

# The Practice and Politics of Care: Social Service Organizations, Community Resilience and the Redevelopment of Regent Park

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
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## **Abstract**

In 2005, the Toronto Community Housing Corporation began the ambitious mixed-income redevelopment of Regent Park, Canada's oldest and largest public housing estate. The community has long been subject to race- and class-based stigmatization, and today is one of the last areas of concentrated poverty in Toronto's rapidly gentrifying downtown core. A dense and remarkably active hub of non-profit organizations has developed in Regent Park since the 1970s. This thesis investigates the role that social service providers play in enabling community members to navigate and adapt to the drastic social, economic and political changes brought about by redevelopment in a context of welfare state retrenchment and strong government support for gentrification.

Academic literature tends to dismiss social service organizations as dupes of neoliberalism, robbed of any agency of their own and complicit in the punitive oversight of the poor. I show that the reality on the ground is far more complex, and that social service providers have exercised a powerful place-based agency by virtue of their position at the intersection of state, market and community forces. At the heart of this agency sits a praxis of care that is attentive to the complexity of ordinary life and responsible and competent in providing practical and emotional support.

I argue that together, the social service providers in Regent Park form a "landscape of care" that over the course of redevelopment has afforded the community orientation, stability, space, capacity and the means to negotiate social and institutional power structures, thereby enabling not only survival but adaptive resilience in the face of erasure. Care enables creative reformulations of the conditions and possibilities of everyday life on the margins of the post-welfare city, and can thereby be seen as a form of oppositional politics that, though nascent, has powerful counter-hegemonic potential. I conclude by considering how care can serve as an analytical and strategic framework for community-level actors contending with the disruptions wrought by the messy and contingent neoliberal urban political economy.

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“The architect who draws and the urbanist who composes a block plan look down on their “objects,” buildings and neighborhoods, from above and afar. These designers and draftsmen move within a space of paper and ink. Only after this nearly complete reduction of the everyday do they return to the scale of lived experience. They are convinced they have captured it even though they carry out their plans and projects within a second-order abstraction. They’ve shifted from living experience to the abstract, projecting this abstraction back onto lived experience. This twofold substitution and negation creates an illusory sense of affirmation: the return to “real” life.”

- Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 1970

“Ideologies happen. Power snaps into place. Structures grow entrenched. Identities take place. Ways of knowing become habitual at the drop of a hat. But it’s ordinary affects that give things the quality of a *something* to inhabit and animate. Politics starts in the animated inhabitation of things, not way downstream in the various dreamboats and horror shows that get moving.... There’s a politics to being/feeling connected (or not), to impacts that are shared (or not), to energies spent worrying or scheming (or not), to affective contagion, and to all the forms of attunement and attachment. There’s a politics to ways of watching and waiting for something to happen and to forms of agency... There’s a politics to difference itself – the difference of danger, the difference of habit and dull routine, the difference of everything that matters.”

- Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*, 2007

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# 1. Introduction

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In 2005, the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) began construction on the ambitious mixed-income redevelopment of Regent Park, Canada's oldest and largest public housing estate, and one of the last areas of concentrated poverty in Toronto's downtown core. Through a public-private partnership with large for-profit developer Daniels Corp., all 2,083 units of rent geared to income (RGI) housing will be rebuilt, and 5,400 market-rate condominiums will be introduced to the 70-acre site, drastically densifying the area, intensifying the scale of the built environment and kicking off a process of state-led gentrification (Lees, 2000; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Kipfer and Petrunia, 2009). The construction is taking place over five phases, each containing a mix of market-rate and affordable housing, culminating in 2020; currently, Phase Two construction is partially complete, and Phase Three demolition has begun. The introduction of higher-income residents to the community and the mixing of housing tenure are intended to 'deconcentrate' poverty, increase economic opportunity for public housing residents, and build 'social capital'. In reaction to the increasing concentration and segregation of poverty in cities, pathologized in the "neighborhood effects" literature (for example, Wilson, 1987; Sampson, 2012), this type of social mixing has become a prominent welfare *strategy and objective* in many Western liberal democracies (Bridge, Butler and Lees, 2012).

A dense and rich landscape of social service organizations has developed in Regent Park since the 1970's, serving neighborhood residents as well as larger segments of some of the city's most marginalized populations. As Vale (2013) has argued, redevelopment marks a shift in the margins of the state's empathy. Social service organizations play a crucial role in helping residents negotiate such shifts, particularly in a context of welfare state retrenchment on multiple scales and strong state support for gentrification. Brandsen et al (2005) define social services as organizations that provide services and goods with a "dual" public (collective) and private (individual) nature, the common denominator of which is "care for others on a voluntary basis." As welfare provision shrinks, families increasingly have to resort to private solutions to what had previously been public issues (Staeheli and Brown, 2003). Social service organizations play a crucial role in supporting these families, providing care so that they can continue to care for one another, and stepping in when the burden of the ordinary becomes extraordinary. Despite this, they've largely been overlooked as a unit of analysis in most of the recent academic literature on the neighborhood's redevelopment (August 2014; Dunn 2012; James 2010). Given their density and importance in the day-to-day life of current residents, a deeper look at how agencies and social service workers are affected by and respond to redevelopment is overdue.

The redevelopment plan necessitates the temporary relocation of all Regent Park residents for upwards of three years; some are able to stay in the neighborhood, but many are relegated to far-flung corners of the city while their sector of the neighborhood is demolished and rebuilt. Some do not return after rebuilding their lives elsewhere. Those who do return find themselves in a very different community in the process of large-scale social and economic change. For the local landscape of social service providers, this means significant shifts in the livelihoods of their client bases and the challenge of figuring out how to continue providing essential services to a dislocated and 'mixed'-up population with less access to longstanding networks of support and care. Although a formal Social Development Plan was developed to address the challenges of community rebuilding, it was insufficiently resourced, and social service providers have had to take on most of this work themselves. This thesis will investigate how the local landscape of

neighborhood-based social services has responded to the redevelopment, and how this response has enabled the original community to adapt to extraordinary physical change and the social challenges that have emerged as a result.

Social service organizations lie in tension among influences from the state, private market and the informal sector of family and community. As such, they offer an important perspective on the ways in which these actors produce and reproduce space over time: in Regent Park, social service organizations have a unique awareness of the ways in which neoliberal processes of urban and welfare state restructuring have manifested in the community. From this understanding emerges a powerful agency, at the heart of which, I argue, sits a praxis of care that has afforded the community orientation, stability, space, capacity, and negotiation in a time of disruptive change, enabling everyday resilience at the margins of the post-welfare city.



Regent Park, 1955. Credit: Michael Burns



Regent Park, 2015. Credit: Vik Pahwa, vikipahwa.com



## I. Regent Park and the Rhetoric of Stigma

Regent Park is Canada's first "twice-cleared community," having been razed and redeveloped via slum clearance in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and fifty years later cleared again to make way for a mixed-income community (Vale, 2013). Regent Park was built between 1947-1959 to house World War II veterans and new immigrants who were unable to manage in Toronto's tight housing market. Through the 1930's, a diverse reform coalition consisting of local businessmen, social workers, academics and activists came together as the Citizens Housing and Planning Association, and convinced the local government of the benefits of urban renewal. They developed the proposals for the clearance of the southern part of the working-class Cabbagetown neighborhood and the construction of social housing, won city council approval for the project in 1945, and in 1947 construction by the newly created Housing Authority of Toronto began.

The physical design of Regent Park was a typically modernist "garden city" superblock layout, with plenty of green space and no thoroughfares, and was oriented towards prescribing behavioral norms. Planners produced a homogenous development of mid-rise buildings, some townhouses, and high-rise towers, surrounded by green open space and enclosed from the pre-existing street grid. Albert Rose, one of the lead reformers, exemplified the environmentally determinist design principles, writing that such orderly planning could reduce delinquency, and stabilize patriarchal families and their place in the labor market (Rose, 1958). When the first units opened in 1949, it was seen as the ideal working class community: the city's powerful sung its praises, and a major newspaper called it "heaven." Twenty years on, the tune was a decidedly different one; descriptions in the same paper shifted to "colossal flop" and "hopeless slum" as a consensus emerged that the project was breeding moral depravity (Purdy, 2003).

Since the 1960s, Regent Park has been highly stigmatized in policy discourse. Racialization has been intrinsic to the community's delegitimization. Beginning in the 1960s, the resident population underwent a dramatic shift from largely white to an incredibly diverse, largely non-white mix. By the time the redevelopment began, over 80% of Regent Park residents were people of color, most of whom were immigrants. Most

residents also belonged to low-income, underemployed or welfare-dependent families, a significant portion of whom were led by single women. While some tenants internalized these negative depictions of their community, others contested them and worked to build a sense of community in Regent Park. In the 1960s and 1970s, a strong women-led tenants movement won economic and political demands from the City - including better maintenance, more democratic management, and less restrictive RGI guidelines - and helped foster many of the neighborhood's social service organization and recreation facilities. Unfortunately, this indirectly lent ammunition to politicians and journalists who had begun stigmatizing the area (Purdy, 2003; Kipfer and Petrunia, 2009). Through the 1980s and 1990s, Regent Park was "a byword to signify everything...that white, middle-class Torontonians fear" (August, 2008). Over this time, multiple initiatives to redevelop Regent Park emerged and failed; only in the context of fiscal crisis in early 2000s did it become a reality.

While the need for new housing was clear, the reality of everyday life differed significantly from popular narratives centered on tropes of hopelessness, blight and social decay. August (2014) finds that people appreciated the accessibility and centrality and amenities of living downtown, valued social networks and a strong sense of community, and a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding. "Before [redevelopment], people didn't necessarily have to explain themselves to each other; they were all somehow marginalized," said one frontline social service worker interviewed for this thesis; another, who has lived in the community for much of her life, described it fondly as a village. Nevertheless, real problems in the community did exist. Apartments were between 55-65 years old, and many were in a state of disrepair due to the chronic underfunding of social housing in the province. Drug-related activity was also common, and led to feelings of insecurity in public spaces (August, 2014). Interview respondents consistently acknowledged that it was a violent place, with lots of crime: "before I started working here, I had never been to so many funerals in my whole life." Unfortunately, the citywide rhetoric around redevelopment distorted the nature of these problems and misattributed them to isolation and concentrated poverty rather than considering deeper structural factors. This is unsurprising given a rapidly neoliberalizing political context

beginning in the early 1990s, within which pro-market and anti-poor ideology would consistently overpower concerns for equity and social justice.

## **II. Redevelopment in Context**

### ***Normalizing urban neoliberalism***

Mike Harris, a Conservative, was elected Premier of Ontario in June 1995 on a platform that was a textbook case of neoliberal strategy. Exemplifying the contradictory nature of neoliberalism, Harris' administration gushed small-government rhetoric while becoming perhaps the most interventionist the province had ever seen; rather than actually dismantling the state, they dramatically interfered in the lives of many groups in Ontario society. Their policies disproportionately attacked the poor, and included: drastic welfare cuts, reductions in provincial social service positions, the introduction of workfare, the elimination of public housing programs, attacks on unions, systematic underfunding of the public education system, the harassment of civil society organizations, and the loosening of planning regulations in pursuit of urban growth (Boudreau et al, 2009).

In the fall of 1996, the Tory provincial government took the initial steps towards the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto and six additional municipalities into a so-called "megacity." In the merged City of Toronto's first mayoral election one year later, Toronto's Mayor Barbara Hall faced off against Mel Lastman, mayor of suburban boomtown North York, the second largest municipality in the new megacity. Hall was a progressive member of the New Democratic Party and an outspoken advocate for Toronto's homeless and marginalized; Lastman was a parochial, business-oriented conservative who famously proclaimed that there were no homeless people in North York since they all sought services in Toronto. Lastman won the election by a landslide, taking most of the suburban votes on an ideologue's platform of free markets and frozen taxes; Hall took Toronto proper handily, but her innovative policies couldn't stand up to Lastman's populism. This election kicked off "a dramatic new wave of megalomaniacal urban growth" (Boudreau et al, 2009) and its results continue to reverberate through the city almost 20 years later.

What emerged at the urban level was a new era of neoliberalism that can be seen as “revanchism,” a right-wing reaction against the city’s working class, unemployed, immigrants and minorities (Smith, 1996). Politically, amalgamation was accompanied by the downloading of social welfare responsibilities leading to municipal budget crises, and the reduction of local government powers to tax or otherwise raise funds. Together, the Harris and Lastman governments pushed Toronto as a location for capital accumulation and facilitated the city’s “re-embourgeoisement” by ushering in a condominium boom and high-end culture. The city’s remarkable diversity served as a convenient PR strategy, but racism within the city’s institutions grew more rampant (Boudreau et al., 2009). The result was a new set of socio-cultural disparities predicated on rising inequality, and a new set of norms about urban subjectivity and citizenship.

Through the first decade of the new millennium, the city was under the spell of Third Way urbanism, infusing the neoliberalism of the late 1990’s with a few progressive strands in tune with the sensibilities of the city’s mainstream: “that loose constellation of predominantly white, new middle-class gentrifiers, condominium dwellers, and edgy hipsters who define central city political culture” (Kipfer and Petrunia, 2009: 111). Keil (2009) calls this “roll-with-it neoliberalization,” a period more self-referential than roll-back and roll-out neoliberalization, which were in clear dialogue with the Fordist-Keynesian compromise and marked by the normalization of neoliberal practices and mindsets. Overall, the strength of the renewed political activism of conservative middle classes continues to subsume that of working class or popular groups. The clearest indicator of this in Toronto is the election of suburban conservative Rob Ford for Mayor in 2008, followed in 2014 by John Tory who, despite a more rarified pedigree and a reputation for steady centrism, is poised to steer Toronto on a center-right course more likely to reinforce than dismantle structural inequities.

### ***Public housing: fiscal crisis, market-based solution***

The Canadian federal government stopped funding social housing in 1994 and downloaded responsibility for the provision and management of this good onto provincial governments. In Ontario, Harris canceled all future provincial commitments to social

housing construction (including 17,000 projects that were underway) shortly after his election, and in 2000 his administration passed the Social Housing Reform Act, which devolved administration and funding of social housing a second time, down to the municipal level. The result was an immediate crisis in affordable housing in the province and the rapid growth of a bewildering bureaucracy (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006).

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation was formally created on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, combining three municipally operated housing providers. With the City as its sole shareholder, it is charged with managing approximately 58,500 units of housing across more than 2,200 buildings; it is the second-largest public housing provider in North America. In its first annual report, it listed the following challenges: a capital deficit growing at a rate of \$30M per year; an aging housing stock with the average building nearly 40 years old; and operating costs rising faster than revenues at a rate of five to one (TCHC, 2002). Municipal tax revenues couldn't begin to cover the immensity of this financial burden, and cities received no additional funding along with the added responsibility; indeed, federal transfers decreased on an annual basis. Devolution more or less ensured that social housing would be "desperately targeted for neoliberal solutions" (August, 2014).

### ***Poverty and inequality in the divided city***

Today's Toronto is characterized by polarizing income inequality, both between the city's neighborhoods and among residents. This inequality has been growing for over 30 years, slowly at first but rapidly beginning in the 1990s and into the new millennium (Hulchanski, 2007). Three well-established labor market trends are especially important for understanding the growth in inequality: a growing income gap between an increasingly well-paid managerial group and groups of workers in lower-wage occupations, a growing income gap between recent immigrants and the native-born, and a growing income gap between visible minorities and whites (Walks, 2010). Despite having 5 of the country's 10 richest neighborhoods, the city leads all major cities in Canada when it comes to child poverty (Polanyi et al., 2014). As a result of the income dynamics described above, poverty in the city is increasingly racialized. In neighborhoods

like Regent Park and neighboring Moss Park, where the population is majority non-white and majority non-native-born, over 50% of children live in poverty.

The redevelopment of Regent Park is thus situated within a period of revanchist urban neoliberalism in which the political power of low-income groups is at a minimum and the market imperative drives policy decisions. However, this thesis will show that this is not cause for pessimism; neoliberalization's dominance of urban life has been imperfect and messy, and amidst this complexity there are traces of an oppositional politics that resists neoliberalism's spread. In Regent Park, as this thesis will show, social service organizations are a starting point for understanding already-existing forms of everyday, ordinary resistance to large-scale urban processes that, though totalizing at a birds eye view, are a lot more ambivalent on the ground.

### **III. Research Question and Methods**

A set of third-sector organizations provides essential social services to the Regent Park community based on the characteristics and needs of the local population, and form a central part of local relations of social reproduction that ensure the survival of some of the city's most marginalized groups in the face of systematic oppression. The redevelopment disrupts these relations in a number of ways. How have social service providers made sense of and responded to the social challenges that have been most pressing over the course of this intervention? What is the nature and significance of this response for the affected community, and what learning opportunities does it offer for those engaged in social planning in the context of urban restructuring?

To answer this question, I used qualitative methods to inquire into five key issues from the perspective of social service workers at five organizations in Regent Park:

1. The evolution of the pre-intervention landscape of social service organizations in the neighborhood, and how these organizations have come to provide the current range of services that care for the welfare of Regent Park residents.
2. How social services have been involved in the redevelopment planning process,

and how they have planned for redevelopment internally.

3. The social, spatial, economic and political changes occurring as a result of the redevelopment, and how organizations and service provision are affected by these.
4. How organizations are responding to redevelopment and the resulting changes in the community.
5. How this response is affecting the population that relies on these organizations and the services that they provide.

My research focused on six social service organizations based in Regent Park on or directly adjacent to the redevelopment site. Each offers at least three of the following services: physical and mental health care; housing assistance; shelter services; education; employment services; youth programming; immigrant and refugee services; nutrition and food access. With one exception, each has at least 25 years of continuous presence serving the Regent Park community, and all but one were involved in creating the Social Development Plan. The organizations I focus on, profiled in greater depth in the following section, are listed below with the date of their establishment:

- Centre for Community Learning and Development (1975)
- Christian Resource Centre (1964)
- Dixon Hall (1929)
- Pathways to Education (2001)
- Regent Park Community Health Centre (1973)
- Yonge Street Mission (1896)

These organizations were chosen for the breadth of services they provide, their tenure in the community, and their local roots. Other large social service providers such as the Salvation Army and the Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club are active in the community, but they are not based locally, nor have they historically focused primarily on this community, and for these reasons I chose not to include them in this study. I also attempted to reach

out to two smaller local organizations focused on specific groups, the Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and the South East Asian Service Centre, but was unsuccessful in making contact. Interview respondents confirmed that my list of focus organizations was inclusive of the most significant local social service providers.

My data collection consisted of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with individuals employed at each organization. The full list of interviewees is in Appendix 1. Potential interviewees were identified using contact information listed on organizational websites, via outreach to organizational representatives, and through the “snowballing” technique. Interviewees were selected based on limited knowledge of the following criteria: tenure; employment history; history of community engagement; involvement in organizational decision-making processes; frequency of contact with service users. My aim was to speak to the individuals with the most comprehensive knowledge of the organization’s mission, programs, funding, and needs of the communities to whom services are provided. I tried to speak to at least one front-line worker and one member of the management team of each organization. Due to my limited time in Toronto and the many other demands facing these organizations, this was not possible in all cases: at Pathways to Education, I only spoke to the Executive Director; at the Christian Resource Centre and the Community Health Centre, I only spoke to front-line staff. Additionally, late in the writing process, I was given the opportunity to speak with Mitchell Cohen, President of the Daniels Corporation, about his firm’s social planning and development efforts in the community.

Each interview was semi-structured. I developed a basic instrument with open-ended core questions based upon the five processes listed above, and added specific questions based on the interviewee’s area(s) of expertise. This allowed me to compare perspectives across interviews and pinpoint common tensions between service provision and the redevelopment process. I encouraged each interviewee to develop a narrative of their personal experience and perspective navigating the process of redevelopment, alongside that of their organization.

In analyzing my interviews, I used qualitative coding methods to identify common themes, processes, relationships, challenges, constraints and questions across interviews. I



also gave extra attention to trying to understand and give shape to the agency of the individual, their experience of and response to these changes, and considered ways in which my analysis could affirm and foreground their subjectivity and voice, both individually and collectively. My goal is to use the data to form an experiential understanding of how things ‘worked out’ for the people who worked through the redevelopment. My concern is less with pursuing a causal analysis than developing an alternative perspective on a phenomenon that can both facilitate constructive responses to social problems, as well as prompt and sustain social inquiry on the ground and in the academy.

### ***Two units of analysis: organizations and individuals***

In this thesis I refer variously to social service organizations, social service workers, and social service providers. This last term is intended to encompass the first two. Over the course of my research, I gradually realized that I would be best suited by treating social service organizations and social service workers at those organizations as two overlapping units of analysis. These organizations are only as strong, savvy or sensible as the people who staff them. In my interviews it became clear to me that the individual agency of the staff I spoke to was equally, if not more important, to study and to valorize in the context of this research. Their reflexivity and resourcefulness make them members of the city’s “real creative class” (Wilson and Keil, 2008). Some have been in the community since long before the redevelopment; others have been in Regent park for less than three years. Some are formally trained as social workers; others are not. And yet, together, they constitute a class of people that has held and sustained space for the ordinary - for the complexity of individual lives, and for the character and sentiments of a community – during a time of extraordinary rupture. They are one of the few parts of the community that has persisted during a time when everything else has changed. The agency of the individual and the organization are clearly intertwined and co-dependent, yet each also extends well beyond the other. Both deserve recognition and uplifting, for the sake of future research on restructuring, and more importantly for the sake of communities caught in its throes.

## **IV. Social Service Organizations in Regent Park**

Regent Park is a service hub, a spatial concentration of third-sector social service organizations. The agglomeration benefits to clients of this concentration are significant, because together they can act as “proxies of collective consumption” (DeVerteuil, forthcoming). “Regent is so well-resourced, more so than most communities in Downtown East,” said a front-line worker who was relatively new to the neighborhood after working for some time in nearby Moss Park. “Here you just have to step outside your door and you’ll hit some kind of [organization] where you get a free something. There’s not nearly this level of service saturation elsewhere.” In addition to the range of health, educational and cultural programs offered, many members of the Regent Park community rely on social service organizations to make ends meet. “When you’re here, you’re spoiled with services. Some people don’t have to use money for food at all. They just know where and when all the meals are, and use the food banks for everything else. You can be poor and live downtown if you know how to manage.”

### ***Centre for Community Learning and Development***

In 1979, the Centre for Community Learning & Development was founded as East End Literacy, a community-based organization offering literacy skills to residents of downtown east Toronto with funding from the provincial government. For over 30 years, the organization was based out of the Parliament Street branch of the Toronto Public Library, on the perimeter of Regent Park. As the needs of the client base evolved in the new millennium, the organization added the Immigrant Women Integration Program (IWIP) in order to address issues of isolation, language barriers and the lack of culturally sensitive services available to newcomers to the city. In 2006, the organization rebranded itself as the CCLD in order to enable access to new types of funding from larger actors like the United Way and the City that were looking towards Regent Park in the context of redevelopment. In 2010, the organization was given the opportunity to be the “custodian” of the TD Centre for Learning, a new facility built through the redevelopment, and run it as a programming hub space within the community, engaging other organizations and

stakeholders. Daniels was the first sponsor of this initiative, and through a partnership agreement, CCLD did not need to pay rent, and could thereby offer their programming for free. At present, their programming includes: IWIP; Academic Upgrading, an adult literacy program; Youth Empowering Parents, a program for youth to help adults integrate into Canadian society; and an array of digital media skills initiatives.

CCLD is based in the heart of Regent Park, and like all of the other organizations, was busy and full of community members on the days I visited. The organization is open to the community, in a few senses. As one of their staff members described it: “People walk in, hang around, it’s a really open environment. It’s the same for other agencies around here, 5-10% of the year our rooms are being utilized by another organization because their space is being renovated, or their computers aren’t working, etc.....The idea is that if you need it, you need it, so use it if its not being used. The way we operate is...that whatever’s best for the community, we’ll go for rather than whatever’s best for our internal processes and we’ll figure it out later.” The organization has been instrumental in mobilizing residents around accessibility issues over the course of the redevelopment. Their ethos towards resident-driven initiatives is that “if it comes with conscientious intent, we’ll push to make it happen.” Their approach to doing so is to “design community partnerships around community needs.” Most recently, they’ve worked with residents to start a catering collective, yoga classes, and a sewing cooperative.

### ***Christian Resource Centre***

2015 marks the Christian Resource Centre’s fiftieth year in Regent Park. The CRC began in the basement of the Rosedale United Church - located in one of Toronto’s wealthiest neighborhoods - as a small discussion group focused on bettering the lives of the city’s most marginalized. In 1965, they opened an “Inner City Christian Mission” in the basement of the Regent Park United Church, to continue these discussions on the ground in one of the city’s poorest communities. They began to feed those involved in the discussions, and through this became aware of a lack of food security in the community. They developed a full-fledged meal program that has continued to this day, and this, in turn, strengthened the original discussion group’s advocacy work by bringing them into

closer contact with the Regent Park community. They remained in the basement of the Regent Park United Church until 2012, when they moved into their brand new building at 40 Oak St.

In 2003, when they first learned of the redevelopment, they decided that they would try to build a new building concurrently, in order to fully take part in the revitalization. They fund-raised for half of the total \$23 million cost, and Daniels and the City of Toronto contributed the other half. The new building includes a large drop-in center, community kitchen, activity spaces, a worship space and gardening plots; the most significant new facility, though, are the 87 “deeply affordable housing units” that sit on top of the communal area.<sup>1</sup> These units - a mix of bachelor, one-bedroom and two-bedroom - are on par with the price of a room in a rooming house in Downtown East. The cost of the units was subsidized via seven different head leases with different social service organizations from across the city, each of which is responsible for six to seven units of housing. A remaining 40 units were designated as relocation units for community members losing their home through the redevelopment. These units were available on the stipulation that once tenants moved in, they cut TCHC ties and lost any position on the waiting list for a newly redeveloped unit; however, the housing subsidy from the City is not lost.

Most recently, the organization entered another significant period of expansion by becoming the physical home of the Regent Park Community Food Centre, a partnership between the CRC and Community Food Centres of Canada, a national organization whose mission is to partner with community groups to increase access to healthy food and develop political momentum around issues of food justice. As a result of this partnership, the organization has been able to bring on seven new staff and significantly increase their programming capacity around food and urban agriculture, which in turn supplement their long-running meal programs.

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<sup>1</sup> These units are not part of the total replacement count, however some of the tenants at 40 Oaks were previously TCHC tenants in Regent Park. When they chose to accept the opportunity to relocate to a unit at 40 Oaks, they had to agree to end their relationship with the TCHC and waive their right to return to a new TCHC unit.

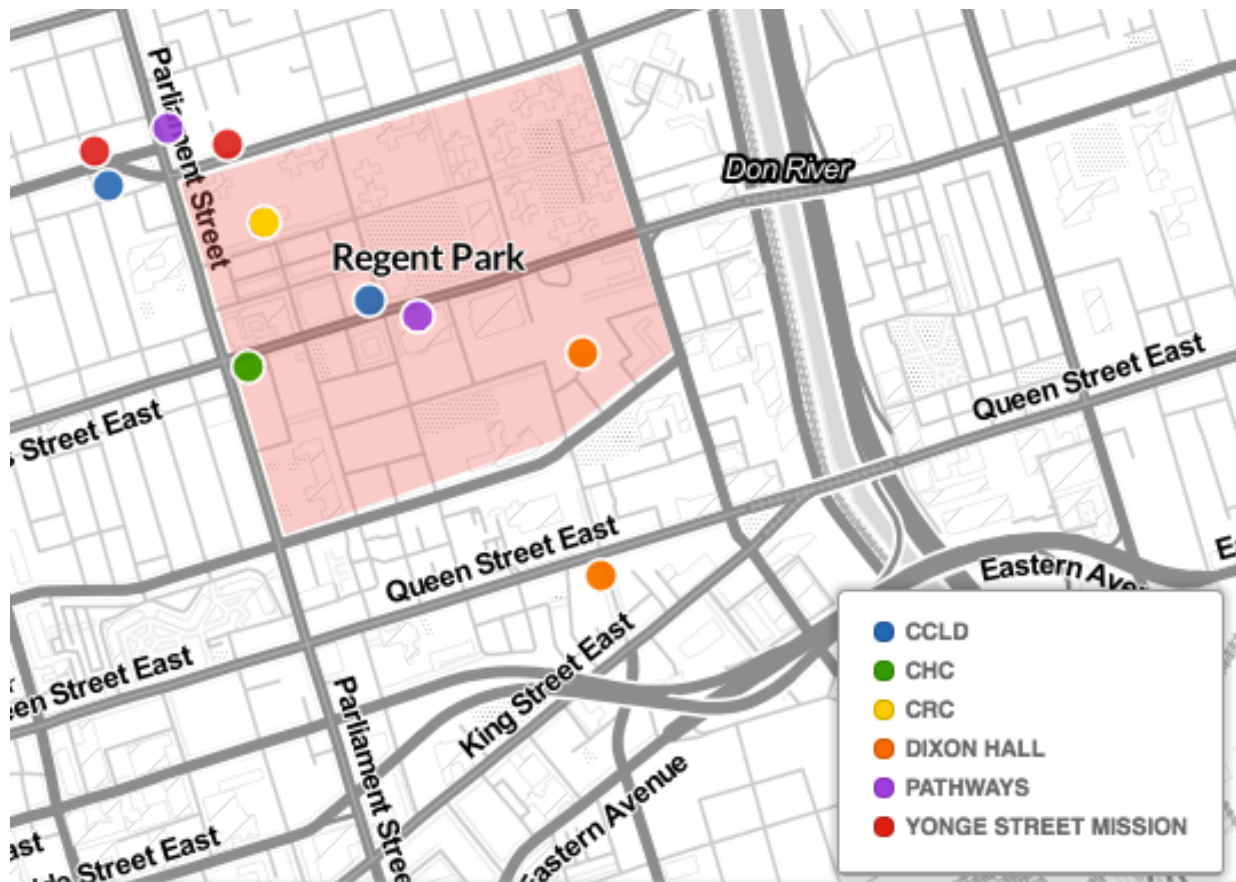


Figure 1. The local sites of the social service organizations studied in this thesis.

## Dixon Hall

Dixon Hall is a multi-service agency with 80-year-old roots in Regent Park. They offer a wide range of programs to members of communities across Downtown East, with a special emphasis on youth development, seniors, and the homeless and underhoused. For the first thirty years, the organization resembled a Christian relief agency, and in the 1970s re-oriented their efforts towards community development and capacity-buildings. Dixon Hall runs a large Employment Services Centre on the periphery of Regent Park that has played a considerable role in increasing job access over the course of the redevelopment, as well as a Mill Centre that provides skills training for marginalized community members. Other programming includes parenting support, settlement services for new immigrants, health and wellness programming for seniors, and a popular music school.

Dixon Hall has grown into a large organization, and though based in Regent Park,

their portfolio of activities now extends beyond the community. For example, at a city-wide scale they coordinate training for the 3000 volunteers for City's Out of the Cold program, and operate two emergency shelters for homeless men. As they've increased the scope and scale of their work, they haven't lost their roots within the community. During a recent strategic planning process, they considered the idea of moving some resources to the inner suburbs with community stakeholders. "The community said we need you here and it's not a good time for you to leave. We received very clear communication from residents on that." Dixon Hall will be building a new Youth Centre within Regent Park after the demolition of their old facility, and the organization will also be the main agency responsible for coordinating programming at the new Athletic Grounds.

### ***Regent Park Community Health Centre***

The Regent Park Community Health Centre (CHC) was established in 1973 and based in the bottom two floors of one of the neighborhood's high-rise apartment buildings that was demolished in Phase One of the revitalization. They moved to a large new facility on the edge of Regent Park shortly before redevelopment began. Although they no longer based within a residential building, it was clear that the CHC was a community space; on the days I visited, the lobby was busy with community members taking a break from the cold, and the atmosphere was a friendly but busy one.

The CHC's core focus is providing services for those who traditionally have trouble accessing health services well, specifically immigrants and refugees, and homeless and marginally-housed populations; more broadly, it is dedicated to improving the health of the community and reducing health inequities in Toronto. Along with primary care, they provide a range of services ranging from housing support to harm reduction to adult literacy, in line with their holistic view of health and its social, cultural and economic determinants. Their catchment area extends beyond the bounds of Regent Park proper - for example, they serve homeless clients across Downtown East - but their roots are firmly within the community. The RPCHC is the parent organization of Pathways to Education, and also leads a considerable amount of community development work through a continuum of care framework.

## ***Pathways to Education***

Pathways to Education is an award-winning, national organization that began in Regent Park in 2001, emerging from research conducted by the Community Health Centre into the community-level factors that determine educational success. This research began in 1999 out of concerns about increased gang violence and the ever-younger age of youth involved in criminal activity, and found that the high-school dropout rate in Regent Park was twice the citywide average, and over 70% for children of single parents and/or immigrants. The program is geared towards guiding students towards graduation, and is based on four integrated supports: tutoring four nights per week in the community; group mentoring for grades 9 and 10 and career mentoring for grades 11 and 12; student-parent support workers; and for students who ultimately graduate, a scholarship to be used towards post-secondary tuition.

Since the program's inception, dropout rates have decreased by nearly 80% and post-secondary attendance has increased by over 300%. The organization was described to me as "an environment to ensure that marginalized communities can have the same benefits as wealthier communities and access to the same playing field." Pathways enrollment peaked at about 950 students a few years ago, and is currently about 820, which comes out to 85% of all high school-registered students in a catchment area that includes all of Regent Park and extends somewhat to the south.

## ***The Yonge Street Mission***

The Yonge Street Mission (YSM) began in 1896 on the back of a horse-drawn "gospel wagon." Since then, the Christian faith organization has grown into one of downtown Toronto's largest nonprofits focused on serving the city's most marginalized through over 100 initiatives and programs. In 1966, the YSM opened a youth center one block west of Regent Park on Gerrard St, which was renovated and re-opened as the Christian Community Centre in 2004. In 1999, the YSM opened the 310 Centre on the northern edge of Regent Park, which houses a thrift store and computer literacy center, as well as staff offices. In 2010, the YSM opened its first satellite office in nearby St.

Jamestown, where its community development work for Downtown East is based. The YSM is a Christian organization, and is the only organization among those I studied that has a specific faith-based mission: staff members receive spiritual guidance, and religious services are also offered to the community.

### ***Regent Park: social service hub***

As Cheshire (2007) has argued, “one of the great but largely under-investigated agglomeration economies of cities is not their contribution to productivity but their contribution to welfare.” Social service hubs exemplify this alternative type of agglomeration economy. Furthermore, Martin and Pierce (2013) have likened service hubs to a residual of the state, serving as they do as spaces of social reproduction, innovation and support. By creating and maintaining patterns of collective and non-market consumption in the face of economic marginalization, organizations in these hubs participate in the co-construction of “complex geographies of survival,” (Mitchell and Heynen, 2009). The centrality and visibility of these clusters means that their survival is always in question, however, they have remained remarkably resilient in the face of neoliberalism (DeVerteuil, forthcoming).

Interviewees had mixed opinions about the dense concentration of social service providers in Regent Park. Some argued that it led to an unfortunate mix of competition and complacency. “If you look at a lot of the agencies here and how they were behaving before the redevelopment, they were all looking at short term benefits, and nothing in the long term. Hardly any programs were focused on long-term employability skills, there were very few that engaged youth in real leadership capacities. The value-add of all these things was very low, there was almost a negative [return on investment],” said one front-line worker who spent a significant amount of his youth in the neighborhood. This was a minority view, however. The consensus was that the level of need was clear and serious, and that although density came with challenges, all of these organizations performed necessary services. The redevelopment was broadly seen as coinciding with, and to some extent initiating, a period of more productive collaboration among services, an awareness of the benefits of coexistence, and a more impact-oriented service model. As I will show,



a number of organizations have begun to add longer-term, community development-focused work to their portfolio in conjunction with the redevelopment. The same respondent added that “Now, a lot of the organizations are not able to use Regent Park as leverage like they were in the past....Regent Park is not as bad anymore and everyone knows it, so now it’s more about having impact and being able to prove it. Activities that were sketchy or vague are not getting resources like they once were.” As complex of an agglomeration as it may be, it has nevertheless proven to be an essential asset to the community during redevelopment.

## **V. Overview of the Argument**

In the following chapter, I discuss the redevelopment in detail, along with the social, economic and political factors that contributed to the decision to move ahead with this pioneering project. The plan for redevelopment is put in the context of other like-minded efforts in U.S. cities to deconcentrate poverty through the introduction of social mix, the consequences of which are considered. Although capital accumulation is the primary motivation behind all of these projects (which wouldn’t proceed without some projection of profit), they also have ambitious social goals. Despite the good intention that went into crafting a Social Development Plan to provide a framework for service planning over the course of the redevelopment, a chronic lack of human and financial resources has rendered it of little use to those engaged in social service provision on an everyday basis, despite the pervasive sense that more strategic thinking around redevelopment would benefit frontline workers. I use data from interviews with social service workers to describe the wide range of challenges their clients faced as a result of the redevelopment, ranging from service access to emotional wellbeing, and argue that these challenges share a set of common characteristics that social service organizations are uniquely capable of both perceiving and responding to.

In Chapter 3, I zoom out from Regent Park to discuss social service provision at a more conceptual level. I locate social service providers within the political-economic area of the “third sector,” delineate the nature of their activities, and describe their complex

relationship with the welfare state. In Canada, as in many other advanced capitalist states in the west, the Keynesian welfare state has undergone a period of intense restructuring since the 1980s that has resulted in a broad fade in redistributive politics and an increasing reliance on third sector organizations to provide for the welfare of the poorest. In the context of welfare state restructuring and urban restructuring, specific challenges to social service organizations have emerged; I argue that these make them worthy as a lens through which to analyze these very processes, and that by virtue of being at their intersection are positioned to exercise more agency than is often attributed to them.

I argue in Chapter 4 that this agency is fundamentally a caring one, and should be understood as such. Care is defined as the provision of practical and/or emotional support, and I show that it has been pushed to the margins of the contemporary political economy with important negative ideological consequences. Since care is necessarily relational, and thereby spatialized, I make a case for understanding social service providers in Regent Park as parts of a local landscape of care. Breaking care down into four elements - attentiveness, responsibility, competence and responsiveness - and describe the ways in which the practice of social service providers in Regent Park incorporates each of these.

In Chapter 5 I show how social service providers were able to attend to the social challenges brought on by redevelopment in all of their complexity by means of this praxis of care. Specifically, social service providers adapted the local landscape of care in ways that afforded the community orientation, stability, space, capacity and the means to negotiate structures and institutions of power. They thereby served as a crucial intermediary force between spatial and social change, their presence and agency enabling the community to not only survive, but to reformulate the conditions and possibilities of their individual and collective lives in the face of change.

I conclude by arguing that the praxis of care, by complicating the simple script of socio-spatial change envisioned by planners, amounts to a form of oppositional politics, mundane but powerful nevertheless in the face of the massive disruptions brought on by processes of capital accumulation and state and spatial restructuring.

## 2. The Messy Making of Mix: Redeveloping Regent Park

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The decision to redevelop Regent Park was primarily motivated by financial concerns, however social welfare goals were also envisioned, and these figured strongly in the public narrative around plans for the community's future (August, 2014). Redesigning Regent Park and densification through the addition of market-rate condominiums was intended to bring economic opportunity to the community by virtue of the introduction of a new class of residents and increased local investment. This vision follows in the footsteps of public housing experiments in the United States that aimed to deconcentrate poverty through a wide variety mixed-income housing strategies (Vale and Shamsuddin, 2014), which research has subsequently shown to be a misguided attempt to spatially solve deep socio-structural problems (see DeFilippis, 2013). The ways in which mix has manifested in Regent Park reveal a much more complex process than the simple theories of social change pushed by mixed-income redevelopment's political advocates suggest. Indeed, separation has been the more predominant feeling for TCHC residents and social service providers.

From the perspective of those on the ground - both service providers and residents - the need for new housing was undeniable; one interviewee went so far as to say that

“Regent Park was under the slumlordism of the city.” Purely from a housing standpoint, change was overdue and welcome. However, with the redevelopment would come a range of complex social challenges, including displacement, crime, and the inaccessibility of key services and amenities. Social groups from youth to homeless people have each been affected by these changes in different ways. Instability, disorientation and loss have reverberated through Regent Park since demolitions began in 2005, and the work of holding space for the community and helping it grow in the context of extraordinary change has been immense. Although a Social Development Plan was eventually developed to facilitate the transition and bring about integration between new and old community members, it was under-resourced from the outset, and social service providers have been hard-pressed to implement its many recommendations. Instead, as subsequent chapters will show, they’ve responded intuitively through a place-based practice of care that has ensured individual and community survival for those who were losing their home.

## **I. Making Way for the Market: The Physical Transformation of Regent Park**

The costs of redevelopment have ballooned since they were first projected in 2002, and with this, pressure to build and sell ever more market-rate units. To facilitate the necessary accumulation of capital, the architecture and design of the new structures have evolved considerably, as have the dimensions of mix, with the result being a community of high-rises that seems a far cry from pre-redevelopment Regent Park.

### ***Planning and finance***

The original redevelopment plans for Regent Park were made public in 2002, and approved by City Council in 2003 and 2005. These plans laid out a five-phase strategy that would see the original 2,087 rent-geared-to-income TCHC units replaced on-site (for the most part) along with the addition of 2,400 new condominiums, roads, parks, amenities and retail facilities. The number of market units in the TCHC’s proposals to City Council soon began to creep upward, as did requests for off-site replacement of RGI units.

In 2005, permission was granted to build off-site replacement of up to 729 RGI-subsidized units, of which 266 have been built, all within the vicinity of Regent Park in Downtown East; no more off-site housing is planned. By mid-2012, quiet increases to the projected total of condominiums - 5,400 - began to look more and more dramatic, considering they were made without tenant consultation. Overall, social housing has declined from 100% before redevelopment, to 47% in the original plan, to 25% in current plans. As a result of the redevelopment, the area's population will swell from about 7,500 to 17,000 people.

In 2005, the TCHC was ready to turn to the private sector to seek a development partner. An RFP was issued in May 2005, the primary focus of which was to secure a private sector partner capable of making the most money by taking advantage of the permissible market housing density, and Cresford Developments was selected on this criteria. Daniels made it to the shortlist during this first round, but was not ultimately selected. Their proposal took a broader view, according to President Mitchell Cohen: "We very much spoke to the complex, highly layered, textured nature of this thing, really positioned our approach to it as one of a community developer, not as a builder. It was not just about bricks and mortar, because that's the easy part of what is going to happen in the transformation of this community. The more significant aspect in terms of long-term success is the development of a healthy social infrastructure." When Cresford Developments withdrew during the due diligence phase, the TCHC went back to their shortlist and re-issued an RFP that was identical except for a provision allowing the submission of what Cohen called "alternative development frameworks." "With that door open," he continued, "we resubmitted our proposal emphasizing our approach as one of a community developer, not just a builder, and were ultimately selected. At that moment, TCHC had a CEO and board that were fully engaged and supportive of this approach, and they did give us the authority to look at this as much more than a physical transformation, an opportunity to create opportunity through every aspect of the revitalization effort." Daniels began construction of Phase One in 2006, and has subsequently been hired to carry on through the subsequent four phases.

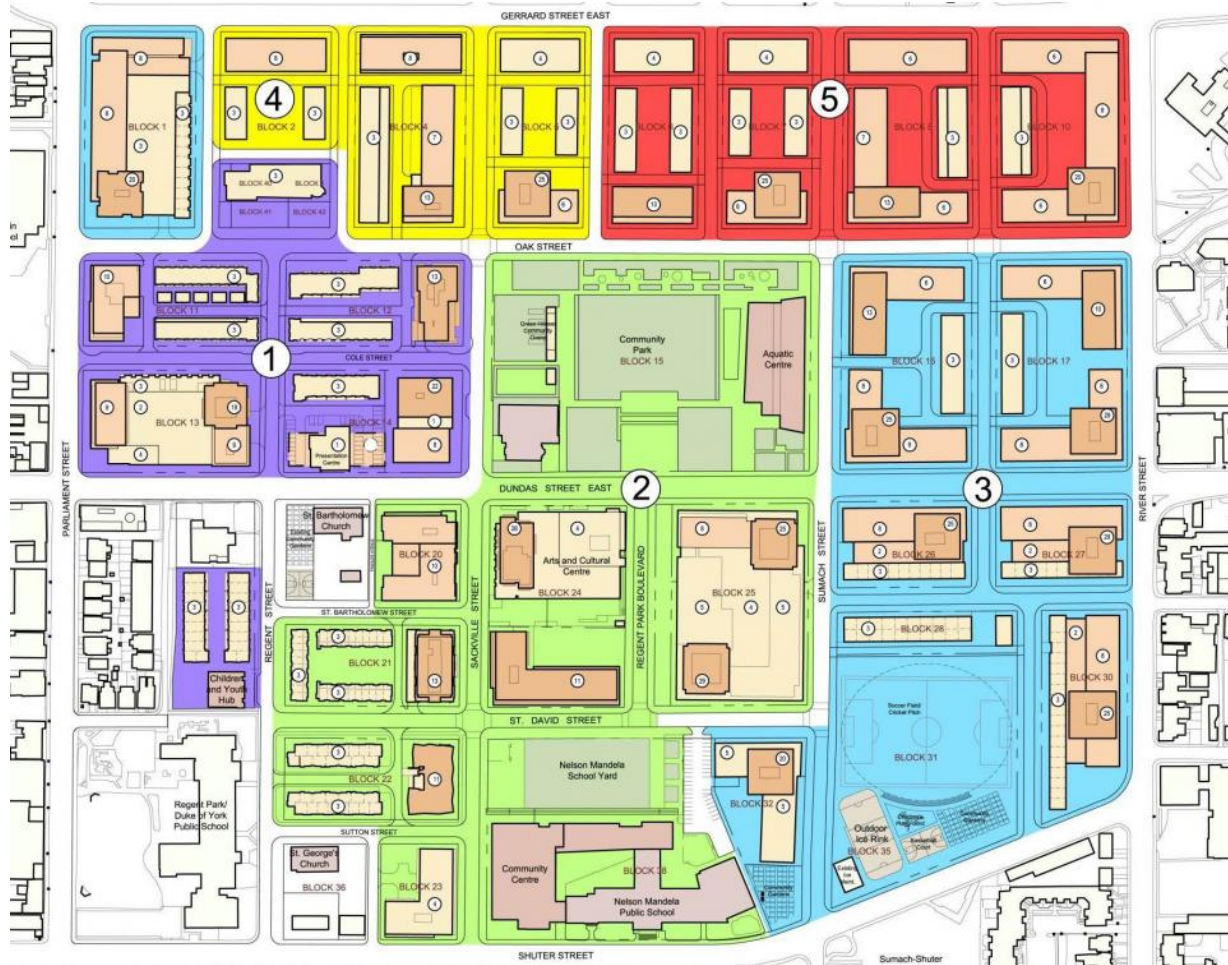


Figure 2. Regent Park Redevelopment phasing strategy. Diamond Schmitt Architects, 2013

Since redevelopment began, overall costs have more than doubled. Financially, the redevelopment is premised on the idea that the sale of the land and condo units will finance the reconstruction of the TCHC housing. The initial plan was for TCHC's costs to total \$423 million: they would take on some debt, make a \$30 million equity contribution, and contribute on-site savings and other budget items already dedicated to Regent Park. The sale of land not required for public housing or community use would provide them with a major source of income. By 2012, the TCHC had spent 80% of the projected cost on the first two phases alone, their equity contribution nearly quadrupled. The TCHC is also taking on a significant amount of long-term debt and is bearing risk for market development; even with the increase in condominiums, they are losing money. Over time, this has contributed to a shift in discourse from financial feasibility to financial

unsustainability, giving justification to ever-greater market orientation. What this amounts to is the use of “public spending to enable private accumulation through gentrification” (August, 2014: 127).

## ***Architecture and design***

The design of the community is perceived as a key enabler of its ‘reintegration’ with the city - and thus, its gentrification. To remedy the perceived behavioral effects of the modernist design - specifically, isolation - the new design objective “is to create a neighborhood that will look and feel like it is an integrated part of the surrounding areas” (TCHC, 2005). This vision for the physical normalization of Regent Park included re-introducing the street grid, buildings with ground-level commercial space, and front entrances directly on streets. “The ideal is you won’t be able to tell where Regent Park was — it will simply blend in,” said Ken Greenberg, one of the original lead urban planners on the project, in a newspaper interview. “It’s important to work on housing, but not in isolation. If you just rebuild, you’re going to get a more genteel form of ghettoization, the same social isolation, the same lack of employment, the same lack of education opportunities,” he continued (quoted in Dmitrieva, 2014).

The issue with physical normalization is that it could have gone a number of ways, as the surrounding areas vary considerably. Downtown East has had its share of the city’s condo boom, and some of the neighborhoods surrounding Regent Park – for example, the West Donlands and Corktown to the south – have seen considerable high-rise residential development in the past two decades. On the other hand, the area of Cabbagetown directly to the north is predominantly single-family and duplex homes. Thus, while the original design for the new Regent Park was of a community of low-rise townhouses and mid-rise apartment buildings (6-8 storeys) that might have blended in with Cabbagetown, this vision has since been abandoned. The number of townhouse blocks has nearly halved, while the number of towers has grown from eight to 13, as have their average heights. Indeed, as August (2014) documents, the highest tower proposed in 2002 (70m, 20 storeys) is shorter than most of the towers that have since been proposed and built (60-120m, 16-32 storeys). The definition of mid-rise has also shifted: today, “mid-rises”

include buildings up to 16 storeys, twice the 2002 height for that category. Although a the rhetoric around redevelopment concerned reintegration with the surrounding community, all that's left of this vision is the integration of the street grid (August, 2014).

"Diversity" figured strongly in the discourse around redevelopment. The new neighborhood would exhibit "diversity of building types, designs and heights; diversity of tenures; diversity and mix of incomes; diversity and mix of uses; diversity of builders; and diversity of activities" (TCHC, 2002). Ideological criticism aside, this designed diversity has not come to pass. Although the 2002 plans conveyed an intention to mix social and market housing within buildings, the redevelopment has progressed with a segregated approach. A range of condominium sizes was also proposed, and over time homogenized to a mass of small 1-2 bedroom units. Early plans envisioned a significant "buffer" of affordable units to ensure more of a continuum of incomes, but this has largely failed to materialize: only 262 of the units in the community classify as "affordable" (August, 2014). Instead, what has emerged is more or less a rigid two-layered stratification; altruism has more or less given way to the market imperative.



*Regent Park, 2015. Credit: Vik Pahwa, vikipahwa.com*



## ***Relocation and the right to return***

The redevelopment of Regent Park stands out from many U.S. cases of mixed-income public housing redevelopment for the fact that all residents of the pre-development buildings are guaranteed a right to a new on-site unit. To make way for the redevelopment, residents are temporarily relocated for the length of the phase in which their building is scheduled to be demolished. These residents are placed in available TCHC units across the Greater Toronto Area for between 3-7 years until they are matched with a new unit in Regent Park. In Phase One, 381 households were relocated, and 440 households were relocated during Phase Two. Phase Three affects the largest number of families yet: 324 units were relocated by September 2014, with the total projected to be 630. In Phase One, relocation units were given on a first-come, first-served basis, which saw residents lining up overnight to secure a desirable place. The process has since been redesigned to be based on a lottery for unit choice, followed by several “rounds” of offers from which tenants can choose.

In Phases One and Two, the likelihood of being relocated within or near Regent Park was fairly high, due in part to the construction of the offsite units mentioned above. The process of building nearby offsite units to house relocated tenants was put to a halt after a 2009 spending scandal at the TCHC that resulted in the resignation of CEO Derek Ballantyne, and the election of Mayor Rob Ford in late 2010 put a virtual halt on the creation of new rental housing in the city. Thus, during Phase Three, it was far more likely for the only available relocation units to be miles away in the inner suburbs; these locations tend to lack accessible services, and are also often far removed from peoples’ social systems of support. As this chapter will show, displacement is at the root of many of the social challenges residents have faced as a result of the redevelopment.

All relocated tenants were guaranteed a right to return to the community by the TCHC, however significant concerns remained about whether this would in fact materialize. “As we began demolition in Phase One, the fear was palpable and the mistrust of government was very clear,” said Cohen, Daniels’ President. “People were thinking, you’re giving me this piece of paper that says that I have a right to return but why

should I trust this, you've never even repaired my home. Until people started to move back, that fear was justified." Evidence from social service providers does suggest that, despite the guaranteed right of return, not all tenants have been able to realize this right as a result of personal or family issues exacerbated by displacement.



Figure 3. Regent Park in the context of the TCHC's entire service area

In Cohen's eyes, the relocation has been the most difficult part of the redevelopment, plagued by "a lot of miscommunication, misunderstanding and mistrust." At the same time, he argues that it was absolutely necessary because it allowed the project to build the momentum necessary to bring about positive changes in the community: "Relocation is what has allowed Regent Park to proceed at the pace that it has, and have the public and private investment to support the overall revitalization. We as the developer have been able to sell over one thousand condos, the proceeds from which have been the fuel to drive the revitalization forward. We're able to do this because we've been able to show

that it's real - that these buildings are going to come down. It's real and it's happening today and tomorrow and you can understand how your investment is going to be a good one. The entire thing is based on our ability to convince people to put equity into a terribly stigmatized neighborhood...The key element of that is relocation with a right to return. Despite the flaws in the process, overall it was the right approach to take."

Altogether, the factors leading to the decision to redevelop point to a sense of urgency around the creation of opportunity. In some circles, the opportunity is presented as economic – profit for a financially crippled agency, and a turn to the market in the context of state austerity. In others, it's social – the opportunity to 'overcome' the perceived ills of concentrated poverty in Regent Park. It's clear that discourses of economic and social opportunity overlap. But are they also interchangeable, two sets of rhetoric that really describe the same process? A review of the literature on mixed-income redevelopment in the United States suggests that efforts to deconcentrate poverty by introducing social mix to communities may amount to gentrification – the conversion of use value to exchange value in the interests of capital accumulation.

## **II. Social Mix, Redevelopment and Gentrification**

A review of the academic literature on mixed-income redevelopment and poverty-deconcentration efforts suggests that what has seemed like sound theory to policymakers actually rests on a series of questionable assumptions about poor people and the power of spatial solutions to perceived social problems. When borne out on the ground, mixing strategies have had a complex array of social consequences for low-income communities and can be seen as facilitating gentrification. This literature has largely failed to consider how established, grassroots social service providers interact with the processes of mix and redevelopment.

### ***Deconcentrating poverty through social mix***

In reaction to the increasing concentration and segregation of poverty in cities, pathologized in the "neighborhood effects" literature (for example, Wilson, 1987;

Sampson, 2013), social mix has become a prominent welfare *strategy and objective* in many Western liberal democracies (Bridge, Butler and Lees, 2012). The dominant welfare objective of this strategy is to deconcentrate and dilute large concentrations of low-income households – for which earlier welfare programs and project-based housing policies are blamed. The hypothesized benefits of income mixing include: better quality housing, improved services, increased amenities, a safer environment, access to more “instrumentally valuable networks...and behavior and lifestyle alternatives,” and, for the city, increased tax revenues and property values (Levy et al, 2013). The ‘social’ aspect of mix tends in reality to refer rather narrowly to income level or socio-economic group (Vale and Shamsuddin, 2014).

Social mix, enacted through policies and plans, has more readily come under criticism, which has proceeded along three main lines. *First*, some argue that social mix is a one-sided policy, rarely advocated in wealthier neighborhoods that may be just as homogeneous, and is therefore nothing more than rhetoric obfuscating a gentrification strategy (for example, Slater 2004, 2006); Walks and Maaranen (2008) have used detailed statistical research to show that mixed-income neighborhoods are a “transitory phenomenon” on the route to more complete gentrification. *Second*, some question the extent to which mixing actually occurs, and the “dubious” assumption that physical ties will inherently lead to social ties (for example, Davidson and Lees, 2010). *Third*, the state’s assumption that a more mixed community will be more harmonious is called into question, and it has been shown that what may actually emerge are additional and/or different tensions (Joseph and Chaskin, 2010).

The necessity of mixing policies bears questioning. “Like the rich, the poor may benefit from the accrual and dispersal of bonding social capital in segregated districts” (Ley, 2013). Peach (1996) has called this “good segregation,” which he defines as segregation accompanied by deep social networks associated with the presence of extended family, “intense neighboring,” and active and robust associations and institutions. These networks of mutual aid and social capital are vulnerable to urban restructuring, as Gans (1962) and Fullilove (2004) have shown. In Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, the segregation of low-income people has aided their efforts to politicize poverty,

permitted efficiencies in social service delivery, and resulted in a community that is more tolerant and nonjudgmental about the disadvantaged than anywhere else in that city (Ley, 2012). From the perspective of many residents, Regent Park is a “service-rich...neighborhood with a strong sense of community and abundance of friendship and supportive social ties” (August, 2014).

The irony of mix is that it can reproduce and/or reinforce inequality and exclusion. Specifically in instances where it is introduced as a means to gentrify a neighborhood like Regent Park, it results in a new reification of class difference. Mixing *relies on a clarification of class difference*. For mix to make sense - to policymakers, to residents, to gentrifiers - two clear classes of people need to be imagined to construct a hierarchy between those who are well and those who need assistance, and relies on the same difference to construct an image of the middle-class individual as a vector of aspiration.

### ***Mixing and gentrifying through housing redevelopment***

The redevelopment of public housing has been the primary tool used to achieve social mix in North America. The bulk of scholarship on income-mixing and redevelopment is focused on the U.S. federal government’s HOPE-VI housing program, which between 1993 and 2010 was used to tear down and rebuild public housing into mixed-income, mixed use communities (Popkin et al., 2004; DeFilippis and Fraser, 2010; Vale, 2013). It is premised on the idea that creating economically “integrated” neighborhoods through spatial income-mixing will improve the lives of all residents as well as the conditions of the surrounding community. Its goals included: the recapitalization of public housing after disinvestment; replacement of subsidized units with market rate; transforming occupancy rules so that only those who are working may reside in them; community economic revitalization; attracting higher-income people into new developments; moving public housing residents into work with the intention of having them transfer into private-sector rental or homeownership (Joseph, Chaskin and Webber 2007). The hypothesized benefits of income mixing include: better quality housing, improved services, increased amenities, a safer environment, access to more “instrumentally valuable networks...and behavior and lifestyle alternatives,” and, for the

city, increased tax revenues and property values (Levy et al, 2013).

It has been argued that mixed-income redevelopment – HOPE VI in particular - marks another in a long line of misguided efforts to implement a spatial solution to social problems, and fails to address the root causes of inequality and poverty, which is not a function of its own spatial configuration (DeFilippis, 2014). And indeed, the bulk of research on HOPE VI concludes that success has been modest at best, with significant case-by-case variation in whether goals are met. Greenbaum et al (2008) show that it has diminished pre-existing social networks and failed to enhance the social capital of low-income people. Social interaction across class or housing tenure tends to be limited (Joseph and Chaskin, 2011). There has been a lack of meaningful wealth accumulation for publicly subsidized tenants (Levy, McDade and Dumlao 2010), and there is not much evidence that living in a mixed-income environment alone propels people out of poverty (Chaskin et al, 2012) or breaks down social barriers (Chaskin and Joseph, 2011). Instead, what often results is a “complex game of avoidance and distinction” (Le Gales, 2012). Charles Tilly’s (1999) work on durable inequality also notes that once relatively small differences in status emerge within a social system, many other forms of social practice continue to reinforce these differences. When it comes to the promise of the ‘right to the city’ that these developments are often seen as providing, Chaskin et al. (2012) argue that the “rights of private property over public access and public order over individual freedom” are prioritized, generating challenging daily experiences for low-income residents.

More recent literature considers whether mixed-income redevelopment is a form of gentrification. To Bridge, Butler and Lees (2012), it is “gentrification by stealth,” while Chaskin and Joseph (2013) use the slightly more politic “positive gentrification” to describe the intent of mixed-income redevelopment. The introduction of social mix through public housing redevelopment fails to avoid the fundamental social challenges common to other gentrifying neighborhoods. The combination of social and market goals generate a series of fundamental tensions - between integration and exclusion, use value and exchange value, and appropriation and control - that play out on the ground in complex ways due to competing expectations about normative behavior and the use of

space. Further, these tensions are thrown into “particular relief” due to the simultaneous physical proximity and social distance between residents in vastly different socioeconomic situations (Chaskin and Joseph, 2013). That said, Freeman (2006) makes clear that different people within gentrifying contexts have different perspectives on its benefits and harms, and Pattillo (2007) shows that residents often see positive and negative benefits at once. It is crucial to identify this process of gentrification as state-led, in that it is embraced and activated by policymakers (Davidson, 2008). In the case of Regent Park, Kipfer and Petrunia (2009) argue that this case of state-managed gentrification amounts to “recolonization” of long-pathologized but potentially valuable space.

### ***Shifting focus: redevelopment and social services***

Research on the effects of mixed-income redevelopment has privileged the individual or family as the primary unit of analysis, and while social services are often mentioned, it’s rare for them to occupy a central place in analysis. One exception is Oakley, Fraser and Bazuin (2014) who examine community programs offered in conjunction with HOPE VI and conclude that their focus on driving residents to participate more fully in labor and housing markets has limited their impacts and undermined their mission. Joseph (2010) has examined the perspective of social service providers on mixed-income redevelopment in Chicago, who displayed strong support for the city’s commitment to mixed-income redevelopment, but frustrations with delays and shifts in processes in procedures. Despite advocating for more systematic investigation into the perspective of social service providers on the redevelopment process, this work focuses on a narrow set of service providers created or contracted by developers in order to provide outreach, case management and referral services for former public housing tenants displaced by redevelopment who may have wished to return to their former community. It also focuses narrowly on opinions about the redevelopment, rather than engaging substantively with the agency of the social service providers in the context of such change

If, as Bridge, Butler and Lees (2013) argue, mixed-income redevelopment has the potential to be “gentrification by stealth,” this is likely to have impacts on social service

organizations in communities being redeveloped as a result of socio-economic and political changes. To date, the effects of gentrification induced by mixed-income redevelopment on social services have not been investigated, but a growing body of scholarship is beginning to document the effects on social services of gentrification more broadly. In Los Angeles and London, DeVerteuil (2010; 2011) has shown that gentrification has led to both the displacement of some social services, as well as a state of immobility for others, wherein they cannot afford to expand in situ or move elsewhere to re-balance inequities in social service provision at the city scale. A rising tide of service NIMBYism has been observed in other contexts, as the more stigmatized clientele become less and less tolerated by gentrifiers over time (Betancur 2011; DeVerteuil 2011).

### ***Reflection: use value, exchange value and the rent gap***

Regent Park seems to be a clear instance of the type of “rent gap” that Smith (1979) has argued is at the core of the gentrification process in North American cities. A rent gap is essentially the difference between a site’s actual value and it’s potential value at ‘best use.’ When the rent gap in an area is determined (or believed) to be great, Smith’s theory suggests that developers will identify this difference as an economic opportunity upon which to capitalize, and that the area will undergo gentrification as a result.

In the case of Regent Park, it is clear that Smith’s theory helps to explain the push to redevelop. The 70 acre site sits in close proximity to Toronto’s downtown core, sandwiched between two of the city’s most rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods - Cabbagetown and the Distillery District - and the land’s sale and development has the potential to be extremely profitable for the city over time. August (2014) shows that TCHC leadership were well aware of the “economic rebirth” of Downtown East and the increase in value that this could provide to properties in Regent Park, and insisted that this was a “major opportunity” for the private sector.

To real estate developers and their political allies, ‘best use’ is associated with highest potential value of the land. The concept of value is central to the history of political economy (Smith, 1776; Ricardo, 1817; Marx 1864), and discussions center on two types: use value and exchange value. For Marx, use value of a good lies in its ability



to satisfy a particular material social need. Use values are commodified when it becomes possible to trade them and transfer ownership over them via a market. When commodities are exchanged, they gain an exchange value, which “manifests itself as something totally independent of use value,” (Marx, 1864).

Before redevelopment, Regent Park - the well-located and well-serviced neighborhood, the affordable housing, the strong community - had a very high use value for residents. But exchange value was limited - neither the land nor the housing were commodified. This wasn't really an issue for residents, who would not have had significant means to engage in this exchange anyhow. For the city and developers, however, the prospective exchange value of the land and the housing that could be built there became greater and greater as the surrounding area continued to develop and gentrify. The lure became so strong that the decision was ultimately made to commodify housing in order to capitalize on the prospective exchange value and fill the rent gap by bringing the land to what they deemed as it's best use, which, paradoxically, was maximized exchange value rather than maximized use value.

Despite seeming like disparate motivations for redevelopment, the rent gap and the concentration of poverty in the community are actually intimately linked through the political-economic concept of “value.” Bringing the land to “best use” would also mean addressing the concentration of poverty that is seen as limiting the land's exchange value. This is in spite of the fact that this very concentration of similar subjects was of high value to the neighborhood's residents - the networks of non-transactional care and support had become dense over time, and were essential to the livelihood of this marginalized group (August, 2014). The perceived stigma of concentrated poverty would seem to act as a barrier to an influx of (higher-class) people who *could* participate in the commodification of the neighborhood. Thus, we can see the deconcentration of problematic subjects and the filling of the rent gap as two intertwined motivations behind the drive to ‘mix up’ the neighborhood. In order to truly fill the rent gap, “social” problems would therefore also have to be addressed.

### III. Social Planning

Over the course of the TCHC's planning process between 2002-2005, public consultations were held with community residents, through which a range of priorities and concerns emerged. In 2004, these began to be channeled into the creation of the TCHC's Social Development Plan, which was ultimately published in 2007 with the assistance of stakeholders from the City government as well as the CHC, CRC, YSM and Dixon Hall. Under the overarching framework of "social inclusion," the plan makes 75 recommendations in four key areas: social cohesion, employment services, community facilities and long-term change management. In the TCHC's words, "The SDP provides a framework for social change within Regent Park over the course of the Revitalization and into the long-term. It is not a service plan; rather it is a plan that will enable better service planning by fostering local culture and cohesion, security and participation, service access and continuity, and the volume of services" (TCHC, 2007).

Of those who originally wrote the SDP, the Executive Director of Dixon Hall is the only one still working in the community. "Understandably, there's a lot of unhappiness around the SDP, but we did what we could," she says. "None of us had any experience whatsoever with this type of transition, so we just tried to include everything we could think of to try to support the transition and try to maintain a healthy community... We were working off of ideas rather than experience...It was the first SDP any of us had ever built." The initial burst of energy behind the SDP soon fizzled due to inadequate support for follow-through. Social service providers felt as though the TCHC and the City saddled them with the financial and organizational burden of carrying out these recommendations.

At this point, the perspective of frontline workers is that the TCHC and Toronto are "failing" the recommendations made in the Social Development plan. Although I was told that the City would disagree with this, multiple respondents were frustrated that "insufficient" or "no" resources were given to the new Regent Park Neighborhood Initiative created to coordinate implementation of the plan, or the established social service organizations, to carry out the recommendations. The plan created a number of structures that were supposed to feed up through the local political system all the way to

City Hall, but “these were really hard to maintain with no resources.” Not only were they underfunded, but participation from powerful stakeholders outside the community was limited. “There was a sense that the stakeholder table would be a place for information sharing and decision-making and an opportunity to hear from the community. This didn’t happen in practice, and decision-makers didn’t end up coming to the table. So it morphed into just an information-sharing body, at which point the EDs kind of lost the sense of a need to go, because it wasn’t worth it for us,” a managerial-level respondent said.

From the SDP, employment is arguably (and not surprisingly) the only focus area in which lasting progress has been made. Dixon Hall’s Employment Services Centre has scaled up considerably since the redevelopment began, as has employment-oriented programming at other organizations. Daniels has been instrumental in encouraging its new commercial tenants to hire local residents as much as possible. The City has also dedicated considerable resources to a new employment center in the community, which is next door to the CCLD. Said one respondent from that organization: “Employment in particular, I’m particularly impressed by. We’re right next door to the employment center, and the community had nothing like it before. It’s small, but their focus is on getting as many people jobs as possible, and they’ve filled like seven or eight hundred positions over the past few years. And with the businesses coming in, Daniels strongly encourages that they hire from within the community. So at FreshCo the overwhelming majority of employees are Regent Park residents, and it’s the same with Tim Horton’s.”

Independently of the TCHC, Daniels has put considerable effort into “social infrastructure development,” and this effort is recognized by frontline staff, many of whom said they knew Cohen personally. Some of their efforts have been at the planning and development level: noticing the absence of any additional arts and culture space in the community, they integrated a new multi-purpose cultural facility, the Daniels Spectrum into construction plans; they also successfully lobbied the City to move the renewal of the park from the final phase to the first, recognizing that such an important public space had to be at the forefront of the physical changes. They have worked with local organizations as well as others from outside the community to activate each of these spaces: in the park, for example, they’ve worked with the CRC, Dixon Hall, the CHC and the Salvation army

to develop community plots, a greenhouse and a public bake oven; the Spectrum is now home to some of Pathways' activities, as well as local cultural organizations like the Regent Park School of Music and ArtHeart.

In the majority of my interviews with social service workers, the SDP went unmentioned during discussions of planning for redevelopment, and likely as a result of being under-resourced from the outset, it doesn't seem to play a significant role in how service provision is presently planned. Still, some attached importance and urgency to it and hoped to see renewed energy around such a collaborative approach. One respondent argued that "the Social Development Plan needs to happen still. There's a lot of good actions in there, but no money attached to any of them anymore, just an expectation that these organizations who are *already* doing way more work will take them up. Phase Three is a crucial time to get this back on board. And if we don't do it soon, it's just gonna be us versus them permanently, and it's gonna be a shitshow."

#### **IV. Social Challenges of Redevelopment**

As community-based institutional actors with a long history in Regent Park and deep relationships with community residents, social service providers have a unique perspective on the process of redevelopment. On the one hand, they see the grand theory behind introducing social mix, and conceptually, aspects of it hold true: "If you're in an environment of despair, it's harder to get yourself out of it. If kids only grow up seeing struggle, it'll perpetuate itself. Without exposure, there's nothing new for a person to learn from." At the same time, she says, none of this can be solved with new housing alone, and exposure to opportunity needs to be actively cultivated: "you can't just hope for things to rub off." Another front-line worker expressed a similar sentiment about the logic behind mix as a poverty reduction strategy: "It's the lazy man's way of addressing the deeper issues of poverty and unemployment." It relies on a lot of what the same respondent called "maybe? spinoffs." For example, in his perspective the logic relies too heavily on "oh, people will move in, and maybe as a result there will be more connections to possible jobs." From where they sit, the theory becomes a lot messier when it hits the

ground, and since redevelopment began they've dealt tirelessly with the everyday complexities that clients face in navigating such drastic change from society's margins. Ten years into the process, "lots of the issues are the same. Racism, drug dealing...the poverty is the same, it just looks different." In the sections that follow, I detail the most pressing social challenges stemming from the redevelopment as identified from the social service providers' unique position within the community.

## ***Relocation and return***

### **Relocation complications**

Relocation has been a very complicated process for many community residents, in particular due to the lack of institutionalized support around this process. "People just keep getting blindsided." Poor communication and unclear information resulted in a great deal of uncertainty about how relocation worked and what the timeline for individual families looked like. Preparing to move and packing was challenging for those with dependents or disabilities, and little guidance or assistance was offered for these activities. Although the majority of tenants in Phase One (and to a lesser extent Phase Two) were able to relocate within or near Regent Park, by Phase Three it was more than likely that the only option for most would be temporary displacement to a TCHC unit elsewhere in the city, often at a great distance from downtown.

Many relocation units were reported to have been in poor condition: mold, broken doors, poor plumbing and missing appliances were all cited as problems. Housing workers had to develop a whole new set of relationships with TCHC representatives in communities across Toronto in order to negotiate better arrangements for clients. Because of the administrative structure of the TCHC, property management is not consistent across the system, and rules and requirements vary geographically. "Lots of people have only ever had Regent Park as a landlord. So when they are relocated and the new [property manager] does something a whole different way, there's a process of relearning we have to go through." Significant language barriers meant that tenants were often unable to understand important documents including leases, were often unaware of their rights through the process and in their new units, and had difficulty participating in in-person

relocation consultations with the TCHC. Lacking the resources and capacity to pay attention to individual tenant needs, the TCHC provided very little in the way of support during this process. Even if they had developed a more supportive infrastructure around relocation, a history of distrust and poor communication would have minimized tenant use of these supports.

The level of uncertainty around this process was a significant stress on community members. “The separation anxiety was huge. People panicked. There were questions about how they would participate in the new community, what would happen to their kids, to their friends. Questions about coming back, was there a right? Would you even want to? People didn’t even know how to think about all of this.” One interviewee who resides in Regent Park and was relocated during Phase One confirmed that “so much more support is needed during the moving process.” In 2012, the TCHC and CHC did co-sponsor a pilot position for a relocation worker to help clients with various aspects of this process, including choosing their new neighborhood and unit, looking into schools, and finding services and amenities nearby. TCHC’s bottom-line interests meant that it was hard for this person to be an advocate: “[the TCHC] didn’t want to pay for someone to advocate for people, they wanted to pay for someone who would minimize noise about the transition.” The pilot was not turned over into a permanent position. Frontline staff were unclear whether or not this is now being done internally at the TCHC. As it stands, social service organization staff continue to do much of this work themselves.

### **Access to services and support**

Living in Regent Park, anything you need on a daily basis is within walking distance, as is the downtown core. In many suburban areas, there are few - if any - amenities or services within walking distance. The cost of visiting family, shopping, and meeting other needs can mount significantly when walkability is no longer an option. “If people can’t afford transportation, they’ll be destitute in the suburbs,” said one frontline worker. Many frontline workers reported clients struggling with isolation in their relocation units, where they had no community and where local services were minimal and/or inaccessible; as mentioned above, this had dire consequences for some clients dealing with addictions or

mental health issues.

“Moving from a place with so many services where it’s difficult to go hungry, to where you need to get on a bus just to get a bit of support, makes a life where there’s already a lot going on just that much more stressful.” Decreased access to social services was one of the most consequential aspects of relocation for many. Accessibility was limited both by the location of relocation units, as well as the distance of many of these units from Regent Park. In Phases Two and Three, relocation units have been more likely to be in under-resourced suburban areas with vastly fewer services available. As I will describe in Chapter 5, social service organizations went to great lengths to ensure that those relocated outside of Regent Park could continue to access services during their period of displacement. However, even though they were made open, it was not always easy for clients to maintain access to these supports. “A lot of people end up missing out on all the free things that are so important for low-income families, like after-school programs and ESL programs.” The \$3 transit fare each way is a burden, especially for those living on fixed incomes and social assistance, as is the length of the commute, which can be upwards of 90 minutes and involve multiple bus transfers. Few programs have transportation subsidies built into their budget. “They made all sorts of promises about paying for the TTC, but it’s never happened. Our transportation budget is ten times what it should be because we continue to pay for the TTC, and the TCHC has just failed to reimburse us.”

### **Returning to Regent Park**

Not all families return to Regent Park after relocation. For some, it’s a choice, albeit a difficult one. “It’s very emotional,” said one frontline worker, to the point where “families become divided over whether or not even to return.” Concerns in this regard reportedly include unit size, safety, and academic interruption. For others, legal difficulties or health issues can jeopardize the right to remain in TCHC housing at all. For example, tenants with histories of addiction or substance abuse often saw these worsen with the isolation of relocation, to the extent that some ultimately lost their housing and standing with the TCHC, and thus their right to return to a unit in Regent Park.

The majority do make it back, and “for the most part everyone is just so relieved.... They’re coming back to brand new units and they’re coming back because it’s been their choice. Yeah, they were forced to leave, but the coming back is the honeymoon,” said one respondent. This reflects a general consensus, but those who deal more directly with housing issues also insisted that settling back in to Regent Park was still far from simple. Larger-family units have in some cases been inaccessible for seniors and those with disabilities because they are now split across multiple levels. A handful of respondents reported that a number of larger families were choosing not to return because of the decreased unit sizes. The formal responsibilities of tenants also changed, and with brand new units, it can be challenging to help people understand their responsibilities as tenants. One frontline worker gave the example of the “garbage rooms” included in new townhouses near the entrance; the architectural intention was that tenants would store garbage in these rooms, keeping the street free from bins and thus more aesthetically pleasing and “unified” as a result. However, “nobody wants to keep their garbage inside,” she said. Many families moved the bins to the front steps of their house, which upset the TCHC - “because then the units aren’t cosmetically looking how they want them to” - to the point where some tenants received eviction letters. Had there been better consultation with residents over the floor plans of these units, said the interviewee, this never would have been an issue.

### ***Loss of diversity***

Overall, gentrification was seen as impacting the diversity of the community: “The big downside of gentrification is that not anyone can afford to live here anymore - only certain races. As a result it’s a lot less multicultural than it was before,” said one respondent who works directly on housing issues. However, in conjunction with this broader social change, respondents saw a specific intentionality at work in perceived attempts to socially re-engineer the neighborhood by reconfiguring individual, family and community subjectivity. There was a common sense that the motives behind poverty deconcentration were not wholly benign. “From the government’s perspective, it’s good. You get to relocate people with whom you had so many problems. For them, it’s a way to



clean up. They were smart to know lots of people wouldn't come back," said one frontline worker. "They're strategically redoing how the family should look," said another. In her eyes, groups like single mothers and large extended families living together - common situations in Regent Park - were clearly not accommodated in the redevelopment plans. As a result, people in these groups are more likely than most to choose not to return, and have a harder time adjusting if they do come back. "They have a type of lifestyle that they want to see...it's all strategic." There was a sense that former residents of Caribbean descent in particular were being "creamed" out intentionally because of "presumed criminal behavior." There has been no noticeable affect on crime, though, as other groups have "filled the gap" and taken up the same criminal behavior.

Frontline staff shared multiple stories of increased surveillance on families over the course of relocation. The TCHC is believed to use this surveillance to intimidate certain tenants and/or try to revoke their rights to return to their new unit; "people are afraid to fight because they don't want to lose the housing they have." Multiple respondents at different organizations believe that this process is racialized, and that tenants of African and Caribbean descent are being disproportionately targeted. Most of those who focus on housing spoke of having to advocate on clients' behalf in situations when their right to return was jeopardized in this way.

## **Crime**

It is popularly assumed that physical upgrading via redevelopment will remove environmental determinants of crime. However at present, the consensus on the ground is that "the neighborhood has changed physically, but what goes on hasn't. Criminal activities are still there, just not physically as obvious." Additionally, there is concern that "revitalization has distributed the violence all across the city. Where the people relocate, their problems relocate with them. I worry that people are not making the connections about what that really means about poverty," in the words of one respondent who works directly with at-risk youth.

It was suggested that social planning could have been much stronger and more intentional around gang activity in the neighborhood, and how this would change as a

result of the redevelopment. "In Phase One, particularly on the south side of Dundas, the structure of gangs broke up quite a bit," said one respondent who was familiar with gang activity through his work. Gangs in Regent Park were "run like a business, with a strong hierarchy." Along with this hierarchy came behavioral norms, which gave a certain aspect of stability. With the loss of structure, "a lot of younger gangs were forming without a lot of guidance on how to behave. Kids like 16 to 19 years old. They would brandish guns, act recklessly. There were five shootings in a one-month period before the Eaton Centre shooting all because of these new rivalries. There was nobody managing them because there was nobody older than them; their level of freedom was excessive." As a consequence, it was argued by a number of respondents, police raids increased for a period of time, resulting in "lots of arrests. And so when people actually do become convicted, TCHC can initiate eviction, which they've been doing a lot more."

Even though concerns about serious crime remain, there is a general sense that overall public safety has improved. Whether this can be attributed to planning and design or the presence of a venerable national institution, though, is an open question for some: "safety's improved quite a bit but I actually attribute most of it to the fact that we now have a 24-hour Tim Horton's, so there's lots more people outside at night, whereas in the past, come 10pm, it was dead silent."

## ***Community-building***

The idea of developing a mixed-income community - at least when it comes to poverty reduction - rests on the mixing. In Regent Park, social service staff aren't seeing nearly as much mixing as they'd like, and worry about its potential effects. Just connecting to the new condominium residents - much less realizing integration - has been challenging. At this point, this is partly because the redevelopment is still underway, and neither the new or old community is fully constituted in place. Most staff are aware that condo-owners don't tend to work in the community, and aren't around at all during the day, when they would most likely be able to reach out. Some have tried to distribute fliers or leaflets advertising events and sharing information about the community, but aren't able to get past the security at the front door of the condominiums. Reaching out to the

residents associations is often just as unproductive, and many reported having been rebuffed. "Condo-owners don't seem to see the importance [of community-building]. I'm not sure what to do except keep trying. It'll happen, but it'll be a struggle," said a frontline worker. In the absence of many initiatives recommended through the SDP, the burden of outreach rests on frontline workers' informal efforts.

"The line between condo owners and regular residents is most clear in mutual spaces like parks and the Aquatic Centre," one respondent stated. In the summer of 2012, he started Show Love, a series of free grassroots drop-in gatherings with music and food, held weekly during the summer on Friday afternoons in the park. He saw it as the way to bring elders and youth in the community back together in the aftermath of a burst of gang violence that culminated in a shooting at a large downtown mall in which both the shooter and one of the victims had grown up in Regent Park. Over the course of the summer, he received numerous complaints from condominium owners in the area, often from blocks away, about the event. Show Love is one of many community events - some of which began well before redevelopment - that social service workers struggle to get new residents to be a part of: "they'd rather criticize it," some feel. Says a colleague: "There's still an old community and a new community and there's really nothing that happens where both are actually *together*. I mean we do events like Show Love, and a mixture attend those, but you can see who's new and who's not." Still, there is agreement that events help. The Film Festival, Farmers Market, Sunday in the Park, Show Love and others have all been cited as contributing to community-building between the new and old Regent Parkers. By and large, though, these are organized by the social service organizations, with minimal participation from individual condo-owners or their resident associations. Old Regent Parkers also consistently make up a disproportionate amount of those in attendance.

One of the biggest challenges to building community in Regent Park is the stigma surrounding some of the challenges that the neighborhood has confronted in the past, including crime, poverty and drug use. "A lot of newcomers are under the notion that physical changes will make the problems go," said one respondent. This preconception contributes to the difficulty of communicating and reaching mutual understanding about

what it means to be a member of the Regent Park community. When newcomers don't like what they see, it's easier for them to take action and access politicians; old Regent Parkers will struggle with that, and it's not something they're used to doing, respondents said. For him, this has meant stepping in a lot, and arguing on his community's behalf. It's also resulted in a renewed focus on building political voice. Frontline staff also sense stigmas around some of what their organizations do being barriers to integration. For example, one frontline worker acknowledged that his organization's drop-in center "doesn't serve the needs of the people moving in, and so they aren't immediately drawn to it in any way. But even if they did come, I'd worry that they might feel uncomfortable or have a stereotype." A colleague echoed these thoughts: "we have a reputation for being for homeless people, which comes with a bit of a stigma. People might not feel safe in our space, and it's been really tough to get kids involved in particular." Frontline workers also shared concerns about "new people overpowering the voice of the preexisting community. We need to educate newcomers about things like harm reduction to reduce the stigma." He was personally involved in an elongated battle for a new methadone clinic in the area that was eventually struck down by gentrifiers from Cabbagetown, and worries that this type of instance may repeat as the composition of Regent Park changes. This concern about inequities in access to and use of power was echoed at other organizations. "The new people don't understand how the community plans and organizes, how ideas work and move here," said another front-line worker, who sees a need for more activism and advocacy that unites the new and old communities and sees the future of Regent Park as a common cause.

### ***Emotional wellbeing and mental health***

"There's a huge increase in the amount of mental health stuff coming up: stress, anxiety, panic, even depression and conversations about suicide. I haven't seen this much in years," said one interviewee. Acknowledging that many community members come from a lot of trauma, she wonders how much of this increases is related to the redevelopment. Sources of stress vary, from relocation to continuity with schooling to right of return, but there was consensus among interviewees that the redevelopment had

brought a significant amount of stress to the community. “With this, a lot of people are ready to snap.” Organizations have struggled to find sources of funding that will allow them to bring staff with mental health training on board to help the community deal with these challenges; instead, they’re trying to provide mental health training to their own staff.

### ***Focus population: Youth***

Many argued that the redevelopment has been toughest on youth; others add that they have also been the most resilient. Both may be true: relocation has caused significant social educational and social disruption for young people, and upon returning to Regent Park, they’ve found fewer hospitable spaces wherein they can grow unscrutinized and unstigmatized.

Trying to fit into new neighborhoods elsewhere in the city during relocation has been a struggle. Kids knew how to navigate Regent Park. Before redevelopment, said one respondent, “you didn’t just know where the services were, you also understood the criminal activity, you knew who the [drug] dealers were. And so you could do your thing and not have to worry. But in your new place, you feel unsafe when you don’t know what’s going on.” More often than not, relocation neighborhoods have just as much criminal activity as Regent Park once did, but fewer social and institutional supports. In addition, the stigma of being a Regent Park kid is a strong one in Toronto, and carries well beyond downtown and into the suburbs. Relocated youth face social exclusion in their new communities and bullying in their schools; this has been the worst in communities like Jane and Finch where local gangs have rivalries with gangs in Regent Park. “Kids’ rivalries, nobody’s paying attention to that. Housing or the City don’t care. Kids get bullied, treated like garbage, even shot at,” said one frontline youth worker. Many youth return to Regent Park regularly to keep up with their friends; they “just go home to sleep.” A number experienced periods of homelessness as a result of relocation, because “where their families had to move didn’t work for them, they didn’t feel safe or comfortable in their new community.” Most end up couch surfing with family and friends in Regent Park. Some have had small stays in shelters, which haven’t been successful. “If Dixon Hall had

a youth shelter, it would be full,” said one staff member.

Relocation could also mean a range of educational setbacks for youth. Pathways reported that during Phase Three, 256 of their students were impacted. Most high school students remain at the same school, which, being proximate to Pathways, means that they can continue to attend the program for the most part. But for students who do end up having to switch schools, their educational progress can be jeopardized. In Phase One, the TCHC’s relocation dates were not planned with youth in mind: “In the middle of the semester, people were leaving for neighborhoods that were quite far, and ended up having to change schools because the travel times were insane.” The consequences of this dislocation can stretch over a child’s educational development. Not only have they missed material, but their confidence as learners is often undermined during their period of absence and instability. It was also reported that adult education program participants often take up to six months to get back up to speed upon their return.



*Youth who take part in programs offered by Dixon Hall. Credit: Michelle Siu/The Globe and Mail*

At the time of writing, youth in Regent Park were particularly upset about the demolition of the old Community Centre, one of the few spaces in the neighborhood that was safe for them to hang out. It was originally promised that there would be “a smooth transition, no gap” between the opening of the new Community Centre and the closing of the old. Out of the blue, it was announced that there would be a six-month period where neither would be open. This is one of a number of instances in which youth have lost access to safe spaces in the community. For example, some outdoor park spaces where youth traditionally spent time were temporarily shut down due to land transfers between the City and Daniels. The open space that remained was space that was traditionally occupied by gang members or drug users, which youth felt uncomfortable in.

In the new Regent Park, youth face new stigma and an “us and them” tension with newcomers. Feelings of alienation are common. “They think they’re being replaced,” said a youth worker. “It’s hard to show them the new resources are theirs. When they see a new building, they’re not attached to it. Many of them think they don’t deserve these things.” Additionally, of those who work with youth on a regular basis were very aware of a big demographic shift as a result of the redevelopment: the neighborhood’s youth population is beginning to shrink, and “overall it’s less of a youth environment.” The vast majority of people buying and moving into the new condominiums do not have kids; those who do have very young kids. At Dixon Hall, staff members have considered the possibility that they may not need a dedicated youth office in the community down the line. But he’s not sure how to plan for this type of change with the limited information he has at hand. “How do we make sense of these changing demographics?... It’s hard to plan when new and old aren’t talking, but that’s where the solution lies.” There remains so much important work to be done with at-risk youth in the community, but these broader changes are undeniable.

### ***Focus population: The homeless***

Downtown East Toronto is home to many homeless people, and the services that they access are concentrated there. Although not formally housed in Regent Park and therefore not subject to relocation and resettlement, they are considered members of the

community and Regent Park and its immediate surroundings were, for many, a place of refuge. The CRC, YSM, RPCHC and Dixon Hall all serve the homeless community, and staff at these organizations spoke to new challenges to the homeless and underhoused as a result of the redevelopment and the concomitant gentrification in the area.

The construction resulted in some degree of physical disturbance for homeless people. At the outset of the redevelopment, demolition created excessive amounts of dust, for which there was no mitigation strategy in place. This had adverse effects on the respiratory health of many homeless people, who took their concerns to the CHC. The CHC was able to carry this complaint to the City, who responded by hiring community members to spray the sidewalks to keep dust down. As a result of the noise and disturbance caused by demolition and construction, many homeless people who lived in or around the community moved; finding a new place nearby where they were comfortable and welcome was not always easy.

Changes in the community have brought increased policing of the presence and behavior of homeless community members. Specific mention was given to increased police “harassment” of homeless people spending time in parks, as well as drug users. In the 10 years since the redevelopment began, the city has hired additional bylaw officers to monitor local parks for violations. “They’re supposed to be chatting to folks, referring them to local services. But more often than not, they’re just making quick calls to the police.” In such cases, frontline workers might step in and negotiate with the police on behalf of a client. An additional spike in bylaw enforcement is expected in the run-up to the 2015 Pan-American Games, and frontline workers have already begun to warn street-involved clients of increased police presence in the area.

All of that being said, interviewees agreed that the homeless community will receive little material benefit from the redevelopment. Whether or not it is intended to reduce poverty, the consensus was that it does next to nothing to address the deeper, more structural issues that keep people on the streets. A respondent responsible for the day-to-day operation of his organization's drop-in center says that the many homeless folks he interacts with on a day-to-day basis “haven’t really changed. Do they have a little more optimism? Maybe. But they’re still fighting the fight of their daily lives.”



## V. Conclusion

There are common characteristics to the range of social and economic challenges as narrated by social service workers on the front lines of the redevelopment. They all involve various overlapping degrees of disorientation, instability and the loss of valued private and public spaces. These factors are exacerbated by stigmatization, racialization and structural inequalities in social and economic power that precede the redevelopment. These inequalities are at the root of the dynamics of mistrust on the ground and the weak level of public institutional support for the affected community, and lead to the privileging of the market imperative over community needs when it comes to adapting the plans to changing circumstances. Physical disruption unsettles established patterns of social reproduction in ways that significantly impact the wellbeing of those living complex lives on the city's margins.

Due to their long history on the ground in Regent Park and their deep, personal relationships with those affected by the redevelopment, social service organizations were uniquely capable of seeing, understanding, and responding to the emergent social challenges of physical transformation in ways that met the community's evolving and diversifying needs, engaged new stakeholders, and strengthened a range of internal capacities. In the following chapter, I will elaborate upon the nature and role of social service organizations in the context of neoliberal processes of restructuring, and develop my claim that they provide an essential means through which to understand how marginalized communities survive through, adapt to and subtly resist these structural changes. Subsequently, I argue that what has made the role of social service organizations in Regent Park unique is a place-based ethic and practice of care, which has been a key intermediary force enabling resilience amid spatial and social change.

"At the outset, none of us really appreciated how significant the impact would be," said one respondent who has been working at the managerial level since the redevelopment began. As challenging as the changes have been over the first three phases, there's also a sense that the community is still very much in a state of flux, and that the persistence of care is necessary to bring the community back to stability by the

time the dust settles. “It’s all so new. No big divisions are set yet, there’s just lots of possibility. The fact remains that the need is still extraordinary and there’s no wrong way to support a community,” said another managerial-level respondent.

This state of flux could well be an opportunity, but there are some who are more cautious and uncertain with their judgments. “There are going to be reverberations, I just don’t know what they are yet,” one respondent said. Perhaps uncertainty is the underlying thread through these perspectives; the knowledge that much remains unsettled. What’s important is that this uncertainty is not an impediment to action; rather, the experiential awareness of such a lack of certainty is what motivates the social service providers to go to the lengths that they do in caring for Regent Park.

### 3. Social Service Organizations in the Post-Welfare City

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Subordinate to financial profit from the outset, the financial, human and institutional resources committed by the TCHC and the City to facilitating the complex social transition associated with Regent Park's development were wholly insufficient. More crucially, however, these plans failed because they could not - by virtue of being plans - attend to the surging contingency of ordinary life. As extraordinary as the physical restructuring was, the accompanying social challenges were nevertheless rooted in the everyday, that constantly overflowing world of labor and necessity and grace where culture stews and where the power and force of structures and systems hit the ground with both deadly certainty and perplexing ambivalence.

Contingency is not chaos; it cannot be assumed (although it was) that Regent Park was a vacuum lacking social systems and structures by which it could attend to and care for its own. A layered plurality of modes of knowing, relating and attending to lives already existed in the community, linked through feedback loops anchored in part by institutions and individuals dedicated to service. These actors, like all others, are caught up in contradictions and dilemmas of their own. Nevertheless, they exercised a powerful vernacular agency in the context of redevelopment by virtue of their grounded presence,

attention to the ordinary, and caring practice. The nature of this caring practice will be taken up in the next chapter. Here, my intention is to identify and situate these agents within both Regent Park and the broader context of consolidating yet incomplete neoliberalism. I will delineate the conceptual space of the “third sector,” within which social service organizations sit, and from there define “social service organization” and justify my use of the term. I will then describe two sets of pertinent challenges to third sector social service organizations under neoliberalism: shifting funding regimes as a result of state restructuring, and gentrification as a result of urban restructuring.

## **I. Situating Social Service Organizations in the Third Sector**

The social service organizations studied here fall into a political and economic area that is notoriously difficult to define. In academic literature, labels for this sphere vary, and include: the third sector, the voluntary sector, the social economy or the non-profit social service sector. Each of these labels carry different connotations, but overall they describe a sphere of social reproduction that is neither public nor private, market nor state. Any definition of this sphere must do more than just position it “between market and state” (Jessop, 2002:463). Fyfe (2005) argues that it is better envisioned as lying within “a triangular tension field,” the three corners of which are the state, the market and the informal sector; characteristics of landscapes of third sector organizations are shaped by local influences from these three directions.

The term “voluntary sector” is most commonly found in British scholarship, and I find it inappropriate in this context for two reasons. First, it may give a North American audience the false impression that the work of the sector is done by volunteers. Some of the functions of these organizations rely on volunteers, and paid staff do volunteer additional time and work to various efforts, but this is not an accurate description of how these organizations function overall. Secondly, and more substantively, I do not see the actions of organizations and individuals in the sector as purely “voluntary.” Rather, they are both compelled and restricted in doing the work that they do by a range of political,

financial and moral forces that the label “voluntary” obscures. The term “non-profit social service sector” is used in Canadian reports and policy briefs, but I find it too specific and restrictive for my purposes here; it, too, is apolitical.

I will use the term “third sector.” My reasons for this are threefold. First, it clearly delineates a space apart but not isolated from state and market actors; this space includes the social economy. Second, and in contrast, it is open to organizational hybridity, evolution, activism and alternative power dynamics in ways that other, narrower terms are not. Third, and crucially, it makes space for potential linkages and conversations with other relevant uses of the adjective “third” in describing social and political concepts. This may at first glance seem trite, but when it comes to articulating the importance of this space as one of political possibility and alternatives, these linkages are crucial sources of insight. For example, both Homi Bhabha (1994) and Edward Soja (1996) put forward concepts of a “third space.” For Bhabha, the “third space” comes into focus as narratives of cultural domination are displaced, and it is here that the most creative forms of identity can be produced, in the intersections and overlaps between differences of class, gender, race and location. For Soja, who draws heavily on Lefebvre, thirdspace is a “purposefully tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is actually a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events appearances and meanings” (1996: 2); it is lived space, actively reproduced. In a different vein, use of the label “third” also puts me in conversation with the concept of the “third way,” laid out by Anthony Giddens (1998) as a framework for a reconstituted politics beyond left or right, and commonly used to refer to the neoliberal economic and social policies of the Clinton and Blair governments in the US and UK beginning in the late 1990s.

Within the third sector, social service providers tend to be called organizations or agencies. Among frontline workers, the terms were used interchangeably to describe their own organization as well as others in Regent Park and across Toronto. I will use the term “organization” because it seems to be a bit more common, is a bit broader and more flexible of a concept, and because I will be using a different concept of “agency” when talking about the role of front-line workers, and want to avoid any terminological confusion.

## II. Dupes or Rogues? The Work of Social Service Organizations in a Neoliberal Era

Social service organizations are a key component of the third sector. All social service organizations are, in one way or another, caring organizations; care is their common denominator (Brandsen et al, 2005). As spaces of care, sanctuary, difference, collective consumption, social reproduction and political possibility, they play a crucial role helping the urban poor satisfy their needs and wants outside of the market (DeVerteuil, 2012). Social service organizations are self-governing institutions, separate from government, and non-profit-distributing. They can be distinguished from the state by their independence; from the market by their emphasis on mutuality, altruism and lack of profit motive; and from the family or community by their formality (Milbourne, 2013). Increasingly, these organizations are hybrids, in terms of the services they offer and the way in which they offer them. The organizations in this study are not anomalous in being engaged in a wide range of activities that range from direct health service to vulnerable clients, to education, to community-building and political advocacy. As spaces within communities, social service organizations have a long history of serving to help residents develop relationships around social reproduction, common values, place identity, and socialization. These relationships feed back in to the organizations, and they grow in dialogue with their community. As they evolve in response to need, their relationships with each other and the community form a critical layer of social protection.

Residuals of the Keynesian public welfare state, they exist in a contest of consolidating yet incomplete and ambivalent neoliberalism, sometimes working alongside it, other times serving as an alternative (DeVerteuil, forthcoming). In the Canadian context, social service organizations have retained very close relationships with the welfare state, but they are not completely co-opted into doing the state's dirty work, as Wolch (1990) argued they would likely be. Together, their work is crucial in filling the gaps left by uncoordinated and uneven welfare-state roll-back and enabling resilience among vulnerable clients and communities. That said, they are not inherently positive or progressive forces: they do play a part in processes of neoliberalization, whether as on-

the-ground translators of state policy, or by encouraging specific subjectivities (Trudeau and Veronis, 2009). While they often share a caring orientation towards their community there is not necessarily a common vision for that community's future or the means by which to realize that future.

Since the mid-1990s, interest in the role of the third sector as a possible panacea for the problems and contradictions of neoliberalizing states has grown significantly (Jessop, 2002; Fyfe, 2005). Putnam's (1993) argument that the third sector is a key site for the production and reproduction of the norms and networks of social capital quickly took root in the Third Way politics of the Clinton and Blair administrations and provided fodder for advocates of state restructuring and devolution. This growing interest in the third sector on behalf of elites has led to significantly increased demand on these organizations by governments and communities, but very limited additional support and resources. As the demands on these organizations continue to grow, however, concerns from the front lines are expanding past financial capacity: "The state doesn't have the capacity to fight capital. They're struggling to keep the goods they've promised to people in a balance," said one interviewee. How much more can the third sector help maintain that balance? "We don't have the money and we don't have the public; that would be the death of a kind of democratic engagement."

Out of the complexity of the third sector's relationship with the state have come two viewpoints on the role of social service organizations (and organizations in the third sector more broadly). The first is dismissive, and sees these organizations as "dupes of neoliberalism" (DeVerteuil, forthcoming), co-productive with the state of neoliberal modes of governance of welfare provision and the "junior partner" in the management of the poor. Wolch's (1990) 'shadow state' thesis has been the most influential argument from this camp. She argues that the increase in scale and scope of the voluntary sector was a way for the state to offload risk and responsibility to non-state actors, leading to the emergence of a "shadow state...administered outside of traditional democratic politics...yet remaining within the purview of state control" (Wolch, 1990: xvi). The emergence of the shadow state is now seen as a key component of roll-back neoliberalism, and the shadow state's subsequent enlistment in the micromanagement and

“punitive oversight” of the poor is seen as its roll-out phase (Fyfe & Milligan, 2003; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2003; Wacquant 2009).

These tendencies are undeniable; the front-line workers I spoke with were very conscious of the *potential* of their work to re-enforce existing power dynamics and regimes of control. But this is altogether too simple of a perspective, and it falters by giving almost no agency to the urban poor as authors of their own experience, nor to organizations and their employees in negotiating the complex unevenness of neoliberalism and its effects on the urban poor. As this thesis will show, there is both agency and political potential in these spaces that is crucial for understanding community responses to change. In response to the shortcomings of the dismissive perspective, DeVerteuil (2012; forthcoming) has articulated an alternative, “perhaps even rogue” perspective that takes the complexity of the situation seriously and sees social service organizations in an “ambivalent to hopeful” light as a platform for poverty management. These organizations, in their resistance to physical displacement and the persistence of their ethic of care, serve as crucial stewards of strategic sites that interpret and negotiate between market, state and community forces. They serve as spaces of abeyance, but also as spaces of sustenance and care; they also serve as a vehicle for social movements and alternative citizenship (DeVerteuil, 2012; Amin et al., 2002). The pessimism of the first perspective sees only neoliberalism and responses to it, whereas this more optimistic perspective opens up space for alternatives both real and imagined (May & Cloke, 2014).

In many cities, the third sector is dominated by larger organizations that have had the resources to “ride out” the neoliberalization of social welfare funding (Amin, et al., 2002). This is certainly the case in Toronto and in Regent Park, where the organizations that remain at the heart of the community have evolved into relatively large, multi-purpose service providers. Their size and range is partly a result of “riding out” two significant trends in social welfare funding – corporatization and the move to project-based funding – and partly as a result of the expanded community development capacity they have each taken on in response to inconsistencies and failures in the neoliberal model of economic growth.



### III. Navigating a Changing Welfare State

The state remains a major producer and shaper of urban inequality and marginality, supporting market capitalism through programs and policies that attempt to cushion its impact and “mop up” the most glaring aspects of the poverty it engenders (Wacquant, 2002). They also play the dominant role in shaping discourses about whose behavior gets regulated, where, and when. In the 1960s and 70s, the state fused social reproduction to the urban scale and underwrote much of this reproductive process, from housing to transportation to welfare (Smith, 2002). By the 1980s, however, a broad move was underway from the managerialist and welfare-oriented “Keynesian city” to a more entrepreneurial, competitive city that shunned the provision of public goods (Harvey, 1989; MacLeod, 2011; DeVerteuil, forthcoming). Social services are caught (but not trapped) in the midst of these shifts in the state’s orientation towards the poor; these shifts can be considered in terms of the processes of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalism (Peck and Tickell, 2002). Roll-back neoliberalism consists of the hollowing out of the Keynesian state through deregulation, devolution, privatization and austerity; this process seeks to displace (politically, economically, socially and physically) the Keynesian arrangements of social reproduction to clear a space within which market-based and market-sustaining solutions to the problem of social reproduction can take root. A process of roll-out neoliberalism concurrently deepens the state’s interventions in the lives of the poor specifically through disciplinary social policies such as workfare. In this section, I will describe in broad strokes the neoliberalization of the Canadian welfare state since the mid 1980s, and relate this to changes in the relationship between the state and the third sector.

Among advanced capitalist economies in the West, the Canadian welfare state is commonly categorized as “liberal” rather than corporatist or Christian-Democratic (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This category is broad, but generally, liberal welfare states can be seen as reluctant to replace market relations with social rights, instead aiming to provide a safety net for the poorest while encouraging the bulk of the population to rely as much as possible on private sources of economic security. This is exemplified by the fact that Canada has always relied more heavily than most Western democracies on means-

tested programs, with healthcare as the major exception (Banting and Myles, 2014)

At the federal level, welfare state change has been characterized by three overlapping policy trajectories. The first is one of system maintenance, within which those universal programs such as pensions and healthcare have remained in place, as have their redistributive impacts; however, it is important to acknowledge that these systems were also not designed explicitly with the poor in mind. Policy change, the second trajectory, has more punitively targeted programs like unemployment benefits and social assistance which provide ever less support to the vulnerable as a result of their restructuring. In the late 1980's, over 80% of unemployed Canadians received benefits; a decade later, that number was down to 40%, and 30% in Ontario, due to shifting eligibility rules. Social assistance cuts were federally capped in the early 1990s, and cut by a further 20% in Ontario a few years later. Overall, the real value of benefits fell tremendously, and the progressivity of the tax system was also reduced. Finally, policy drift has meant that policies on the whole have largely failed to keep pace with social change, and thus programs end up covering an ever-declining portion of the salient risks faced by citizens (Banting and Myles, 2014).

As redistributive politics faded in Canada, the third sector civil society organizations (including social service providers) that speak for and act in the interests of lower-income and poor Canadians have been weakened, and changes in the distribution of power within political institutions have made efforts to tackle inequality more difficult. Beginning in the early 1990s, there was a schism between advocacy groups and service-providing organizations seeking closer links with the government in order to maintain funding; in this context, many of the former fell to the wayside. Policy activism among civil society organizations was also diminished, as they became increasingly overwhelmed with the demands of service provision as a means of organizational survival. Ideas about public funding had changed, and groups who did not serve the governments priorities were punished through the withholding of resources. Presently, a social investment perspective dominates the relationship between the third and public sectors; funding, and thereby programming, is predominantly focused on developing "human capital" that will pay off in the future for both individuals and society. From a service perspective, this has meant

opportunities for new projects, particularly in early childhood, learning and education. From an advocacy perspective, however, the focus on these specific issues has squeezed out opportunities to address broader redistributive inequities (Philipp, 2014).

Within the social investment perspective, the third sector has come to be seen as a putative solution to a number of governing dilemmas, in that it offers governments the prospect of addressing, and being seen to address, problems previously considered intractable through efficacy and innovation at new scales. What this amounts to is a “new institutional fix” in the management of poverty, as part of a broader project to restructure the postwar welfare state in an era of fiscal constraint (Peck and Tickell 1994). This new institutional fix has involved a pluralization of the actors involved in the provision of social goods and the ‘subsidiarization of social policies’ (Andreotti et al, 2012). Overall, then, the present historical conjuncture can be seen as a “post-welfare” moment marked by the gradual dismantling of the liberal welfare state in accordance with neoliberal imperatives (Morgen and Maskovsky, 2003).

Neoliberalism is intrinsically messy, and there is no extra-local ‘neoliberalism in general’; this historical conjuncture must be seen in context. By doing so, we can see that there is no clear-cut break between the city of the Keynesian welfare era and the city of the neoliberal post-welfare era. Today’s post-welfare city contains important residues from the Keynesian era; as Fairbanks (2009) has shown, previous welfare settlements serve as the foundation for current third sector practices and geographies. Indeed, taking a geographically-specific perspective and understanding the ways in which these eras of governance coexist spatially, we can see that the retrenchment of the welfare state and the resulting urban injustices coexist with and depend upon more “supportive” – or at least ambivalent and/or incomplete - currents of state action for the management of vulnerable groups. This dialectical, rather than unidirectional, movement of welfare can best be seen from the perspective of social service organizations, DeVerteuil (2012) argues. They serve variously as three coexisting types of space - spaces of abeyance, spaces of sustenance, and spaces of care – and the state becomes dependent on these arrangements and configurations.

Third sector social service organizations owe a certain degree of their recent

growth and present shape to neoliberalism. Increasingly, they act as a substitute for the Keynesian state, but they are by nature unable to match its scope. They are left with a complex relationship towards both the previous Keynesian system and the incompletely consolidating neoliberal one.

## **IV. The Pressures of Neoliberal Restructuring**

Processes of neoliberal restructuring challenge social services' organizational model, as well as their place within the contemporary city. Shifts in the nature of social welfare provision have led to corporatization and a transition to project-based funding, carried out via changes in state funding regimes that have been followed by the private sector and larger non-profits like the United Way. Urban restructuring, via gentrification, has also been shown to pose significant economic and political challenges to social service organizations. As I will later show, frontline staff negotiating these broader shifts tend to find strategies of resistance that allow them to continue to work in a more grounded and holistic way than current funding regimes endorse.

### ***Corporatization***

Fyfe and Milligan (2003) distinguish between "grassroots" social service organizations on the one hand, and "corporatist" on the other, and describe a broad shift among larger, urban organizations from "grassroots" to "corporatist" structure and practice. Grassroots organizations are characterized by a commitment to non-hierarchical structures and maximizing the decision-making inputs of service users, drawing on rhetoric of empowerment and active citizenship. Corporatist organizations are characterized by bureaucratic structures, professionalization, and the development of passive citizenship. The emergence of these more corporatist characteristics often reflects welfare state restructuring and the need - either endogenously or exogenously driven - to provide services to greater numbers of people. The funding that organizations receive often carries conditions that force organizations to take on more corporatized structures in order to remain eligible.

Bureaucratic formalization and professionalization undoubtedly bring important benefits in terms of service delivery and access. However, what threatens to emerge are increasingly asymmetrical power relations within organizations, disempowering those that work at the front-lines, as well as between service providers and clients. Additionally, the move towards corporatization erodes the capacity of individual workers and organizations as a whole to engage in activism or advocacy that directly challenges government priorities.

Large and multi-faceted, the organizations at the heart of this study each display a heterogeneous mix of grassroots and corporatist characteristics with and across divisions and programs. In particular, areas of organizations focused on health or employment tended to be more corporatist in orientation. Aligned as they are with the priorities of neoliberal governance, these areas are the source of the bulk of City and Provincial funding, which comes with professional and managerial requirements that significantly impact organizational culture. The front-line staff I interviewed all exhibited an orientation toward clients and community that was very 'grassroots', but also very aware of and conditioned by emerging and evolving corporatist structures of varying levels of proximity.

### ***Project-based funding***

Government services have been downloaded to the non-profit sector across Canada without adequate funding. In the period between 1993-2003, the key provincial departments that fund the operations of non-profit social service agencies have only increased their support of administrative and core-cost expenditure by 1%. Most government grant programs provided no increase in administrative support. Over this time, inflation was 18%. The impact of public funding shifts is substantial; government funding accounts for 72% of the sector's revenue (Toronto Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2004).

As the overall amount of funding for social service organizations shrinks, the *type* of funding they receive from the government is also shifting, away from core funding of organizations to project/program funding. Core funding is more amenable to organizational development and building a more complete infrastructure for client

services. Project funding, on the other hand, tends to be short-term and tied to the delivery of a specific program; it tends to require extensive reporting, which takes time away from other functions, all of which can be destabilizing for staff and clients. (Ahmed et al., 2006). Project funding supports activities and services that funders identify as priorities, which are not necessarily shared by the community. More politically contingent and fickle, project-based funding can also create instability and frustration for communities: “so many programs have come through, then their funding ends, and the community is left with no recourse,” said one frontline worker.

In 2004, the City of Toronto documented that organizations were reporting high levels of program fluctuation, staff turnover, and burnout due to the increased emphasis on project funding. Since organizations need to continually search for new project money, often competing with peers, they have trouble engaging in long-term planning (Toronto Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2004). Project funding creates uncertainty for workers, who are always under the stress of losing their job if funding is not extended (Ahmed et al., 2006). This was a pressing and present concern for some respondents, but others shared stories of beginning on a project-basis with their home agency, and broadening their portfolio over time beyond any project-specific mandate to the point where their employment was less contingent on individual grants or programs.

The organizations in Regent Park are relatively well-resourced compared to those elsewhere in the city, and acknowledge as much. Nevertheless, they face the same range of fiscal pressures, which risk undermining the sector’s capacity to build and maintain strong communities.

## ***Gentrification***

The bulk of the literature on gentrification is centered on the fate of individuals or groups; there has been a lack of research on whether gentrification is displacing not only vulnerable people, but the social services on which they may depend. If, as Bridge, Butler and Lees (2013) argue, mixed-income redevelopment has the potential to be “gentrification by stealth,” this is likely to have impacts on social services. To date, the effects of gentrification induced by mixed-income redevelopment on social services have

not been investigated, but a growing body of scholarship is beginning to document the effects on social services of gentrification more broadly.

Social services tend to be concentrated in central-city locations due to their accessibility and visibility – this is certainly the case in Toronto – and this fact renders them vulnerable to gentrification. DeVerteuil (2010; forthcoming) has shown that NIMBY opposition from gentrifiers towards existing or expanding social services has been a challenge, as has potential shrinkage of the service-dependent population. As more stigmatized clientele become less and less tolerated in classed spaces, the organizations who serve them become “favorite targets” of gentrifying forces, which exploit organizations’ “Achilles tendon” - their dependence on public funds and private grants - by taking advantage of their higher levels of access to public functionaries and the responsiveness of institutions to their demands (Betancur, 2011). Gentrification thus may serve to divert community-based organizations away from the task of community building and towards the “defense of place” against fragmentation from within and from without (Betancur, 2011).

The prevailing assumption has been that center-city social service clusters would be gradually dismantled within the gentrifying city (Dear and Wolch, 1987). However, DeVerteuil’s case studies of social services in gentrifying neighborhoods in Los Angeles and London show that the story is more complicated. Displacement did occur for one fifth of the 80 organizations studied, and these shared common characteristics: they were smaller than average, relied more on erratic donations and client fees than government funding, and were engaged primarily in advocacy rather than direct service provision. The most significant outcome of gentrification, however, was entrapment: organizations lost the ability to move and/or expand in situ, and struggled to take in newcomers. Gentrification resulted in service hub lock-in. Although immobility makes efforts to more equitably distribute social services throughout cities difficult, but it does mean that these “holdouts of the public city” can persist in opposition to the class remaking of the inner city (DeVerteuil, 2010).

Social services thus exist in an almost paradoxical relationship with gentrification: while gentrification cannot proceed unless these organizations address and/or obscure the

presence of the city's most stigmatized individuals, the presence of these services also impedes full gentrification. This paradox results in a "freezing" of social service geographies and a "rough co-existence" between gentrifiers and existing social service communities. Social service organizations have struggled to build positive engagement or community with Regent Park's new middle class residents, and respondents who deal directly with homeless individuals did speak to stigmatizing narratives about the services in the neighborhood. While client bases have largely remained stable to date, organizations are aware that the proportion of youth in the community is falling, and are beginning to question the future of educational and youth programming.

## **V. Conclusion**

Social service providers are a unique set of actors in cities at the center of the intertwined processes of urban and welfare state restructuring under neoliberalism. They offer a unique vantage point that is both grounded in the complexity of everyday life but also firmly embedded within broader political-economic processes. Indeed, they end up as an intermediary force between the two, such that "the actions of paid staff, volunteers and service users alike may often subvert the dictates of neoliberal regulation such that policy is reinterpreted; imposed identities and subjectivities resisted; and decisions about 'the right thing to do' subject to relational judgments made in the present rather than according to a pre-consumed rule book" (May and Cloke, 2014).

Social service providers have witnessed the redevelopment from a place at the socioeconomic center of Regent Park. Witnessing is an active, rather than a passive role: witnesses have the power to challenge the plot, interrupt actions, and reinterpret actions. These organizations and the individuals who represent them have done just that by exercising what the next chapter demonstrates to be an agency characterized by a practice of care. Care, marginalized by the econocentric logic of neoliberalism, goes a long way to explaining not only the persistence of these welfare-oriented organizations in the post-welfare city, but their capacity to hold the community together through a period of intense physical and social restructuring that threatened their erasure.



## 4. A Spatialized Practice of Care

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The importance of social service providers, from an academic perspective and on the ground in Regent Park, is clear. In this chapter, I will consider the nature of their agency in more detail and argue that it is fundamentally a caring one. Together, the individuals and institutions that provide social services in Regent Park constitute a significant layer of the local landscape of care. This landscape of care has been crucial in supporting the Regent Park community through a process of extraordinary transition, as the next chapter shows. For now, I will build out a definition of care as an emotional practice that is both laborious and ethical, and that has significant spatial and temporal dimensions, all of which structure the survival and becoming of communities and individuals. I will give life to this definition by demonstrating the ways in which frontline social service workers see their own work as caring, and argue that this work is informed by a deeply thought and felt analysis of social structures that manifests very differently than that which we privilege in the academy but which nevertheless plays an essential, world-making role in the lives of those at society's margins.

Care is not something that planners are prone to see, much less give considerable importance to. This chapter and the next will show together that, though marginalized, care is central to how individuals exist and persist within space and through time. Without developing a deeper understanding of care on care's own terms - by which I mean not

trying to co-opt it into normative econocentric frameworks for understanding action - planners will consistently fail to engage with a force that, perhaps above all others, determines how people and places change. If the role of the planner is to facilitate social change, then care must be attended to.

## **I. The Elements of Care**

Care is considered notoriously difficult to define. Because of the possibilities it opens, I am very partial to Tronto's suggestion that care is "a species of activity that includes everything [people] do to maintain, contain and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves and our environment" (1993; 126). This definition is expansive and rich, and as I will later argue, politically potent; crucially, it posits care as a practice. Nevertheless, it is admittedly broad, and within the focus of this thesis, I also think it's important to have a simpler and more practical definition at hand as well, that applies directly to the work that social services do. In light of this, we can also see care as the provision of practical and/or emotional support (Milligan and Wiles, 2010).

Care is necessarily relational, in that it involves responsibility and commitment to an object/subject of care; often, the relation is not dyadic but rather involves a complex network of actions and actions. Care has four core elements. The first is attentiveness: a recognition and awareness of need is required in order for a response to emerge. Second is responsibility, by which we willingly take it upon ourselves to respond to the need we have recognized. Third is competence, or the skill of providing good care that meets the need for care. Finally, the responsiveness of the care receiver to the care must also be considered. (Tronto, 1993). Although it is a deeply human and ubiquitous practice, attentiveness, responsibility and competence vary across social positions determined by factors including gender and class.

Caring relationships are affected by where they take place, and along with interpersonal relations, involve people-place relationships; as such, care is spatialized (Lawson, 2007; Milligan and Wiles, 2010). Following from this, we can also see that

practices of care are situated, and care is a quality of spaces that is produced relationally (Bondi, 2003). Care settings such as social service organizations - including both their professional spaces like offices or clinics, as well as public ones like gardens or drop-in centers - form part of the social fabric of the places they are located (Conradson, 2003) . This awareness of care's spatialization is still relatively recent within academic literature, and the conceptual strategies for exploring connections of care across and through space are still in development. One of the most promising means of understanding how care exists in space is the metaphor of the landscape, through which different scales of care can be treated as mutually constitutive, and through which multiple sites of care can be connected (Milligan and Wiles, 2010; Atkinson et al., 2011). Landscapes can encompass institutional, domestic, familial, community, public and private spaces; they are "spatial manifestations of the interplay between the sociostructural processes and structures that shape experiences and practices of care" (Milligan and Wiles, 2010: 739). In Regent Park, other elements of the landscape of care may include schools, mosques, the Community Centre or one's neighbors. Multilayered and inclusive of different scales of caring relationships, landscapes of care both emerge from and reproduce relationships of care.

Research on care should take into account not only spatial processes but temporal ones as well (Bowlby, 2012). The timescale of the human life course and intergenerational relationships are central to care. So, too, is the role of memory and habituation: memory affects anticipations of who should care for who and how, and patterns of caring behavior are learned over time in place. "Personal or group resilience in the face of challenging events and transitions can itself be seen in terms not only of the immediate resources a person can access but also to long-term patterns of access to and use of care" (Bowlby, 2012: 2019). The impact of events is mediated by access to care, and the lack of access to habitual caring relationships can exacerbate this impact. Similarly, one's access to care is mediated by the cumulative impact of events, structures and relationships, and shifts over time.

From an academic perspective, there are two ways to treat care, differentiated by how the place for care in society is imagined, and in the criticality with which competing discourses of independence and interdependence are engaged. The first, and dominant

perspective is of care as “bounded”: from this perspective, care is seen as either “a temporary input to facilitate return to the norm or as a long term input to approximate the norm” (Atkinson et al., 2011:565), the norm being the independent, self-actualizing and productive individual. This perspective is helpful in that it can shed light on inadequacies or inequalities within existing institutions and relationships of care, there is also a need to raise more profound questions about the place of care in society. A more radical alternative, then, is to see caring relations as interdependent and pervasive, and focus analysis on how and where care is positioned, and the consequences of this positioning in terms of goals of social inclusion and social justice. From this viewpoint, care can be seen as an ends of social action, and not merely the means (Trudeau and Cope, 2003).

This distinction between bounded and unbounded care is also helpful when it comes to understanding social service providers in Regent Park, who practice a mixture of both as a result of their paradoxical position vis-a-vis the neoliberal state. Bounded care, more often than not, results in more tangible outcomes: specific health services, job training, access to an affordable home. Particularly with the move to project-based funding, nearly all of the government funding that they do get goes to “bounded” care practices. Unbounded care fills the space beyond the mandates; I think that this term also describes the creative interpretation and manipulation of mandates to make them more effective. Community development, memory work, or advocacy can all be seen as practices of unbounded care.

The co-presence of bounded and unbounded practices of care within social service organizations points towards the broad and significant influence that neoliberalism has had on care’s place in society. Sevenhuijsen (2003) has argued that over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, care was relocated from the private sphere to the public (through the emergence of the Keynesian welfare state) and back again. In this second movement, neoliberal shifts in advanced capitalist countries have changed the topography of care, redistributing responsibility for care away from the public sector and towards the private- and third-sector, as well as individuals themselves. Neoliberal discourse increasingly privileges the individual as the primary site for agency, responsibility and well-being, enacted through autonomy and choice (Miller and Rose, 2008). The result is an

institutional and discursive separation of care and economy in ways that constitute those in need of care as subordinate and less valuable. The continual recreation of the boundaries between care and economy fixes care in place and serves to associate care with specific locations, organizations, and kinds of persons (Tronto, 1993). Additionally, these discourses erase meaning, feeling, and emotion from the concept of care (Haylett, 2003). As a result of this marginalization, the political possibility of more inclusive forms of sociality is obscured.

This state-driven marginalization of care, via its exclusion from the public sphere, is mirrored in academic and popular discourse. This marginalization is political (Lawson, 2007). It bolsters relations of economic and social inequality, and restricts individual and collective well-being. It furthers the myth that success is the product of autonomous individuals, and thereby erodes any sense of responsibility to dedicate resources (public or private) to the work of care. Care shapes how we think about and act in the world, and as such, is a worthy object of both social investigation and political struggle. Addressing the spatiality of care is also politically important. By bringing a landscape of care to life, and thereby recognizing that care is not limited to specific spaces, contexts or scales, we can refuse its devaluation. Care is social, economic and spatial justice. The spatiality of care should be an ethical concern of planners. In a context of competing discourses of independence and interdependence, where the former is backed by the powerful with dire and unjust consequences, it is imperative that planners acknowledge and reproduce care work through their practice.

## **II. The Practice of Care in Regent Park**

Care is both a labor and an ethic; together, these form a practice. In Regent Park, I see social service provision - as the provision of practical and emotional support - as caring practice, ethically informed (although not uniformly) and enacted on an everyday basis within a community of concern. This practice is spatialized through the relationships that social service providers have with their clients, community, colleagues, and other institutions. Indeed, social service providers actively manipulate the topography of care

both within Regent Park and within the city more broadly to attempt to ensure continued support to clients. They ensure the persistence of distinct spaces of care, while at the same time extending this practice beyond institutional walls and into both private and public spaces. The temporal aspects that are central to care are also evident in the work of social service providers. They engage with memory and historical patterns of behavior (caring and otherwise) to mediate the impacts of physical changes. They also work across generations to ensure that community members at different points in the human life course are both cared for and can give care themselves. In the paragraphs that follow, I will detail the ways in which social service provision in Regent Park incorporates the four elements of care identified above and can thus be seen as a caring practice.

### **Attentiveness**

Care requires the recognition of a need; if we are not attentive to the needs of others, we cannot address them. I will elaborate on the nature of social service providers' attentiveness in more detail in the next section. For now, I will argue that their presence and the personal nature of the relationships that frontline staff have with clients speak to service providers' attentiveness to the needs of Regent Park residents. The majority of these organizations have been on the ground in Regent Park for upwards of 30 years, and over that time have been involved in all aspects of community life; as one respondent said, "We've done our time in the community. When it comes to identifying need, all our programs are run out of the community and we know what's happening because we're there. We hear from people, we see it, it comes up at meetings...we're the ones who can make the connections about what it all means." Many of the staff were currently living directly in the community with their families; many more had lived there at some point in the past few decades. Over half had worked in Regent Park for a total of more than 10 years.

Through regular service provision, staff interact with members of the community on a personal basis and at routine intervals. They also participate in community events and spend time interacting with the community in public spaces, building an informal and intimate set of relationships with people who they consider to be far more than just

clients. It's also common for service providers to interact with relevant on their own terms and in their own spaces; for example, multiple front-line staff mentioned doing door to door work regularly for purposes ranging from political canvassing to diabetes awareness. Their paid work was often supplemented with additional volunteering in the community. Additionally, as mentioned elsewhere, service providers went to great lengths to maintain their level of attentiveness during client's relocation through home visits, regular phone calls, and ensuring that they were able to return to the community and to services as easily as possible.

One respondent, who immigrated to Canada and settled in Regent Park a decade ago, exemplifies the level of everyday attentiveness that comes from true presence in the community. "Since I live here I wear a few different hats but all at the same time! I am working 24/7. When I am shopping, when I am having family time with my kids, people are always coming up and starting to ask me questions about everything." She went on to describe her volunteer work as a Resident Animator for the TCHC, responsible for outreach around tenant update meetings concerning the redevelopment and relocation. "It was just a lot of door knocking and talking....People trusted the animators more than they trusted the housing staff." Trust follows from presence, and it became clear to me that the social service providers were among the most trusted institutional actors in the community. Obviously, this was partly due to their roots in Regent Park, but also, as this thesis shows, their capacity to act on resident needs in good faith, and thus encourage the continuity of communication through which needs could be expressed.

## ***Responsibility***

A sense of responsibility to care can be rooted in individual experience, political beliefs, and cultural practices. Among Regent Park's social service providers, all of these motivations exist. For some, it was rooted in a long history living and working in the community; as mentioned, many grew up in the community or spent a considerable amount of time there as youth, and others currently reside in the community with their families. "This community has been my life, I love this community, and I think that because of that, if I have something I can give, I give it," said one respondent. For others,

their sense of responsibility to care was rooted in their faith. In the words of one frontline worker, “I see Jesus in every person who walks through the door. I’m here out of love.” Another respondent at the managerial level described leaving a large private-sector corporation to work in the community out of a personal choice “to work in a faith environment” and thereby “make a more positive impact than I was.” Lastly, for some, their sense of responsibility is much more politically rooted and driven by a strong commitment to social justice; for those with less personal history in the community, this was the most commonly stated motivation for doing social service work there. Common across these responses, it should be noted, is the mention of love. Indeed, one respondent argued that love was ingrained in her organization’s practice: “The basic DNA of this place is deep emotional labor...it’s a complex environment that needs an attention that I would call love...and hope for what love can bring.”

## **Competence**

From a statistical perspective, these social services provide an immense amount of material services to the community, from music lessons to dentist appointments. I’m not in a position to evaluate their competence in these areas, and I can only say that they are among the most well-respected organizations in the city who do what they do, and they would not be as central as they are to local life for as long as they have been if they were not able to competently meet basic needs. What I do want to argue is that their work is, to the best of their abilities in the context of severe resource constraints, both holistic and generative, and that these qualities, more than any performance metric, demonstrate competent care. Both of these qualities are encapsulated in the way that one respondent described her approach to her work as rooted in her Indigenous heritage: “I have seen people do incredible things. All you need is courage to get out of the box society puts you in. And doing that is a matter of self-preservation. I care about giving people a sense of self-awareness, self-actualization, helping them move past their fear of risk. From an indigenous point of view, there’s no such thing as failure. Just learning moments. You never fail, you always succeed at something, just not what your intention was.” As philosophical as it may be, when borne out in action, this is what competence looks like.



Across the board, respondents emphasized “seeing the whole person” and seeking to provide a “continuum of care” to all clients through intra- and inter-organizational relationships. Although a true continuum of care is utopian under current resource constraints, the tendency towards this, especially in recent years, is evident in the evolution of service provision as organizations add new capacities that take a broader view of vulnerability and a more systematic approach to poverty alleviation. There is an acknowledgement that “you can’t do anything on it’s own, for example health and community are hand in hand.” These developments suggest that care is seen as more than just ensuring a minimum standard of material welfare; rather, it is about living in one’s world as well as possible. As one respondent declared, “embedded in the way we all work is the whole person. We try really hard not to drop people. Expressing love and care is not hand-holding, but a real understanding that people need support.” Such an ethos of unconditional acceptance relies on a highly demanding set of practices and competencies, to the extent that it “articulate[s] a particular kind of oppositional consciousness which has the capacity to produce a genuinely emancipatory service environment” (May and Cloke, 2013). This points to the second competence of the care given by social service providers: inasmuch as possible, it is generative. By this I mean that it is focused on the creation of opportunity and possibility rather than just a movement towards a norm. Holistic and generative, care becomes a world-making force.

## ***Responsiveness***

The element of responsiveness concerns an understanding of how care is received, and how the care-receiver responds to the care. The lengths to which TCHC-housed community members have gone to access services in Regent Park during their period of relocation also speak clearly to the importance that they play in upholding the standard of wellbeing that they would like to maintain. Those in the community have also emphasized that these services continue to be crucial regardless of physical upgrading in the neighborhood. For example, Dixon Hall underwent a strategic planning process from 2007-2009 in which they considered the possibility of moving some resources to the inner suburbs to meet growing demand there. “The response from the residents involved in the

strategic planning was very clear: they said we need you here and it's not a good time for you to leave."

The level of community participation in their activities also indicates that care is well received. They are consistently able to draw crowds for events as well as mobilize residents around important social issues. Volunteer rates are high. People are comfortable spending time in public spaces at organizations like lobbies, gardens and drop-in centers. High service demand also suggests that the community responds positively to the care given by these organizations. Part of this demand is obviously rooted in economic need rather than the quality of service, however it was also made clear to me that if service users do not feel that a service is competent or if they feel disrespected or stigmatized while using it, they won't take advantage of it at all; for example, respondents at multiple organizations indicated that clients avoid some drop-in centers or food banks in nearby neighborhoods due to how they feel treated when they use these services.

Attentiveness, responsibility, competence and responsiveness are joined by intuition, which has been described as "the process of dynamic sensual data-gathering through which affect takes shape in forms whose job it is to make reliable sense of life." The intuition exemplified by care work in Regent Park is not just tacit, and though deeply affective, forms the basis of a situated analysis of the structures and institutions that reproduce exclusion and oppression. These analyses are plural, and may be indigenous and wholly unfamiliar to academic convention: subjective, situated and by no means airtight, they nevertheless inform the everyday enactment of ordinary power.

### **III. Attending to Care's Attention**

In the academic literature on care, much of which is philosophical in nature, attentiveness is rather abstractly defined as the recognition of need. In this section, I intend to elaborate on what I see as the two key components of this recognition: thick description and weak theory. I do so out of the belief that the grounded, situated way in which these care givers see the community is fundamentally different than academics, planners, and policymakers who aren't on the ground and in relationship with the community on an

everyday basis, and the conviction that if these external actors could develop a perspective on the community more akin to that of these important local actors, then the negative social consequences of their actions could be ameliorated and they would be more able to equitably and humanely engage communities in processes of social change.

Social service providers' perspective on community change and the knowledge they shared with me takes on much of the characteristics of "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). When recounting their own behavior or that of others, they relay not just facts but layers of significance, emotion, intention, depth, context and empathy. They convey structures, symbols and meanings; they see layers of all of these, moving thoughtfully between them and changing focus when they deem that a different scale of perspective is needed. They track the emergence and effects of both endogenous and exogenous flows of social discourse. They each shared with me an interpretation of the phenomenon of redevelopment, reflexively arrived at, and also reflexively considered, even over the course of one hour-long interview. Their interpretations are experiential, relationally constituted and humane. One interviewee exemplified this (natural?) orientation toward thick description when describing what motivates her to work as a social service provider in Regent Park: "All these narratives, man...I want to help make sure that what made and makes this community so rich stays intact. It's not easy. They made us think it would be, but we're losing the things that are most precious: identity, history, elders." This thick perspective on what makes a community health and well can quite easily be juxtaposed with "thin" perspectives from outside the community, full of facts but paradoxically little truth in a context where context is everything.

As planners or academics, we use theory to make sense of change. Sometimes we build it ourselves, and sometimes we borrow it; we've also been known to bicker about it. Often, the thicker our description, the less we need to rely on theory: the applicability of the general diminishes in the complexity of the specific. Gibson-Graham (2014) draw a distinction between 'strong theory' and 'weak theory'. Strong theories are "powerful discourses that organize events into understandable and seemingly predictable trajectories." Neoclassical economics is a paradigmatic example of strong theory; mixed-income redevelopment as a welfare strategy is also predicated on strong theory. Thick

description, they argue, resists the gravitational pull of strong theory by nature, and instead lends itself to “weak theory.” Weak theory attends to nuance and complexity, apprehends plural determinants of change, and yields to emerging knowledge rather than seeking to confirm something that is already thought to be known. In contrast to the defensiveness of strong theory, weak theory is “reparative” (Gibson-Graham, 2006).

Weak theory is practiced rather than preached, and its practice takes on an ethical dimension through the understanding that how we represents the world contributes to enacting that world. Stewart (2008) writes that the point, or essence, of practicing weak theory “is not to judge the value of analytic objects or to somehow get their representation right but to wonder where they might go and what potential modes of knowing, relating and attending to things are already somehow present in them as a potential or resonance.” Social service workers put weak theory into practice; the redevelopment puts strong theory into practice.<sup>2</sup> (Social service organizations, in the same way that they give both bounded and unbounded care, practice both weak and strong theory). Weak theory is “a space that takes place,” and to inhabit this space is to attend to - and thus, I would argue, *care for* - the co-existence of complex lives, habits, fictions, differences and trajectories. In practicing weak theory, then, these social service workers create, inhabit and ‘place’ this space.

“You can either do what you always do, or change what you do to have an impact right now. We identify need and try to adapt what we’re doing, adapt our work plans to incorporate things as we see them.... We know what’s happening because we’re there, we hear from people, we see it,” said one social service provider. Their agency is rooted in their presence in the community. Everything else follows from there. Over time, they build an ethnographic knowledge of their clients and their environment that, as both form and

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<sup>2</sup> The term “weak” may not immediately sound like a descriptor that is appreciative of this type of theory’s contribution to the agency of social service workers. Nevertheless, I’ve chosen to stick with it for a few reasons. First, it’s most easily juxtaposed with “strong” theory. Second, from a queer perspective, I want to resist capitulating to the normative and masculinist assumption that “strength” is inherently good while “weakness” is something to be avoided or ameliorated. To be weak is not to have failed. In this case, the strength of weak theory is in its weakness – its porosity, adaptability and flexibility. By not being rigid and overly deterministic, and rather by virtue of its “weakness,” weak theory has a far more positive and personal impact on the lives of the community members.

result of social inquiry, has performative, world-making effects (Law and Urry, 2004). This ethnographic sensibility feeds back into their practice. Their relationships with clients and community are forged through place-making practices; it is what people do in place, day-to-day, that makes places what they are. “Any responsible agency needs to be understood as a place-making agency,” argue Raghuram et al (2009), and I would argue that the reverse is also true. Responsibilities (stretching well beyond any job description) stem from their place-making capacity, and their place-making capacity stems from their position of responsibility within the community. Their negotiation of neighborhood change shows a keen acknowledgement of their place-making agency and responsibility. By exercising their agency - through the cycle of thick description, weak theory and care - these social service workers legitimize and build the agency and authorship of the people and communities they work with.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In this space of thick description and weak theory, the seeds of a radical sort of politics are evident. This politics resists (en)closure and finality, and insists on vulnerability, partiality and location. It is a politics of situated knowledges that is about the “joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions - of views from somewhere” (Haraway, 1988). It is a politics of interdependence, and yes, care. Where care persists, it challenges moves in public policy and discourse towards autonomized and responsabilized selves through its emphasis on relationality and interdependence (Raghuram et al., 2009). Indeed, the persistence of care within social service spaces so seemingly co-opted by the state serves as an immanent critique of neoliberalism, revealing the contradictions necessary to its reproduction over time and space. In doing so, care points to pathways for change and resistance, realistic alternatives close at hand.

When we on the left speak critically about neoliberalism, we talk about large-scale forces and we speak in the abstract. Individual agency fades from view because we don't

know where to start; these abstract forces are given lives of their own, simplified and thus reified in the very manner of the neoclassical economists whose simplifications we're speaking out against. The social becomes reduced to "a residual effect" of more fundamental, systemic political economic realities (Barnett, 2009). Spending all our time looking for the forces that drive massive global change can mean missing what's closest at hand, the everyday conditions of social change, of which there are many but among which, I believe, care stands out for its capacity to negotiate and facilitate processes of transition in a way that fully accounts for the complexity of ordinary life.

## 5. Care's Affordances

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When redevelopment began, it was common for the leadership of social service organizations to see the process in a “narrow” sense. There were conversations about what relocation would mean in terms of service access, and whether changing demographics might impact the demand for existing services. But Phase One was relatively small, and the relocations largely local, and it took time for the broader consequences to come into focus. As one managerial-level respondent described, “discussions of the need for support filtered up as frontline workers started to watch the communication from the TCHC to the clients, and clients began to ask frontline workers more questions, and the messiness of the whole thing just became a lot clearer. Now, three phases in, we know what this is and we can think more expansively.” What emerges from more expansive thinking about the redevelopment? What type of agency is exercised in light of this new awareness and what is made possible as a result?

On one level, the range of supports offered by the social service organizations has undoubtedly expanded, and the redevelopment is reflected in an ever-increasing amount of programming. However, on a deeper level, this more expansive thinking about redevelopment allowed social service providers to attend to the true social complexity of what was originally seen as a simply physical change, and reproduce the local landscape of care accordingly. They adapted and expanded the local landscape of care-giving and

care-receiving between individuals, groups and places in order to continue to accommodate those who are temporarily relocated through the redevelopment. By virtue of their caring presence, social service organizations afforded the community orientation, stability, space for the past and the future, the capacity for economic empowerment and political advocacy, and the means to negotiate social and institutional power structures, thereby enabling not only survival but adaptive resilience in the face of erasure.

## **I. Affordances and Social Relationships**

The notion of affordance was developed by psychologist James Gibson, who wrote that “the affordances of any thing are what it offers in terms of the activities and meanings it allows because of its characteristics” (1979). The term has been adapted by urban design scholars to conceptualize the link between the built environment, human behavior, and the fulfillment of needs and values (Lang, 1994). For example, Vale et al. (2014) have argued that affordable housing environments can and should be designed to afford low-income residents more than shelter, and take into consideration social structure, economic livelihoods, vulnerability to risk and the threat of displacement, and community empowerment. Affordances are not properties, and are different than functions in that they are not automatic or deterministic. Rather than resources or stocks, affordances are relational and concern the possibility for action; these possibilities are emergent, relying on attention, capacity and effort, both from that which affords and that which is (or those who are) afforded.

Relational and thereby spatial (much like care), I argue that the concept of affordances is also relevant for social systems – such as landscapes of care – that are predicated upon relationships between different actors. Social relationships produce and reproduce opportunities and possibilities based on their characteristics. These opportunities and possibilities of a social system can be seen as extended to a public - not *the* public in a universal sense, but a finite public that is bounded by the spatiality and temporality of the relationships that make up such a system. Affordances of a social system are not static; publics exist in relation to them in a permanent state of ‘working towards’,



and can also adapt affordances through their use and through engagement with the system which extends them, reproducing them in their own image if need be. Members of a public may also be able to extend the affordances of a system to others with whom they are in relationship.

In the case of the landscape of care in Regent Park, the public constitutes those whose lives come into meaningful contact with this set of caring relationships, including service users, community residents, and those who may not have a fixed spatial presence but who remain in a caring relationship with social service providers over time, such as homeless people or temporarily relocated TCHC tenants. The affordances of the local landscape of care are extended through relationships of care-giving and -receiving, and the possibilities they offer are worked towards by members of this public through various acts of individual or group agency. Crucially, it is the caring way in which social service providers are present that makes what they afford more likely to be taken up; the affordances described below have been so impactful because of the way in which the practice of care works at the level of everyday life. As a social system, a landscape of care affords those who inhabit it practical and emotional supports (material and otherwise), which can be sought, received and utilized based on an individual or group's capacities and attunements.

In what follows, I argue that five types of affordance were extended to the Regent Park community by virtue of the social service providers' practice of care: orientation, stability, space, capacity-building and the negotiation of structures and institutions of power to community members during a period of physical and social change. Overlapping and coexistent, these affordances enabled the community to make sense of and work through temporary displacement, the physical transformation of their home and the social challenges that arose as a result. In the final chapter, I will also argue that they formed the base of a largely nascent, but critically important, oppositional politics within the work of everyday survival on the margins of the post-welfare city.

## II. Orientation

*“The work of inhabitation involves orientation devices; ways of extending bodies into space that create new folds, or new contours of what we could call livable or inhabitable space. If orientation is about making the strange familiar through the extension of bodies into space, then disorientation occurs when that extension fails.” (Ahmed, 2006:11)*

Orientation is a matter of recognition, and concerns how people inhabit space. To be oriented is to be turned towards objects - familiar signs, perhaps, or anchoring points - that help us both situate ourselves and find our way. Orientation is always a question, one about how we find our way and how we come to feel at home (Ahmed, 2006). Social service providers both recognized the extent of the disorientation individuals could face at various stages of the redevelopment, and responded in ways that afforded the possibility of (re)orientation within a context of constant change.

The redevelopment disrupted relationships and patterns of inhabitation and was thus a thoroughly disorienting process for the community. When the old residences began to be demolished, familiarity literally crumbled and the sense of loss was palpable for social service providers; the new buildings that rose in their stead were unfamiliar and sterile, and community members had the sense that they did not belong to them. Relocation was an uprooting, and community members would find themselves in unfamiliar environments, far from what had previously anchored their lives and in a context within which new anchoring points - for example, social services, cultural communities, family members - could be few and far between. Fullilove (2005) has described this experience as “root shock.” For those who made Regent Park their home in Canada after immigrating from abroad, “it was their second lost home, which was a lot for people to have to process.” Once deeply familiar, the new Regent Park could feel alien, unrecognizable, and community members were in need of means by which it could come to feel familiar again.

The homeless population in Downtown East also found the physical restructuring to be disorienting. “All the shelters are still open, the services they need are still open. But sometimes there are small gaps, disorientations, people looking for things they knew but

which have moved.” One respondent who spent time working at the front desk of his organization recalled having to give directions to homeless visitors who couldn’t find their way through the neighborhood to familiar places: in some cases these had moved or disappeared; in other cases they were still there, but in a context so unfamiliar that they were difficult to recognize. That which seems to have disappeared may have only just shifted, and social service providers were able to help community members fold that which was displaced or different back into patterns of everyday life.

The social service organizations themselves are landmarks in Regent Park, points of familiarity and anchoring for residents as a result of their longevity and rootedness in the community. The effort and resources put into retaining service access for those who are temporarily displaced during redevelopment made it possible for people to remain oriented towards and within their community from a distance. A significant amount of effort was also put into helping the relocated develop an orientation in their new locations; into locating them, for however long. This work was done with the knowledge that disorientation was consequential, but also the sense that no situation is devoid of the possibility of familiarity and orientation. At the same time, social service workers ensured that personal connections were not lost: “Our staff very rarely did home visits before; we mainly connected through school or programming. Now, with people who have relocated, we do monthly visits and phone check-ins...There’s way more travel. It’s all the same work, but not at all in the same place now,” said one managerial-level respondent. Frontline staff, as primary points of contact, are a familiar presence in the lives of many community members; personal relationships are central to their practice. Although it’s possible to connect a relocated teen to a decent youth worker in Scarborough, the relationship is not interchangeable and at the end of the day, it’s what matters most.

Signposting - the marking of space and time - can be key to recognition, and thus orientation. Marking space can involve labeling, as well as beginning to build new relationships of reference between people, places and ideas. For example, the Show Love event first mentioned in Chapter 2 was begun as a way to bring elders and youth in the community back together in the aftermath of an upswing in gang violence that culminated in a shooting at a large downtown mall in which both the shooter and one of the victims

had grown up in Regent Park. Many within the community believed the violence to be connected to the disruption of the redevelopment. The event, which takes place at regular intervals each summer, can be understood as a signposting event that labels the park as a space for a specific (but open) community, and imbues that marker with a value orientation, towards love and it's public demonstration. The space created by the event is also one in which those who attend can recognize and reconnect to fellow community members. Following this, it's evident how orientation may also come from association with content or meaning: this space is one in which I belong because my values are shared and because my presence is valued. Other events like Sunday in the Park and the Regent Park Film Festival were cited as playing a similar orienting role.



*Children paint a mural at Show Love. Credit: Artscape.org*

Social service organizations are also stepping in as de facto custodians of many of the new public spaces in the community, including: the new garden plots, greenhouse and bake oven in the park; the TD Centre for Learning; the cafe in the Daniels Spectrum; and the forthcoming athletic facilities. By doing so, they're able to mark these new spaces and facilitate their 'opening up' for the community: "we're able to show the community that these spaces are theirs, that they deserve them and have a right to live their lives in them." The work that the social service providers have put into building community in the context of redevelopment - not only holding on what was, but cultivating new forms of being together in place - has ensured Regent Park's inhabitability, it's potential to feel like home again.

Marking time – establishing temporality – can be as simple as setting and keeping routines. For example, attending a parenting support group or a Mandarin conversation circle on a weekly basis can contribute to feelings of continuity and pace amid the chaos of daily life. With service access guaranteed, care was something that could be counted on for the next week, and the week after that, for the foreseeable future. Future instances of service access and the foreseeable reproduction of caring relationships could give community members the opportunity to add definition to their horizons in a context where a great deal was unclear. Social service providers also marked time by helping people establish relocation timelines and clarify specific important dates, helping people make an imposing challenge seem practical and manageable. They have a more detailed and nuanced sense of the real phasing and pacing of the redevelopment than is reflected in publicly available documents, and it is part of their vernacular. Lastly, social service providers marked time by incorporating consideration of the community's past and future into programming since the redevelopment began. I go into more detail into the memory work facilitated by social service providers when I discuss the affordance of space, but for now will emphasize that this is a new aspect of service in most instances. But there is also more direct consideration - borne out of worry, in many instances - about what the future could and should look like; engaging in projection with community members can be orienting in that it helps give definition and form to a horizon of expectations, and thereby a basis upon which to evaluate changes as they come.

Education is also a form of orientation, or an orientation device. Indeed, I would argue that the educational spaces within the social service organizations have performed many of the orienting functions described above: marking space and time, building recognition, and serving as anchoring points. For example, Pathways and CCLD occupy space in the Daniels Spectrum and TD Centre for Learning, respectively. Both have maintained regular access for clients during relocation, and also incorporated memory work and discussions of the community's future into their various curricula. Literacy lessons at the CCLD that consider what it means to deal with change, or the integration of discussions of stress and mental health into nutrition workshops at the CRC both give participants the means to find their way through what they're experiencing; participants are given something to *turn to*. The Pathways program also performs an orienting role, both as an anchoring point for youth, and by orienting them towards an alternative horizon to that which is structurally scripted. If orientation is not only a matter of knowing where you are but knowing where you are going, the orienting function of education in the context of transformational restructuring is all the more clear.

Regent Park was a fairly insular community before the redevelopment, and part of the work of orientation has been building new networks of recognition and ways of feeling at home among those most cynical about the redevelopment. "Some older residents were borderline institutionalized in how unwilling they were to be open to change. They wanted Regent to remain a closed place...the open-mindedness was just not there, and we have really tried to add that into the programs that we do," said one front-line respondent. Along with incorporating discussions of change and how to cope with it into services, communication and information-sharing has been a key strategy to overcoming this reluctance. The same respondent explained that "a fair amount of [the reluctance] is based on a lack of knowledge and communication; a lot of people equate redevelopment with displacement because of what they've dealt with in the past in their homeland. They're not really aware of the concept and so part of our role is to educate them on the bigger picture. A lot of residents have a cynical perspective on change. Some for good reasons, some for fear that they're being played. We're trying really hard to find ways to alleviate that concern and I think we've been effective in building open-mindedness."

Attachment to familiarity can also inhibit adaptability and the capacity to reorient in the face of loss. As this anecdote shows, part of the work of becoming oriented may involve letting prior orientations go, and developing the capacity to build new relations of familiarity; social service providers were able to facilitate this process as well.

Reflecting on the impacts of redevelopment on her clients, one respondent remarked that: “I do think that identity is something that people are struggling with. They really cling to being someone who’s lived here for a long time. Now, people are reexamining those identities with each other. In a way that maybe before, they wouldn’t have. They’re searching for signs of belonging all over again, because everything looks different and way more upscale.” This statement demonstrates a key conceptual link between orientation and identity. The search for the “signs of belonging” that she references is the means by which people rebuild a situated identity, and link that identity to that of others through the reproduction of shared inhabitation. Orientation is a step towards (re)settling in unfamiliar spaces that might come to feel like home.

### **III. Stability**

Conceptually, stability is closely related to orientation, and overlapping in terms of familiarity and anchoring. But I use it in a slightly different sense, to convey persistence, reliability and balance. Massey (2005) argues that stability is never complete, and that instability is always co-present. Nowhere is this more true than on society’s margins; describing what it’s like to be a parent living in poverty, one respondent remarked that “these people lead chaotic lives, to the point where just about anything can be a crisis.” With this in mind, it’s important that affording stability be understood as enabling adjustments to the balance between what is stabilizing and destabilizing, as opposed to offering some fixed state of stability. In the context of an intervention that destabilized and mixed up a community in which lives were already chaotic, social service providers’ practice of care afforded stability by offering community members opportunities to bring more of their lives into the realm of reliability and reduce the unpredictability of the effects of disruption. One respondent described stability as her most important

contribution to the community. "I'm a stabilizer. I'm consistent and I'm a soft place," she said. "People know my response is always going to be the same: I'm going to be that soft place. All of this change and all of this craziness, people know that I am consistent and I am soft."

During a period of constant turnover, social service providers were one of the few parts of the community whose presence remained consistent throughout; they were the ordinary in the midst of the extraordinary. The care they continue to practice remains firmly situated. Residents could rely on social service providers to hold the community's past and character, and their work imparted the knowledge that there was a community to return to. Stable service access, from education to health to recreation, was the essential means by which relocated tenants maintained their ties to the community. This reduced the stress of displacement and the negative impacts on social networks that restructuring threatened to engender. Affording stability has required considerable work within organizations: resources had to be re-allocated, new capacities developed, and new funds raised in creative ways in order to ensure continued relevance in the face of the community's evolving needs. In situations where important resources were lost due to demolition, such as the Community Centre or Dixon Hall's Youth Centre, social service providers ensured that the functions these places performed were continued elsewhere, even in makeshift ways, to ensure the continuity of support.

Support through the relocation process, from choosing a new neighborhood, to planning, to packing and moving, was inadequately provided in any formal way. Although there was a period when the TCHC funded a relocation support worker at the TCHC, I was told that the person who was brought in to fill this position "should have known more about the community, more about who was here. It was hard, she would connect for such a short time before just sending them off." Her role did little to fundamentally address the instability of the process. Front-line social service workers across the range of organizations stepped in to minimize the chaos of this process. This included consulting with clients about new communities (even using Google Maps to show those without internet where they were in relation to Regent Park), helping them strategize around packing and unpacking, and establishing good relationships with new landlords.



In an important material sense, social service organizations also did their utmost to contribute to clients' financial stability over the course of relocation, which could impose various additional expenses. This was direct, in the case of subsidized transportation to ensure cost neutrality to service access. In other cases, it was more indirect: the example of the Yonge Street Mission allowing relocated community members to return to its food bank to get halal goods. And lastly, in a broader sense the work that social service organizations have put into job-readiness opportunities that have arisen as a result of the redevelopment has also contributed to the financial stability of many who may not have been able to prepare for or connect to stable employment opportunities beforehand. Dixon Hall's work rapidly scaling up its Employment Services Centre, and developing the Mill Centre, are exemplary of efforts to introduce more permanent financial stability into the lives of community residents.

For those who were underhoused prior to the redevelopment, the CRC has afforded lasting housing stability (and affordability) in Regent Park, through its 40 Oaks development. As Daniels and the TCHC went about their business, the CRC decided that they, too, wanted to build housing and "be part of the solution." However, they took a very different route. Concerned about the growing ratio of condominiums to TCHC units, and by the loss of affordability in Downtown East more broadly, the CRC initiated a landmark "deeply affordable" 87-unit housing development on site in Regent Park. 40 Oaks houses "the type of people who would probably have been left behind by the revitalization. People who are clients of the organizations that circle around us...who are maybe couch-surfing or using shelter systems, but are also part of programs here and know RP and live here, but don't necessarily have access to TCHC proper...those people wouldn't have gotten a space here. The idea is to house those people," said the project's Tenant Services Coordinator. The model is made financially viable through head leases with other social service organizations, which are responsible for contributing support workers and property management capacity. An on-site tenant services coordinator works with the social service workers from each of the partner organizations to help them support their clients. "We wanted to build a model that people could see actually works. In terms of groups coming together to provide deeply affordable housing for the hard-to-

house, this is not something that happens everywhere but probably should,” said a CRC employee. 40 Oaks is the most significant example of a much broader trend of social service providers fighting for the continued right to housing for those who have experienced instability due to mental health and or addictions issues compounded by relocation, they have tried to ensure that as many pillars of support as possible remain in place.

What’s interesting about this affordance is that, at the same time as social service providers enable stability through care, they also manage to destabilize and render incomplete the processes of urban and welfare state restructuring by ensuring the persistence of a plurality of subjectivities and ways of life in Regent Park. The stability thus not only enables survival, presence and growth, but is political through what it confronts. Social service organizations ensured that the space for the messiness, incoherence and contingency of everyday life on society’s margins remained in place. For example, for homeless community members, the persistence and reliability of safe spaces like the CRC’s drop-in center or the CHC’s lobby amid development and gentrification pushes back against stigmatization and ensures that the community remains, inasmuch as possible, one in which they, too, are welcome.



*The 40 Oaks residence. Credit: Christian Resource Centre*

## IV. Space

“Perhaps we could imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far,” writes Massey (2005). Social service providers, through weak theory and thick description but also just through their attention to the whole person, foster this simultaneity of stories, narratives and experiences in Regent Park through the spaces they create, which are, in the words of one interviewee, “spaces where residents see their selves reflected and their community reflected.” Through the community development work that these organizations do, they also ensure that the community is continuously involved in asking and answering what it means to live together, to share the space that they do. The new condominium owners are now a part of Regent Park’s story-so-far, and the social service providers have put considerable effort into creating opportunities for them to see themselves reflected in the community.

Massey offers three propositions about space: first, that space is the product of interrelations and interactions; second, that space is the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity; and third, that space is always under construction, never finished, never closed (Massey, 2005). Each of these propositions concerns emergence and possibility, and as such, connects space to time. The praxis of care we see in Regent Park affords space for time in different ways. Social service providers continue to make space for the community to engage with its past - both through grieving, and drawing it into the present to ensure continuity. They also work to ensure space for the original community in the present, ensuring against their displacement to the best of their abilities. Finally, the social service providers produce space for the future, by opening up spaces and opportunities for resident-driven initiatives and the staking of claims.

In Regent Park, to afford space has been to fight for it and contest its seizure or enclosure. Crucially, social service providers engaged residents in fighting for public space as well as private space. Private spaces are spaces of withdrawal, where one’s mode of dwelling goes uncontested. Social service providers have worked with residents to ensure their right to private space, for the right to different and self-determined ways of life and modes of dwelling in the face of official concern and contestation. We see this in the

negotiations around garbage rooms in houses, for example, or the making of arrangements for large families to stay together. Public spaces are spaces where meaning - especially what it means to be social, to live together - is consistently negotiated, rather than preordained. Social service providers have actively engaged the community in negotiating the meaning of new and renewed public spaces.

### ***Spaces for memory and grieving***

“There’s a danger of old Regent’s history being marginalized. Work is needed to help retain that history, and it’s up to organizations to create programming that captures that history through storytelling, art, etc.” Holding space for the community’s past within the present is a difficult but important task that a number of social service providers saw as central to the work of caring in the context of redevelopment. One respondent who has tried to engage community members in memory work said that “I’m just looking at how to recapture whatever was. You have to be adaptable and flexible and it’s hard, grieving and letting go. The cycle of grieving is immense. It’s a matter of working with the understanding that there are some things that we don’t have control over, but it’s a new beginning and nothing ever ends.” Helping the community express and articulate loss has been a challenge, but arts and culture-based strategies have emerged as the most effective means to address this need. “Art goes across language and culture. There’s a therapeutic level to it. For example we brought in a Bangladeshi artist whose work invoked images from his homeland, and this got people wondering and discussing what was happening to their second home, like, they’ve lost their homeland twice, you know?” Other venues for this memory work include storytelling circles for elders, as well as activity spaces like gardens, community kitchens, and the new sewing cooperative.

Spaces through which to deal with loss could emerge in unexpected contexts. Recently, Dixon Hall was given the opportunity to take the lead on a three-year federal youth gang prevention program along with five other organizations, including the CRC and the CHC. Developing a strategy to identify youth at risk of joining gangs, they included a criterion of “significant sense of loss” among others about the nature of peer groups and activities. It quickly became clear through their interactions with youth around

these issues that addressing this sense of loss this was a key strategy through which service providers could intervene in gang recruitment processes. As a result, they held group activities for youth around grief and closure, within which it became clear to those involved that feelings of loss were intricately tied up with the redevelopment. Thus, although these restorative spaces were established through a gang prevention program, “ended up playing a key role in organizing and engaging the community in saying goodbye.” Working through grief and loss in the present is an important means by which the community can fight it’s erasure and continue to claim the space as it’s own, as the place of it’s stories-so-far.



*A mural on an old Regent Park residence prior to demolition by Dan Bergeron. Credit: Fauxreel.ca*

## ***Spaces for growth***

Organizations and their staff have gone to great lengths to ensure the persistence of safe spaces for youth, to create opportunities for them to process how they are being affected by the redevelopment - including grief and stress - and to ensure that the supports necessary for their personal development stay as firmly in place as possible. Through relocation, youth were able to retain their spots in the programming they were involved in. Organizations ensure that youth still qualify for any financial subsidies involved in their participation, and that they “get all the benefits as though they were still living in the community.” Nevertheless, continued participation is not seamless; the time and cost associated with commutes can be an added source of stress on youth and their parents.

For many youth, Regent Park has been their only home. Now, “all the things they’re used to, all the memories, are disappearing.” Amid so much change, youth often “need space to talk...to hold each other down,” said one front-line worker. CCLD has opened its doors to a self-organizing group of teens who needed a safe space in the community, away from their homes and parents. “There’s about 20 of them and they’re here every Saturday afternoon, all guys, all Muslim, ranging from 14-19. They just talk about culture, parents, stereotypes, dealing with community stigma.” The redevelopment interferes in the lives of youth in a variety of ways. For them to be afforded access to space that can be wholly theirs, a space of respite free of adult intervention or presence, to negotiate their own personal development as individuals and as members of their community, is a crucial service.

It’s common for youth to feel alienated amid all of the new buildings and amenities. “It’s hard to show them the new resources are theirs. When they see a new building, they’re not attached to it. Many of them think they don’t deserve these things,” said one youth worker, who has at times struggled to convince youth of the potential benefits of the redevelopment. “They think they’re being replaced,” he says. He’s put a lot of effort into incorporating youth participation at the forefront of the community’s new resources, like the Spectrum, and hopes to do the same with the new Community Centre and athletic facilities, and is optimistic: “once you show them glimmers, then they see it.”

## ***Accessible spaces***

With the influx of new residents, there is a widespread sentiment that “there’s an us versus them mentality, and were competing for space.” Significant accessibility concerns emerged around the new amenities in the community, including the Aquatic Centre and the Daniels Spectrum; different responses emerged to each. In the case of the Aquatic Centre, social service providers were active in negotiating for greater community ownership of this space. In the case of the Spectrum, similar efforts to make it a community space have coexisted with efforts to construct alternative art and culture spaces. In both cases, the social services were necessary players in activating these spaces for their clients and claiming them for the community, building use value in and around them. Without this work, amenities would be still be present and contributing to positive redevelopment narratives, but would afford little to the community, and thereby serve to reinforce dynamics of social exclusion and fine-grained segregation.

Every single respondent spoke very positively about the new Aquatic Centre, some to the point of ebullience. But the Aquatic Centre has also been in the middle of some of the most pointed battles over accessibility. As a City Community Centre, programming is free; however, registering for programs was only possible online, and only at specific hours of the morning. For many Regent Park residents, these were huge limitations: internet remains unaffordable for many, and registration hours fell at a time when working parents were too busy getting their days started to be logging on. The result was that people from outside the community were using programs at far higher rates; “the people who actually have the means to go elsewhere leave no space for the community.” Another respondent suggested that “saying that it’s for everybody in the City was a mistake. These are places where people grow together, and they’re not able to do that if not everyone from their community can be in that space.”

The Aquatic Centre was also originally inaccessible to many members of the community for cultural reasons. A high proportion of the community’s population is Muslim, and the cultural accessibility of the facility for Muslim women was not initially taken into account by the City. “The cultural context of swimming, they just had no idea.

These are the things we have to tell them. We had to push back, and say “yeah, this is great, but it’s also an impeachment on equity.”” As a result of a campaign led by one of the front-line workers interviewed for this thesis, the pool now has dedicated times for Muslim women to swim, along with privacy screens for the windows that can be used at this time. Advocacy has also led to the delineation of a section of the pool for seniors, “so that they can be present but in an environment that more meets their needs. Nobody things of stuff like this in the abstract.” In the future, planning for public space needs to involve the community to a far greater degree, it was argued, so that these negotiations don’t have to happen post-facto. “People who are not on the ground are the people who make all these big decisions, they have to come from the bottom up, organically happen. You need people from all different perspectives and that’s just not happening.”

One of Daniels’ flagship projects within the overall development has been the Daniels Spectrum, which has emerged as a hub for arts and culture organizations, many of which have deep roots in Regent Park. Nevertheless, social service providers voiced significant concerns about the accessibility of this space, and the extent to which it actually belonged to the community. “We need tough conversations around Artscape. Who is this being built for? We’re opening Regent Park to the whole city, but we also have to make it accessible to residents,” said one respondent. Concerns about community art spaces were echoed across a number of organizations. Another respondent said that the programming that moved into the Spectrum has become less accessible. “Residents don’t see themselves reflected in the Spectrum,” she said. “Just because it’s physically based in the community, that doesn’t make it a community art space. It needs to be a space where art can be created by the community.” Organizations like CCLD have responded to these concerns by building up their own capacity to serve as a hub for community members interested in participating in the arts. They’ve built a number of relationships with artists from within and outside the Regent Park community, who lead weekend workshops on everything from watercolor to dance. Activities like this that afford opportunities for emotional expression among community members are fundamentally important to periods of transition. The lesson is that they won’t happen anywhere; they need to be grounded in spaces the community feels ownership of, and in art that resonates with experience.



## ***Community development spaces***

Social service providers are keen to help facilitate the integration of the old community and the new. “It has to be intentional or it won’t get done, just because you share a space...Intentionality was missing on a few levels.” Social service providers have taken advantage of the availability and potential of shared spaces like the Park to create opportunities for community development. Many of the events mentioned in prior sections served this purpose, as has the custodianship of new spaces like the Community Centre and Athletic Grounds that will be shared by TCHC tenants and condo owners.

Many of the programs themselves are seen as potential spaces for community-building, and are being opened up to new residents. At Dixon Hall, parenting programs that are open to the community are beginning to see some integration. “We’re starting to see new people who have babies. Everyone wants the best for their kids, so when you have a speech and language workshop, then you see a mixture. But it’s still a ‘we come and get this and we go’ situation, there’s not a whole lot of “what do we have in common” in those interactions,” said one respondent from that organization. At the Yonge Street Mission, community development work is also being focused on programs that “work across the income spectrum, like parenting classes or support for new Canadians,” in order to increase opportunities for interaction. In terms of creating new opportunities, youth workers have collaborated to try to areas of overlapping interest between Regent Park youth and condo owners. For example, they tried to set up a babysitting service: youth were looking for after school jobs, and young mothers who were new to the community were looking for childcare. Unfortunately, this didn’t get too far off the ground.

Regent Park has long been a community of gardeners. Most of the old multistory buildings had yards with allotments for residents, as did all of the townhouses. In the new high-rises and townhouses, there are far fewer plots, and there is an overall feeling that “the gardening community is losing space.” The CRC in particular has gone to significant lengths to build new gardening spaces that serve about 75 families, and all of the organizations participate in the management of a large plot in the new park. In the context

of redevelopment, these new gardening spaces were cited as crucial for the maintenance of community ties through the growing of cultural foods, the sharing of harvests, and opportunities to mingle. They've also been spaces wherein people can informally but intimately discuss information and questions about the community's transformation, and give each other ongoing support. It should also be noted that the work of making space for gardening has involved a good degree of effort and collaboration from Daniels, who identified "Food and Agriculture" as one of their organizing principles for understanding social development within the community. As such, these space-making efforts have also been an important means through which social service providers could begin to build ground-level relationships with a key new actor in the community.

## **V. Capacity**

Capacity concerns the ability to exercise one's own agency. In some senses, it follows from space, in that it concerns the ability of an individual or group to exercise agency within space and thus reproduce it in their own image over time; on the flip side, however, capacity can also be seen as preceding space, in that space will never be claimed by a community that does not have the capacity to mobilize resources and power to do so. Social service providers have afforded community members opportunities to build their individual and collective capacity in a range of dimensions; here, I will focus specifically on economic opportunity and political advocacy.

### ***Economic opportunity***

Social service providers played an important role building resident capacity to take advantage of the economic opportunities that have arisen in the community through revitalization. In a very direct sense, this has involved an immense increase in the resources devoted to job-readiness and skills-training programs. These initiatives line up with the official vision of redevelopment that sees the inclusion of the community into the city's broader labor market; however, what's clear is that these jobs did not emerge purely by virtue of an income mix in the neighborhood, but rather through the work of

community-based institutions. Dixon Hall's new Employment Services Centre is the exemplary case, offering free services to all community members and working in conjunction with the government and local businesses to connect employment-ready residents to jobs; they've also established a micro-loan program for local entrepreneurs. Dixon Hall's new Mill Centre complements these efforts, and offers carpentry and home renovation training to marginalized community members with the support of a local college.

Alongside these formal initiatives, social service providers also took steps to create other types of economic opportunity that align with the skills, lifestyles and resources that already exist within the community, and that do more to build a local base of economic agency. As the old Community Centre was being prepared for demolition, a number of old (but fully functional!) sewing machines were found in the basement. No plans were made to store much of what was in the Community Centre, and so CCLD agreed to give the sewing machines a home. Many women in the neighborhood expressed to the CCLD a desire to use the machines, and with the organization's support, they started a sewing collective local women that has become very popular. Members have made handbags to sell at fundraising events, and as I visited, products were in the work for a Community Bazaar on International Women's Day. The long-term plan is to develop the social enterprise into a cooperative business. While the collective is an important source of economic opportunity and independence, it also serves key social functions for members. "There's so much sharing of stories while sewing. Everything is made with so much meaning." She described "cultural threads" running through the conversations and the craft, as members drew on stories from their home communities around the world and wove them into a narrative about Regent Park. This performed a particularly important intergenerational function of "maintaining authenticity," she says.



*The Regent Park Catering Collective. Source: Centre for Community Learning and Development*

Similar opportunities were created around cooking, which has long been an important social activity in Regent Park. Potlucks were very common, and residents would rush to offer to cook for community events. Food was also sold at markets put on by social service organizations. With the redevelopment, the farmers market was formalized by the City and Daniels, which meant that residents who were formerly able to sell whatever they wished now had to have food preparation certificates. In response, CCLD coordinated training courses to help residents earn these certificates. “We realized that once they have these certificates, they can cook to make a profit, and so we started the catering collective. There’s a lot of money to be made, and it’s a business training opportunity,” said a respondent involved in developing the training course. Most of the collective’s members are single mothers and first generation immigrants who would otherwise have very limited access to job opportunities and sources of income; for them, it’s been an important financial opportunity as well as a source of community. The organization is currently developing a literacy module for people in the collective focused around language skills necessary for starting a business.

Both the sewing collective and the catering cooperative began as resident ideas, which organizations were attentive to and had the competence to realize. Going forward, “building out social enterprises and collectives, linking what people do to new types of local employment opportunities,” is seen as one of the biggest challenges for CCLD and other organizations, one respondent said; “but this is also *such* a big opportunity, as an alternative revenue stream for people. It’s the biggest opportunity available.” Indeed, the foundation of support upon which these initiatives have been built is due to the changes in the community as a result of the redevelopment and the fact that building economic opportunity is now a focus for many different stakeholders all at once. “Five years ago, we wouldn’t have been able to launch the catering collective or a sewing group. People wouldn’t have been open to the employment angle, or there would have been too much uncertainty. There’s a general belief now that the environment exists for people to do these things. There’s been a mindset shift about what [organizations’] intentions are. Ten years ago, someone offering to set up a catering group would have been seen as extractive. The assumption now is that people will get to be their own boss, get skill development and economic opportunity.”

## **Advocacy**

Over the course of the redevelopment, local social services have strengthened their own capacity to be advocates for the local community, and by doing so have afforded opportunities for community members to develop and exercise their political voice. This is an important new source of energy and potential in a community where frontline staff often see “a weariness from fighting for such a long time.” These parallel processes of capacity-building can together ensure that the community maintains agency in the face of broader socio-economic processes, and can mobilize around issues it is affected by. At the same time, this enhanced advocacy capacity is still, in many ways, a nascent affordance, albeit one with significant potential to reverberate into other areas of the praxis of care, especially space-making and negotiation, as the redevelopment marches on and the dust ultimately settles.

Just coping with the pressures of redevelopment has re-ignited advocacy capacity

across organizations. Social service providers were thrust into issues around unit sizes and disability access in the new buildings, as well as poor conditions in relocation units around the city, such as a lack of hot water or broken doors and windows. Of her colleagues, one manager said that “We’re way more organized now. We write way better letters, we keep lots of documentation. We learned so much in Phase One. We have it down pat. Being advocates, helping people, being understanding - we’ve all had that skill set for a long time. But we’re just way more strategic and organized now.” Another frontline worker echoed this new sense of confidence stemming from negotiating the complexities of redevelopment: “The [redevelopment] has upped our advocacy game, it’s on a whole other level because we’re always having to check someone on equity.” Some organizations have been able to hire dedicated advocacy and community development coordinators, while others have tried to develop this capacity across the organization. Dedicated positions for advocacy and community development are still fairly new within the community, and many frontline staff are just beginning to strategize about how their work may be able to contribute more to this sphere of activity.

Those directly engaged in advocacy often find themselves in a paradoxical position: “you need to do advocacy, but at the same time you can’t be political. Organizations that say that they’re focused on building campaigns that will make serious systems change would have run out of funding,” said one respondent responsible for a range of advocacy campaigns. Organizations often get around this by framing advocacy efforts around capacity-building. For example, the advocacy coordinator at the CRC does a considerable amount of her work in conjunction with a team of advocates drawn from the community; together, they work on a range of issues ranging from neighbor relationships to legal rights. A similar approach is being taken at the Yonge Street Mission, which recently added a community development portfolio to the organization, the core functions of which are capacity-building among *groups* of community residents, and coordinating relationships and partnerships between these groups and third parties in the community. Staff in other parts of the organization are eager to contribute to these efforts: one respondent at the same organization saw opportunities for food bank members to work together to lead new programs under the community development framework. Indeed, he

thinks that one of these new programs could consider the current system of food access and distribution in the neighborhood, and how it could be improved: “I don’t presume that we know the best way to do this,” he says.

Prioritizing advocacy and community development resources between systemic efforts and immediate material needs can be difficult. It was argued that, at present, the vast majority of community-engaged work still falls into the latter category. These short-term efforts - for example, around making a low-budget grocery store more wheelchair accessible - are important, but take up most of the resources, creating for social service providers “an upstream-downstream problem. How much time do you devote to upstream issues in a neighborhood like this when you don’t see these basic efforts going anywhere?” The result is, at present, a lack of an explicit and coherent social justice framework to local advocacy work. Frontline staff, especially those on the younger end, hope to build such a framework in the coming years. For example, one respondent is personally involved in provincial anti-poverty campaigns such as Put Food in the Budget, and hopes to be able to build organizational support behind this more public work in the coming year. In a similar vein, another front-line worker said “I don’t have a lot of bandwidth for advocacy, not as much as I’d like. Day-to-day management of the food bank is a ton of work. But it’s time to be having conversations about food security.” This advocacy, he says, needs to tie in to a broader push for a guaranteed basic income: “we should be a top-up, not a consistent necessity.”

## **VI. Negotiating Structures and Institutions of Power**

Social service providers negotiated institutions and structures of power in order to maintain or strengthen their practice of care; they did so in response to community needs and concerns, and have thereby afforded the community the possibility of renegotiating these power relationships as the redevelopment continues to progress. Tools for negotiation included advocacy, interpretation and collaboration; other caring practices such as space-making and capacity-building also supported negotiation. In turn, the work of negotiation has contributed to social service providers’ maintenance of other

affordances, for example, by helping to retain access to orienting points in the community, or gathering resources for capacity-building work. Common across the work of negotiation was the justification or legitimation of differences in class, culture and ability. This effort is grounded in an ethic of care that embraces the whole individual on his or her own terms, and that is more concerned with emergence than restriction. By negotiating new relationships at different scales, social service providers are able to ensure that they remain capable of acting to adapt the local landscape of care from which all of the affordances discussed here emerge.

### ***Socio-structural negotiation: class***

The redevelopment radically reconfigured the socio-economic landscape of Regent Park. Class difference was introduced to a neighborhood that had previously been quite predominantly low-income, and this occasioned a shift in the way that class figured in both organizational thinking and individual theories of practice. Class-consciousness was something that these organizations and their staff already had in abundance. The substantive and important change has been its routinization: a certain class calculus has become part of everyday practice for many staff, and negotiating class differences becomes a much bigger part of what they do. Suffice to say, this is not in anybody's job description. But the fact that they enable such negotiation to occur at the community level is crucial in the context of gentrification which could otherwise lead to social exclusion.

Class differences have had to be negotiated with respect to amenity and service access. The case of the Aquatic Centre, described above, is a perfect example of this. Internally, organizations have also had to consider how they will accommodate newcomers with higher class statuses into their services. Debates within organizations about service access for new community members with higher incomes are also complex negotiations of class and privilege. The CHC spoke early on about what the redevelopment would mean for them as an organization. There were sincere concerns about increased demand for services, both as a result of the increased population and the complicated process of relocation and resettlement. In this context, a staff debate emerged on the question of whether to restrict access to certain services, potentially on the basis of



income. Some opposed the possibility of exclusivity, favoring a policy of being as open as possible and embracing the new/potential Regent Park in its entirety. Others argued that it was more imperative that the CHC protect and privilege the access of marginalized clients, and accept newcomers on a case-by-case basis only. Ultimately, the organization came together in agreement that they would continue to prioritize services for marginalized people - especially the homeless and non-status immigrants. Although front-line staff are not sure about the overall impacts of this decision, they are confident that they have “protected what we’re good at.” For new residents, “the doors are open a little bit, but not too wide.”

This position is not free of tension. Everyone - the community, the organization, the workers themselves - is sensitive to the idea of income figuring into assessments of need, and although it’s not asked directly, the implication is that perceived class position does come into play when determining new client eligibility. Within the CHC, there remains a diverse array of mandates, across which prioritization of the old Regent Park community varies. For example, they have committed to providing harm reduction services to anybody: “there are functional addicts, and hidden addicts, and we couldn’t only support those addicts who *look* down and out.” The same goes for mental health services, around which there remain numerous different social and cultural stigma. On both of these fronts, the CHC feels that restricting these services puts people at clear additional risk. Thus, even amidst a clear effort to hold space for the community in the context of structural forces that might otherwise limit their access, social service providers are also attentive to the range of care needs now present in the community, and addressing them to the best of their abilities.

Interviewees at Dixon Hall also reported facing the challenge of “finding a middle ground between the new and old community, and what that might look like.” Maintaining service access and affordability is a priority, but they also recognize that much of what they do could be an opportunity to break down some of the new class barriers in the community. One topic of discussion was the daycare services they offer. Previously, these had been free, based on the assumption that the financial cost would be a burden on families living below the poverty line. But with the influx of money into the community,

the organization can't afford to subsidize the cost for families who can reasonably afford the service. "There are really different levels of wealth in the community now, and the question becomes how do you determine who to charge what?"

The introduction of class difference to Regent Park changed the climate within which these organizations serve. Specifically, tensions with gentrifiers have emerged over the presence and role of service providers within the community; frontline staff often negotiate these on their own terms, but organizations also engage in broader strategizing around their persistence amid this evolving (and strengthening) class structure. Those who work with homeless people and drug users spoke to increased NIMBYism as a result of local gentrification, and the emergence of a "narrative" about there being too many services in the community. In response to this, there is pressure to "keep a low lid" on controversial work such as harm reduction, and always discuss it in the framework of supporting better health, since "people in Cabbagetown can be pretty harsh." There is an associated concern that it may be more difficult to establish and offer new services where and when they may be necessary, particularly around highly stigmatized issues such as addiction. "Overall, it seems harder to get stuff started," said one frontline worker. "The question of whether we are going to be opposed looms much larger now." But, he continued, "if I have a chance to explain what I do, then there's a chance we can build from there." He's eager for more public education and awareness about harm reduction initiatives like needle exchange, and has been involved in developing videos and teaching tools explaining how such programs work, and what their merits are for users. Unfortunately, he sees his chances to share these resources with the community as limited; for now, he's only been able to use them in internal trainings with members of his own organization.

Gentrification means something to those whose work is centered on education. "I hate to say this but it might work out OK for us," said one manager. "Upwardly-mobile people are afraid of poor people, and [our organization] promises a path towards a more middle-class life, so this may appeal to people who want to see that sort of change. People still - naively? - believe in education as an equalizer." She suspects that gentrification may actually result in increased support for her organization, which she plans on cultivating to the greatest extent possible, confident as she is that her organization's model has proven

to succeed in building opportunity where others haven't, and that in the face of otherwise massive structural constraints upon youth in Regent Park, her practice must continue to be viable.

Animosity for harm-reduction, generosity for graduation rates. From the perspective of social service workers, some services are worth more (or less) than others in the eyes of gentrifiers. Organizations now need to think in terms of what might be opposed by the new community, along with what might benefit the old, and chart a course accordingly. What's clear is that these two concerns do not overlap. The latter is clearly the priority, but the former is not insignificant. If gentrification means different things for different organizations - or even different parts of the same organization - what consequences might this have for the community and for the local landscape of care? It's not possible to say definitively, but what this points to is a division of the old community into those deserving of services and those who are not, and the potential emergence of differentiated landscapes of care due to the various types of stigmatization that different groups face.

### ***Institutional negotiation: social service providers***

The network of relationships and partnerships continuously reproduced among organizations and their staff constitutes a key component of the local landscape of care. These relationships have varying degrees of formality and continuity. Some are personal and ad hoc, others are formalized and longstanding. At all scales, these relationships depend on significant personal effort, which often comes out of an explicit frustration with the a perceived status quo of competition and/or siloed and disconnected efforts towards similar causes. Changes all across this network were negotiated in the context of redevelopment in order to continue to afford adequate and competent care in a rapidly-evolving context of needs.

One of the most significant changes that social service providers mentioned was an overall increase in collaboration. "I'm seeing a lot more collaboration. I think it's for two reasons. First is that a big push has come from Daniels, who are very big on it and try to orchestrate a lot of it. Second is that some organizations kind of have to, from a funding perspective: the grants require partnership," said one respondent. Increased collaboration

between social service providers was seen by all respondents as beneficial for the community's welfare. With the advent of the redevelopment, "people are realizing they can get a lot more done together and that as long as people get what they need, it doesn't really matter who provides it," said another respondent, indicating that this was a marked shift from the way that organizations previously related to each other. For example, the revitalization is broadly seen as having brought the Executive Directors of the neighborhood's social service organizations closer together. One specific area of ongoing collaboration is lobbying the City and the Province for resources to expand mental health services, programming and training. Some frontline staff did caution that where collaboration at higher levels does happen, its benefits may remain unclear or unrealized for front-line workers.

Significant barriers to increased collaboration remain. Time and resource constraints are pervasive, and are seen as inhibiting better communication between social service providers. "There can be four different people doing the same program, but unless a participant says something you may never know," said one frontline worker. This is a particular challenge when, in many instances, collaboration rests on individual initiative, and stable structures for coordination are lacking. One respondent at the managerial level has responded to this need by trying to build a roundtable for community development workers to meet, give updates on their work, find points of intersection and opportunities for collaboration. "Everyone's interested, I think a lot of people feel like things are going on and they don't know about them," she says, but the strategy for follow-through on this idea is unclear, and as a result she feels like she's left to personally pick up the baton.

One frontline worker also suggested that generational divisions could be a barrier to information-sharing and collaboration. "Who gets and shares what information is kind of a problem. It could just be that new people aren't seeking it out, and I don't think its a conscious gatekeeping, but the people who have been here a long time do what they do and don't necessarily have the time to get to know who the new staff are. The new staff, being new, don't always necessarily know where to start." For example, one respondent who only recently started working in the community recalled never being made aware of the Community Crisis Response Network until a resident mentioned it by chance at a

community safety meeting. This statement and others point towards increased effort to name and address these barriers in order to facilitate more and better collaboration in the future.

As much as the work of negotiating collaboration has been occasioned by redevelopment, it's also clear that welfare state restructuring is also at work. Organizations are, quite literally, at a loss if they cannot collaborate, because grant funding from government sources often mandates it. This pressure has, perhaps not surprisingly, resulted in "unnecessary competition or animosity" around structuring partnerships, which can result in "organizations acting a bit more in their own self-interest than the community's," in the words of one respondent. Overall, however, organizational survival in the context of these dual forces of restructuring is the priority: "people are getting a bit worried about how they're going to maintain funding in all of this newness. We have to keep looking at that competitiveness and figuring out what we're gonna do with it."

### ***Institutional Negotiation: Toronto Community Housing***

In the context of the numerous difficulties surrounding the relocation process described in Chapter 2, the role of social service providers negotiating with the TCHC on behalf of clients and community members more broadly was absolutely essential in avoiding much of the harm that could have arisen from this process. Everyone had a story about grappling with the TCHC about the relocation process. This communication was difficult for all parties, but incredibly necessary. "Sometimes when [the TCHC] see[s] us they want to give us a big hug. But sometimes they must think "oh God." Because we can push when we need to, we're ready." If social service organizations hadn't had the attentiveness, responsibility and competence to manage such crucial relationships and pathways of communication, it's unlikely that anybody else would have, due to the level of distrust around that organization in the community, which is not unwarranted given the history of neglect.

Supporting people through the TCHC's official relocation process was "a huge challenge" for frontline staff. In the early phases, organizations struggled to get a clear sense of who was moving when, finding out on an informal basis from individual clients;

through discussions with the TCHC, they arranged more reliable communication around relocation schedules. Frontline staff across all organizations spent a significant amount of time trying to ascertain details and navigate bureaucracy on a client-by-client basis. “With the relocation, we had a lot of additional work around really basic stuff, just supporting tenants. Helping them understand their letters, communicate with the TCHC, get ready to move, even packing,” said one manager. Another added that “people don’t have a good understanding of their rights.” Language barriers were a significant issue, and staff with connections to specific linguistic communities in Regent Park would often attend relocation meetings with clients from those communities to interpret, as well as translate important documents like leases and tenant agreements.

The intimate nature of the relationship these services have with clients meant that either clients were comfortable asking for support, and/or that social service providers would be able to realize on their own accord when support was necessary. “A big part of the relocation was just being the person in the middle.” Strong internal relationships were also crucial to the performance of this function. “We had to get good at sharing a lot of information between staff to stay on top of everything. The key thing around the relocation process was our relationships with clients. You know where they live but not necessarily whether they have a hoarding problem, for example. But, once you know, you can link them up with the housing team,” said one managerial-level respondent. Within and across organizations, individuals had a *web* of support at their disposal, which they were not responsible for navigating on their own. This logistical support was essential in the context of the psychological difficulties that many residents faced. It was both a means by which to open up greater dialogue around relocation and thereby address these more personal issues, and it was also a way to alleviate stress.

Those directly involved in housing issues feel that, although they don’t have problems communicating their concerns, they have to be very diplomatic, and “very aware of the political sensitivities.” There is frustration that the TCHC’s “main strategy is just conflict avoidance,” rather than taking a deeper look at the issues at hand. Relationships seem to be much better with local TCHC representatives working in the community on a regular basis, compared to those working higher up at the corporate

level, with whom there have been greater difficulties seeing eye to eye. Regardless of the ease of communication, the marketized nature of redevelopment and the way it has unfolded seems to have negatively affected some frontline staff's opinion of the TCHC, which in turn makes communication a challenge. "They forget that they are a social housing provider. Adding "Corporation" to their name indicates the direction they're going," one frontline worker argued. Social service providers sought communication with the TCHC that was more attuned to the complexity of tenants' lives, and less concerned with the bottom line.

Finally, it's important to note that social service organizations, as well as individuals on their own initiative (especially those who live in the community), also worked to build the capacity of tenants to engage with the TCHC themselves. In contexts where the community itself interacts with the TCHC, communication often doesn't occasion a move past dialogue to action. "We want people to speak into the issues that they care about, but fatigue sets in when it just ends at dialogue, when we record but nothing happens. You can't just extract." Indeed, the growth of community development work at these organizations is in response to the predominance of this modality across many of the settings in which community members interact with powerful institutions.

### ***Institutional Negotiation: Police***

Social service organizations/workers have been a crucial conduit for the police-community relationship. This is an exceedingly important role in a context where identity and subjectivity is being reconfigured and certain norms of behavior are coming into contestation. Respondents at Pathways, Dixon Hall and CCLD all mentioned trying to work more with the police "so they're not such bogeymen." They do see efforts within the police force "to not be seen as paramilitary bullies" and make an active effort to communicate this with the community, who have a fairly deep historical distrust of the police services. While the police do try to reach out to the community, they don't succeed on their own.

The community's relationship with the police is "a huge situation. Especially now, there's such a different vibe. Part of it is that the condo owners want more security and

part of it is this push for community policing.” Social service organizations have facilitated meaningful dialogue between the RCMP and the community, but are also “taking them to task and asking what can you do for us if you’re here,” said one manager. CCLD holds community debriefings on site after incidences of crime, bringing together community stakeholders and police officers. Often, this involves “enlightening officers” to what’s actually going on in the community, but it’s also a crucial space through which to see the officers as individuals, said one CCLD employee. “It’s a layered relationship but we need it whether we like it or not because they’re not going anywhere, and there’s this expectation that safety involves policing.”

## **VII. Conclusion**

The previous chapter could have been read as an uncritical valorization of social service providers, however this would be a mistake. In exploring what they have made possible against considerable odds, my intention was not to ignore the fact that their relationships with each other and the public and private sectors are complicated and far from ideal. Nor was my intention to ignore the fact that the practice of care that has enabled community resilience can also be seen as contributing to the very processes of neoliberalism that put the community’s survival at risk, by facilitating the redevelopment process and participating in the restructuring of the welfare state. As I argued in Chapter 3, social service organizations are caught up in contradictions and dilemmas of their own, by virtue of their position in tension between the state, market and community. Furthermore, as powerful as care is, it is important to remember that it is both labor and ethic, and we know both to waver; from this, we can accept that care’s affordances may change over time as well. Accepting these caveats, it is nevertheless quite clear that social service providers have enabled the Regent Park community to resist its erasure at the hands of capital.

The work of care is ordinary and often mundane, but it happens at the scale at which social relations are enacted, maintained and potentially altered. Often invisible - or rendered so by academics - practices such as care are assumed to be unproblematic,



merely functionalist and without great significance. What this chapter shows, however, is that such marginalized practices must be seen as actively engaged in attempts to adapt to, rework and potentially resist one group's exercise of power over another. Orientation, space, stability, capacity and negotiation were possibilities afforded to the community by the presence of a landscape of caring actors and institutions; through relationships with these care-givers, the community of Regent Park has been able to oppose what it saw as the threat of its own erasure and grow on its own terms.

## 6. Conclusion: Why care?

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“A five minute walk in Regent Park used to take 25 minutes because you’d get caught up in your village. It felt like a village before. My hope is that it will get there again. But the change is destabilizing,” said one front-line worker who lives in the community. “The best part about it was that it felt like a village. Now it feels like a trendy neighborhood. But all trends get old. So what happens when everybody loses interest? What about the really vulnerable people that were here that are so much more vulnerable after going through this process for 16 years?” Redevelopment has been a time of extraordinary change in Regent Park. The community is densifying and gentrifying; homes and familiar public spaces are being lost and replaced; families are moving, social relationships are changing, and identities are being contested. Formal planning efforts intended to address the social challenges of structural change have lacked the financial and institutional resources to be of use to those engaged in social service provision on the ground. Instead, the human-scale complexities of redevelopment have been attended to as they emerge by third-sector social service providers with deep local roots. By virtue of a situated practice of care, social service providers have afforded the community orientation, stability, space, capacity, and the means to negotiate prevailing institutions and structures of power, thereby enabling the community to not only survive in the face of

vulnerability, but to reformulate the conditions and possibilities of everyday life and remain resilient in the face of erasure.

Having shed light on the role and potential of care amid processes of neoliberal restructuring, two questions emerge. First, how can the political significance of care be understood? And second, how might care be put into practice by community-level actors – in Regent Park, Toronto, or elsewhere – contending with the negative consequences of neoliberal urban restructuring?

## **I. The Oppositional Politics of Care**

Care, by means of its affordances, comes to seem a little paradoxical. On the one hand, social service organizations facilitate the redevelopment - and thereby the broader process of restructuring and accumulation of which it is manifest - out of a sincere desire to provide for the best possible level of wellbeing in Regent Park. On the other hand, care botches the script and complicates the totality of change envisioned by more powerful actors outside of the community. What do these complications mean? The praxis of care enables the emergence of key creative strategies of keeping afloat and tinkering with the conditions and possibilities of their everyday lives. Though seemingly mundane, these strategies are in fact deeply political. In its ordinariness, the praxis of care is attuned to the very sphere of life from which the political emerges and upon which change rests. The question of living together is the central question of the political; the praxis of care both asks and answers this question through the affordances discussed above. Together, care and its affordances constitute a form of ordinary/everyday opposition to the intertwined neoliberal processes of urban and welfare state restructuring.

My concept of oppositional politics is based on Katz's (2004) framework for understanding the creative strategies through which disempowered groups - in her case, children in Sudan and East Harlem - respond to the massive disruptions of development, which she describes as "the iterative flux of capital moving across space in time, making and unmaking particular places; structuring and restructuring social relations of production and reproduction." In reaction to the tendency in much post-structural Marxist

geography for almost anything to be constructed as an oppositional practice, she attempts to break down forms of everyday opposition to understand the ways in which different practices respond differently to development. What emerges are three overlapping conceptual categories: resilience, reworking and resistance. Looking back at the data from frontline workers in Regent Park through the lens of Katz's tripartite framework, we can see more clearly the variety of ways in which a subtle but nuanced oppositional politics is at work in the work of caring for the community.

Resilience concerns the innumerable small acts of getting by that enable the endurance (or extension) of patterns and geographies of survival when the underlying causes of social problems cannot immediately be changed. It is an adaptive process rather than an endpoint and can include creative new ways of bringing resources into a home or community, providing protection, or new relationships of mutual aid. Resilience is a crucial stage in survival and the foundation for future transformation (DeVerteuil, forthcoming). Across all of the affordances described above, it is clear that social service providers' praxis of care has enabled resilience among those affected by the redevelopment of Regent Park. Not only has care contributed to everyday forms of resilience among community members, but it has deepened the resilience of social service organizations themselves, whose sustained presence in the downtown core amid neoliberal restructuring is far from guaranteed. Through the work of care, social service organizations have demonstrated a pro-active adaptiveness in the face of change that has maintained their relevance for both their clients and the TCHC and Daniels. Through affording Regent Park residents orientation, stability, space, capacity and negotiation, they have transferred resilience in a productive way and reaffirmed their role at the heart of the community. And by serving as a key intermediary force between physical and social change such that the worst social consequences of redevelopment were avoided, they have ensured their legitimacy in the eyes of empowered external actors.

The second strategy is reworking. Practices of reworking directly alter the conditions of existence - for example, by recalibrating power relations or redistributing resources - to enable more livable and workable lives; this requires a greater level of consciousness of the underlying conditions of oppression than resilience. Katz writes that "projects of

reworking tend to be driven by explicit recognition of problematic conditions and to offer focused, often pragmatic responses to them. They generally operate on the same plane and scale that a problem is experienced, although their effects - both in terms of practical outcomes and for producing consciousness - are often much broader" (Katz, 2004: 247). The clearest example of reworking that has emerged from the praxis of care is that of the accessibility of the new Aquatic Centre. This was a case wherein social service providers, in relationship with community members, collectively opposed and changed a set of rules and structures that inhibited the access of a segment of the community to an amenity that was supposedly public; Doing so involved developing a collective consciousness that exclusion was based on race, ethnicity and gender, and articulating as much to those in positions of power, with the result being a permanent change in normative structures within a space. Other examples of reworking that emerged from care's affordances include, I would argue, the development of 40 Oaks, the establishment of the catering cooperative, and the creation (and maintenance) of alternative arts and culture spaces. At this point, though, reworking has still mainly happened at a small scale, and has more potential than has been realized. However, as organizations continue to grow into a new advocacy role and offer scope for broader political consciousness-building and activism at various scales, it seems fair to be optimistic about the possibility for further reworking as the redevelopment proceeds.

Resistance is the rarest of these three strategies of opposition, and it is that which openly confronts and subverts or disrupts the conditions of oppression in the service of emancipatory objectives. Resistance depends on the invocation of an oppositional consciousness. During my time researching Regent Park, no social service providers described being seriously involved in an explicit politics of resistance. Reasons for this range from resource constraint, to the lack of a coherent constituency, to a still relatively nascent oppositional consciousness. Furthermore, the redevelopment more or less dominates the immediate political horizon in the community, and attitudes towards it are more ambivalent than oppositional; acknowledgement of the need for an improvement in material and physical standards of living are clear, as is the desire for upgraded amenities and access to economic opportunity. At the same time, potential avenues of resistance to

urban revanchism did become apparent in some interviews: these included the fight for a basic income in Ontario, a city-wide food justice movement, and affordable housing activism. Frontline staff expressed the desire to expand their advocacy work across new constituencies at different scales, and as the redevelopment proceeds and the community stabilizes again, this looks increasingly possible based on increased community development and collaborative capacities in the community. Furthermore, there is the potential for them to expand their constituency to include new middle-class community members; Lawson and Elwood have used relational poverty analysis – which theorizes the middle class not solely as a discrete position but as a social and subjective relation – to show that cross-class spatial encounters can in fact result in “boundary-breaking, transformative moments...that might constitute a first step for middle class actors to politicize poverty in counter-hegemonic ways” (2014; 210). If their efforts to establish a common political community gain traction, they may open up new potential to politicize poverty through place-based cross-class coalitions in the service of social justice.



*A mural in Regent Park, 2013. Credit: Bernarda Gospic/TheVarsity.ca*

## II. Responding to Restructuring by Adapting the Landscape of Care

Social service providers and other caring actors in settings acutely affected by processes of urban and/or welfare state restructuring can analyze and strategically respond to these forces by using the “landscape of care” framework. By doing so, they can not only take steps to ensure their own resilience, but afford community members the possibility of creative reformulations of the conditions and possibilities of everyday life. By thinking spatially about care, social service providers can situate themselves in relationship to other caring actors, institutions or sets of relationships. Doing so may help identify gaps in the landscape of care: these could be areas where one or more elements of care falters, or indeed where neglect predominates. Finally, the “landscape” framework lends itself to responses that involve constellations of actors ranging from the family to the public sector as necessary. A response to neoliberal restructuring processes that attends to the actual or potential existence of caring relationships between various individual, group and institutional actors has the potential to effectively engage in the interplay between large-scale structural changes and everyday experiences and practices.

Focusing specifically on mixed-income redevelopment projects like Regent Park, I recommend that social service providers work across the local landscape of care to strategize around the following issues:

- *Relocation management.* Clear communication, accessible information, practical and financial assistance, and personal (including emotional) support are all necessary to ensure that relocation is as smooth as possible. Yet even with the most robust strategy in place, such an upheaval will inherently be a complex and messy process. Social service providers with roots in the community are probably best poised to attend to this complexity and facilitate the process, provided that they have human resource and financial support from the public sector and private development partners. In cases where these resources are lacking, social service providers are likely to be the only actors able and/or willing to pick up the slack, and should prepare accordingly.

- *Service demand and access.* Social service providers should be prepared for shifts in service demand due to changing demographics, economic challenges and opportunities, and needs for mental health and emotional support. They should also strategize around how best to maintain service access for those temporarily relocated away from the community; this may involve helping clients build relationships with service providers in new neighborhoods, or ensuring that returning to the home community to access services is possible and feasible.
- *Partnerships.* To extend and adapt the local landscape of care, social service providers will need to develop the capacity to collaborate within and between organizations and areas of specialization, in both formal and informal ways. Efforts will also need to be made to ensure that grassroots actors have open and productive relationships with other institutional stakeholders involved in the transformation, including the public sector, private sector developers, and members of the nearby and incoming communities.
- *Internal resource planning.* Redevelopment has imposed a significant burden on social service providers who were already operating under significant resource constraints. From a human resource standpoint, increased flexibility of roles will be required, as will coordination around building new capacities. Financially, organizations should expect to have higher expenses as a result of redevelopment as needs become more complex and service demands shift; some of these will be predictable, but others are likely to be ad hoc.
- *Community development.* Mixing unsettles patterns of social reproduction, and introduces new actors to a space already dense with relationships. In order to ensure that redevelopment does not result in more severe segregation or social exclusion, social service providers should prepare to strengthen their capacity to do community development work.
- *Political advocacy.* Addressing the concerns listed above will depend on recognition, legitimacy and concessions from dominant institutions, and therefore, in all likelihood, contestation with these institutions. Social service providers



should thus plan on strengthening their capacity to advocate on their own behalf, as well as that of their clients and community. Advocacy is likely to be focused on issues of housing and affordability, but may also encompass broader issues such as food security and racism.

More broadly, social service providers intending to reproduce community-level resilience in contexts of acute restructuring should continue to consider and attend to instances or patterns of disorientation, instability, contested space, capacity gaps and disparities, and the means by which institutions and structures of power are negotiated by community actors. Doing so will require attention, responsibility, competence and responsiveness of the sort that are elemental to the ethic and work of care. These efforts would also benefit from support from urban planning practitioners within public institutions, as well as those working elsewhere in the field in the service of social justice.

### **III. Why should planners care?**

If care has played such an important role in facilitating the interaction between physical and social change, enabling the survival of a rich but marginalized community, and interrupting the script of capital accumulation that seemingly governs the urban political economy, how can planners respond to this ubiquitous practice? What would it mean for planners to care about care? As both means and ends to social, economic and spatial justice, care should concern planners, who should strive to ensure the reproduction of care work through their practice. Care holds potential for the planning field as a framework for attention that would allow practitioners to better understand the types of social relationships that produce resilience at the community-scale. Care can also be seen as a framework for action, for an ethical practice that attends to and supports ordinary acts of resilience, reworking and even resistance on the city's margins with a view to establishing and maintaining the conditions for a pluralistic and democratic urban life rather than trying to solve social challenges as if they were technological problems.

A starting point for a caring planning practice would be an understanding that "care is the difference between an abstract sense of the other and an emotional,

connected and committed sense *for the other*" (Cloke, May and Johnsen, 2011). Although the field today is certainly aware of the presence of life on the margins, and the desire to 'make life better' for those perceived to be in lack has without doubt led to material improvements in the lives of many, planners all too often rely on the dynamics of abstraction and projection described by Lefebvre in this thesis' epigraph, and "strong" theories of social change that are inconsistent with - and harmful to - everyday life. A practice of care for planners would begin with an empathetic and reflexive attentiveness to the other akin to that demonstrated by social service providers in Regent Park, a "thick" perspective that sees depth of agency and identity rather than lack. Our theories of practice and of social change would be weak, grounded in the complexities of the specific and open to the contingency of the ordinary and "animated inhabitation of things" (Stewart, 2007: 15). We would seek to engage with the potential already present in everyday modes of knowing and relating, becoming open to possibility rather than imposing limits on the possible (Gibson-Graham, 2008).

Doing so would be a step towards a more democratic practice. Democracy is a process and a struggle; difference is its lifeblood (Mouffe, 1999). By attending to and nurturing complexity rather than trying to engineer it away, a caring planning practice would strengthen the capacity of those on society's margins to articulate difference, build different visions for the future, and act in the pursuit of a different balance of power between community and capital. The beginnings of such futures are close at hand, quietly working at the margins of the contemporary political economy, watchful and world-making. Neoliberalization, though hegemonic, is incomplete and emergent; opportunities for its creative contestation are manifest. By combining ethical thinking and action in the service of an incremental, inclusive and potentially radical urban politics, a place-based practice of care affords one such opportunity.

# Appendix 1: Interviewees

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*The following is a list of the social service workers interviewed for this thesis, organized alphabetically by organization. Not all respondents wanted direct quotes to be attributable to them by name, so for the sake of consistency, all quotes in the thesis were left anonymous. The “Responsibilities” category signifies whether the primary nature of the interviewee’s work was front-line or managerial; in cases where both are listed, the interviewee has a managerial-level position but also engages in front-line work with clients.*

## **Centre for Community Learning and Development**

Name: Agazi Afewerki

Position: Coordinator, TD Centre of Learning and Youth Empowering Parents

Responsibilities: Front-line and managerial

Date Interviewed: 3/1/2015

Name: Caroline-Mahlikah Awe:ri-Outten

Position: Deputy Executive Director

Responsibilities: Front-line and managerial

Date interviewed: 2/24/2015

Name: Sureya Ibrahim

Position: Community Engagement Worker

Responsibilities: Front-line

Date interviewed: 2/25/2015

## **Christian Resource Centre**

Name: Ashrafi Ahmed

Position: Community Gardens Coordinator

Responsibilities: Front-Line

Date Interviewed: 2/24/2015

Name: Justine Barone

Position: Community Advocacy Coordinator

Responsibilities: Front-line

Date interviewed: 2/2/2015

Name: Ray Mallozzi

Position: Drop-In Centre Coordinator

Responsibilities: Front-line

Date interviewed: 1/30/2015

Name: Mary Middleton  
Position: Tenant Services Coordinator, 40 Oaks  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 3/13/2015

### **Dixon Hall**

Name: Hongmei Cai  
Position: Community Settlement Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 2/23/2013

Name: Sandra Costain  
Position: Director, Child and Youth Services  
Responsibilities: Front-line and Managerial  
Date interviewed: 3/12/2015

Name: David Reycraft  
Position: Director, Housing and Homelessness Services  
Responsibilities: Managerial  
Date interviewed: 2/25/2015

Name: Kenneth Slater  
Position: Youth Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 1/30/2015

Name: Kate Stark  
Position: Executive Director  
Responsibilities: Managerial  
Date interviewed: 2/24/2015

Name: Ronnie Thompson  
Position: Family Support Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 2/27/2015

### **Pathways to Education**

Name: Sharmini Fernando  
Position: Director  
Responsibilities: Managerial  
Date interviewed: 1/29/2015

### **Regent Park Community Health Centre**

Name: Dr. Ambaro Guled  
Position: Community Health Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 2/23/2015

Name: Calvin Henschell  
Position: Homelessness Outreach Coordinator  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 1/29/2015

Name: Lesa McPherson  
Position: Housing Support Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 1/30/2015

Name: Deany Peters  
Position: Community Development Worker  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 2/27/2015

### **Yonge Street Mission**

Name: Daniel Moore  
Position: Food Bank Coordinator  
Responsibilities: Front-line  
Date interviewed: 2/23/2015

Name: Bill Ryan  
Position: Director of Reconciliation  
Responsibilities: Managerial  
Date interviewed: 2/27/2013

Name: Jeanie Son  
Position: Director of Community Development  
Responsibilities: Front-line and managerial  
Date interviewed: 2/23/2015

### **Daniels Corporation**

Name: Mitchell Cohen  
Position: President  
Date Interviewed: 4/20/2015

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