensure tenants are better treated (LHION, 2020c).

These problems speak to the longstanding effects of neoliberalism on social welfare policies in Toronto, where austerity has remained a priority for the state since the crisis of 2008. Austerity is intended to bring down public deficits, reduce the burden on taxpayers to provide social services, and create a welcoming environment for the private sector to invest. But the effects of austerity in Toronto have widened gaps in well-being between the poor and wealthier taxpayers.

In early 2020, Social Planning Toronto and LHION hosted a City Budget Forum for the community at the Barbara Frum Library near Lawrence Heights with over one hundred people in attendance. One researcher spoke about austerity’s impacts:

Look at Toronto after a decade of austerity. There are lots of reports from United Way, the Toronto Foundation, from the Metcalf Foundation, all of which point to

the fact that there's a big gap that's growing every day between rich Torontonians and the rest of us. And we're seeing specific communities being left behind and so that trend has made everyday life difficult, especially for Indigenous, Black, Brown, and members of the LBTQ communities, people with disabilities, seniors, all these people are seeing the biggest negative impacts.

The speaker continued:

There is a lack of affordable housing, transit poverty... We have had a decade of this political commitment to keep property taxes low and as a result we're spending about \$200 less per person investing into the areas where help is needed... [Our data shows] climbing rents, increasing by thirty percent. The social housing waitlist has grown significantly. If you look at how much affordable rental housing we have built it does not keep up at all. Almost half of tenant households are paying more than 30 percent of their income on shelter, and the standard for what is considered livable is less than that (Social Planning Toronto, LHION, 2020).

These trends are difficult to reverse, and they do set limits on what Lawrence Heights tenants can demand from the state. At LHION's General Membership Meeting (GMM), attendees talked about how their goals might be undermined by local and provincial budget cuts affecting social housing, public transportation, and K-12 education (LHION, 2019b). During another community planning meeting at the UNISON building in Lawrence Heights, several speakers gave insights into shelter affordability challenges that low-income people in Toronto are facing, in large part because affordable housing supply is lacking:

Everywhere you look there are condos going up. There are supposed to be affordable units but [developers] are not doing it because they are not mandated to do so. Should there be more affordable housing? More housing cooperatives? All of the above (LHION, 2019c).

A tenant in the meeting said:

Now you have million-dollar housing in Lawrence Heights which makes it hard for people who've grown up in the community to keep living here. We need more affordable housing. We're not in a strong market area. People now see that affordable housing is not there in Lawrence Heights now. So, now they're looking elsewhere. There is a housing crisis in Toronto (LHION, 2019c).

These statements show us some of the limits when it comes to what community volunteers can compel Toronto to do on tenants' behalf regarding housing. LHION members understand that the answer to the city's housing crisis is to provide more affordable options. As more condo-style housing is built in the absence of apartment buildings and social housing, renters flood into the least expensive units available. This brings down the vacancy rate, permitting landlords to charge higher rents when demand goes up. While discussing the makeup of new housing in the Lawrence Heights "revitalization" plan, a LHION member said, "all of it should be rent geared to income housing" (LHION, 2019c).

There are clever machinations at work here where the state administers policies that deprive the existing public housing of necessary resources and maintenance, legitimating the construction of socially mixed housing as the rational choice. States are driven by pressures to create growth. To this end, they are prone to suppressing popular movements that challenge this directive. But states are not wholly resistant to popular struggles either, with the latter pressing the former for change that is not automatically limited to what the state deems permissible.

Community Safety and Solidarity

Statements from public officials and journalists about the Lawrence Heights

“revitalization” often include references to crime in the district and how a socially mixed redevelopment is how public safety can be better realized. “Mixed-use developments [are] generally positive and will enhance [the] community’s safety” (TCHC, 2011b, p. 5).

A shared conviction that pundits share is that the original structure of Lawrence Heights is to blame. Former Toronto Mayor John Sewell once said: “Buildings in Lawrence Heights are set upon a sea of grass without any facing the street. Eyes on the street are what make a place safe” (Pratt, 2004, p. B03). Sewell said, too, that Lawrence Heights failed because people living there stayed put rather than joining the middle class and leaving. Believers in social mixing say you must attract the middle class from outside, in part by rendering the buildings themselves more appealing. The redevelopment architecture, says Hume (2018, p. 2), “avoids the strictly utilitarian approach characteristic of social housing and offers a reassuring measure of pleasure. It addresses wants as well as needs.” Social mixing advocates that a greater presence of the middle class will inevitably invite private investment into the site because they impose informal rules of behavior that keep everyone in line.

Addressing community safety is an important matter for tenants, as indicated by TCHC survey results (TCHC, 2011c). LHION, for its part, created a Safety Committee to work in tandem with TCHC employees and local government officials (TCHC, 2018). These interactions carry tensions between a community and a police force that has been a

persistent and often violent presence in tenants' lives for decades, especially when the drug trade gathered momentum in the 1980s and 1990s. TCHC's pamphlets project a strong police presence as creating safety for tenants rather than posing a threat:

Getting connected and staying safe



Safety is an important topic in our community and across the city. There are several agencies, committees and individuals that support the community and safety-related initiatives in Lawrence Heights and Neptune. Below is a brief listing of resources that are available to tenants. Getting connected to resources is an important step in securing a safe environment for your household and your community; get connected and help create a safer community for all to enjoy.

Figure 27 - Public safety in Lawrence Heights #1 (TCHC, 2012b). Reproduced with permission

Join your local Community Police Liaison Committee:

The purpose of the committee is to:

- establish and maintain a meaningful community police partnership
- to work together in identifying, prioritizing and problem solving of local policing issues
- to be proactive in community relations, crime prevention and communication of initiatives, and
- to serve as a resource to the police and the community.

Figure 28 - Public safety in Lawrence Heights #2 (TCHC, 2012b). Reproduced with permission.

LHION is working with the government on public safety plans, but it is also pressing it to create tangible reforms. LHION members have spoken about what the network was doing in response to incidents of gun violence in Lawrence Heights. They did the things grassroots organizations commonly do: hosting multiple safety forums,

pressing the state to bolster street lighting, and initiating what it calls a Healing Project that is intended to offer solidarity and mentorship to tenants, especially young people; a city official spoke about how they would introduce a grant stream to help at-risk people that is specifically for communities undergoing “revitalization” (LHION, 2019b).

In an important sense, the state’s actions to address public safety mirror its involvement with the community on other fronts. Like with housing and the SDP, government officials taking part in public safety discussions present the image of dutiful public servants. But in their capacity as state representatives, they often engage the public in ways that scramble this image. Society is a composite of hierarchies and wealth disparities between classes, so the government pursues reforms meant to keep these conditions intact, leading to contradictory effects.

During one of LHION’s Safety Committee meetings to discuss reform, ten police officers attended, where they outnumbered the residents and agencies. At that meeting, officers discussed installing four new surveillance cameras at four entry points into the district (LHION, 2020c). Though the police insist the cameras are not to be consistently watched and are subject to re-assessment by Toronto City Council, they nevertheless store images of people in the area (LHION, 2020c). And this raises concerns about how this may stigmatize tenants further under the pretense of generating safety. Police officers are thus seeking stronger bonds with residents while simultaneously intending to police them more intensely. Lefebvre argues that “bureaucracy: is supposed to be, aspires to be .

. . and perhaps even believes itself to be ‘readable’ and transparent, whereas in fact, it is the very epitome of opacity, [and] indecipherability” (as cited by Butler, 2012, p. 65).

The government has tried to convince Lawrence Heights tenants that policing can be changed by having “meetings with Lawrence Heights’ Black youth on a regular basis” (LHION, 2020d). This strategy gained traction in the context of aftershocks that followed the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in the United States during the summer of 2020. Floyd’s death kindled widespread attention to the issue of police brutality and shone a light on movements devoted to defunding police departments in favor of social services investments. Political dissatisfaction with status-quo policing reverberated into meetings conducted by LHION and local politics around the “revitalization.”

Community representatives have explored other options predicated on creating reform. LHION teamed with Social Planning Toronto, the North York Community House, and others on research examining policing in the city and concluded that investments should be diverted to support structures instead of law enforcement (LHION, 2020d). In a later meeting, a member of Social Planning Toronto presented findings from their report to be sent to local politicians, noting that Black and Indigenous people are roughly four times more likely than non-racialized persons to be charged by police. Police officers, the report says, are being questionably deployed as “a Swiss army knife for all social problems” (LHION, 2020e). LHION has also encouraged the state to subsidize a Black Youth Action Plan meant to offer social assistance, including setting up a Black youth composting initiative, culturally focused parenting initiatives, and more

broad goals like helping eliminate race-based disparities for young Black students (LHION, 2020f).

The COVID-19 pandemic has encouraged non-profits to try and alleviate the isolation and alienation that social distancing can exacerbate. As much as LHION has worked productively within the government during the “revitalization,” including on issues like public safety, it has also resisted undue interference from outside forces. A speaker from an outside organization delivered a presentation to LHION members who promoted a neighborhood Pod Program for use in Lawrence Heights. These pods are akin to local networks organized “through WhatsApp groups, phone lines, and other ways to get communities to build latent infrastructure; neighborhoods then use these networks to keep in touch and support their material and social needs” (LHION, 2020f).

More specifically, the Pod Program seeks to train tenants to do tasks typically done by bureaucratic agencies. These tasks include “phone check-ups with seniors, check-ins with people with special needs, getting people groceries, and providing financial supports for residents that are already engaging through volunteerism” (LHION, 2020f). A prominent LHION member responded:

Residents [in Lawrence Heights] are already doing this without many resources. When I see this idea of pods, I look around my community and say we’re already doing this work. It’s really hard when people have been doing the work and then [others] come and say well we’re kind of recreating it again but we’re not recreating it again. And many people have already had the training and they’re doing it...I can understand the concern over what the residents roles are and what are the agencies roles, but we have to be very careful when there is power involved with policy people (LHION, 2020f).

This exchange shows how Lawrence Heights' tenants and grassroots representatives have developed a robust network addressing its social problems. These problems include food security, alienation, and caring for the vulnerable in lieu of access to extensive public support from the government.

There has been considerable ire directed against the Ontario government by the Lawrence Heights community in response to their lack of financial support for community measures and even the massive local government-led "revitalization" itself, particularly those projects meant to enhance public safety and social development. In 2019, Doug Ford's administration canceled "\$14 million in funding promised by the former Liberal government for a new community center in Lawrence Heights, putting the future of the project in limbo at a time when the neighborhood has been overwhelmed by gun violence" (Pagliaro, 2019, p. A1).

Politicians made statements about the cuts that reinforced their manufactured image in the public eye. Ford's image is constructed to be a populist foil to the so-called *downtown progressive elites* in cities like Toronto. Such elites are the source of resentment by voters who form a large part of Ontario's Progressive Conservative base. About the funding cut for the proposed Lawrence Heights community center, Ford said the former Liberal government's spending "put the province in bankruptcy" and joked that the Wynne government also committed to "giving everyone a new car" (Wilson, 2019, n.p.). But Ford's administration was linking right-populist ideals with neoliberal

policies. In this respect, social spending cutbacks can be framed as a common-sense solvent to protect taxpayers against overzealous liberals.

Politicians responded to Ford's actions at the local level by following his right-populist script where everyone fits into their respective roles. City Councillor Mike Colle, playing the role of the downtown liberal that Ford criticizes, has voiced criticism of the provincial government's withdrawal of money for the community hub:

We've got to deal with the gun violence and the police in 32 Division up there are doing an incredible job but the residents are going through hell. You can't just deal with the gun violence with the police," Colle said. "You got to have safe places for people to go to (Wilson, 2019, n.p.).

MP Marco Mendicino mentioned that he and Josh Colle were working to get the province back to the table to re-commit to funding the new center (LHION, 2020a). One LHION member said of the community center funding that they felt frustrated that "politicians are using the community like a political football" (LHION, 2019c). The neighborhood faces the familiar risk of shouldering a greater burden for protecting tenants' safety with limited resources from the government, which is engaged in disputes and party politics. But as this research has shown, the community and LHION have proven adept at managing and finding solutions to everyday problems on their own terms.

Conclusion

In this final case study chapter, the central message is that the community in Lawrence Heights has been able to assert its interests during this ongoing "revitalization," accrue and manage resources and hold the state accountable. This finding is evident when we

look at community involvement in three major elements of the “revitalization,” including the SDP, housing, and public safety. LHION’s volunteer members have significantly contributed to engaging tenants and devoting time and money to boosting local employment and organizing community-led projects. These actions help ensure tenants are treated respectfully by the state in its position as the landlord. LHION also does extensive youth outreach and provides care services for tenants, especially those who fall into vulnerable categories (e.g., seniors, disabled, etc.).

In this chapter, a collection of evidence has been presented that speaks to the potential presence of a passive revolution at work in Lawrence Heights, however much it may currently remain in a liminal stage. It would be easy to conclude the data presented here, such as the excerpts from the various community meetings hosted by LHION, the surveys done by tenants, the work done by community animators, etc., as simply constitutive of the normal planning processes, as nothing irregular. Critics could go one step further, deeming these events as evidence as co-optation where community participation is channeled into legitimizing the project. City officials and planners who engage with the community speak about being committed to progressive local politics, taking a sympathetic approach to dealing with tenants who are pressing the government to come through with promises for funding for local projects, to give answers to questions about the “revitalization.” Such work by everyday people cannot be easily discounted and shows their commitment to not be taken advantage of by powerful interests.

But the fact remains that significant limits are set on what the community can accomplish even with highly organized volunteer bodies like LHION working on their behalf. With the SDP, the government is still framing and setting boundaries around what gets defined as priorities to receive funding. These activities are also highly localized, which on the one hand, speaks to their stakes for community members. Still, on the other, they proceed as detached mainly from any larger movements that may lend them additional power and thus help ward off the problem of militant particularism. With housing, the sheer expense and multiple interests at play in the public-private partnership put limits on what is possible. Besides replacing the existing rent-geared-to-income units in Lawrence Heights, the state is resistant to demanding more social housing on-site. Regarding public safety, sponsors of the “revitalization” presume that what is needed is an influx of middle-class residents who could potentially impose moral authority over tenants under the pretext that safety is wrought through ‘more eyes on the street.’ In a paradoxical turn, the state’s policy response to demands for enhanced safety measures, which have included more security cameras and greater police engagement, may leave tenants feeling more stigmatized.

With the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” having taken shape in the wake of the crisis of 2008, there are discernible effects that the crisis and subsequent program of austerity have had on the planning. The post-2008 crisis austerity has magnified inequality and the housing affordability crisis in Toronto. Austerity has fuelled publicly expressed displeasure with neoliberal-style policies for many in the community. Indeed,

these events have expanded the waitlist for social housing where the available supply cannot meet demand. While community members may demand more social housing rather than condos, austerity has combined with the neoliberal policies of the 1990s and 2000s to reinforce the local government's commitment to social mixing based on public-private partnerships.

Our dynamic selectivities framework can offer us additional insights into this final chapter. The state's policies have strategic intentions behind them. They must conform with what their private partners require to make the redevelopment profitable and thus be able to absorb surplus labor and capital. The spatial dynamics of the "revitalization" are such that the state and planners minimized resistance to it from outside districts, who emphasized that inflows of people and traffic will be managed through infrastructure improvements that prioritize smart growth. So long as densification continues progressing in Lawrence Heights, the state hopes for more significant inflows of capital, emerging businesses, and personnel in the form of police and building managers who will enforce order and reshape the neighborhood's identity.

But multiple sites of power can upset this trajectory and set it in other directions. The community and grassroots organizers are an integral sphere of power. They continue to apply pressure on the government to follow through on their demands for change and not simply be the vehicle that helps facilitate the building of condos and big business in the area. The news media is an essential sphere in which the "revitalization" has been discussed from multiple angles. However, most of it has promoted a clear vision of it as

bringing prosperity to Lawrence Heights. And the government uses parliament and the media as mediums to communicate its own narrative for what should happen.

Conclusion

Introduction

This dissertation addressed the following questions:

- 1) What do ongoing relations between interested parties involved in remaking Lawrence Heights tell us about the capacity for late neoliberalism to absorb and modify the multiple visions put forward for the “revitalization” that align with its principles?
- 2) What political outcomes arise in the deliberations over the use and distribution of resources associated with the “revitalization”?
- 3) How do these interactions in this localized case study fit into larger struggles between different groups to leverage the state to institute certain policies in an environment where neoliberalism’s negative impacts on poorer communities have fueled energetic counter-pressures?

My findings reveal many political interchanges between the local government and associated planners, on the one hand, with members of the Lawrence Heights community, LHION, and other interested persons and organizations. The *form* of these exchanges is deliberative and conflictual, which is, of course, essential to politics. Of importance is that the community in Lawrence Heights, including tenants, organizers, and the volunteer membership of LHION, has asserted itself in the planning. My intention has been to put the community front and center, gauging its capacity to obtain input over how public resources are distributed in the process of “revitalization.”

At this moment, grassroots energies representing Lawrence Heights continue to be locked in a struggle to bring about change on their own terms, to live without the burden of stigma from outsiders, and confront a government that has long oppressed

them. As Lefebvre might see it, these are familiar struggles that face societies oppressed across varying spatial and temporal contexts. Such struggles include Lawrence Heights' tenants striving for adequate housing, access to better job opportunities, and being treated fairly and equitably by a state that remains committed to a neoliberal paradigm that has lost its once revolutionary sheen.

Let me briefly clarify what the face of neoliberalism poses as a force against which grassroots pressures continue to run up. This is to say, so long as people see themselves less as a society and more as free individuals, the closer we get to assembling the catallaxy that Hayek (1973) refers to as the spontaneous social order brought about through self-adjusting markets. Hayek insists such a society is predicated on maximally liberating the individual, Polanyi counters that such a condition would have to be highly structured as opposed to liberating, and involves making any and everything into commodities, which 'denaturalizes individuals' as opposed to freeing them (Lindsay, 2015). These ideas are part of the lifeblood of neoliberalism. There is not enough space here to elaborate on this debate, much less pose a response of my own.

At least, what can be read as a defense of Polanyi's position is that in Lawrence Heights, there are grassroots efforts set against compromising the integrity of their neighborhood before this sudden tide of abstract space creation absorbs everything in its wake. Grassroots goals are centered on achieving social justice rather than defending an individualist ethic. They are pushing back against neoliberalism's overwhelming emphasis on "self-reliance," the notion that individual success is more widely obtainable

provided persons are expected to make all the right decisions on their own, and that markets are an ideal medium to negotiate this challenge.

The entirety of the case study chapters in this dissertation, and the wide expanse of time they cover, were meant to drive these conclusions home more forcefully. I showed how the roots of the community's assertive approach to dealing with "revitalization" planning, and their willingness to hold the state accountable, is a product of the strong communal bonds that have been forged between Lawrence Heights' tenants and grassroots organizations that more directly represent their interests.

My analysis showed that in the context of the post-2008 crisis, the community in Lawrence Heights has worked to tilt the direction of "revitalization" planning towards their demands. These activities have been operating despite the ever-deepening tendency after periods of crises to outstrip public assets and further commodify daily life. Despite the limits that such action runs up against in a neoliberal context, it lends hope to existing leftist political movements that strive to reverse what Wendy Brown (2019) calls neoliberalism's de-democratizing tide. Having drawn this conclusion, the following two sections of this conclusion will clarify how this empirical finding contributes to the existing literature on this subject matter in terms of theory and research outcomes. Lastly, the third section of this chapter will discuss possible directions for future research.

Theoretical contributions

This dissertation explained the tendency for social scientists to draw similar conclusions about "urban revitalization" projects. The conclusion typically offered in these studies is

that the totality of events associated with a “revitalization” invariably deepens neoliberalism’s hold on daily life (*some recent studies include Wong, Chen, Tang, & Liu, 2021; St. Louis-McBurnie, Pagaling, & Roberts, 2021). One risks framing their empirical findings to suit this fatalistic conclusion when evaluating community involvement through this prism. With this dissertation, the data reveals evidence that grassroots have been mobilized to pressure the state regarding how “revitalization” policies operate, even as it struggles against the real and significant limits that the state sets on what policies are allowed to accomplish.

For Rosa Luxemburg, the institutions and functions that comprise the *state* are manifestations of class struggle. In a capitalist society, the state applies strategies to stimulate growth whenever slowdowns occur. But the state should not be placed in a functionalist box either (see Brenner, 1994). Like Marx and Engels, Lenin saw the state in terms of its function as the repressive arm of the bourgeoisie, leading to the conclusion that it must be destroyed (Marsh & Tant, 1999). Luxemburg, in contrast, saw the state as inseparable from society rather than as an entity unto itself, whereas Lenin is mistakenly reifying it. She accordingly supported working-class movements operating outside the formal logic of state-like hierarchies (Aronowitz & Bratsis, 2006, p. xiii). The idea, then, is to encourage the active participation by the masses in political life who can collectively lead us into “social democracy” and away from the formal or “bourgeois democracy” under capitalism (Volrath & Ashton, 1973, p. 102). Because state action is inextricably woven into the larger social relations that hold bourgeois democracy together, it follows

that when the working masses succeed in transitioning towards a social democracy, the state withers away axiomatically.

These thinkers understand that the everyday social relations that hold existing societies together prove challenging to alter. And societies apply coercive measures, which we recognize as state action, to keep things held together. Ernest Mandel (1975) talks about the state as something that reduces the size of cyclical variations, which we can associate with the swings in the business cycle. With neoliberalism, the state tries to restart growth whenever crises strike. Still, each passing business cycle adds complexity and contradictions on top of the old ones, such as permitting the innovation and use of ever more complex fictitious capitals, the sorts of things that exacerbate what mainstream economists call systemic risk (Harvey, 2011).

Neoliberalism tends to thrive on the disorder, which further complicates how the state works to hold capitalist societies and their various hierarchies intact. Bob Jessop (2019, p. 975) defines neoliberalism as a “strategy of disruption, not of stabilization: it targets social arrangements, institutionalized social compromises, and diverse policies that block the one-sided privileging of exchange-value (monetary gain) over (social) use-value.” Neoliberalism exploits crises through moves to promote the market, including lifting restrictions on creating and accumulating interest-bearing capital (otherwise known as financialization) and the transference of public assets into fewer private entities (Mirowski, 2013). When these strategies are used, boom and bust cycles intensify, as Marx understood (Brenner, 2006). The difference with neoliberalism is that when crises

hit, rather than the Polanyian double movement kicking in with society erecting barriers to stall disruption, the opposite occurs (Jessop, 2019, p. 968). Neoliberalism advocates point to state interference in the private sector as the source of the problem. On this basis, they call on the state to roll back social protections and roll out more neoliberal strategies to quickly kick the business cycle back into a boom phase (Theodore, 2020).

This theoretical understanding of neoliberalism and how it continually reproduces and strengthens itself after a crisis erupts has implications for our case study. Lawrence Heights was built in a pre-neoliberalism context when the state was trying to ward off another depression. The recessionary 1970s gave way to the first roll-back and roll-out phase of a then-novel neoliberal program (Peck & Theodore, 2019). After the crisis of 2008 hit, the Ontario and Toronto government doubled down on the austerity and privatization strategies that had become business as usual during the 1990s. The “revitalization” of Lawrence Heights through a public-private partnership is an outgrowth of this same paradigm (Moore & Wright, 2017).

I can now better clarify in theoretical terms what the efforts by the Lawrence Heights community say about the present and future place-based resistance movements that seek to render urban living less alienating and conditioned by what the state allows. Lefebvre (1996, p. 124) writes supportively of the left’s striving to undermine centralized forms of decision-making and build up self-management, “a social practice that can overcome the dissociations of everyday life and create new institutions going beyond those that simply ratify the dissociations.” Following Hayek, Magnusson (2013) says that

prioritizing individual freedom is essential. However, when taken to a logical extreme, it can eliminate any semblance of society, exacerbating alienation. “We also want to be and do something meaningful as a community, and this means having a venue for public, as well as private, action” (Magnusson, 2013, p. 78).

Studies of urban politics – particularly studies of place-based resistance – do open themselves to what Mark Purcell (2006) terms ‘the local trap.’ The local trap refers to the belief that the local level is inherently more democratic than other levels, leading “to a reductionist focus on highly local concerns and ignores the urban networks that traverse multiple scales” (Butler, 2012, p. 150). While the local trap is an important concern, this dissertation highlights the complex links between agents and institutions at different levels of action over time without putting any so-called high or low politics on a pedestal.

In so doing, I also put forward a view of neoliberalism as a process that unfolds unevenly across space and time and can be similarly resisted in different ways. Protesters mounted campaigns called “Fight for \$15 and Fairness” across North America in the mid to late 2010s to press the state to raise minimum wage requirements (Russell, 2015; Mojtehdzadeh, 2018). Simultaneously, organizers and tenant volunteers gathered in Lawrence Heights and pressed local officials during the “revitalization” planning to follow through on their commitments to providing scholarships, subsidies for community projects, employment opportunities, and job training opportunities for their neighbors.

With neoliberalism, societies undergo repeated phases of crisis followed by commodification, de-democratization, financialization, and dispossession by

accumulation. Each phase brings new complexity and multiple avenues for resistance to market rule. Robert Latham (2018, pp. 11-12) says social transformations now unfold

through time, diachronically, but also synchronically, within a given space and moment that we can take to be our contemporary capitalist totality. These contemporaneous or concurrent dynamics signal that anti-capitalism will have to rely on a diverse range of organizational forms and practices and, perhaps as never before, on the inventive agency of the exploited who must deal with the complexity of forces and conditions.

This dissertation shows Lawrence Heights as a site where the community is exerting some place-based agency. Such agency is applied through the state intervening in people's lives with this project. Seeing these efforts as akin to permeating and breaking through the larger realm of abstract space creation highlights how they are transformational but are also bound by limits set by neoliberalism's power.

The evidence I have presented in this dissertation leads me to conclude that there is evidence for a potential passive revolution in the Lawrence Heights case. The community, in other words, is exerting place-based agency by pressuring the state to intervene in the "revitalization" on the community's terms as much as is possible. Hope for those opposed to neoliberalism is that a passive revolution in Lawrence Heights might get linked to, find common cause with, or simply occur alongside movements of its kind happening simultaneously and into the future, adding momentum for those pressing for progressive social change.

Critics may allege that my interpretation of the data presented in this case study may be premature. In other words, for me to say there is a potential passive revolution taking shape might be too hasty a claim to make at this point. Bertell Ollman (1998, p.

345) warns against creating a prison around one's thinking, where "there is no sense of the present as a moment through which life, and the rest of reality as the conditions of life, passes from somewhere on its way to somewhere." I would respond to such criticisms by saying it is easier to meld the evidence with conventional narratives than by deciphering the potential for positive change using roughly the same evidence. There are elements in the data presented, however fragmentary and local in scope, which signal the presence of progressive changes that I think are worth highlighting.

It remains the case that neoliberalism is the dominant philosophy that has been impacting policymaking in Canada for decades. It substitutes collectivism with a conformist belief that individuals can secure all wants and needs by engaging in commodity exchange relations. Such total commitment to holding the class relations constitutive of capitalism intact is what gets challenged by class struggle for differential space. Lefebvre recognized that "if space becomes *fully* abstract, capitalism cannot survive. It cannot survive because, in fact, capitalism requires difference" (Mitchell, 2020, p. 15). Successfully creating a measure of difference is a necessity for capitalism to avoid simply creating uniform suffering. Sometimes, struggling working people are afforded material benefits dispersed to them via the public purse. They give input on the political process through voting, protest, and other measures. These events can allow for the carving out of a measure of differential space, of resistance to alienation. Such occurrences, it should also be said, can easily amount to placation.

Oppressed people do struggle against the limits of the possible. In the scenario of potential or liminal passive revolution described in this dissertation, the oppressed have made gains in creating differential space, but not so much that neoliberalism gets repudiated. The Lawrence Heights “revitalization” model roughly mirrors the one deployed in Regent Park years earlier, involving a similarly massive deployment of capital and technocratic expertise to take advantage of this site’s potential for greater surplus creation. Up against such power, grassroots energies are having to work in the margins, demanding the state use public resources on their terms and not so much on those same experts who are upending their lives.

Neoliberalism is an adaptable paradigm in that it can be attached to other ideas to preserve its power in response to political and economic flux. Jeremy Engels, for instance, “claims that ‘wedge issues’ like abortion and gay marriage are “as much a part of neoliberalism in the United States as the rhetoric of efficiency, deregulation, and free trade” (Engels, 2015, pp. 124–125) (as cited by Davidson & Saull, 2017, p. 708). However much neoliberalism is steered away from being solely concerned with liberating markets, it is hostile to the exercise of democracy, collectivist action, and the substitution of public resources in place of market-driven solutions. If the community can apply itself to these ends, it can create spaces of difference.

Research Outcomes

The case study chapters in this dissertation provide a timeline of change of the Lawrence Heights neighborhood, beginning with the dispossession of Indigenous territories up to

the present. This timeline shows how and why capital and people migrate in and out of the space under investigation. Using this motive as a driver for the research process, I give a chronological story of change in Lawrence Heights that is comprehensive but selective. “All historical writing periodizes the past, and makes choices among chronological realities, based on positive or negative preferences that are more or less” (Braudel & Wallerstein, 2009, p. 173). The historical account presented here gives us insights into how grassroots associations have engaged with other forces around them, including political officials, planners, the news media, and neighborhoods around them.

Evidence of these engagements shows that people representing Lawrence Heights in the environment of community meetings are deeply committed to self-management, democratic decision-making, and challenging the state to facilitate change that reflects the demands of tenants. These details comprise what some may allege are overly local matters, such as securing and managing several thousands of dollars for tenant-led programs and employment opportunities for youth and other persons in the neighborhood. Critics may be inadvertently reading their own expectations into what is supposed to happen when communities work through a “revitalization” project that is upending their lives. People living in Lawrence Heights understand that the “revitalization” is happening whether they accept it or not. On this basis and others, the staying power of neoliberalism and the ongoing spread of abstract space set limits on what is possible. Instead, tenants and their representatives are pressing the state to make sure that change is going to happen on their terms wherever possible.

When the original Lawrence Heights was announced for construction in the mid-twentieth century, it was met with resistance from outside districts. For generations, the tenants in Lawrence Heights would be warehoused in an area that others largely ignored. The isolation experienced by these public housing residents helped give rise to a culture rooted in activism and mutual care. Illuminating these research outcomes in a case study that has yet to receive extensive scholarly attention is a central contribution of this dissertation to the existing literature.

Avenues for Further Research

A fruitful direction for research going forward would be to look more closely at how grassroots groups like LHION and other non-profits devoted to the cause of self-management work to combat internal and external pressures to be absorbed by the state and other private entities. This would entail a shift in focus where this dissertation was concerned more with looking at the “revitalization” in the aggregate in terms of understanding the collisions between larger social forces over time. For this purpose, Marxist historical materialism felt like the most suitable lens by which to view this case study. A future project could turn inwards and examine the subjective elements of “revitalization” planning.

To this end, Foucauldian thinkers might urge us to look past how social movements engage with the state and vice versa and reckon instead with the problem of government, that is, how people’s thoughts and behaviors become conditioned to support and conform to certain power structures and not others (Rose, 1999). To this effect,

Foucault would stress that trying to ameliorate the functionalism common in state theorizing leads one to over-value the “problem of the state,” seeing it “either as a cold monster dominating us or as the fulfiller of social and economic functions” (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 174). Rose and Miller (1992, pp. 174-175) say further that the state has “neither the unity nor the functionality ascribed to it” but is a ‘mythical abstraction’ that is embedded in the wider field of governmentality, that is, how populations govern one another and themselves through a diverse set of “mundane programs, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions.”

As a jumping-off point, one could interrogate how grassroots organizations involved in events like “urban revitalizations” either work to fend off or embrace the conditioning influence of governmentalities and gauge how this struggle affects how they exercise agency. Melo and Baiocchi (2006, p. 596) raise key questions on this front, asking “whether deliberative, ‘horizontal’ governance structures favor middle-class and elite interests; and what are the conditions under which participatory arrangements can be both democratic and governance-enhancing.” These sorts of questions can extend the analysis of grassroots participation in the Lawrence Heights “revitalization.” One can look more closely at these entities themselves to see whether their members are individually and collectively challenging prevailing governmentalities, which often buttress the ongoing neoliberalization of everyday life (Hamann, 2009).

Another avenue for future research is to apply an intersectional and postcolonial lens to the study of how Lawrence Heights changes internally as the “revitalization” proceeds into its next phases. As earlier chapters documented, all TCHC tenants in Lawrence Heights have been afforded the right to return to the neighborhood once their new units have been constructed. But scholars have raised concerns over how newcomers in revitalized neighborhoods who occupy market-rate units may affect the existing culture in such districts (Rich & Stoker, 2014).

This issue has special importance given the demographic profile of many Lawrence Heights tenants who historically have dealt with racial stigmatization as members of isolated public housing complexes. When more affluent persons and private market forces flow into a neighborhood they have traditionally avoided, will they carry prejudices with them? Will the new residents wall themselves off from their TCHC tenant neighbors? Or will these newcomers join newly developed businesses in the area to render Lawrence Heights inhospitable to existing tenants, thus encouraging them to move elsewhere?

Such questions often form the basis of postcolonial studies, which makes substantive connections between how imperial centers of power stretch outwards and render other spaces and people into peripheral subjects to fit changing objectives. As was explained in this dissertation, the case of Lawrence Heights signals the spread of “urban revitalization” strategies from inner city spaces outwards into the inner suburbs. When the “revitalization” proceeds into its next phases, further research endeavors can continue

investigating how it affects the internal dynamics of the neighborhood and the rhythms of political life experienced by its tenants. Lefebvre (1996, p. 85) sums up this pattern of colonial domination, which hopefully is met with resistance by grassroots efforts:

Having become political, social space is on the one hand centralized and fixed in a political centrality, and on the other hand specialized and parceled out. The state determines and congeals the decision-making centers. At the same time, space is distributed into peripheries which are hierarchized in relation to the centers; it is atomized. Colonization, which like industrial production and consumption was formerly localized, is made general. Around the centers there are nothing but subjected, exploited and dependent spaces: neo-colonial spaces.

Concluding Remarks

Famous writer and activist bell hooks once said in an interview with the poet Maya Angelou: “I will not have my life narrowed down. I will not bow down to somebody else’s whim or to someone else’s ignorance” (Angelou, 1998, n.p.). Hook’s statement echoes the general thrust of grassroots involvement in the revitalization planning within Lawrence Heights. The energy from these tenants helps subvert people’s preconceptions about what a “revitalization” implies. Among the more superficial of these views, as expressed by pundits, politicians and others outside Lawrence Heights, the “revitalization” is something we are told should be welcomed because it is the most rational and cost-effective strategy to improve a “priority” neighborhood.

In everyday life, people in Lawrence Heights continue actively resisting pressures on them to simply conform with what city officials and other “revitalization” enthusiasts might presume is best for them. Wacquant writes (2010, p. 218):

When urban degradation and symbolic devaluation intensify to the point where neighborhoods of relegation appear to be beyond salvage, they provide political leaders and state bureaucrats with warrants for deploying aggressive policies of containment, discipline, and dispersal that further disorganize the urban poor under the pretext of improving their opportunities.

Martine August (2014) pushes back against such top-down forms of control by instead making a case in defense of the social benefits of concentrated poverty in a study of pre-“revitalization” Regent Park. Contrary to the prejudicial views people often have about public housing, the relative insularity common in such districts has helped tenants develop strong communal bonds and assist one another with their everyday problems with a communitarian spirit. August (2014, p. 1330) concludes that the Regent Park “revitalization” model, the same one being applied in Lawrence Heights, amounts to a

one-time injection achieved by transferring public assets and resources to private actors who see the opportunity to profit from the transaction. As such, it holds questionable promise for addressing the key problems identified by tenants, all of which are traceable to ongoing issues like decreased funding for housing maintenance, a retracted social safety net, constrained labor-market opportunities, poverty, and racial inequality.

August is undoubtedly correct that the Regent Park model is unlikely to resolve these larger problems. What can happen with the sort of critique August is making is that it gets challenged in the public sphere by state officials who denounce it as irrelevant. In turn, it promotes this model into being what amounts to neoliberalism with a human face. Derek Ballantyne, a former TCHC representative, responded to similar critiques levied against this model by people like Sean Purdy. In so doing, Ballantyne insisted that the “revitalization” is not designed to solve city-wide issues, but instead

identifies services and programs that measurably address access to learning, economic development, residents' health and the challenges faced by new Canadians. Far from taking a paternalistic approach, Toronto Community Housing is partnering with residents, agencies, the city and other interested groups to make this happen (Ballantyne, 2005, p. A19).

Foucault says neoliberalism is not simply about policy but also comes to be inhabited in an individual's mind as a governmentality, exemplified by the entrepreneurial spirit and the belief that life is driven by personal decisions rather than politics (Lemke, 2002).

A concern for the Left is that neoliberalism becomes so entrenched that everyone internalizes it, takes it for granted, and renders its principles as sacrosanct.

Wendy Brown (2019, p. 171) says that when the political right gains strength through the pervasiveness of neoliberalism, spurning ethical provocations to “care for or repair the world” becomes something for it to *do*:

And, as Nietzsche points out, “there is so much that is festive” in it— especially in the pleasures of provocation and piling on, of humiliating others or making them suffer, of dancing at the bonfires of what one is burning down.

Such a scenario would leave little room for a revolutionary alternative to neoliberalism to arise, much less generational change through a passive revolution. If anything, this dissertation – having employed a Marxist analytical lens – gives faith to the adage that wherever power is exercised, it will be confronted with resistance of a kind. A challenge comes with identifying how such events will play out at varying tempos of social change.

In this current moment, despite how challenging resistance can be, the grassroots movement in Lawrence Heights will hopefully continue exerting pressure on the TCHC, associated city officials, and other decision-makers to realize changes that tenants want.

This is one potential outcome that could take shape over the normal passage of time. Still, other unknown ends may result from grassroots involvement in the “revitalization” over long periods.

Outside the scope of local negotiations and conflicts between these parties, they collide with (and can affect) other streams of political activity that can be powerfully obstructive and may also unlock new avenues for change. Even if neoliberalism continues fracturing, where openings might arise for the Left to gain support for expanding the social safety net, augmentation of socialist political parties, etc., there is just as much potential for the political right to reinforce neoliberalism. Wendy Brown (2019, p. 2) says that there is currently a mixture of “libertarianism, moralism, authoritarianism, nationalism, hatred of the state, Christian conservatism, and racism” that is conjoining with neoliberalism to project an individualist ethic and aggressive defence of the status quo in opposition to progressivism.

Such concerns have special relevance when examining my case study. As I have shown, there is a deeply rooted nationalist spirit inextricably tied to a colonial legacy, white supremacy, and the imputation of Protestantism as a state religion. But moral and social control structures remain permeable, which might allow counter-hegemonic assemblies to make inroads. “Social regulation has undergone major shifts,” writes Valverde (1991, p. 167), “both in terms of the relationship between the state and private agencies of regulation and of the framing of social problems.” Our hopes should be set on seeing the grassroots movement in Lawrence Heights continue making gains in dealing

with a state that has neglected and mistreated them for decades and which in “revitalization” planning has been alternately restrictive and cooperative.

Regarding restrictiveness, I provided empirical evidence documenting the state’s commitment to rebuilding the neighborhood in ways that largely conform with the tastes and interests of big business, private development firms, and austerity-driven approaches to state planners. On the cooperative side, the state has responded sympathetically to grassroots demands for more employment opportunities and public funds for tenant-led initiatives. In other words, the forces defending neoliberal policy regimes confronted and absorbed a degree of grassroots-led pressures seeking greater public resources and control. But this also reveals an important reality about the present condition of late neoliberalism. Grassroots demands, and the need for the state to be responsive to them, reflect the wider frustrations people have with the state’s ongoing commitment to privatization, state-managed gentrification, and austerity politics. Beyond setting what may be a potential passive revolution in a context still defined by neoliberalism’s hegemony, I spoke to its resonance with the broader efforts of the oppressed in capitalist societies trying to create spaces of difference.

There are subsidiary questions that I investigated that stem from my central research question. What does community involvement in the Lawrence Heights revitalization say to us about the impacts of neoliberalism on daily life? What do my conclusions tell us about how “urban revitalizations” should be analyzed by social scientists? To the first question, I demonstrated that despite being undermined by its

contradictions through decades of being propagated as an ideology, logic, and driver of public policy, neoliberalism remains a hegemonic force that is not easily dislodged from the realm of “revitalization” planning. Existing scholarship rightly highlights the degree to which neoliberalism overpowers alternative visions and policy packages that significantly challenge its principles.

However, in response to my second subsidiary question, I also explained that grassroots involvement in the Lawrence Heights “revitalization” has concertedly pressed the state to respond to its demands. It follows that scholarly interpretations of such activity should not be read simply as additional evidence of more sophisticated strategies to fulfill neoliberal ideals through “revitalization” planning. Through my case study analysis, I provided support for my central argument, along with my answers to these subsidiary questions. My case study gives a chronological history of the Lawrence Heights neighborhood, showing at each step how an environment conducive to a grassroots mobilization took shape. From its beginnings, Lawrence Heights’ tenants have been stigmatized and mistreated by the state, the media, and surrounding neighborhoods. What is clear from analyzing what the state has done in Lawrence Heights since its opening in the late 1950s is that it has not been on the side of the people living there, as evidenced by decades of mismanagement, neglect, and gridlock. The most encouraging sign is that there remains a tight-knit group of tenants, activists, and organizations who appear set on not allowing powerful forces to dictate their future.

Appendix

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1 – Draft of questions for a semi-structured interview with Toronto Community Housing staff members (Interview conducted on November 26, 2019):

IQ 1 What is your connection to the Lawrence Heights project?

IQ 2 How is the approach to urban planning in the context of renewing urban neighborhoods similar or different now compared to the early and mid-twentieth century?

IQ 3 What do you think of the provision of de-commodified housing as a strategy by which to tackle affordable housing issues?

IQ 4 How important is the legacy of past urban planning strategies in the City of Toronto in terms of their effects on the direction that the Lawrence Heights plan has taken?

IQ 5 My understanding of urban planning is that it is a highly technical discipline whose practitioners are supposed to apply the techniques of mapping and configuring land use in order to maximize efficient use and the well-being of populations connected to it. What advantages do your skills bring to the design of the new Lawrence Heights? Are there any limitations?

IQ 6 As was the case with the new Regent Park “revitalization,” there has been extensive consultation generated between the Toronto Community Housing Corporation and the City of Toronto with interested residents of Lawrence Heights to involve them in the making and implementation of this renewal plan. What has your involvement been with the consultation aspect of the renewal plan?

IQ 7 What do you say to those residents who may be concerned that their involvement in the consultation process amounts to mere window dressing, and that they wish to be more involved in the actual decision-making of urban renewal matters rather than just being consulted on these issues? This was a common complaint expressed by original Regent Park residents.

IQ 8 The new Lawrence Heights is the product of a public-private partnership between the Toronto Community Housing Corporation with Context Development and Metropia. What is your opinion on this partnership strategy? What has been your experience working with these organizations on this particular project?

IQ 9 Urban planners want to improve the Lawrence Heights neighborhood. How do you deal with the need to augment the appearance of the area and implement new amenities that were not present while also being aware of the tendency to diminish the existing bonds and culture that existed in the neighborhood prior to the plan being put in motion?

IQ 10 How do you plan on dealing with the infrastructural problems that the Lawrence Heights plan is confronted with, namely the highly congested traffic running along the streets that surround the area?

IQ 11 The application of social mixing within this “revitalization” plan, as was the case with Regent Park, is promoted by Toronto as helping alleviate the stigma associated with living in a completely publicly owned housing community. Do you endorse this idea? How might you respond to critics who say social mixing can be punitive in that more affluent newcomers come to monitor and try to adjust the environment by “revitalizing” it?

IQ 12 Why do you think it took so long for this plan to be put in motion in Lawrence Heights?

IQ 13 Peter Marcuse has written about the difficulties faced by urban planners in their efforts to plan entire communities in a way that is socially just, that is, decisions that benefit the community as a whole instead of satisfying individual demands. In your experience with the Lawrence Heights project, how do you adjudicate between individual demands from residents, which may be varied in nature, with what you determine is the most effective path for social justice for the community as a whole?

2- Question asked to North York Historical Society (NYHS) staff members (Email sent May 6 2020 at 2:57 pm):

Jon Careless: My name is Jon Careless and I’m a student who is currently working on a research project on the Lawrence Heights community in North York. I have been trying to track down some books that might give me a better understanding of the history of Lawrence Heights and North York generally. I was browsing your website and noticed you have some interesting history books listed in your resources section, most of which are in Toronto’s public library system, which is of course presently shut down. I was just curious if anyone working for the NYHS might know of any history texts that focus on the Lawrence Heights neighborhood, or maybe even some on North York that are not on your website that you might be able to suggest? I realize that it might be especially difficult tracking any of these books down given the pandemic, but I thought I would ask even just for the sake of curiosity. I was looking forward to reading one of your site’s recommendations (Pioneering in North York: A History of the Borough), but the few

copies available through Amazon are quite expensive to say the least. I think it'll be best to try and wait till the libraries reopen.

Email reply from NYHS staff dated May 11 2020 at 6:36 pm:

NYHS: I'm at a loss to suggest a contact regarding the Mulholland's. The OHS Library may have or should have the Mulholland Family history. I gave them a copy some time ago. There have been articles written in the OHS Bulletin but they always bothered me! Please don't quote me!! Henry Mulholland came from County Monaghan, Ireland. He married Jane Armstrong. He settled his various children on farms in the North York /Don Mills area.[These are all listed in the Mulholland book - there were extensive charts for each family.] One of the farmhouses was moved and is now a restaurant on? Don Hills Rd. Henry traveled back to Ireland more than once and brought horses and settlers to Canada. He died when the ship he was on sank in the Gulf of St Lawrence. Jane Mulholland married James Stewart, and they settled on the property where the North General Hospital is located.

James Stewart was the youngest known brother of my husband's ancestor (who, in due course, settled in the Bolton area). (The first Stewart/Stuarts came to Canada in 1818 and settled in Cavan Twp just south of Peterborough.) James and his widowed mother followed and settled in Cavan. Being the presumed youngest, James had to move on. He did little farming but made his living cutting timber and bringing it into the City of Toronto. He cut timber all winter in areas north of Lindsay. It may have been milled at the various mills on the Don. I believe there was one at Leslie and Shepherd. I don't know how far north the Stewart Mullholland property extended, but it extended south almost to Lawrence East and east to what is now the 404. Leslie was about the western boundary.

Our family (Stewart/Stuart) connection was the fact that Jane Mulholland, daughter of Henry Mulholland, married James Stewart. James lived at the house behind the North York General. This house was altered considerably by Hon George Stewart Henry Premier of Ontario (c1930) Louisa Stewart, daughter of James and Jane, married Henry. He died young, leaving her with a young family and not much money. She was the brains/mover etc, and with her son built it into a successful farm/showplace. It became the Henry farms. This became a housing development. There were mills along that branch of the Don River. In those days, families stuck together - pooled their efforts, etc. As I traced the various Stewart/Stuart families, I found nieces/nephews moved about to family connections. Certainly, nephews etc, operated mills.

Re: confusion of the name, John and George Stuart patented the Cavan property in 1818, and while George died young, John lived to quite an age. Half of his family were Stuart

and the other half Stewart. My husband's ancestor didn't come until c1843 and was Samuel Stewart of Bolton. Samuel Stewart and James Stewart witnessed the 1837 Rebellion. His son, William, changed the name to Stuart and ended up a miller first on George Street and the Esplanade in Toronto and later in Mitchell and New Hamburg. William's family was at all at the Mulholland Stewart Reunions.

3- Draft of questions for a semi-structured interview with the Director of Pathways to Education (Interview conducted on October 21, 2020):

IQ 1: I understand that you work as Director of Pathways to Education, a non profit organization that (and I'm reading from the mission statement) provides after-school programming to help at-risk youth in low-income communities to graduate from high school and successfully transition into post-secondary education or training. So, clearly, this is a very helpful organization. I wonder if you could explain a bit about your connection to Lawrence Heights through your work with Pathways to Education?

IQ 2: If you met someone who had never been to Lawrence Heights and didn't know anyone who lived there, how would you describe the neighborhood to them, based on your own experiences, the hard work you've done with your organization, and the people you've connected with there?

IQ 3: On the City of Toronto website, it talks about how Lawrence Heights was identified by the city as being a priority neighborhood which, along with several others, is being targeted as sites to be revitalized, or as former Toronto Community Housing executive Derek Ballyntyne once said, Lawrence Heights needs to be replanned and rethought. I was wondering what you think about this move by the local government, in tandem with TCH to revitalize Lawrence Heights precisely because they have targeted it as a priority?

IQ 4: I've been told that following Toronto's amalgamation in 1998 and the making of this megacity was originally promoted by Mike Harris as a cost-savings measure, which apparently never materialized, and also that the city itself employs thousands more people than it did in 1998. Part of the explanation for amalgamating was to bring property development out of the backrooms where you had deal-making between local politicians from the pre-amalgamation six governments and make it more transparent and ultimately more centralized with the megacity controlling matters. Do you see any resonance in how the "revitalization" planning has been conducted in Lawrence Heights? Do you perceive it as having been a transparent and ethical process?

IQ 5: Many of the planning newsletters I've reviewed have mentioned the extent to which the community within Lawrence Heights, and also people living in surrounding areas like in Lawrence Manor, have been consulted by planners. They've had town hall meetings

and surveys. Have residents been allowed to get substantively involved in both the planning and decision-making?

IQ 6: I understand that there are residents in Lawrence Manor, organizations like the Four Quadrants Neighborhood Association (I think I'm pronouncing that right), and others who have resisted the Lawrence Heights plan because we don't have the appropriate infrastructure to serve the increase in density that this project will create, won't be able to handle more vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and this might hurt property values. Have you heard much about this? Do you have any opinions about what these people are saying?

IQ 7: There's been a lot of press afforded to the Regent Park "revitalization," and it has been seen as a successful public-private partnership between TCHC and the Daniels Corporation. And so the new Regent Park model is being applied to the "revitalization" of Lawrence Heights. What is your opinion of private developers Metropia and Context being involved in the Lawrence Heights plan? Also, I'm curious if you have an opinion of how the "revitalization" has panned out in Regent Park?

IQ 8: When I spoke to planners involved in the Lawrence Heights "revitalization," they gave responses to critics of public-private "revitalization" initiatives by saying that TCHC can no longer afford to handle the maintenance and repairs on its existing housing stock, much less enough money to simply renew the existing stock altogether rather than "revitalize" it. And they also said that by forming a partnership with private developers, they can handle more of the costs in the absence of what they say has been pretty limited support from both the province and the federal government. Is this an issue that you've heard about in your involvement with planning staff, members of the community, grassroots organizations, and the like? Do you have any thoughts on this matter?

IQ 9: I was wondering if we could discuss the social development plan. I know it's been talked about by TCHC and city officials as a big component of the "revitalization" and has garnered support from organizations including LHION and the Lawrence Heights Immigration Partnership. Do you have any thoughts on it in terms of its strengths, and potential limitations?

IQ 10: Some critics of these big revitalization projects are that they risk ushering in gentrification through the back door. By that, I mean that it is a project intended to improve the quality of the housing by remaking it and improving the living conditions of Lawrence Heights residents while also mixing the community with people of more varied income classes, and so by improving the quality of the real estate, increasing the density and improving the tax base, the government can help encourage more retailers to move in (create jobs, commerce) and reduce the burden on taxpayers contributions to social

spending by increasing fiscal revenue and economic growth generally. At the same time, critics are concerned that, over time, remaking Lawrence Heights in this fashion could make existing residents feel unwelcome and may end up pushing them out of the community altogether. Do you think such concerns are warranted?

IQ 11: From gentrification, I was hoping I could ask a few questions related to issues around anti-racism and the perception of Lawrence Heights as it is framed by institutions like the media and the city government. My first question on this subject is, in this current political moment we're in with greater public awareness (in the media and elsewhere) of movements like black lives matter and the need to combat anti-black racism, are you seeing a perceptible impact of these social pressures for change on the direction that the plan has taken?

IQ 12: One event that I attended early on in my research was one promoted by LHION in a building operated in Regent Park by the Daniels Corporation. It was called We All Belong and it was intended to discuss the need to combat the persistent negative media coverage and assorted prejudices that are embedded in stories about communities like Lawrence Heights and elsewhere, and so the event was intended to present a richer more holistic picture of these areas and give people platforms to discuss their stories and feelings about their community and how others see them. How do you feel about media coverage of communities like Lawrence Heights. Do you think they tend to perpetuate certain prejudices, and if so, are efforts underway through the "revitalization" that are helping to combat this tendency?

IQ 13: In my experience speaking with and sitting in on meetings between LHION, I have been struck by the level of involvement in the "revitalization" and cooperation between planners, community animators, residents, and city officials. Have you heard much about how this is going? Successes? Limitations?

IQ 14: I read in news reports that Doug Ford had rescinded funding for a new community center for Lawrence Heights. Do you have any thoughts on this development? Have you heard much discussion about it in talks with your associates, friends, and people who are connected with the "revitalization"?

IQ15: With "revitalizations" of this kind, critics that I've encountered tend to view them with some skepticism in that they see them as essentially fulfilling the desires of big business (who want to move into a community), of big developers who want to create housing that they can make lots of money from, and governments who see an opportunity to help generate more business activity, reduce social spending burdens and even gentrify the area – and that the interests and desires of the families and people who have lived in the community before the "revitalization" are mainly seen as secondary, as problems that

authorities need to manage and negotiate in order to get the plan built and their goals accomplished. Have you witnessed much in this planning process that would lead you to question such views as expressed by such critics? Or is their assessment essentially correct?

IQ16: Follow-up question: COVID's impact on the Lawrence Heights plan?

Appendix B: Documentation

1- Copy of Research Agreement with Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) which permitted me access to TCHC planning documents featured in this text.

*Note: the original case study was intended to explore three sites, including Lawrence Heights, North End Halifax, and the Lachine Canal in Montreal. Due to constrained time, I decided to focus solely on Lawrence Heights.

Toronto Community
Housing Corporation
931 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON
M4W 2H2



July 8, 2019

Dear Jon Careless,

RE: Toronto Community Housing Research Application – Approval

I am writing in regards to your request to conduct research involving Toronto Community Housing (TCHC). I am happy to inform you that TCHC approves your research request as indicated in your application for the study: *Conflicting visions: political struggle over urban spaces in Toronto, Halifax, and Montreal*.

It is expected that all research follows and abides by standard ethical practices. If there are any changes to the research topic or design, and if any unanticipated problems and potential risks arise, TCHC must be informed immediately. The final research outputs (e.g., report, publication, film) are to be provided to TCHC two weeks in advance of publication, with an acknowledgement of TCHC's co-operation and contribution.

Thanks for your interest in conducting research at TCHC. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Kate Serjeant
Planning Assistant, Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Relations
Toronto Community Housing Corporation

2- Copy of correspondence with Lawrence Heights Inter-Organizational Network staff members granting me permission to sit in on community meetings

Email sent April 24, 2019, at 2:12 pm:

Jon Careless: I was wondering if you could tell me what time the general meeting is taking place tomorrow at the Lawrence Heights community center?

Email reply from LHION dated May 7, 2019, at 6:23 pm:

LHION: Hi Jon,

Apologies for the late reply.

The email lhion.org@gmail.com main use is to share info with the network. The LHION does not have any admin support and most of its communication is done via its Co-chairs.

Below are the dates of the 2019 LHION General Meetings held at the Lawrence Heights Community Centre from 9:30 am - 12:00 pm: Thursday April 25, 2019, Thursday June 27, 2019, Thursday September 26, 2019, Thursday November 28, 2019. Would you like me to add your name to the LHION email distribution list so you can receive future updates of other meetings and events?

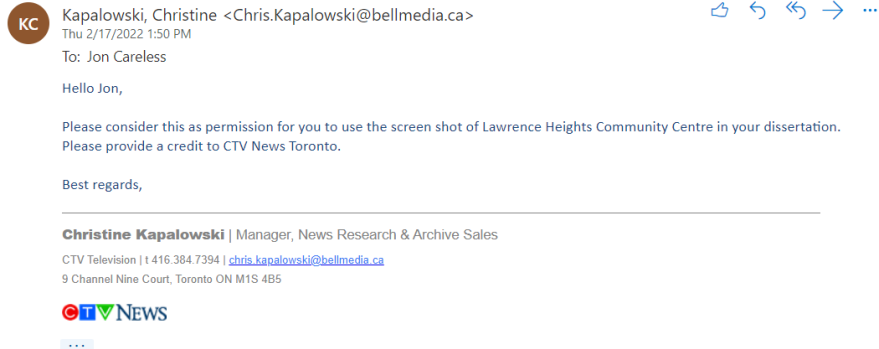
Email reply dated May 7 2019 at 3:17 pm:

Jon Careless: Thanks for sending this. Yes, please add me to the list when you get a chance.

3- Figure 1 - Map of Lawrence Heights and Lawrence Manor (Google, n.d.)

Followed guidelines as specified: https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB_ALL/permissions/geoguidelines/

4- Figure 3 - Untitled photo of Lawrence Heights by CTV News (CTV-News, 2019)



5- Figure 4 – Untitled Lawrence Heights blueprint by BuzzBuzzHome.com (n.d.) (*1 of 3); Figure 5 - Untitled Lawrence Heights blueprint by NewLawrenceHeights.ca (n.d.) (*2 of 3); Figure 6 - Untitled Lawrence Heights blueprint by CondoPromo.com (*3 of 3)



POLITICAL SCIENCE
 Firstname.Lastname
 Jon Careless

Copyright Permission Request
 March 28, 2022
 Jon Careless (Mailing Address)
 45 Balliol Street, Unit 1712
 Toronto, ONT, M4S 1C3

Re: Request for Permission to Use Copyrighted Material in a Dissertation

To whom it may concern,

I am a York University student preparing my dissertation for submission as part of the requirements of my doctoral degree in political science. The title of my dissertation is: *Conflicting Visions: Political Struggle over Urban Space in Lawrence Heights*. The reason I am writing is to ask permission to include the following material in my dissertation:



Reference Information: NewLawrenceHeights.ca (n.d.). *The New Lawrence Heights: North Toronto. See The Homes. See The Vision. See The Future*. Retrieved from NewLawrenceHeights.ca



Reference Information: NewLawrenceHeights.ca (n.d.). *The New Lawrence Heights [Untitled online image]*. Retrieved from <https://www.buzzbuzzhome.com/ca/the-new-lawRENCE-HEIGHTS>.



Reference Information: HeightsDevelopment Inc. (n.d.). *The New Lawrence Heights Towns in Toronto*. Retrieved from CondoPromo.com: <https://www.condopromo.com/the-new-lawRENCE-HEIGHTS-TOWNS-TORONTO/>

In the interest of facilitating research by others, my dissertation will be available on the internet for reference, study and/or copy. The electronic version of my thesis/dissertation will be accessible through the York University Libraries website and catalogue, and also through various web search engines. I will be granting Library and Archives Canada a non-exclusive license to reproduce, loan, distribute, or sell single copies of my thesis by any means and in any form or format. These rights will in no way restrict republication of the material in any other form by you or by others authorized by you.

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If you would like to confirm permission by email, my email address is: careless@yorku.ca

Sincerely, Jon Careless

I, Lee Kautsars hereby represent and warrant that I have authority to grant the permission requested and do grant the permission.

Signature: Lee Kautsars

Name: Lee Kautsars
 VP Sales, Marketing + Design.



6 - Figure 8 - Map of North York (NYHS, 2018)



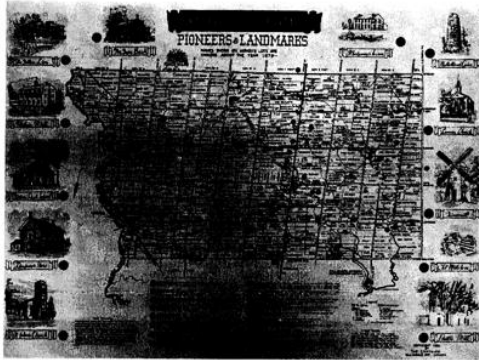
POLITICAL SCIENCE
Firstname_Lastname
Jon Careless

Copyright Permission Request
February 15, 2022
Jon Careless (Mailing Address)
45 Balliol Street, Unit 1712
Toronto, ONT, M4S 1C3

Re: Request for Permission to Use Copyrighted Material in a Dissertation

Attn: North York Historical Society

I am a York University student preparing my dissertation for submission as part of the requirements of my doctoral degree in political science. The title of my dissertation is: *Conflicting Visions: Political Struggle over Urban Space in Lawrence Heights*. The reason I am writing is to ask permission to include the following material in my dissertation:



Reference Information: NYHS. (2018). Map of North York (1878). *North York Historical Society*. Retrieved from <https://nyhs.ca/history/#map>

In the interest of facilitating research by others, my dissertation will be available on the internet for reference, study and/or copy. The electronic version of my thesis/dissertation will be accessible through the York University Libraries website and catalogue, and also through various web search engines. I will be granting Library and Archives Canada a non-exclusive license to reproduce, loan, distribute, or sell single copies of my thesis by any

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If you would like to confirm permission by email, my email address is: careless@yorku.ca

Sincerely, Jon Careless

J. Careless hereby represent and warrant that I have authority to grant the permission requested and do grant the permission.

Signature: *J. Careless*

Name: *Lean Rucchetto*
Library Service Manager Subject
Departments
NYCL
Toronto Public Library



Appendix C: Source Data for Census Analysis (1961 to 2011)

Census data year: 1961			
Males: Ethnic Origin: English	1430	Females: Ethnic Origin: English	1429
Males: Ethnic Origin: Irish	465	Females: Ethnic Origin: Irish	537
Males: Ethnic Origin: Scottish	609	Females: Ethnic Origin: Scottish	565
Males: Ethnic Origin: Welsh	50	Females: Ethnic Origin: Welsh	42
Males: Ethnic Origin: Other British Isles	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: Other British Isles	0
Males: Ethnic Origin: French	92	Females: Ethnic Origin: French	95
Males: Ethnic Origin: Austrian	43	Females: Ethnic Origin: Austrian	32
Males: Ethnic Origin: Belgian	9	Females: Ethnic Origin: Belgian	11
Males: Ethnic Origin: Byelorussian	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: Byelorussian	0
Males: Ethnic Origin: Czech	29	Females: Ethnic Origin: Czech	22
Males: Ethnic Origin: Estonian	23	Females: Ethnic Origin: Estonian	15
Males: Ethnic Origin: Finnish	5	Females: Ethnic Origin: Finnish	7
Males: Ethnic Origin: German	170	Females: Ethnic Origin: German	198
Males: Ethnic Origin: Greek	23	Females: Ethnic Origin: Greek	19
Males: Ethnic Origin: Hungarian	22	Females: Ethnic Origin: Hungarian	21
Males: Ethnic Origin: Italian	85	Females: Ethnic Origin: Italian	70
Males: Ethnic Origin: Jewish	1	Females: Ethnic Origin: Jewish	3
Males: Ethnic Origin: Latvian	23	Females: Ethnic Origin: Latvian	18
Males: Ethnic Origin: Lithuanian	5	Females: Ethnic Origin: Lithuanian	2
Males: Ethnic Origin: Netherlands	60	Females: Ethnic Origin: Netherlands	59
Males: Ethnic Origin: Polish	48	Females: Ethnic Origin: Polish	34

Males: Ethnic Origin: Roumanian	17	Females: Ethnic Origin: Roumanian	15
Males: Ethnic Origin: Russian	9	Females: Ethnic Origin: Russian	14
Males: Ethnic Origin: Danish	11	Females: Ethnic Origin: Danish	8
Males: Ethnic Origin: Icelandic	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: Icelandic	2
Males: Ethnic Origin: Norwegian	11	Females: Ethnic Origin: Norwegian	13
Males: Ethnic Origin: Swedish	10	Females: Ethnic Origin: Swedish	10
Males: Ethnic Origin: Slovak	13	Females: Ethnic Origin: Slovak	13
Males: Ethnic Origin: Ukrainian	62	Females: Ethnic Origin: Ukrainian	56
Males: Ethnic Origin: Yugoslavic	12	Females: Ethnic Origin: Yugoslavic	12
Males: Ethnic Origin: Other European	39	Females: Ethnic Origin: Other European	30
Males: Ethnic Origin: Chinese	18	Females: Ethnic Origin: Chinese	11
Males: Ethnic Origin: East Indian	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: East Indian	0
Males: Ethnic Origin: Japanese	38	Females: Ethnic Origin: Japanese	45
Males: Ethnic Origin: Syrian-Lebanese	3	Females: Ethnic Origin: Syrian-Lebanese	4
Males: Ethnic Origin: Other Asiatic	1	Females: Ethnic Origin: Other Asiatic	0
Males: Ethnic Origin: American	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: American	1
Males: Ethnic Origin: Canadian	39	Females: Ethnic Origin: Canadian	32
Males: Ethnic Origin: Eskimo	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: Eskimo	0
Males: Ethnic Origin: Native Indian-Band	1	Females: Ethnic Origin: Native Indian-Band	2
Males: Ethnic Origin: Native Indian-Non Band	0	Females: Ethnic Origin: Native Indian-Non Band	1
Males: Ethnic Origin: Negro	17	Females: Ethnic Origin: Negro	15
Males: Ethnic Origin: Other	19	Females: Ethnic Origin: Other	21
Males: Ethnic Origin: Not Stated	18	Females: Ethnic Origin: Not Stated	16

Census year: 1971	
Census Tract name	286
Total population	4395
Origin: British Isles	1795
Origin: French	160
Origin: Austrian	5
Origin: Chinese	5
Origin: Czech	20
Origin: Finnish	25
Origin: German	115
Origin: Hungarian	45
Origin: Italian	1330
Origin: Japanese	10
Origin: Jewish	420
Origin: Native Indian	5
Origin: Negro	35
Origin: Netherlands	60
Origin: Polish	50
Origin: Russian	10
Origin: Scandinavian	10
Origin: Slovak	0
Origin: Ukrainian	65
Origin: West Indian	30
Origin: other & unknown	220

Census year: 1986	
Population, 1981	3756
Population, 1986	3530
Ethnic origin - single origins	3105
British	680
French	30
Aboriginal peoples	0
Black	210
Chinese	0
Dutch (Netherlands)	5
German	25
Italian	1560

Jewish	60
Polish	55
Scandinavian	0
South Asian	45
Ukrainian	45
Other single origins	385
Ethnic origin - multiple origins	425

Census year: 1996	
Total - Total population by visible minority population	3365
Total visible minority population	1110
Black	690
South Asian	80
Chinese	10
Korean	15
Japanese	25
Southeast Asian	95
Filipino	30
Arab/West Asian	45
Latin American	110
Visible minority n.i.e.	30
Multiple visible minority	0
All others	2250

Census year: 2001	
Population, 1996 - 100% Data	3365
Population, 2001 - 100% Data	3290
Total population by visible minority groups - 20% Sample Data	3290
Total visible minority population	1255
Chinese	15
South Asian	65
Black	670
Filipino	75
Latin American	135
Southeast Asian	75
Arab	25
West Asian	130
Korean	10

Japanese	0
Visible minority, n.i.e.	40
Multiple visible minorities	15

Census year: 2006	
Total population by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry - 20% sample data	3765
Total population by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry - 20% sample data / Total Aboriginal ancestry population	10
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / North American Indian single ancestry	0
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / North American Indian and non-Aboriginal ancestries	10
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / Métis single ancestry	0
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / Métis and non-Aboriginal ancestries	0
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / Inuit single ancestry	0
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / Inuit and non-Aboriginal ancestries	0
Total Aboriginal ancestry population / Other Aboriginal multiple ancestries	0
Total population by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry - 20% sample data / Non-Aboriginal ancestry population	3765
Total population by visible minority groups - 20% sample data	3770
Total population by visible minority groups - 20% sample data / Total visible minority population	1495
Total visible minority population / Chinese	10
Total visible minority population / South Asian	90
Total visible minority population / Black	945
Total visible minority population / Filipino	175
Total visible minority population / Latin American	95
Total visible minority population / Southeast Asian	30
Total visible minority population / Arab	15
Total visible minority population / West Asian	20
Total visible minority population / Korean	50
Total visible minority population / Japanese	20
Total visible minority population / Visible minority, n.i.e.	10
Total visible minority population / Multiple visible minority	25
Total population by visible minority groups - 20% sample data / Not a visible minority	2275
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data	3770
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / British Isles origins	415
British Isles origins / Cornish	0
British Isles origins / English	210
British Isles origins / Irish	185
British Isles origins / Manx	0
British Isles origins / Scottish	140

British Isles origins / Welsh	25
British Isles origins / British Isles, n.i.e.	45
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / French origins	55
French origins / Acadian	0
French origins / French	60
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Aboriginal origins	10
Aboriginal origins / Inuit	0
Aboriginal origins / Métis	0
Aboriginal origins / North American Indian	10
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Other North American origins	370
Other North American origins / American	15
Other North American origins / Canadian	365
Other North American origins / Newfoundlander	0
Other North American origins / Nova Scotian	0
Other North American origins / Ontarian	0
Other North American origins / Québécois	0
Other North American origins / Other provincial or regional groups	0
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Caribbean origins	290
Caribbean origins / Antiguan	10
Caribbean origins / Bahamian	0
Caribbean origins / Barbadian	10
Caribbean origins / Bermudan	0
Caribbean origins / Carib	0
Caribbean origins / Cuban	0
Caribbean origins / Dominican, n.o.s.	0
Caribbean origins / Grenadian	30
Caribbean origins / Guyanese	0
Caribbean origins / Haitian	0
Caribbean origins / Jamaican	205
Caribbean origins / Kittitian/Nevisian	25
Caribbean origins / Martinican	0
Caribbean origins / Montserratian	0
Caribbean origins / Puerto Rican	0
Caribbean origins / St. Lucian	0
Caribbean origins / Trinidadian/Tobagonian	10
Caribbean origins / Vincentian/Grenadinian	0
Caribbean origins / West Indian	15
Caribbean origins / Caribbean, n.i.e.	0

Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Latin, Central and South American origins	110
Latin, Central and South American origins / Aboriginal from Central/South America	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Argentinian	10
Latin, Central and South American origins / Belizean	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Bolivian	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Brazilian	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Chilean	10
Latin, Central and South American origins / Colombian	10
Latin, Central and South American origins / Costa Rican	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Ecuadorian	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Guatemalan	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Hispanic	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Honduran	40
Latin, Central and South American origins / Maya	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Mexican	10
Latin, Central and South American origins / Nicaraguan	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Panamanian	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Paraguayan	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Peruvian	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Salvadorean	35
Latin, Central and South American origins / Uruguayan	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Venezuelan	0
Latin, Central and South American origins / Latin, Central or South American, n.i.e.	0
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / European origins	1920
European origins / Western European origins	110
Western European origins / Austrian	40
Western European origins / Belgian	0
Western European origins / Dutch (Netherlands)	25
Western European origins / Flemish	0
Western European origins / Frisian	0
Western European origins / German	45
Western European origins / Luxembourger	0
Western European origins / Swiss	0
European origins / Northern European origins	15
Northern European origins / Finnish	10
Northern European origins / Scandinavian origins	10
Scandinavian origins / Danish	0
Scandinavian origins / Icelandic	0

Scandinavian origins / Norwegian	0
Scandinavian origins / Swedish	0
Scandinavian origins / Scandinavian, n.i.e.	10
European origins / Eastern European origins	145
Eastern European origins / Baltic origins	0
Baltic origins / Estonian	0
Baltic origins / Latvian	0
Baltic origins / Lithuanian	10
Eastern European origins / Byelorussian	0
Eastern European origins / Czech and Slovak origins	0
Czech and Slovak origins / Czech	0
Czech and Slovak origins / Czechoslovakian	0
Czech and Slovak origins / Slovak	0
Eastern European origins / Hungarian (Magyar)	0
Eastern European origins / Polish	30
Eastern European origins / Romanian	40
Eastern European origins / Russian	45
Eastern European origins / Ukrainian	35
European origins / Southern European origins	1675
Southern European origins / Albanian	70
Southern European origins / Bosnian	0
Southern European origins / Bulgarian	0
Southern European origins / Croatian	10
Southern European origins / Cypriot	0
Southern European origins / Greek	30
Southern European origins / Italian	1375
Southern European origins / Kosovar	0
Southern European origins / Macedonian	0
Southern European origins / Maltese	0
Southern European origins / Montenegrin	0
Southern European origins / Portuguese	195
Southern European origins / Serbian	15
Southern European origins / Sicilian	0
Southern European origins / Slovenian	0
Southern European origins / Spanish	30
Southern European origins / Yugoslav, n.i.e.	0
European origins / Other European origins	30
Other European origins / Basque	0
Other European origins / Gypsy (Roma)	0

Other European origins / Jewish	30
Other European origins / Slav (European)	0
Other European origins / European, n.i.e.	10
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / African origins	695
African origins / Afrikaner	0
African origins / Akan	0
African origins / Amhara	0
African origins / Angolan	0
African origins / Ashanti	0
African origins / Bantu	0
African origins / Black	0
African origins / Burundian	0
African origins / Cameroonian	0
African origins / Chadian	0
African origins / Congolese (Zairian)	0
African origins / Congolese, n.o.s.	0
African origins / Dinka	0
African origins / East African	0
African origins / Eritrean	70
African origins / Ethiopian	100
African origins / Gabonese	0
African origins / Gambian	0
African origins / Ghanaian	105
African origins / Guinean, n.o.s.	0
African origins / Harari	0
African origins / Ibo	0
African origins / Ivorian	0
African origins / Kenyan	10
African origins / Malagasy	0
African origins / Malian	0
African origins / Mauritian	0
African origins / Nigerian	0
African origins / Oromo	40
African origins / Peulh	0
African origins / Rwandan	0
African origins / Senegalese	0
African origins / Seychellois	0
African origins / Sierra Leonean	35
African origins / Somali	160

African origins / South African	0
African origins / Sudanese	110
African origins / Tanzanian	0
African origins / Tigrian	0
African origins / Togolese	0
African origins / Ugandan	0
African origins / Yoruba	0
African origins / Zambian	0
African origins / Zimbabwean	0
African origins / Zulu	0
African origins / African, n.i.e.	170
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Arab origins	10
Arab origins / Egyptian	0
Arab origins / Iraqi	0
Arab origins / Jordanian	0
Arab origins / Kuwaiti	0
Arab origins / Lebanese	0
Arab origins / Libyan	0
Arab origins / Maghrebi origins	0
Maghrebi origins / Algerian	0
Maghrebi origins / Berber	0
Maghrebi origins / Moroccan	0
Maghrebi origins / Tunisian	0
Maghrebi origins / Maghrebi, n.i.e.	0
Arab origins / Palestinian	0
Arab origins / Saudi Arabian	0
Arab origins / Syrian	0
Arab origins / Yemeni	0
Arab origins / Arab, n.i.e.	10
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / West Asian origins	45
West Asian origins / Afghan	15
West Asian origins / Armenian	10
West Asian origins / Assyrian	0
West Asian origins / Azerbaijani	0
West Asian origins / Georgian	0
West Asian origins / Iranian	25
West Asian origins / Israeli	0
West Asian origins / Kurd	0
West Asian origins / Pashtun	15

West Asian origins / Tatar	0
West Asian origins / Turk	0
West Asian origins / West Asian, n.i.e.	0
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / South Asian origins	100
South Asian origins / Bangladeshi	0
South Asian origins / Bengali	0
South Asian origins / East Indian	70
South Asian origins / Goan	0
South Asian origins / Gujarati	0
South Asian origins / Kashmiri	0
South Asian origins / Nepali	0
South Asian origins / Pakistani	15
South Asian origins / Punjabi	0
South Asian origins / Sinhalese	0
South Asian origins / Sri Lankan	10
South Asian origins / Tamil	0
South Asian origins / South Asian, n.i.e.	0
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / East and Southeast Asian origins	290
East and Southeast Asian origins / Burmese	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Cambodian	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Chinese	30
East and Southeast Asian origins / Filipino	170
East and Southeast Asian origins / Hmong	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Indonesian	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Japanese	20
East and Southeast Asian origins / Khmer	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Korean	50
East and Southeast Asian origins / Laotian	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Malaysian	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Mongolian	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Singaporean	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Taiwanese	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Thai	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Tibetan	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Vietnamese	25
East and Southeast Asian origins / East or Southeast Asian, n.i.e.	0
East and Southeast Asian origins / Asian, n.o.s.	0
Total population by ethnic origin - 20% sample data / Oceania origins	0
Oceania origins / Australian	0

Oceania origins / New Zealander	0
Oceania origins / Pacific Islands origins	0
Pacific Islands origins / Fijian	0
Pacific Islands origins / Hawaiian	0
Pacific Islands origins / Maori	0
Pacific Islands origins / Polynesian	0
Pacific Islands origins / Samoan	0
Pacific Islands origins / Pacific Islander, n.i.e.	0

2011 National Household Survey (NHS) Profiles Files / Profile of Census Tracts		
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes	5315	3610
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Non-immigrants; Both sexes	2125	1825
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Non-immigrants; Both sexes / Born in province of residence; Both sexes	2050	1710
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Non-immigrants; Both sexes / Born outside province of residence; Both sexes	75	110
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes	3080	1715
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes	545	425
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / United States; Both sexes	30	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Jamaica; Both sexes	35	165
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Guyana; Both sexes	35	55
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Haiti; Both sexes	220	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Mexico; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Trinidad and Tobago; Both sexes	25	0

Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Colombia; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / El Salvador; Both sexes	90	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Peru; Both sexes	0	25
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Chile; Both sexes	25	30
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Americas; Both sexes / Other places of birth in Americas; Both sexes	70	105
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes	430	645
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / United Kingdom; Both sexes	0	10
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Italy; Both sexes	55	465
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Germany; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Poland; Both sexes	0	20
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Portugal; Both sexes	0	75
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Netherlands; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / France; Both sexes	100	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Romania; Both sexes	50	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Russian Federation; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Greece; Both sexes	160	30

Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Ukraine; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Croatia; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Hungary; Both sexes	25	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Bosnia and Herzegovina; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Serbia; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Ireland, Republic of; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Europe; Both sexes / Other places of birth in Europe; Both sexes	15	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes	1265	280
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Morocco; Both sexes	360	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Algeria; Both sexes	330	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Egypt; Both sexes	135	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / South Africa, Republic of; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Nigeria; Both sexes	0	15
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Ethiopia; Both sexes	0	50
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Kenya; Both sexes	0	30
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Africa; Both sexes / Other places of birth in Africa; Both sexes	425	180

Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Asia; Both sexes / Turkey; Both sexes	40	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Asia; Both sexes / Other places of birth in Asia; Both sexes	235	55
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Oceania and other; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Oceania and other; Both sexes / Fiji; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Immigrants; Both sexes / Oceania and other; Both sexes / Other places of birth; Both sexes	0	0
Immigrant status and selected places of birth - Both sexes / Total population in private households by immigrant status and selected places of birth; Both sexes / Non-permanent residents; Both sexes	110	70

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