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**Enforcing Civility:
Homelessness, "Quality of Life," and the Crisis of Urban Liberalism**

By

Alex S. Vitale

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

2001

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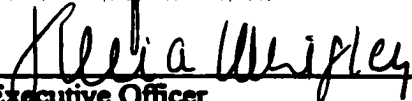
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Abstract**Enforcing Civility:
Homelessness, "Quality of Life," and the Crisis of Urban Liberalism****By
Alex S. Vitale****Adviser: Sharon Zukin**

This dissertation will describe the central role of homelessness in the creation of the "quality of life" paradigm of social control in New York and San Francisco in the late 1980's and early 1990's. This new paradigm represents a general shift in social policies away from the previous paradigm of urban liberalism along three axes. The first is a transition from socially inclusive, rehabilitation-oriented policies to socially exclusive, punitive ones. The second is a rejection of government centered approaches to social problems in favor of market and community-based efforts. The third is a move away from social tolerance of individual and group differences and towards a communitarian outlook, which privileges majoritarian views on appropriate public behavior. I have identified four central factors that contributed to the breakdown of urban liberalism and the rise of "quality of life." The first factor was a crisis in urban neighborhoods in the 1980's that undermined people's faith in the livability of cities. The second factor was the failure of the professional model of policing that had predominated in both New York and San Francisco for several decades to reduce either crime or disorder. Third, the social policies of urban liberalism failed to adequately address the crises of homelessness and disorder, creating a backlash among many community activists across race and class lines, and business leaders. Finally, neoconservative politicians such as Rudolph Giuliani in New York and Frank Jordan in San Francisco were needed to transform this backlash into a coherent new paradigm.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the early 1990's, New York and San Francisco, along with dozens of other American cities, created new laws and police enforcement practices directed at removing homeless people from public spaces. The cities restricted a wide variety of behaviors associated with homeless people, including panhandling, sleeping in parks, and sitting on sidewalks. These policies have been joined together under the rubric of "quality of life" improvements, to emphasize their focus on visible forms of disorder that directly affect people in their everyday lives. The term "quality of life" has come to mean more than a set of policies, however; it is also a new way of thinking about urban social problems that attributes neighborhood decline to the presence of visible disorder. Rather than focusing on structural solutions to homelessness, the new paradigm redefines the problem as one of behavior leading to neighborhood disorder and decline. Homelessness is thus transformed from a problem of housing and social services to one of policing. The result has been a criminalization of homeless people in urban America.

Society at large is usually indifferent about the means that the police use to maintain order on the edges of society. The daily lives of social outcasts are of little concern. The police have always treated those on the margins of society in a repressive manner. Vagrancy and loitering laws, round-ups of drunks and prostitutes, and the meting out of street justice, in the form of physical attacks and personal indignities, have been routine elements of life since the creation of police forces over 100 years ago. The interactions between the police and this extreme underclass occur in a hidden late night world of alleys, park benches, and skid row sidewalks. They are rarely the focus of social

movements, political speeches, or popular culture. What, then, is truly new about punitive practices towards the homeless in the 1990's? What made the criminalization of homelessness in the 1990's new was that it transcended this popular disinterest. The public attitude towards the issue of homelessness was transformed from one of passive sympathy to active antagonism. In the process, much of the political landscape of urban America was transformed.

What happened in American cities was more than the creation of some new policing tactics, or the construction of a new philosophy of the socially marginal. It was a melding of the two into a coherent new approach towards social control. The term "quality of life" came to represent a new paradigm of urban social control that transformed more than just the practices of the police towards the homeless. It also changed the way cities dealt with welfare reform, community development, and policing practices in general. These changes have had important consequences for urban residents. The increased use of negative sanctions in public policy, recent concerns about aggressive police tactics, and declining support for social programs are all related to the emergence of the "quality of life" paradigm. In order to understand these developments more fully, it is necessary to examine the process by which the new paradigm came into being.

This dissertation will answer one basic question, how did the rise in homelessness in the 1980's undermine urban liberalism and lead to the creation of a new paradigm of social control based on improving the "quality of life" for urban residents? To answer this question I will describe the economic development strategies, policing practices, and social welfare policies of urban liberalism in relationship to the homelessness problem. I will also explain how these policies affected different political constituencies such as

community activists, business leaders, elected officials, and police executives.

I will argue that the "quality of life" paradigm represents a general shift in social policies away from the prior paradigm of urban liberalism along three axes. The first is a transition from socially inclusive, rehabilitation-oriented policies to socially exclusive, punitive ones. The second is a rejection of government centered approaches to social problems in favor of market and community-based efforts. The third is a move away from social tolerance of individual and group differences and towards a communitarian outlook, which privileges majoritarian views on appropriate public behavior.

But why did this transformation occur in the late 1980's and early 1990's? What were the economic, political, and cultural factors that contributed to the breakdown of urban liberalism and the rise of the new "quality of life" paradigm? I have identified four central factors that contributed to the breakdown of urban liberalism and the rise of "quality of life." The first factor was a crisis in urban neighborhoods in the 1980's that undermined people's faith in the livability of cities. This crisis was related to a series of economic, political and social changes. The economic changes were related to the deindustrialization of many cities as a result of corporate decision making and national economic policy, and the pursuit of an "entrepreneurial cities" strategy by local governments, in which local politicians and elites worked together to promote speculative economic development strategies. The political changes were tied to the conservative national political climate--represented by the Reagan Administration, and the crisis in local social services spending brought about in part by local tax shortfalls. Finally there was a growth in cultural and social disorder associated with increasing crime, violence, and public incivility. The rise in drug violence, muggings, and other forms of street

crime, combined with growing economic and racial polarization, undermined people's confidence in the stability of the basic fabric of urban society. In doing so, crime and economic and racial polarization encouraged local reactions against the most visible symptom of this instability: homelessness. This instability in the daily lives of urban residents set the groundwork for how these cities would respond to the homelessness crisis.

The second factor was the failure of the professional model of policing that had predominated in both New York and San Francisco for several decades. This model—oriented towards fighting major crimes and responding quickly to 911 calls--was unable to address either increasing crime rates or the growing crisis in public order. Local police departments, under pressure from business groups and neighborhood activists, were actively seeking a new way of addressing social disorder. Reformers within these departments were becoming aware of new policing strategies designed to directly address disorder problems, such as the "broken windows" theory, which called for aggressive police enforcement of minor disorder as a way of reestablishing civility and stability in urban neighborhoods. They were then able to adapt these new strategies to the demands being placed on them. This process provided a specific set of new social control practices and a social philosophy to explain them, which became the basis for the "quality of life" approach.

Third, urban liberalism failed to adequately address this crisis of urban instability. The urban liberal paradigm of centralized, expert driven, long-term planning, social tolerance, and therapeutic rehabilitation was unable to restore order to the streets or stability to local economies. In response to this failure local elites and neighborhood

activists began looking for alternative practices and explanations concerning homelessness and public incivility. Local place-based elites felt directly threatened by the growth of disorder associated with homelessness and withdrew their support for the tenets of urban liberalism. They argued in favor of a new philosophy that placed the socially marginal at the center of urban decline. Neighborhood activists of various class and races in both cities also played a central role in underlining the inability of urban liberalism to deal with the crisis of urban neighborhoods. These groups began to develop business improvement districts and community watches and to push the police to take more aggressive action against the homeless and disorderly. In the process, they contributed to the development of both new practices towards the socially marginal, and new conceptualizations of the role of these people in the decline of urban neighborhoods.

Finally, in order for these new practices and philosophies to become institutionalized into a new paradigm another actor was needed. Neoconservative politicians such as Rudolph Giuliani in New York and Frank Jordan in San Francisco were able to gain elected office by melding the new practices and philosophies into a coherent paradigm, that they then used to transform homeless policies and urban policing methods while in office. These politicians were able to gain office in the first place by building new alliances between police reformers, neighborhood activists, and business leaders based on their shared desire to see disorder taken more seriously. Once in office they institutionalized a new set of social control practices and ideologies based on the "broken windows" theory.

In order to answer the question of why the "quality of life" paradigm developed at this time, I have chosen two cities that experienced a dramatic transformation from liberal

to conservative policies towards homeless people: New York and San Francisco. Both New York and San Francisco pursued an "entrepreneurial cities" strategy for economic development in the 1970's and 1980's. They both also had high levels of homelessness and high levels of social tolerance in the 1980's, and yet now have some of the most repressive policies towards homeless people. I will argue that it was precisely this pursuit of an "entrepreneurial cities" strategy of development combined with an investment in social tolerance, which led to the backlash against homeless people. I have chosen the two most extreme examples of transformation to show the central role that entrepreneurialism and urban liberalism played in creating the climate of intolerance that predominated in urban America in the 1990's.

There is also one important difference between New York and San Francisco: the role of leadership. New York has a municipal government structure that retains a great deal of power in the hands of the mayor. With the exception of the education and transportation systems, the mayor of New York has direct authority over municipal agencies, with the City Council playing a limited budgetary role. Rudolph Giuliani, who as mayor ushered in the new "quality of life" paradigm, was viewed as a strong leader because of his ability to make important policy changes in a number of different areas. San Francisco, on the other hand, has a weak mayor. The city has a strong Board of Supervisors, a City Manager, and city departments that are partially controlled by civilian commissioners who serve out fixed terms, which cannot be cut short when a new mayor takes office. Unlike Giuliani, Frank Jordan, who introduced the "quality of life" paradigm in San Francisco, was not viewed as a strong leader. He was unable to implement much of his policy agenda and lost election after one term. Yet in both cities, these two figures were

able to transform policing practices towards homeless people despite strong opposition from civil libertarians and homeless advocates. This suggests that the role of the mayor was important in institutionalizing the new approach, but that other forces were also important.

In order to examine these other forces, I will look at a number of different neighborhoods within these two cities to see how the transformation from urban liberalism to “quality of life” developed. The new paradigm was able to garner support from a wide range of social actors from different races and classes. Business groups were motivated to increase retail and tourist business by reestablishing public order. Middle class community activists—many with roots in the social movements of the 1960’s and 1970’s—mobilized to defend their neighborhoods from disorder. Minority neighborhoods were supportive of new policing strategies that would fight crime and involve community residents in the process. All of these constituencies were frustrated by the inability of urban liberal politicians to reduce visible homelessness and restore civility to public spaces.

A number of theorists have explored the implications of the entrepreneurial strategy of economic development, the reasons why “broken windows” based policing arose, and the limitations of urban liberalism. This dissertation will explain how these developments are related to each other. It will show that cities that pursued urban liberalism and entrepreneurial development strategies played a role in creating the high levels of crime and homelessness that besieged them in the 1970’s and 1980’s. At the same time, their commitment to social tolerance and limited governmental intervention on behalf of the

poor, and a professional model of policing, left them without the ability to adequately address this crisis. As a result, a political movement based on punitive responses to the crisis was able to win broad public support and displace urban liberalism and professional policing.

Background

As homelessness emerged in the early 1980's it evoked a variety of individual, community, and governmental responses. People were motivated to volunteer in soup kitchens, give out clothing, stock food pantries, and even give money to panhandlers on the streets. Government produced a number of emergency responses including shelters, soup kitchens, and a variety of social services designed to get people back on their feet. In these early days, homelessness was often viewed through the lens of the early 1980's recession, and was therefore seen as a short-term economic problem that would improve along with the economy. Therefore, there was little effort made to invest in more substantial responses such as housing and residential mental health and drug treatment facilities.

As the recession gave way to the economic expansion of the 1980's, the problem of homelessness in fact became more obstinate and odious. The numbers of homeless people grew and their relationship to any specific economic downturn became harder to see. Slowly, government and individual responses became more routinized and structured. Emergency shelters became long term shelters or transitional housing. Soup kitchens increasingly had to rely on large government budgets to hire professional staffs

rather than relying on volunteers (Poppendieck 1998). People continued to give their time and money but, rather than hoping to contribute to a definitive solution, they tried to respond in some small way to the cries for help ringing throughout America's cities.

As the 1980's drew to a close and homelessness continued to pervade the urban environment, along with the intertwined scourges of drugs and crime, a siege mentality emerged in the cities. Slowly the focus shifted from how to help homeless people to how to reduce the impact of homelessness on the rest of society. As a result, society's charitable impulses shifted from restoring the homeless to restoring communities—communities that had in many ways been under assault economically, politically, and socially for the previous 25 years. By the early 1990's, the combination of general urban insecurity and the unabated increase of homeless people caused a dramatic shift in homelessness policies and broader urban politics. This shift ushered in a new period of urban *revanchism* with the establishment of a new paradigm of order maintenance in cities across the country that resulted in the criminalization of homeless people.

By 1991, the Miami City government regularly arrested homeless people for sleeping, eating, and urinating in public. In 1994, they used bulldozers to demolish a homeless shantytown in downtown Bicentennial Park. Later that year, they also passed new laws restricting "aggressive solicitation" and "pedestrian interference." The federal courts in *Pottinger v. City of Miami* (1991), ruled that the intent of the city was to criminalize the essential acts of homeless people who had no alternative, given the almost complete lack of a homeless shelter system.

In 1993, the City of Seattle (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty 1994) created a new ordinance making it illegal to sit or lie down on the sidewalk in

many public places, including the central business district. Police, working closely with area merchants, also began rigorous enforcement of anti-obstructing, begging, and trespassing laws. The result was hundreds of arrests and numerous large "sweeps" of public places in the central city.

In 1993, a number of local groups in Santa Monica, California (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty 1994) proposed a local ordinance banning camping in any public place and abusive solicitation. After a broad mobilization in support of the ordinance, the city council passed it in 1994. They also passed tough restrictions on the public distribution of free food. The effect of these measures was to criminalize the basic social and bodily acts of homeless people, forcing them to choose between jail, an overcrowded shelter system, and moving on to another town, with similar consequences.

Perhaps the most important development in 1993, however, was the creation of the Matrix Program in San Francisco. Matrix relied on a wide variety of enforcement tools against "public nuisances" including zero tolerance enforcement of existing nuisance laws, the resurrection of 19th century municipal statutes, and reinterpretations of existing state laws, local ordinances, health codes and park regulations. This resulted in the arrests of hundreds of people for sleeping in parks, panhandling, loitering, outdoor urinating, and serving free food in public. More significantly, it generated thousands of citations that quickly became arrest warrants when people failed to make their court appearances or to pay their sometimes sizable fines. In an effort to increase the tools available to the police, the mayor, and former police chief, Frank Jordan supported a local initiative to criminalize "aggressive panhandling," which was passed by voters in 1994 and used by police to sweep central commercial areas.

The city with the country's largest homeless population--New York--stepped up its punitive measures against the homeless in 1990 with the ejection of large numbers of homeless people from the state-run subway system. This effort was led by William Bratton, who was chief of the Transit Police. In 1991, the effort expanded with the sweeping of Tompkins Square Park and numerous other public encampments by Mayor David Dinkins, a liberal Democrat. In 1993, Mayor Dinkins also initiated a police enforcement effort targeting "squeegee men," who wash car windows at intersections for spare change. However, the move towards punitiveness did not begin in earnest until Rudolph Giuliani took over as mayor in 1994. Giuliani immediately hired Bratton as Police Commissioner, and together they developed a number of new tactics to drive the homeless from public space.

Giuliani's goal was to reformulate the homeless problem as a disorder problem. This allowed him to treat homelessness as a criminal justice issue, not a social services one. He and Bratton framed the issue in terms of "quality of life." This approach concentrated on the impact that homelessness was having on residents and neighborhoods rather than focusing on the plight of homeless people. The Police Department's primary new directive on homelessness was called "Police Strategy No. 5: Reclaiming the Public Spaces of New York" (NYPD 1994). While homelessness was not its sole focus, it established a new way of thinking about the homeless problem in terms of disorder. The behaviors it addressed-- street peddling, panhandling, and squeegee cleaning--were mainly but not exclusively associated with homelessness; a whole range of socially marginal people were criminalized.

Giuliani and Jordan switched the focus from improving housing, employment, social

services, and fighting poverty to using the police to control public disorder. Rather than expanding access to affordable housing, or social services, there was a dramatic expansion of the size and role of the police departments in New York and San Francisco, as they became the agency of first resort for complaints about the declining quality of community life.

These new punitive policing measures were largely based on the "broken windows" theory. In 1982, George Kelling and James Q. Wilson wrote an article for the *Atlantic Monthly* outlining a new approach to both fighting crime and restoring neighborhood stability in urban areas. Elaborating the social necessity of fixing broken windows, Wilson and Kelling (1982) argued that small social and physical disorders (trash-filled vacant lots, aggressive panhandling, graffiti, and homeless encampments) play an important role in neighborhood decline. If these disorders are not "cleaned up," they mark an area as unfit for the constant reinvestment of capital and commitment necessary to sustain neighborhood vitality and civility. Similarly, the police's decision to treat public disorder as a minor problem--not worthy of police or community effort--permitted the development of higher levels of social disorganization and increased crime. The key to reestablishing order, reducing major crime, and revitalizing neighborhoods, they argue, is a combination of tough police and community enforcement against violations of community behavior norms. The police should return to their order-maintenance roots, giving up the professional model of policing, used since the 1930's, which called for uniform enforcement of specific legal codes and for an increased distance between the police and the community (Walker 1977).

Homeless people were not the focus of Wilson and Kelling theory. Homelessness

didn't become a major source of disorder until later in the 1980's. However, there is a clear connection between homelessness and disorder. While any particular aggressive panhandler or "squeegee man" might not be homeless at the moment they were engaged in that behavior, there was a definite overlap in the population of homeless single adults (male and female) and people panhandling, cleaning car windows for money, sleeping in parks, subways, and on sidewalks, and drinking in public. They shared membership in a large class of people who were unable to adequately participate in the new housing and labor markets of the 1980's and 90's. The "broken windows" theory was easily applied to this new class of marginal people who were a source of the majority of urban public disorder.

A classic example of this overlap is the case of Larry Hogue. Hogue was a former Vietnam Vet with a history of mental illness who terrorized a section of the Upper West Side in Manhattan through much of the late 1980's and early 1990's. He was a regular crack user and aggressive panhandler who frequently threatened passers by. During this period Hogue cycled in and out of shelters, low income housing, and the streets. He also circulated in and out of social service programs and the criminal justice system, but none of them seemed to interrupt his pattern of disorderly behavior. Larry Hogue would likely have been a disruptive presence in any period, however, at a time when housing and labor markets, and the social services system were all performing poorly for the most marginal members of society, he became a major source of fear and discomfort for neighborhood residents.

The punitive measures were a significant departure from earlier approaches to homelessness, which relied on therapeutic strategies. In the early years of the Dinkins

administration. New York City focused its efforts on creating permanent and transitional housing, and a network of social services. Rhetorically, Dinkins focused on the plight of homeless families and children in an attempt to portray them as the deserving poor. In San Francisco, Mayor Art Agnos, a former social worker, refused to evict homeless park dwellers until a system of multi-service centers was in place to provide both emergency shelter and a variety of social services designed to stabilize homeless people and move them into permanent housing.

This is not to say that before 1990 all homeless policies were therapeutic and afterwards all were punitive. However, there was a dramatic shift in emphasis that can be seen all across the country during the early 1990's. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (1994) identified 42 cities that developed new anti-homeless measures in 1994, compared to only nine cities in 1991. The report indicates that the adoption of punitive measures was widespread and occurred in both historically liberal cities—such as San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and Seattle--and conservative cities—such as San Diego and Houston. It also shows, as the examples above suggest, that these actions were often taken with broad grassroots support, as evidenced by the success of ballot measures and political candidates who championed the new punitiveness.

The "quality of life" agenda did more than just criminalize homeless people. It helped to transform the way these cities addressed a whole range of social problems. Prostitution, graffiti, and young men hanging out on street corners, as well as panhandlers and squeegee men, were viewed as the source rather than a symptom of urban decline. The response by government was to treat these groups as a central threat to public order, and they were placed at the center of new aggressive policing tactics. It is significant that

these diverse problems of disorder came to be grouped together, and punitive tactics, rather than rehabilitation or structural reform used to address them?

Defining the "Quality of Life" Agenda

In 1991, San Franciscans ousted the liberal democratic mayor, Art Agnos, who was a former social worker, for failing to deal effectively with homelessness. They replaced him with former police chief Frank Jordan. Jordan's two main goals were to improve sanitation services and to reduce the public presence of homeless people. He organized these initiatives under the banner of improving the city's "quality of life." In the first week of his term, he organized "broom brigades" of private citizens, assisted by the city Sanitation Department, to clean up parks and streets throughout the central city. By mid 1993, a major new approach to homelessness, called first called the "Quality of Life Enforcement Program" and later called "Matrix," was in place. The goal of this effort was to remove homeless people from public spaces, including parks and downtown streets, through zero tolerance enforcement of nuisance codes prohibiting drinking in public, camping in the park, and several other minor infractions.

In 1996, voters replaced Jordan with Willie Brown, who championed a liberal agenda and brought with him his political experience and connections from his position as speaker of the California Assembly. Despite his more reformist rhetoric, Brown continued many of Jordan's anti-homeless policies in the name of maintaining the city's quality of life. By the end of his second year in office, Mayor Brown was publicly calling for the removal of homeless people from public parks, increased criminal sanctions, and

greater police resources, including a proposal to use helicopters and heat sensing equipment to locate homeless people who were sleeping in public parks. By late 1998, Brown had recreated the most punitive elements of the Matrix program while providing even fewer direct services to homeless people (*San Francisco Examiner (SFE)* 10/28/98).

New York followed a similar trajectory. Two years into Mayor David Dinkins' term of office, he began to move away from his liberal policies of housing development and social services, and to experiment with more punitive measures. He used the police to evict several homeless encampments and, in 1993, used a new, "problem-oriented policing" philosophy to try to eliminate "squeegee men." Dinkins, however, failed to completely embrace this new punitive effort. He enacted it only sporadically and, perhaps more importantly, failed to fashion it into a public ideology. As a result, Rudolph Giuliani was able to unseat him as mayor by clearly articulating a vision of restoring order and of bringing prosperity to the city, its neighborhoods, and its public spaces through aggressive zero-tolerance policing. Giuliani was successful because he managed to harness the widespread concern of business leaders and neighborhood activists over the declining quality of life in the city.

When Giuliani took office in 1994, he turned Dinkins' experiments into major citywide operations. He evicted dozens of homeless encampments, displaced squeegee men, and ordered the police to harass the homeless through the zero tolerance enforcement of minor infractions. Within the shelter system he attempted to transform the rules of accountability for homeless people. He attempted to charge them for staying in shelters, and threatened them with eviction from the shelter system, the loss of benefits, and even separation from their families for failing to abide by work requirements calling

for people to work 20 hours a week. Tough love replaced housing and services as a new strategy for addressing homelessness and restoring order.

These new developments represent more than a series of isolated policy innovations by particular mayors. They are part of a coherent new *paradigm* of social control. As a paradigm, “quality of life” is a set of concrete social control practices united by a coherent philosophy that attempts to describe the nature of homelessness and disorder and establish methods for restoring social order and public civility.

The “quality of life” paradigm is a way of reorienting the efforts of city government away from the directly improving the lives of the disenfranchised and towards restoring order for the middle class. The “quality of life” paradigm blames the current crisis on permissive social policies and calls for the implementation of a variety of punitive social control practices directed at minor incivilities as the way to restore neighborhood stability. While the previous paradigm of urban liberalism had placed a premium on social tolerance, government planning, and rehabilitation, the new paradigm is driven by a concern with social intolerance, market and volunteer driven mechanisms of social change, and punitiveness. In Chapter 2 I will look more closely at the nature of the practices and ideology that make up the “quality of life” paradigm as well as its historical roots both nationally and locally in New York and San Francisco.

Roots of the Paradigm Shift

Why did urban residents reject urban liberalism in favor of a more punitive “quality of life” approach to social problems in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s? There have been

a number of attempts to explain different aspects of this occurrence. Each of these provides important parts of the puzzle.

Jonathan Rieder, in his book *Canarsie* (1985), outlines the emerging crisis of liberalism in urban America. He describes the process by which white Italian and Jewish residents of the Brooklyn neighborhood of Canarsie came together to fight the busing of minority children into schools in their neighborhood. He shows that these residents' historic connection to the ideals of New Deal liberalism were undermined by their desire to protect their neighborhood from the destabilizing process of integration. They accused the city of engaging in a process of social engineering, which they believed threatened the life of their community.

Rieder's main contention is that it was the attempt by liberals to use government to create economic and social equality for Blacks that created racial resentment among whites. Canarsie's residents felt that they were being asked to sacrifice their schools, homes, and neighborhoods for the advancement of another group. This was especially troubling, because these residents already felt under siege from their own declining economic status. During the 1970's, New York and other major cities were experiencing a reduction in middle class manufacturing jobs that put a squeeze on many middle-class white-ethnic communities.

Rieder outlines how the rise of crime and political disorder in the 1960's began the process of weakening liberalism, especially along racial lines. As crime increased and blacks made more radical demands on government, middle and working class whites turned away from liberalism's embrace of racial inclusiveness. Evidence of this can be seen in Canarsie's support for Richard Nixon in 1968 and 1972. This process, however,

reversed itself in the mid 1970's when Canarsie residents voted for Jimmy Carter and continued to vote for Democrats in neighborhood elections. They had become disaffected from liberalism but were not yet ready to abandon it altogether. It would take the social crisis of homelessness, combined with concern about crime and race to finally destabilize urban liberalism.

Rieder's emphasis on the role of race is echoed by Jim Sleeper (1990) and Fred Siegel (1997). They each claim that liberals were too tolerant of the more extreme demands made by Black militants in the late 1960's and early 1970's. They point to the effort by Blacks to take local control of schools in the Black Ocean Hill-Brownsville neighborhood in Brooklyn as an example. Many whites viewed this effort as an assault on the mostly white teachers union and as a threat to the overall standards of the public school system. They accused Mayor John Lindsay of failing to take quicker action to regain control of the schools and reestablish a sense of order. This was a crucial moment for liberalism. The teachers union had, up to that point, been viewed as a liberal organization in city politics. However, the racialized split between black parents and white teachers, drove the teachers to be more conservative. In both 1993 and 1997 the teachers union failed to endorse the liberal David Dinkins in his races against Rudolph Giuliani, despite Giuliani's repeated criticism of teachers and the Board of Education.

Siegel goes on to claim that this racial resentment became the basis of a new neoconservative urban politics that was ushered in by Rudolph Giuliani. According Siegel, liberalism began to be viewed by whites as a political philosophy that tolerated political and social extremism, which was socially and economically threatening to middle-class whites. Siegel also criticizes liberals' reliance on the courts to win enhanced

social freedoms. He accuses groups like the Coalition for the Homeless and the ACLU of trying to win things in the courts that they can't convince the public are worthwhile. This gave these groups an elitist and anti-democratic appearance, according to Siegel. This bypassing of public opinion alienated many community residents from liberalism.

When Giuliani ran for office in 1989, he attempted to directly appeal to these disaffected white, formerly liberal voters. He even received support from the local Liberal Party, and numerous well known white liberal political activists such as Fran Reiter from the Upper West Side and Wayne Barrett of the *Village Voice* (Barrett 2000). Giuliani campaigned in 1993 on a platform of retaking control of the city from welfare recipients, criminals, and the homeless. These were code words for poor minorities, whom liberalism had been too permissive towards. Siegel argues that it was Giuliani's lack of tolerance that saved the city from the crime, homelessness, and incivility that were destroying it.

British Geographer Neil Smith (1996) also looks at the process of neighborhood level backlashes against urban liberalism as well. He argues that the criminalization of the disorderly and homeless is part of a broader politics of reaction. Comparing early 1990's New York to late 19th Century Paris, he describes a regime of "revanchism" on the part of middle-class residents, who sought to extract revenge symbolically and physically on the socially marginal, whom they blamed as the source of decline and instability in their neighborhoods:

This revanchist antiurbanism represents a reaction against the supposed "theft" of the city, a desperate defense of a challenged phalanx of privileges, cloaked in the populist language of civic morality, family values and neighborhood security. More than anything the revanchist city expresses a race/class/gender terror felt by middle- and ruling-class whites who are suddenly stuck in place by a ravaged property market, the threat

and reality of unemployment, the decimation of social services, and the emergence of minority and immigrant groups, as well as women, as powerful urban actors. It portends a vicious reaction against minorities, the working class, homeless people, the unemployed, women, gays and lesbians, immigrants. (Smith 1996: p. 211)

Smith argues that the recession of 1989-1993 led to an increase in crime and disorder. Upper and middle-class whites resented this "loss of the city," which they blamed on poor minorities and the homeless. Within liberal communities like the Lower East Side and the Upper West Sides in Manhattan, a process of *revanchism* emerged in which middle-class residents criminalized minorities and the poor.

Smith is trying to explain the backlash against homeless people in the late 1980's by analyzing the immediate economic context of recession and gentrification. He shows the role of racism and the desire for economic gain that drove aspects of the backlash. Smith also agrees that race played an important role in this process. Unlike Rieder, Sleeper, and Siegel, who argue it was liberal tolerance of extremist racial demands that undermined liberalism, he argues that neoconservative politicians, conservative community activists, and elites turned race into a social marker of the "dangerous classes." To be a minority person in this period was to be marked as a potential source of crime, disorder, and incivility, who must be controlled by an intensified use of the police. Smith, however, fails to note that many people involved in the backlash against homelessness and crime were themselves, gays, lesbians, working-class, and minorities. The leading politician of the backlash in New York's Lower East Side, which Smith studied, was a Gay Latino, who had broad support in the mostly Black and Puerto Rican neighborhood public housing projects.

Rieder, Sleeper, Siegel, and Smith all tell an important part of the story about why

liberalism was undermined in the early 1990's. The combination of growing crime, disorder, and incivility made many white urban residents turn from having tolerance of social differences to demanding increasingly punitive measures to enforce civility in public spaces. They also show the importance of looking at how local residents respond to social changes, rather than just analyzing the decisions made by elites. What these writers leave out, however, is a full consideration of the role of economics in this process. While Smith discusses the role of gentrification in the process, he fails to note that the backlash was also occurring in non-gentrifying areas, and that this process began well before the period of gentrification in the 1980's, that he is investigating. We must look at the changes occurring in the local economy that began in the 1970's, which played a role in the intensification of crime, disorder, and incivility in the 1980's. We must also look at the decisions that were made by local politicians that helped drive this process. A number of social geographers and sociologists have looked at these aspects of the backlash against liberalism.

Scott Lash and John Urry (1994), Christian Parenti (1999), and Sophie Body-Gendrot (2000) each ties middle-class resentment towards the homeless and poor to the economic restructuring of the 1970's and 1980's. They argue that increased economic uncertainty brought on by the economic polarization of this period forced middle and upper-class residents and business leaders to pressure local governments to defend their terrain from incursions by the "dangerous classes."

Lash and Urry argue that the increased globalization of the economy has divided the world into territories that are part of this global flow of goods, capital, and ideas, and those that are left out. The members of society that have prospered in this new system

live in what they call "tame zones," where social conditions are congenial and stable. The rest live in "wild zones," where crime, dirt, and incivility are commonplace. Residents in the "tame zones" must take action to protect their communities against those from the "wild" ones. In the process, they support repressive policing measures designed to control the mobility of these dangerous outsiders, whether they are homeless people, street criminals, or disorderly teenagers.

Christian Parenti argues that the massive increase in imprisonment and police repression in the 1980's and 1990's was a response to changing labor markets. During the 1960's, workers began to increase their demands for wages, causing elites to throw the economy into a recession in order to discipline labor. The result of this economic policy, according to Parenti, was the creation of a new group of unemployed and angry workers who had to be controlled through the development of a *carcerial* state that relied on prisons and police to maintain social control. This was especially true in cities that were trying to compete for new investment and tourism to off set the economic losses stemming from the loss of manufacturing caused by the recession. As a result cities needed to specifically target those poor people that were a threat to the social stability of urban spaces:

It is no coincidence that zero tolerance/quality of life policing developed just as cities have taken on renewed economic and cultural importance. At the heart of the new urban security quest lies a vexing contradiction: capitalism creates and needs poverty, yet is simultaneously threatened by the poor... As an abstract political force, poverty is very useful; it scares and disciplines the working classes, keeps wages down, and provides a platform for moralizing political circus. But actual groups of poor people in real spaces can cause great trouble for the business classes. (Parenti 1999: p. 90)

Parenti highlights the relationship between national economic forces and local social

crises. He also shows how local elites respond to these conditions, but fails to explain why there was widespread popular support for the war on drugs, the rejection of rehabilitation, and the criminalization of homelessness during this period.

Lash and Urry and Parenti, provide an important economic context for the rise in resentment against the new “dangerous class.” They tie the rise in crime and disorder to the economic restructuring of the 1970’s, but they conceptualize the backlash as being driven by elites trying to protect their “safe zones.” The problems of crime and homelessness, however, are widespread in cities like New York and San Francisco. Their presence in poor and middle-class neighborhoods has also created backlash movements in these communities.

French sociologist Sophie Body-Gendrot discusses the transition from a system of urban social control based on tolerance to one based on suppression. She argues that this change is a result of increased economic pressures on cities. The increased global interconnectedness of cities created intensified inequalities in these cities that threatened to disrupt them through increased crime and violence. She explicitly draws a connection between changing international economic realities and their social effects. She discusses the innovations in policing made by William Bratton in New York as well as the massive expansion of incarceration, as efforts to “managed polarization.” She also describes how national political leaders have used fear of crime among the population as a justification for these repressive measures.

Body-Gendrot shows the interaction between popular opinion and political leaders at the national level in the creation of the “war on drugs” and other policies of mass incarceration. She also describes local “repressive policing” measures such as “zero

tolerance" enforcement of "quality of life" crimes, expanded "stop and search" initiatives, and the NYPD takeover of school security. She fails however, to examine the local processes that generated these new policing practices. She describes and critiques these practices, but never specifically links their creation to the global and local economic changes she describes.

For Lash and Urry, Parenti, and Body-Gendrot, the key to understanding the backlash against liberalism is rooted in the response of elites and the middle class to the contradictions of capitalism that developed in the 1970's and 1980's. None of these writers, however, has looked at the economic development strategies pursued by local political leaders in response to these global economic changes. Nor have they looked at the process by which global economic changes get translated into local social policy changes.

In order to understand the relationship between local social problems, global economic changes, and the rise of repressive policing policies, we must have a fuller understanding of the economic development strategies at the local level. A number of theorists have looked at these local economic development strategies in the 1980's and 1990's. They have created the concept of the "entrepreneurial city" to describe the process by which local government has become more directly involved in economic development activity (Judd and Ready 1986, David Harvey 1989, Parkinson 1991, Hall and Hubbard 1998).

David Harvey argues that in response to the increased mobility of capital, the crisis in profits, and the oil shortages of the 1970's, many cities began to experience economic declines. In response, partnerships between local business elites and political leaders

were created to promote economic development.

The new entrepreneurialism has as its centerpiece the notion of public-private partnership in which a traditional local boosterism is integrated with the use of local governmental powers to try and attract external sources of funding, new direct investments or new employment sources (Harvey 1989: p. 7).

This is often done through a process of public sector risk absorption:

The activity of that public-private partnership is entrepreneurial precisely because it is speculative in execution and design and therefore dogged by all the difficulties and dangers which attach to speculative as opposed to rationally planned and coordinated development. In many instances this has meant that the public sector assumes the risk and the private sector takes the benefits (Harvey 1989: p. 7).

These urban "entrepreneurial cities" redirected government resources from the provision of social services into tax abatements and subsidies to commercial real estate projects. Convention centers, sports arena, and commercial office buildings are examples of the types of speculative developments underwritten by local governments. These governments also used zoning laws and subsidy programs that encouraged high-rent office and residential development at the expense of low-rent manufacturing and housing.

Logan and Moloch (1987), Michael Parkinson (1991), and Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard (1998) argue that this "entrepreneurial" strategy of local economic development has contributed to increases in crime, homelessness, and disorder. Logan and Moloch argue that this strategy creates uneven development and inequality by avoiding redistributive economic policies. Parkinson found that entrepreneurial development strategies in European cities often resulted in increased economic segregation, high unemployment, and more people on social assistance. Hubbard and Hall found similar evidence in American cities and argue that there is growing evidence that the entrepreneurial approach represents a shift in emphasis in local government from social

equity to creating wealth for elites.

While each of these works develops our understanding of the economic and political processes at work, they don't discuss the specific social and political implications of this process. They also don't examine the tactics cities used to try to manage the new social, economic, and racial polarization of American cities. I will show that entrepreneurial development strategies, combined with urban liberal social policies of centralized planning, individual rehabilitation, and social tolerance, resulted in punitive policies towards the homeless.

There are three governing strategies that come together in the 1980's that laid the groundwork for the backlash against homeless people and the decline of urban liberalism. The first was the "entrepreneurial city" approach towards economic development. The second was the social policies pursued by liberal mayors. The third was the practice of "professional policing," which ignored the visible disorders associated with homelessness. The combination of these three policies had an explosive impact on the social, economic, and political relations of New York and San Francisco.

Now I can look at the specific factors that led to the crisis in urban liberalism and the rise of the "quality of life" paradigm in both New York and San Francisco in the 1980's and 1990's. These factors can be organized into four interrelated categories: 1) the development of a political, economic and cultural crisis in urban neighborhoods prior to the increase in homelessness, 2) the failure of professional policing to deal with rising crime rates, homelessness, and disorder, 3) the role of homelessness in undermining urban liberal social policies, and 4) the ability of neoconservative politicians to capitalize on the disaffection with professional policing and urban liberalism by successfully

articulating an alternative based on the new "quality of life" paradigm.

During the 1970's and 80's, New York and San Francisco underwent dramatic transformations as a result of economic, political, and cultural changes. Each city faced serious financial problems as they pursued an "entrepreneurial cities" approach to economic development. This approach is based on the support and subsidizing of corporate headquarters and financial services over manufacturing, through tax and land use policies. The result was the polarization of housing and labor markets. The bulk of middle-class manufacturing jobs were replaced by a small number of high paying jobs and a large number of low paying jobs in the growing service economy. The housing market in each city was transformed by the destruction of low cost housing—especially at the lowest end-- and its replacement by luxury housing. The result was the creation of a large group of people who were left out of labor and housing markets, and inadequately served by social programs combined with a general feeling of economic insecurity among the middle-classes as they struggled to maintain their economic stability in a dynamic and threatening economic environment.

While the underclass was growing, these cities had fewer resources available to respond to their needs because of significant changes in government financing. There were dramatic declines in public spending at all levels. States and cities made some effort to compensate for these losses, but their ability to do so was severely constrained. In California, Proposition 13 limited property tax increases and put the state on tenuous financial footing even before the growing demands of homelessness were felt. In New York, the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970's put the city on a precarious financial footing that

both threatened the core economic functions of the city and constrained its ability to deal effectively with emerging homelessness.

The final part of the crisis was the growth of crime and social disorder prior to the homelessness crisis. Through the 1970's and 80's there were precipitous increases in crime in both New York and San Francisco. In addition, minor disorders such as prostitution and graffiti, had strained the social fabric of many neighborhoods. There was a grassroots backlash by many formerly liberal community activists who felt that the policies of liberal mayors had failed to address their complaints about the declining conditions in their neighborhoods. These activists and local elites were struggling for a way to explain the growth of these problems and a way to control them.

Liberal mayors in New York and San Francisco attempted to explain the crisis and offer specific practices to address it. Mayors Dinkins and Agnos both blamed short-term economic slowdowns and President Ronald Reagan's federal spending cuts. They also attempted to increase social programs to provide emergency services for homeless people on an individual basis (Dinkins, 1987; City and County of San Francisco, 1989). However, their ability to provide these services on a large scale was hampered by government austerity as part of the "entrepreneurial cities" model of economic development they both pursued. They were unable and unwilling to try and correct basic flaws in the housing and employment markets, or increase the welfare state. Instead they preached social tolerance to residents and merchants who were increasingly besieged by crime, dirt, and homelessness.

As a result, the crisis continued, and place-based elites and neighborhood activists lost faith in urban liberalism and began to look for alternatives. At first this happened in

an uncoordinated manner. Different groups attempted to put forward different explanations of the problem and demand different specific new practices. Local elites formed business improvement districts and called for more spending on police and less spending on social programs. Neighborhood activists formed social movements that demanded that police focus on “minor” nuisances rather than just major crimes. Police reformers began to experiment with new police practices based on the “broken windows” theory. They each attributed neighborhood decline to the presence of aesthetic and behavioral disorder and called for a restoration of public civility.

Even with this rejection of urban liberalism, there were two elements still needed to create a new paradigm of social control. The first was a coherent ideology that would tie these new explanations and practices together in a way that would transform the basic methods of urban policing. The second was the emergence of political leaders who could rally these disparate groups into a political coalition, articulate this new paradigm, and set about institutionalizing it.

Frank Jordan and Rudolph Giuliani were both familiar with the “broken windows” theory and masterfully articulated its main themes during their successful mayoral bids in 1991 and 1993 respectively. They each succeeded in creating coalitions of local elites and neighborhood activists who had rejected urban liberalism. Finally, they both backed reformers in their respective police departments who were advocating “broken windows” based policing, thus institutionalizing a new set of social control practices. The result was the creation of the new “quality of life” paradigm in each city.

This new paradigm offered an explanation of neighborhood decline that fit the needs of local elites by disavowing the need for additional costly social programs. It spoke to

disaffected neighborhood activists by championing immediate solutions to disorder. It appealed to the police because it put them at the center of a new approach to solving urban social problems. Finally, it served the interests of neoconservative politicians by allowing for the construction of new electoral coalitions based on conservative fiscal and social policies.

In Chapters 3 through 5 I will explore each of the four factors in detail. In Chapter 3 I will describe how economic, political, and cultural in New York and San Francisco, prior to the advent of homelessness, contributed to a crisis of urban neighborhoods that destabilized the urban liberal paradigm. In Chapter 4 I will demonstrate how homelessness played a central role in the emergence of "broken windows" policing in the late 1980's and early 90's, and the process by which police executives came to adopt new methods of crime and disorder control. Chapter 5 will show how local elites and neighborhood activists in both lower-class and middle-class, and white and minority neighborhoods reacted to homelessness and city government's response. It will describe how local elites and neighborhood activists developed and advocated new practices and ideologies for dealing with homelessness. It will focus on the process by which urban liberalism's failures to adequately address public concern over homelessness led to a neoconservative backlash among formerly liberal voters. I will also show how neoconservative politicians used the "broken windows" theory to construct a new political coalition capable of institutionalizing the "quality of life" paradigm. In the next chapter I will examine the development of the concept of "quality of life" and how it differed from the prior paradigm of urban liberalism.

Chapter 2

Defining the "Quality of Life" Paradigm

This chapter will describe more clearly the subject of this dissertation. What is it exactly that has changed? First, I will define the nature of the previous approach to social control. Second I will review the ideological roots of the new "quality of life" approach. Finally, I will then take a closer look at the history of the term "quality of life" and how political leaders have used it nationally, and in New York and San Francisco. This will allow me to proceed with an analysis of the social forces that brought the new paradigm into being and the reasons why it developed at this particular historical moment.

The "quality of life" approach represents a new paradigm of urban social control. A paradigm must be understood as a set of practices and conceptualizations—in this case, one that defines social policy towards homelessness in terms of social disorder in public urban spaces. This paradigm is a coherent way of thinking about a wide array of social problems—it indicates both a social philosophy of the roots of social problems and the form that solutions to the problem should take. It thus points to a set of concrete social practices to be carried out in specific places under specific conditions.

"Quality of life" represents a desire by urban residents to be free from the dirt, disorder, and incivilities that were widespread in the 1980's and 1990's. At its best it holds out this possibility for all urban residents. In practice, however, "quality of life" created a stark separation between the reasonable desires of residents to be free of fear and harassment, and the belief that the way to achieve this was through the systematic

removal of anyone perceived to be a potential source of these problems. The primary victims of this process were homeless people and other marginalized people living out the lives in public spaces. In order to understand the nature of the new "quality of life" paradigm, it is necessary to first explore what it replaced. The next section will review the nature of the prior paradigm, which I call "urban liberalism."

Urban Liberalism

I want to argue that the development of the "quality of life" paradigm represents a broad shift away from the political philosophy of what I call "urban liberalism" based on three axis: the tension between centralized technical planning with a concern for universal outcomes and a privatized and communalist concern with individual and localized outcomes, the balance between rehabilitation and punishment, and the level of social tolerance.

I use the term "urban liberalism" to refer to the political philosophy of many postwar cities that combined the Progressive and New Deal era orientations towards state interventionist economic and social strategies (Buenker 1973), personal rehabilitation and social work strategies of the Great Society era (Piven and Cloward 1971), and a civil liberties and social tolerance orientation seen most prominently in the post-Brown v. Board of Education era (Young, 1996).

The first element of the "urban liberal" paradigm is the belief that government planning and coordination is the key to resolving social problems. Urban liberals, building on the New Deal tradition, felt that the best strategy for reducing poverty and

other social problems was to rely on the power of the state. Rather than investing all of their energy in social movements to change fundamental aspects of housing and labor markets, they focused on mobilizing the resources of the state to regulate these markets, in order to ameliorate their most polarizing qualities. Urban liberals supported rent controls, higher minimum wage laws, improved welfare state transfer payments, and broader access to health and social services.

At the federal level in particular this took the form of a post-war compromise between industry, labor, and the state. Industry and labor agreed to work together to try and raise productivity and wages. The state worked to increase domestic spending to stimulate the economy and smooth over bad periods for individuals and the economy as whole without challenging the basic structure of employment, housing, or consumer markets. In return industry and labor agreed to a variety of regulations limiting their power.

In order to make government function more effectively, urban liberalism relied heavily on experts to develop comprehensive planning on a wide range of subjects. Urban liberals had a faith in the ability of the social sciences to produce a deeper understanding of the roots, nature, and solutions of social problems than those provided by "free market" theorists. One implication of this reliance on experts is that it has created an elitist orientation (Hollinger 1996, Levin-Waldman 1996) that denies the input of local groups in the formation of social policy priorities.

Second, urban liberals have relied heavily on social programs as a way of both reducing social problems and enlarging their electoral base. They have used a variety of therapeutic and social work models in an effort to transform the behaviors of "deviants" and integrate them into mainstream society. The possibility of human transformation was

considered possible as long as economic and social opportunities were equalized. This was done through state intervention in the economy and social intervention through programs designed to either improve people's ability to compete in the market system or sustain themselves outside of it. It was assumed that those who received help (in the form of transfer payments, including AFDC, SSI, and housing subsidies) would not be a source of public disorder in the form of either crime or political discord. This approach relied on investment in education and job training, as well as more focused therapeutic strategies to reduce psychological problems and substance abuse.

The key was a commitment on the part of liberals to reintegrate people on the margins into the mainstream. They believed that people engaged in behaviors associated with social problems for reasons that could be determined, and remedied, through the same reliance on social science and behavioral experts as discussed above. During the 1960's and 70's, liberals favored social science theories such as labeling theory (Becker 1963, Schur 1965) and strain theory (Merton 1957). Labeling Theory argued that people became deviant only after being repeatedly labeled as such by schools, courts and other institutions. The more young people were told they were "no good" the more they would adopt this persona and act on it. Howard Becker (1963) showed how being called an outsider became an identity that was actively taken up by deviant subgroups such as jazz musicians. Edwin Schur (1965) showed how the process of criminalizing homosexuals and drug addicts served to create a deviant self-image, which tended to drive them further into the margins of society, contributing to a subculture of deviance. This process strengthened people's identities as social outcasts and propelling them towards criminal careers. Schur called for the decriminalization of marginalized groups, claiming that they

were committing "crimes without victims." These theories place the responsibility for causing deviance and creating the solution on the larger society.

Strain theorists argued that crime and deviance were the result of a mismatch between people's desire to participate in the mainstream of society and the opportunities actually available to do so. Robert Merton (1957) claimed that the bulk of serious deviance was the result of people using illegitimate means to achieve the same legitimate goals in life as the rest of society. People pursued these illegitimate means because they didn't have access to the legitimate ones because of inequality in educational and employment opportunities. Therefore, the solution to this kind of deviance was to use government to try to create equality of opportunity and to encourage people to pursue legitimate means to achieve success.

Finally, urban liberalism emphasized individual social freedoms in the form of civil liberties and a tolerance for social diversity. Classical liberalism is predicated on the ideal of individual liberty in the face of a controlling state. For some groups in the post World War II era, this desire for individual liberty in relation to the state became transformed into appealing to the state to grant group rights in the face of a hostile society and economy. The forces that galvanized this strategy were the Black civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the women's movement, and the gay rights movement. This reliance on the state to secure inclusion into the mainstream meshed nicely with the existing liberal priorities delineated in relationship to rehabilitation programs.

In the 1960's and 70's liberals supported a wide range of legal changes that expanded individual rights in relation to the state. These included Supreme Court rulings concerning criminal procedures such as *Mapp v. Ohio*, which established the federal

exclusionary rule for illegal searches and *Miranda V. Arizona*, which forced police to notify people of their right to remain silent and their right to an attorney prior to questioning.

The federal courts also limited the powers of the police to engage in order maintenance activities. Beginning with *Shuttlesworth v. City of Birmingham* in 1965 the Supreme Court began to limit the degree of police discretion in dealing with disorderly people. The *Shuttlesworth* decision was ruled as overly vague because in the words of the Court, "this ordinance says that a person may stand on a public sidewalk in Birmingham only at the whim of any police officer of that city" (quoted in Livingston 1997). In 1971, in *Coates v. City of Cincinnati*, the Court ruled that the, "ordinance prohibiting three or more persons from congregating on sidewalk and conducting themselves in a manner 'annoying to persons passing by' unconstitutionally vague where violation 'may entirely depend upon whether or not a policeman is annoyed'" (quoted in Livingston 1997). In 1972, the Court ruled in *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville* that Jacksonville's vagrancy statute gave the police too much discretion and could be used in a discriminatory manner: "those generally implicated by the imprecise terms of the ordinance -- poor people, nonconformists, dissenters, idlers -- may be required to comport themselves according to the lifestyle deemed appropriate by the Jacksonville police and the courts" (quoted in Munzer 1997). In 1983, the Court expanded its concern about discriminatory police discretion in *Kolender v. Lawson*. Kolender was a black man living in a mostly white neighborhood in Southern California, who liked to take long walks at night. He was routinely stopped, questioned and arrested by the police for failure to produce identification. The Court ruled that, "The statute lacked an explicit standard for

determining how a suspect could satisfy the requirement of providing credible and reliable identification, and thereby encouraged arbitrary enforcement by police" (quoted in Kelling and Coles 1996). These decision create a significant expansion of the rights of people to be a source of minor disorder regardless of community or policing standards of civility.

One of the most important civil rights struggles during this period was over abortion rights. In the 1960's radical women's groups such as Jane in Chicago and the Society for Human Abortion in California began to advocate the repeal of abortion laws and made referrals to abortion providers. By the late 1960's new national groups such as the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL), the Women's National Abortion Action Council, and the National Organization of Women (NOW) had become a significant social and political force calling for an increase in the rights of women to control their own health care (Reagan 1997).

In response to these social pressures the federal courts began to expand their idea of the right to privacy. The courts argued that decisions about reproduction should be made by families and women and not the state. This process began in earnest in 1965 with the Supreme Court ruling *Griswold v. Connecticut* in which the court ruled that the State of Connecticut could not restrict the use of birth control pills because this was a private matter for families to decide on. By the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, a new right to privacy and freedom of personal choice for women in the area of abortion and birth control had been clearly established.

These legal rulings expanded individual rights at the expense of the state and community standards. Of particular interest to this dissertation is the constraints placed

on the police. These rulings served to limit the discretionary powers of the police in dealing with minor disorders, thus legalizing a wide variety of behaviors that might be offensive to some community standards but were viewed by the courts as deserving of tolerance from the police and the state.

The Development of the Quality of Life Paradigm

The legal and cultural changes associated with traditional urban liberalism stand in stark contrast to the new "quality of life" approach seen in the administrations of Mayors Rudolph Giuliani, Frank Jordan, Bret Schundler (of Jersey City), and Richard Riordan (of Los Angeles). Their orientation rejects both the central role of the state as a force for social reform and planning and the culture of tolerance. They rely on market principles through privatization of public spaces and services and an overall shrinkage of government. In addition to privatization they tend to support, at least rhetorically, greater community and business control of government service delivery and of planning at the expense of expert planners. They also criticize the centralized and universal orientation of urban liberalism as elitist in the face of the immediate local needs of residents and businesses. They are unwilling to make long-term investments in social programs in the hope that they will reduce deviance, arguing instead for short-term punitive measures to restore order. Finally, tolerance of overt signs of diversity are sharply limited.

Possibly the most dramatic shift has been the rejection of therapeutic models of personal rehabilitation in both criminal justice and welfare policy. Rather than focusing on the rehabilitation of "deviant" individuals through mental health and substance abuse

treatment, life skills training, and social work case management, individual behavior is to be modified by punitive strategies that keep people in line through the threat of economic or legal penalties, or that physically remove people from locations where their behavior is a disruption. Rather than developing methods of reintegrating "deviants" back into society, they want to exclude them.

This development can be most clearly seen in the arena of criminal justice. Neoconservatives reject the idea that criminals can be rehabilitated through therapeutic efforts. Instead, they argue that some people are fundamentally evil, and there is no possibility of their developing into "productive members of society." If the project of rehabilitation is foreclosed, they must be removed from society, or else constantly monitored to insure their compliance with the legal order, perhaps leading to penal incapacitation and the death penalty. A similar shift has occurred in welfare policy, where strategies to improve conditions for the poor through transfer payments have been replaced by negative reinforcement and incarceration (Davey 1995) and reliance on market forces to create individual economic opportunity (Schansberg 1996).

The last element of this transition is the rejection of civil libertarianism in favor of communitarianism. The "permissiveness" of civil libertarians is being blamed for a wide variety of urban social ills (Sleeper 1990, Kelling and Coles 1996, and Siegel 1997). Allowing individuals to act outside of the bounds of "community standards" of proper behavior, it is argued, opens the door to a general decline in moral standards and destabilizes local communities. The freedom of individuals is countered by the desire of communities for stability, homogeneity, and social order.

The results of the paradigm shift have been paradoxical: both "community control"

and larger police forces, both voluntarism and criminalization. Mayors Jordan and Giuliani both campaigned on a platform that called for a reduced role for government and a return to the private sector. Yet each has supported a major buildup of policing. In 1998 the New York Police Department reached a record high of over 40,000 officers, and police overtime expenses grew significantly in both cities. And, rather than reducing social services bureaucracies, the emphasis of these agencies slowly shifted from providing services to policing those in need.

The effect on the homeless has been a broad criminalization of their everyday lives. For those in the shelter system (a majority of the homeless in New York), there are increasing demands made of them without new sources of support. Shelter rules have become tighter and the threat of eviction is always present. For those on the street (a majority of the homeless in San Francisco), the very acts of sleeping and sitting have become criminalized. Constant police harassment has driven them out of central areas of both cities, creating an additional hardship for the homeless by hampering outreach efforts, breaking down informal support networks, and, most importantly, forcing thousands of people into the courts and jails. In both San Francisco and New York, city officials have acknowledged that county jails house more homeless people each night than even the largest shelters. The effect on the general population of this spatial decentralization and social atomization of the homeless has been one of "out of sight out of mind," especially in New York, where homelessness has lost its urgency as a social issue.

The "quality of life" paradigm didn't develop all at once or fully defined. Its origins

can be found in a series of academic works about the nature of urban disorder and crime, in changing conceptions of the urban crisis by local and national politicians, and in the way the mass media portrayed the crisis and its solutions. Eventually these different groups and their approaches began to cohere around a consistent set of ideas and practices that seemed to overcome the problems associated with the urban liberal paradigm. I will look first at the differing academic theories that contributed to the development of the new paradigm. I will then explore the relationship between local and national politicians and the media in transforming the term "quality of life" into a coherent new paradigm of urban social control

Ideological Underpinnings of QOL

During the 1980's a number of academics were attempting to explain the rise in disorder and crime in American cities and ways of reducing it. These theories were based on the idea that public civility had declined because of a reduction in the ability of urban neighborhoods to enforce standards of behavior both formally and informally. The solution was to develop new mechanisms of social control that focused directly on the problematic behaviors and less on the structural factors that contributed to the overall urban crisis.

The Broken Windows Theory

Prior to the widespread emergence of the homeless problem, James Q. Wilson and

George Kelling (1982) developed the "broken windows" theory, which argued that the unchallenged presence of minor visible signs of social and physical disorder could lead to more serious crime problems. They pointed out that when someone knocks the glass out of a window, and the window is quickly repaired, then there is unlikely to be further vandalism. However, if the window is not repaired, then it is seen as a fair target and soon all the windows get smashed. Similarly, if a neighborhood is able to enforce behavior standards against minor disorders, then more serious problems will be unlikely to develop. On the other hand, if disorder goes unchecked, then a place will be viewed as unregulated, and more serious disorder will develop, leading to higher levels of serious crime and a further surrendering of the public space to disorderly people.

Wesley Skogan (1990) built on this latter part of the analysis. He argued that the unchecked presence of disorder was a primary cause of neighborhood decline. Communities that failed to establish a strong public moral order were likely to be besieged by crime. The high level of crime and disorder, in turn, would discourage the constant reinvestment in homes and business that communities require in order to remain vibrant. He, in effect, reverses the 1960's argument that poverty unchecked generates crime, to say that crime unchecked generates poverty.

This raises the issue of how community definitions of disorder are decided. Since many urban neighborhoods have high levels of diversity the standards for proper behavior are often contested. In the situations that Skogan looked at, he noted that the views that prevailed tended to be those of whites more than people of color, and homeowners more than renters. As it stands now, the group that makes this determination is the police department, which generally lacks the mechanisms and institutions for

adjudicating complex cultural and moral conflicts within communities. The police have historical biases that favor merchants and long time homeowners as legitimate spokespeople for community standards.

George Kelling and Catherine Coles (1996) review several efforts to implement broken windows policies in New York, San Francisco, Baltimore, and Seattle. They argue that where order-maintenance activities have started with good problem-solving research, and are tailored to the specific dynamics of the problem, they have been successful. They point out that community concerns have to be put first in this process: first, because the prior failure to acknowledge these concerns has contributed to suburban flight, and second, because communities have to be partners with the police in order-maintenance efforts.

Kelling and Cole's notion of community involvement in the examples they use raises another problem with this approach. In each of the examples—with the exception of Boyde Booth in Baltimore where the community played a central role, the order maintenance efforts are initiated by government or business on the behalf of the perceived interests of the community. Business improvement districts in New York, Jordan's "clean-up" of San Francisco, and Seattle's restoration of its central business district are elite driven efforts to restore centrally located, high property value locations, not efforts to revitalize troubled neighborhoods where crime rates and poverty rates are high.

The case of Baltimore is also instructive. Kelling and Coles describe two different order maintenance initiatives there. The first involved a community working with the city to try and retake their neighborhood from drug dealing and the violent crime associated

with it; the second involved a business led effort to reduce the presence of homeless people in the central business district. The residents of the Boyde Booth neighborhood were faced with a major crime problem more than a minor disorder problem. The response was to increase drug treatment services, to "target harden" the neighborhood by boarding up abandoned buildings, and fencing off escape routes, and to have the police engage in targeted enforcement activities against drug dealing. The result was a drop in drug dealing and violent crime and an increase in community drug treatment resources. This is a clear case of a successful community-police anti-crime effort. The focus was on dealing with on-going serious crime much more than a campaign against disorderly behavior. There can be no question that widespread drug dealing makes neighborhoods more dangerous and economically and socially less stable.

This case, however, bears little resemblance to the order maintenance initiatives undertaken in downtown Baltimore and the other cities discussed in the book. In each of these cases, the focus is on unsightly and menacing behavior that is dealt with through new punitive measures that reduce the civil liberties of a broad segment of the public. Removing the homeless by restricting access to and activities allowed in public parks, using the police to forcibly remove homeless people from shopping areas, and criminalizing sleeping, panhandling, and sitting on the sidewalk is a very different endeavor from consistent enforcement of existing laws against drug dealing and violent crime.

Wilson and Kelling wrote their initial article (1982) to deal with the kinds of problems that the Boyde Booth neighborhood was facing—an increase in social disorder and crime in residential neighborhoods. At that point, homelessness was not a major

source of disorder, and its relationship to the "broken windows" theory hadn't been established. However, as homelessness increased, Kelling was repeatedly called upon to help cities and police departments apply the theory to homelessness. The most important example of this is when Kelling was hired in 1989 to work with William Bratton who was then chief of the New York City Transit Police to develop new rules designed to remove homeless people from the subway system. By the time that Kelling and Coles reviewed the existing efforts to implement the theory (1996) all but one of the efforts focused primarily on disorders associated with homelessness. By this point, politicians, businesses, and local residents had seen the theoretical potential of the "broken windows" theory to deal with homelessness and Kelling was an active participant in the harnessing of that potential.

The "broken windows" theory has provided a powerful analysis of the rise of urban disorder and strategies to address it. This common sense approach has been very appealing to people disaffected by liberalism's inability to achieve concrete reductions in public incivility. However, it too lacks a political and economic context for its analysis. There is no attempt to address the changing economic realities of urban residents who were on the losing side of growing economic polarization. In addition, little empirical evidence has been gathered to support the basic assertions. A major study in Chicago (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999) questioned the basic connection between disorder and crime that the theory posited. They observed 23,000 streets segments in 196 neighborhoods, and found that physical and social disorder were poor predictors of crime rates. The degree of poverty in a neighborhood turned out to be a much more accurate indicator of crime rates, thus reestablishing the presence of poverty as a major factor in

the level of crime.

In an analysis of efforts to implement the “broken windows” theory, Kelling and Coles (1996) argue that a renewed concern with disorder control and problem-oriented policing (Goldstein 1990) in New York, San Francisco, and Seattle has turned the tide against urban decline and is responsible for a significant drop in crime (especially in New York City). Along with Siegel (1992) and Donahue and Taranto (1992) they also accuse the libertarian legal approach taken by advocacy groups such as the ACLU, which defends the individual rights of homeless people and prostitutes, with fostering disorderly behavior in public streets and parks.

According to this approach, the new punitiveness was a direct technocratic response by the police to the failures of professional policing to restore public order. The declining conditions of public spaces necessitated the development of new policing procedures. The “broken windows” theory provided the outline for a new set of punitive police-based approach to dealing with homelessness and other sources of public disorder. This insight, provides part of the explanation for the development of the “quality of life” paradigm—as will be shown in Chapter 4, but it leaves out the reasons for the rise in disorder in the first place, and the development of a political constituency that would allow these technocratic innovations to become institutionalized.

Communitarianism

A central component of the new theories of order maintenance is their focus on

developing community rights over individual rights as a way of restoring civility and stability to urban neighborhoods. Amitai Etzioni (1995, 1996) argues that the excessive concern with individual liberty stemming from the 1960's counterculture undermined the ability of communities to regulate themselves. He argues that in response to the growing counterculture that there was a process of "defining deviancy down" that contributed to an increased tolerance for social disorder and an increase in welfare dependency, single parent families, and crime. He argued that the result was the destabilization of communities during the 1980's. Many of these communities responded by developing new community centered or communitarian concerns. Etzioni calls for a new, "thick social order" that highlights the interconnectedness of individuals within communities, and provides a standard for judging the harmful effects of individual behavior based on shared community standards. The intention is to recreate the "social contract."

This new comunitarianism is in many ways a reaction to the centralizing forces of liberalism. It is a rejection of centralized state planning, the use of scientific experts at the expense of community influence, and the legal rights of minorities that has been a central tenant of liberal jurisprudence. It raises the same concerns as the broken windows theory. Who decides what the appropriate community standards are? If a majority of residents in ever more local areas are given increased control, then how will the rights of minorities be protected? This move towards localism and "majoritarianism" threatens both the social diversity of urban life as well as the social cohesion of the city as a whole. Local neighborhoods and residents lose their sense of connection to the fate of the city as a whole, focusing instead on their neighborhood, their block, their front doorstep, without seeing how the conditions in these ever more local spaces is inextricably tied to the

condition of the city as a whole.

Urban Neoconservatism

The most common explanation of the decline of liberalism has been offered by neoconservatives with roots in the urban liberal tradition. They have argued that liberalism's fatal flaw was its inability to enforce basic standards of public civility in the face of the fractured racial politics of the post-civil rights era. Jim Sleeper (1990) claims that liberals allowed race-based politics to divide the city and erode universal standards of civility and accountability. Sleeper champions New York's historic diversity and dynamism as one of its strengths. At the same time he points out the crucial role that social workers, teachers, police have played in teaching each generation of new immigrants the values of liberal capitalism. He claims, however, that this system broke down in the post 70's and 80's period as a result of the political separatism of blacks and the willingness of liberal politicians to allow them to pursue this identity politics strategy at the expense of advancing the universalizing project of liberalism.

According to Sleeper, by the end of the economic expansion of the 1980's, the repercussions of this political process was a black community in disarray from broken families, welfare dependency, crime, and drug abuse. The problem affected the rest of the city as well as crime and social disorder spread throughout the city in the form of increased citywide crime rates, graffiti, homelessness, and a growing tax burden to finance welfare and other social programs.

By the time of the 1989 mayoral campaign...the boom had receded, exposing not just the perennial ethnic clashes and jockeying of elites but

also a frightening disintegration of families and neighborhood institutions amid reports of soaring child abuse and abandonment. Everywhere it seemed, were the encroachments of the drug economy, of roaming packs of violent youths, and of the homeless and mentally helpless, human wreckage which no one knew how to repair. (Sleeper 1990: p.17)

Sleeper blames much of the problem on the political extremism of some black leaders who attempted to use the legacies of racism to explain away intolerable behaviors. He points to the Central Park Jogger case of 1989 where a group of black boys raped a white woman in the park, where many blacks defended the boys and claimed that the event never happened. The flip side was the case of Tawana Brawley in which she accused the police of kidnapping and raping her (the boys were convicted). In this case some black leaders such as Rev. Al Sharpton rushed to echo her claims without sufficient evidence (the case was dropped on those grounds). For Sleeper these incidents show that the black community was tolerating indefensible behaviors on the grounds that they were interracial and thus the result of longstanding racial antagonism. Somehow because these events were colored by historical racial injustice that they couldn't be judged by the same standards. This analogy was extended to minor incivilities such as graffiti and squeegee men as society was supposedly morally paralyzed by unresolved racial conflict.

For Sleeper the root of urban decline isn't the increased impoverishment of urban minorities due to economic reorganization and government retrenchment, the ongoing problems of racial discrimination, or the decline in public schools. The problem is a lack of toughness on the part of urban liberals to force the socially and economically marginal to play by the rules of liberal capitalism--to pursue the American dream and be civil members of the society.

This echoed the anti-urban, anti-poor rhetoric of conservatives at the national level.

The portrayal of the poor as "welfare queens" and the Willie Horton advertisements in support of George Bush's 1988 presidential campaign mark the extremes of a tendency to describe the poor as either lazy or criminal. This rhetoric was invariably racialized. Crime and welfare became synonymous with urban minorities, despite the fact that most criminals and welfare recipients are white. Conservative discourse about homelessness was shaped by this pattern of racialization and criminalization. Homeless people were portrayed as either lazy, mentally defective, or criminal.

Urban historian Fred Siegel (1997) argues that the New Deal liberalism of the 1930'-50's was a positive development. It provided the "truly needy" with "social insurance aimed to help people caught in tragedies not of their own making" (Siegel 1997: p. xi). A transition begins in the 1960's with the emergence of what Siegel calls the "riot ideology." He argues that liberals responded to the threat of riots and increased crime by creating a system of dependency for the poor and by tolerating increasing levels of social disorder. He points to the explosion of welfare rolls and the tolerance of extreme Black Nationalism in the Ocean Hills-Brownsville schools conflict in New York as examples of this process.

Siegel blames the decline in public civility on the "moral deregulation of public space." He points out that by the 1980's the livability of urban spaces was under siege:

What unnerved most city dwellers, however, was not crime per se but, rather, the sense of menace and disorder that pervaded day-to-day life. It was the gang of toughs exacting their daily tribute in the coin of humiliation. It was the "street tax" paid to drunk and drug-ridden panhandlers. It was the "squeegee men" shaking down motorists waiting for a light. It was the threats and hostile gestures of the mentally ill making their homes in the parks. It was the provocation of pushers and prostitutes plying their trade with impunity. It was the "trash storms," the swirling masses of garbage left by paddlers and panhandlers, and the open-air drug bazaars on city streets. These were the visible signs of cities

out of control. (Siegel 1997: p.169)

Siegel claims that the utopian and libertarian impulses of the 1960's and 70's had the effect of "defining deviancy down" in the words of Senator Patrick Daniel Moynihan. The social movements of this period favored the pursuit of individual desire over communitarian impulses. The result was behavioral free-for-all. In particular Siegel blames civil libertarians for their decriminalization of "victimless crimes" and the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill. The result of these decisions by liberals was an increase in economic dependency and moral deregulation that threatened to undermine the basic social fabric of New York and other major cities.

In response to this crisis, Siegel champions the policies of New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani elected in 1993. He credits Giuliani with reversing the ill-advised liberal policies of the 70's and 80's. He points to Giuliani's embrace of the "broken windows" theory as a both a set of practices for restoring order and as a social philosophy that explains the urban crisis in terms of social permissiveness rather than economic decline. Siegel's is arguing that the way to revitalize cities is by applying tough love measures towards the socially and economically marginalized.

Sleeper and Siegel continue to approve of those aspects of liberalism that attempt to universalize human experience and meld a coherent and stable society in which a certain amount of diversity and competition can flourish. It's a kind of social contract in which certain ground rules have to be established before the competitive aspects of capitalism and democracy can operate. It assumes that the roots of our current dilemma lie in urban liberalism's rejection of the liberalism of the New Deal and its vision of universal equal opportunity and equal responsibility in favor of a New Left liberalism of radical

individual freedom and preferential treatment for those historically left out.

Origins of the Term "Quality of Life"

The term "quality of life" has been used in many different ways in a number of different fields and in connection with many different and sometimes contradictory policies. The term first begins to appear regularly in print in the late 1960's, in connection with three main areas of concern: health care, the urban crisis, and the environment. By the mid 1970's, the term is commonplace in these broad areas as well as numerous subdivisions, with much cross-pollination. Over time the forward-looking and optimistic use of the term was transformed into a punitive backward-looking usage. By forward-looking, I mean an orientation towards an improvement of the human condition in cultural as well as economic terms. It contains the idea that positive human development is possible and should be strived for on both an individual and societal. A backward-looking orientation suggests an attempt to conserve historic conditions and a pessimism about the possibilities of fundamental human change. I will briefly trace the development of the term in relationship to urban problems nationally and then specifically in New York and San Francisco.

"Quality of Life" Nationally

When President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the War on Poverty in the mid 1960's, he largely conceptualized urban problems in terms of reducing poverty. The period of

1964 to 1968 was one of growing concern about the conditions of poor and minority urban residents punctuated by outbursts of rioting in most major cities. This urban crisis focused the discussion of quality of life on dealing with the conditions that give rise to these fundamental threats to the stability of urban America. As a result, political discussions of the urban crisis including crime and disorder, such as the Kerner Commission report--commissioned by President Johnson to investigate the causes of the urban riots--highlight the need for remedial programs for minorities and the poor (United States, 1968). During the Johnson administration, the rhetorical and strategic emphasis was on using government to improve conditions for the urban disadvantaged. There was a hopeful discourse about the possibility of positive change for the worst-off in society, whom it placed at the center of the debate.

In 1965, President Johnson proposed and Congress approved the creation of the cabinet-level Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which broadened the conceptualization of urban problems from poverty to a wide range of urban ills including housing and community development. In a letter to Congress urging the creation of the Department, he discussed "quality of life" in terms of improving living conditions for the disadvantaged:

Let us be clear about the core of this problem. The problem is people and the quality of the lives they lead. We want to build not just housing units but neighborhoods; not just to construct schools, but to educate children; not just to raise income, but to create beauty and end the poisoning of our environment...The problems of the city are problems of housing and education. They involve increasing employment and ending poverty. They call for beauty and nature, recreation and an end to discrimination (Johnson, 1965).

There is no mention of the needs of other groups or social classes. The focus is on

improving conditions for the poor.

In 1966 Congress and HUD developed the concept further in their first major initiative, the "Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966." The handbook for this new program was entitled *Improving the Quality of Urban Life* (United States. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 1966). The legislation states:

The Congress hereby finds and declares that *improving the quality of urban life* is the most critical domestic problem facing the United States. The persistence of widespread urban slums and blight, the concentration of persons of low income in older urban areas, and the unmet needs for additional housing and community facilities and services arising from the rapid expansion of our urban population have resulted in a marked deterioration in the quality of the environment and the lives of large numbers of our people while the Nation as a whole prospers (United States. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 1966, emphasis added).

The Program Guide points out that requests for funding by cities under this law should contain plans for comprehensive programs that include the following elements:

(a) to rebuild or revitalize large slum and blighted areas; (b) to expand housing; (c) to expand job and income opportunities; (d) to reduce dependence on welfare payments; (e) to improve educational facilities and programs; (f) to combat disease and ill health; (g) to reduce the incidence of crime and delinquency; (h) to enhance recreational and cultural opportunities; (i) to establish better access between homes and jobs; and (j) in general, to improve living conditions for the people who live in these areas (United States. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 1966).

These criteria clearly indicate that the program is directed at the disadvantaged. It is intended to improve cities by bringing up people at the bottom. The goal is to obtain these improvements through new scientifically created social programs, rather than punitive measures. It is forward looking and expert driven. This orientation can be clearly seen in the HUD Secretary's introduction to the Program Guide:

The objective of this demonstration is to test whether we have the capacity to understand the causes of human and physical blight, and the skills and the commitment to restore quality to older neighborhoods, and hope and dignity to their people. This program requires courage: Courage to understand the basic causes of the problem, and courage to seek the solution in the neighborhood, in the city or even in the metropolitan area, as the facts may require. I have confidence in the capacity and determination of the citizens and officials of our cities and towns, and in their willingness to work together to improve the quality of urban life (United States. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 1966).

In the late 1960's and early 1970's a number of books using the term "quality of life" began to appear that addressed different areas of concern different from those at HUD but consistent with the idea of focusing on the needs of those on distress. These books each attempt to deal with important contemporary problems through improved understanding and a concern for the broader human condition. In the area of healthcare, *Health, a Quality of Life* (Sincore, 1968), makes the following statement:

The purpose of this book goes beyond the reporting of comprehensive advance made in the health sciences...Issues such as automobile safety, drug use, abortion, food faddism, sex values, and the nature of human sexuality are included. Honest, straight forward presentations of these often controversial topics are designed to assist the young adult in developing points of view in these important health areas. It is further hoped that this text will mark an end to those placid, innocuous writings that pretend these issues do not exist (Sincore, 1968).

The Quality of Life: Nineteen Essays (Perkins, 1968) was produced by professors at Cornell University. It contains a series of essays that address a range of social issues:

Each was written by a distinguished member of the Cornell faculty, each addresses itself to a topic clearly affecting the quality of life, and each strives for a better understanding of a particular set of problems... They have been put together in a book because, it seems to me, they speak for a university that seeks to share its thoughts *with those who also believe that knowledge about life is a condition for securing its quality* (Perkins, 1968, emphasis added).

The Quality of Urban Life (Schmandt and Bloomberg, 1969), was a collection of 20 papers in areas such as the urban environment, planning, health, education, the arts, and urban order. It called for an investigation of the possibilities of "progress" and "improvement":

A major purpose of this volume is to emphasize and explore the diversity of concerns which must be dealt with if we are to stop evading an assessment of what we have wrought, both intentionally and inadvertently, in building a society of cities. In saying this, the editors by no means wish to imply that the challenges to "make sense" of our multiplicity of dilemmas should be avoided. Indeed, the concluding section of the volume contains several efforts to suggest some sensible ways in which *we might begin to reconstruct the urban order (or disorder) to enhance the quality of urban life* (Schmandt and Bloomberg, 1969, emphasis added).

The task of this book was to explore the complex nature of urban problems in order to develop comprehensive forward-looking solutions.

These efforts helped policy makers think of urban problems as interconnected and related to the total social, economic, and political environment. However, their progressive orientation was turned on its head by the next presidential administration, which moved away from a concern about the urban poor and discussed instead the "environment" in broad terms that address the concerns of middle-class and non-urban residents. Rhetorically, strategically, and politically, Richard Nixon initiated a shift away from liberalism at the national level.

In President Nixon's 1970 State of the Union message, he declared that there was no contradiction between properly managed commercial prosperity and quality of life:

Now I realize that the argument is often made that there is a fundamental *contradiction between economic growth and the quality of life*, so that to have one we must forsake the other. The answer is not to abandon growth

but to redirect it. For example, we should turn toward ending congestion and eliminate smog the same reservoir of inventive genius that created them in the first place (NYT 1/23/70, emphasis added).

Nixon is attempting to focus the nation's energies on dealing with the consequences of growth without challenging the economic and governmental underpinnings of that growth. In a bid to the core Republican constituencies, he makes it clear that this is not just an urban problem:

We will carry our concern with the quality of life in America to the farms as well as the suburb, to the village as well as to the city. We must create a new rural environment which will not only stem the migration to urban centers but reverse it (NYT 1/23/70).

One of the primary goals of this 1970 state of the union message was to redirect government attention and public discourse away from the racial and urban tensions of the 1960's. His message makes almost no reference to the urban crisis that, except for the war in Vietnam, had dominated public policy concerns in the Johnson administration. Instead, he raises a more universal concern about pollution and environmental degradation. By focusing on the environment, he gave "quality of life" a more conservative meaning in the sense of conserving or recreating a past environmental condition. Nixon succeeded in both shifting the focus from the disadvantaged to the middle class, and placing government in the role of preserving and recapturing the past rather than building a new future.

This theme can be seen in the use of the term by the Nixon-created Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA issued two major reports during this period. The first was called *The Quality of Life Concept: A Potential New Tool for Decision-Makers* (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 1973) followed shortly thereafter by *Quality of*

Life Indicators in U.S. Metropolitan Areas, 1970 (Ben-Chieh, 1976). In both these reports an effort is made to develop quantitative measures of a broad collection of environmental factors that effect people's quality of daily life including health, education, and pollution, as well as economic, political, and social conditions. This approach provided a new framework for conceptualizing social problems that was not specifically urban or focused on the disadvantaged; it represents a break from the liberal approach of the 1960's.

"Quality of Life" in New York City

Republican John Lindsay was the first New York mayor to make regular use of the term "quality of life." During the early 1960's, his predecessor Mayor Robert Wagner followed the federal pattern and discussed urban problems in terms of alleviating poverty. In 1964, Wagner initiated a major set of urban initiatives, designed to capture some of President Johnson's Great Society spending (NYT 7/1/64). These programs all existed under the rubric of a "war against poverty."

When Lindsay took over as mayor in 1966, he continued to use much of the same language as Wagner. During the late 60's, however, the social context and Lindsay's political ambitions had shifted. The threat of rioting in New York City had become a major concern and in 1969 Lindsay considered running for the President. As a result, he began referring to the city's problems in broader terms. When New York State announced budget cuts to the city he responded by linking concerns about urban unrest with a general decline in living conditions for the entire city:

The cost [of these budget cuts] to the city in terms of quality of life and increased tensions is incalculable. Not only does it cut deeply into some of

our most basic programs and agencies, but it does so in such a manner as to undermine many of the most important municipal improvements of the last half decade (NYT 4/3/69).

He clearly mentioned concern about the poor and possible social disorder, but broadened the discussion to include all New Yorkers.

In his 1970 inauguration speech, Lindsay highlighted efforts to give neighborhoods responsibility for charting their own course because they "set the quality of life for the city" (NYT 1/1/70). He continues:

If the Bay Ridge homeowner is uncertain of his neighborhood's future, if the Harlem mother does not know if her child is learning at school, if the Forest Hills family fears to walk the streets at night, if the Morrisania office worker cannot travel home at night in comfort or even decency, then the city is not working for its citizens (Morris, 1980: p.147).

At this point poor neighborhoods had been put on the same footing as all other neighborhoods in terms of their needs and their relationship to the overall health of the city. By 1972, the transition from concern to the disadvantaged, to concern about the middle class was complete. Moreover, Lindsay introduced business interest in "quality of life." In announcing approval of a controversial and expensive pedestrian transit mall on Madison Avenue in Midtown Manhattan, Lindsay stated that "cities are beginning to redesign their core areas to favor man on foot and so have revitalized business and enhanced quality of life in downtown areas" (NYT 9/17/72).

Lindsay, following the academic literature, established "quality of life" as a term to refer to generalized urban problems with an emphasis on the "environment." But the environment refers primarily to pollution, amenities, and aesthetics. The main cause of

these problems wasn't racism or social inequality, but failure to adequately deal with the consequences of growth and prosperity through planning and "investment in a better physical environment" (NYT 5/16/73).

In 1974, Abraham Beame replaced Lindsay as mayor. Beame was a Democrat who took over in a period of financial contraction that led to the New York Fiscal Crisis of the mid 1970's. New York City came close to defaulting on its debts as a result of severe budget shortfalls. To stabilize the city's finances broad budget cuts were instituted and a state controlled financial control board was created to oversee the city's operation (Lichten 1986, Shefter 1992, Tabb 1982). Beame dropped almost all reference to the term "quality of life," which for Lindsay had indicated a forward-looking orientation. Instead, he was forced to fight a backward looking defensive war to maintain city services: "The prospect of New York undergoing a trauma of massive layoffs, service reductions, and drastic curtailment of programs which added to the *quality of life* in this city is unthinkable to me" (NYT 6/2/75, emphasis added). This fundamental shift from forward to backward-looking would shape the use of the term for the next 20 years.

Mayor Ed Koch was also slow to take up the term "quality of life." His administration, which began in 1978, continued to be saddled by the city's fiscal crisis, but tried to deal with the city's growing social problems—crime, sanitation, and homelessness--by stabilizing the city's finances and developing new programs. The effects of the fiscal crisis, however, continued to take a toll on the city. Not only were programs for the poor reduced, but basic services, which the middle and upper classes rely on, began to deteriorate. By 1980 the city had lost 25% of its overall work force including 50% of its sanitation workers, 20% of its police force, and 19,000 teachers

(Tabb 1982). Deferred maintenance became the rule for the city's infrastructure leading to significant problems with roads and bridges, parks, and public transportation by the mid 1980's. The city closed down four of its public hospitals, and had to turn over the bulk of the City University of New York system to the State. Increased crime and homelessness, and reduced sanitation and infrastructure upkeep gave the entire city a feeling of social and physical disorder.

It wasn't until late 1981 that Koch started to actively use the term "quality of life," however. He did so as a direct response to constituencies that were beginning to lose faith in him. After Koch attempted to blame his problems on Lindsay, who responded that it was Koch who let the "quality of life" in the city decline, even though he had had to face major urban problems of his own (NYT 12/16/80). Middle class residents let their opinions be known through a series of increasingly contentious neighborhood meetings. At one such meeting in Queens, residents accused the mayor of ignoring "middle-class quality-of-life issues," and of having "abandoned the homeowner" (NYT 3/11/81). Finally, business groups increasingly threatened to leave the city because of "quality of life concerns."

In response Koch began to adopt the term during his reelection bid in 1981. In campaign stops he pledged to "work in the next for years to improve the quality of life in this city" (NYT 6/11/81). In his September 1981 *Mayor's Management Report*, Koch added a new section called "Quality of Life Enforcement" (Koch, 1981). This section outlined efforts to keep streets clean, reduce canine waste and sidewalk vendors, increase enforcement against street level drug dealers, provide school guards with peace officer status, enforce traffic laws, and beef up the Environmental Control Board. There was no

mention of homelessness, panhandling, or other minor disorderly conduct.

By 1984, Koch had transformed his use of "quality of life" from trying to express concern about overall conditions in the city, to creating the basis for a series of law enforcement efforts. In what was a precursor to many of the developments within the Giuliani administration, Koch created a work camp for minor offenders, tried to clean up Times Square, and initiated a number of "quality of life programs" within the Police Department. The latter consisted of new traffic and narcotics enforcement efforts, increased patrol strength, and the first stages of the Community Patrol Officer Program, which increased the number of officers walking beats and working with communities on problem solving efforts, as opposed to just 911 emergency response (Koch, 1984; NYT 4/4/84). This new approach indicated an awareness of the underlying principles of the "broken windows" theory, but didn't fully embrace its enforcement priorities. That had to wait almost another ten years.

During the next few years, Koch continued to play up his tough enforcement oriented approach to improving conditions in the city. Sanitation services and police enforcement continued to be enhanced, but conditions failed to improve. Instead, the advent of widespread homelessness besieged the city and further negatively affected social and aesthetic conditions throughout the city. The term "quality of life" reemerged as the shibboleth of his enemies on the left and right. Many middle-class New Yorkers continued to complain about the loss of services and the impact of homelessness on their daily lives. At the same time, David Dinkins, then Manhattan Borough President, assailed Koch for failing to constrain the real estate boom of the mid 80's, and its environmental effects on the city:

Is it not our responsibility, as public officials, to leave to the next generation a city of human scale and an environment that preserves the quality of life equal to that which our predecessors left us? Manhattan real estate, in particular, has become such a hot market that the sheer magnitude of the money involved appears to overwhelm any balanced value system. For overdevelopment brings with it real costs: the loss of air and light, wear and tear on urban infrastructure, pedestrian and vehicle gridlock, and the inability of sanitation and transport services to keep up with demands (NYT 2/19/87).

This is a very different set of problems than those raised by Queens homeowners and midtown business leaders. While Koch tried to address the concerns raised by all constituencies, he was both unable to do so and not totally committed to the task. Instead he insisted that the overall financial health of the city had improved, especially in relation to the fiscal crisis that preceded him:

When the mayor's potential challengers decry the declining quality of life here, Koch has a simple rejoinder: Things are better now than when he took office in 1978. He is running against the fiscal crisis of that era, since it provides a better benchmark for his tenure than the mounting problems of schools, subways, crack, street crime and homelessness. Even those turned off by his "acerbic" approach, Koch said, should recognize that he has "rebuilt the city of New York" and "put us back on the map as an international capital." Should anyone try to drown out that message, as happened toward the end of the Queens town meeting, Koch simply raises his voice. "The city is prosperous!" he shouted at his audience. "We have the lowest unemployment rate in 17 years! There isn't anybody who wants a job who can't get a job! You wanna go back to the old days" (NYT 12/15/88)?

Koch wanted to be judged based on these larger economic measures than the cleanliness and safety of the streets. He had been pursuing a "global cities" economic development strategy based on enhancing New York's role as a headquarters multinational corporations and finance. *New Yorker's* and the liberal *New York Times*, however, were not satisfied with that approach, and Koch lost the Democratic primary to David Dinkins, who went on to win the 1989 general election.

During the 1989 campaign Dinkins was aware of "quality of life's" currency, but preferred to shift the focus from the middle classes to the disadvantaged:

Asked to speak to the concerns of the middle class, Mr. Dinkins did not present a plan for police coverage. Nor did he discuss jobs or the economy, cleaner streets, safer subways, improved management, lower taxes or tougher treatment for criminals, as the other candidates have. Instead of offering specific solutions, he offered the conclusion "that quality-of-life issues are important to all of us" and turned back the discussion to the poor (NYT 7/13/89).

Dinkins had no choice but to acknowledge the widespread use of the term. He tried, however, to downplay it and its appeal to the middle classes, and instead focus on the needs of more disadvantaged groups.

Having won the election, Dinkins tried to back away from using the term. He was unable to do so because it had become so central a part of the political lexicon that even a long time liberal like Ruth Messinger, the new Manhattan Borough President and Dinkins ally, convened a Quality of Life Task Force to address the public impact of homelessness as well as noise and sanitation problems (NYT 4/11/90). Dinkins, however, continued to try to recast "quality of life" as a social improvement program for the poor: "Some say quality of life is best defined by spotless parks and litter-free roadways. But for me it is best exemplified by a happy, healthy baby or by a teen-ager with a diploma in hand and a sparkle in the eye" (NYT 5/25/90).

This approach pleased some of Dinkins' core urban liberal constituency, but as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5 many residents felt besieged by the growing crime and disorder problems—including many African Americans-- . As a result Dinkins was forced to directly address the city's growing crime and disorder problem. He did this with two initiatives that came to fruition in 1991. The first was his Safe Streets - Safe City program

(Dinkins 1991) that provided for a dramatic increase in the number of police officers and social services paid for by a series of new, dedicated taxes. The second was the forceful and high-profile eviction by the police of a homeless encampment in Tompkins Square Park. Both these measures indicated that Dinkins was attempting to fully embrace the calls for improving middle class quality of life. However, these measures also continued to contain an appeal for social programs as the true long-term solution to these problems. This emphasis on slow moving social rehabilitation efforts left him vulnerable to a “quality of life” proponent who forcefully embraced middle class concerns about crime and disorder and disdained the efforts of social workers and government bureaucrats.

During the 1993 campaign, Rudolph Giuliani repeatedly emphasized a concern with “quality of life” to distinguish himself from Dinkins. His campaign themes can be summed up in two of his main campaign commercials. The first contains the following quote from Giuliani, the second is described in detail by the *New York Times* below:

Some people call this an outer borough. I call it part of the heart and soul of New York City. I've lived here in Woodside, Queens. I was born in Brooklyn, lived in Queens, went to school in the Bronx, lived in Manhattan. I've lived or gone to school in just about every part of New York City. It's a city that I love. It's a city that I see as a city of neighborhoods. We have to listen more to the people who live in these neighborhoods in New York City; we have to listen to them when they tell us about the deterioration of the school system. And we have to fight back to make the New York City public schools the best in the country again. We have to listen to them when they tell us they want *a higher quality of life, a cleaner city, a better city, a city that draws more business and has more jobs*. We have to listen to them when they tell us that the city is crushing the small businesses of New York City. I mean, after all, that's the heart and the soul of the city, the small businesses. That's what we're being told by the people who live in these neighborhoods. I've been there. I've grown up there, that's where I come from, that's where my family comes from, and I've been listening to them for the last four years. And that's what they've been telling me (NYT 8/12/93, emphasis added).

The television and radio spots, which began the day after the Democratic mayoral primary, have coincided with an emphasis by Mr. Giuliani on what his campaign calls "quality of life" issues. He has assailed "the disorder that is driving the city down," promising a crackdown on street drug dealers, panhandlers and menacing "squeegee men." And last week he unveiled a policy to curtail services drastically to some of the city's homeless by setting a 90-day limit on many shelter stays, in an effort to free up funds to work with the chronically homeless. The themes, Mr. Giuliani's aides say, seek to put Mayor David N. Dinkins on the defensive about the state of the city he presides over. "It takes the campaign to the record," said Mr. Giuliani's chief strategist, David Garth. *"Do you feel safer? Do you really believe that crime is down? Are you going to have to have a searchlight to walk in the streets and to step over the bodies of the homeless who need help"* (NYT 9/20/93, emphasis added)?

The emphasis here is on the fate of both middle class neighborhoods and businesses. The well being of the poor and the homeless is of no concern. The homeless are to be swept up for the benefit of the rest of the city. Giuliani's strategy of blaming the city's physical and social deterioration on Dinkins' tolerance of disorder was successful. It also set the groundwork for a series of punitive measures the Giuliani undertook once in office.

One of the first initiatives the new mayor put forward was the creation of "independent living plans." The proposal called for limiting the amount of time that people could stay in city shelters to 90 days, requiring homeless people to agree to a treatment regimen, and making them pay part of the cost of their shelter. This was proposed as a tough love measure to force homeless people to develop plans for changing their overall situation rather than being allowed to continue in their "negative" behavior pattern:

Giuliani asserted that his tougher approach, which he said shows more love and compassion for the homeless than they have ever been shown by previous administrations, would reduce the city's homeless population by giving them more options and making them more responsible for their fate (Newsday 5/7/94).

This new program made clear Giuliani's desire to deal with homelessness through punitive sanctions rather than increased services.

At the same time that this policy was put in place, the mayor began to reduce support for housing and treatment programs. The most serious was the scaling back of the city's subsidy program to landlords to house homeless families:

Three city agencies have eliminated or tightened housing placement and referral programs, lengthening waits for subsidized housing to months. And the only evening intake unit, in the Bronx, still warehouses 100 families or more a night despite the city's attempt just this week to screen the homeless through a telephone hotline (Newsday 11/17/94).

The mayor's inability to provide basic services meant he was soon forced to back away from the time limits and case management rules.

The other major "quality of life" development during the early part of the administration was in policing. Giuliani hired former Transit Police Chief William Bratton to be Commissioner of the NYPD. Bratton had made a reputation for himself at Transit by implementing a series of "broken windows" based policing tactics, including driving the homeless out of the system and aggressive enforcement of fare-beating laws. Bratton and his top staff developed a series of new crime fighting strategies for the NYPD. The fifth of these was called "Reclaiming the Public Spaces of New York." This document specifically mentions the "broken windows" theory and calls for restoring order through aggressive enforcement of minor crimes such as prostitution, graffiti, loud music, public drinking and "the specific crime and quality-of-life problems facing each community" (NYPD 1994). It also called for the passage of a "Quality-of-Life

Legislative Agenda" that included new laws against aggressive panhandling and panhandling near ATM machines. The latter was passed in September of 1996.

Tough love from social service providers and increased enforcement by police placed homeless people in a world full of punitive sanctions. The message was loud and clear. The way to improve the "quality of life" of the middle and upper classes was to make the lives of homeless people untenable in public spaces. Solving homelessness was not the goal; it was reducing the visible impact of homelessness on the rest of the city.

"Quality of Life" in San Francisco

"Quality of life" doesn't have the same extensive history in San Francisco as in New York. This may be due to the fact that their urban problems didn't reach the same level of crisis during the late 1960's and mid 1970's as New York. In New York John Lindsay, a moderate Republican, ushered the term into conventional usage. San Francisco didn't have a Republican mayor during this period and that may explain why the term was picked up much later by the media and local politicians. As a result, when the social crisis of homelessness emerges in the 1980's "quality of life" wasn't as available in the local political lexicon for either progressives or conservatives.

While "quality of life" didn't play the same symbolic role in the early stages of the homelessness crisis in San Francisco as it did in New York, the overall content of the discussions was similar. Chapter 5 will provide a more detailed discussion of this history. For now I will just point out that there was an important tension between conceptualizing the homelessness problem in terms of providing assistance to homeless people or towards

addressing the complaints of middle class residents. The former was discussed in terms of developing social programs and new housing; the latter in terms of "retaking the streets" and restoring the physical and social environment of the city. This is the same tension that has occurred in New York since the 1960's.

In San Francisco, 1986 was a crucial year for the homelessness crisis, as what had been a localized problem came to disrupt neighborhoods throughout the city. As the city struggled for a way to address the problem the two main rhetorical themes—helping the disadvantaged and protecting the middle class--were in constant and sometimes contradictory circulation, as can be seen in these two very different editorials from the San Francisco *Chronicle* in July 1986:

A vigorous and humane program is necessary to deal with the new phenomena of homeless vagrants encamped in San Francisco's residential neighborhoods. Initially the city plans to use social workers and police officers to suggest to any roosting drifters that they take advantage of homeless facilities and hotels for which the city government has budgeted \$8 million annually. Once shelter is provided, both public and private agencies should commit their means to medical and psychiatric care, job direction and guidance for drug and alcohol abusers (SFC 7/11/86).

San Francisco has reached a crucial crossroads: Either surrender the streets to the rabble of riffraff rapidly gaining possession of them, or crack down and throw the bums out. Now is the time to decide whether decent citizens have the right to enjoy their beautiful city without offense to eye or limb, or whether they have to yield to indolent vagrants and demented derelicts (SFC 7/30/86).

In the first, the focus is on what can be done to improve the lives of homeless people themselves. In the second, these people are now referred to as "riffraff" and "demented derelicts." The focus is on how social and aesthetic disorder is a problem not for those on the streets but for the "decent citizens" of the city. There is also a clear movement from a

rehabilitation-based services-oriented approach to a punitive enforcement-oriented approach. However, the actual term "quality of life" is not used at this stage.

The regular use of "quality of life" develops in relationship to three other social issues in San Francisco. The first is the conflict over growth. In 1983 a series of efforts begins to try to limit the growth of the downtown financial district. Fearing a growing "Manhattanization," urban environmentalists put forward a number of measures to restrict growth. These efforts were often couched in terms of maintaining the city's high "quality of life." The two quotes below highlight the use of the term. The first is in relation to a 1985 Board of Supervisors zoning plan in response to these concerns, the second is from a prominent San Francisco architect:

The plan contains what are thought to be the most stringent growth restrictions ever enacted by a major American city. It was passed in response to years of complaints from residents that San Francisco's scenic beauty and quality of life were being spoiled by developers who were filling the downtown skyline with look-alike, glass-sheathed skyscrapers that gave rise to serious traffic, parking and housing problems (NYT 7/3/85).

"The trend in American cities is clearly toward control," said San Francisco architect Jeffrey Heller. "People resent uncontrolled overbuilding that robs them of quality of life." San Francisco has spent the last decade trying to preserve its scenic beauty and life style while coping with traffic congestion, strained services, high housing costs and the flight of businesses to its suburbs (Washington Post 8/27/88).

This use of the term is consistent with its early environmental orientation, and also coincides with largely middle and upper class concerns. It also has a strong aesthetic element that will be a central motif in its later use in relation to homelessness.

The second regular use of the term emerges in association with the HIV/AIDS epidemic. As the disease comes to affect a larger group of people, public discourse about

treatment becomes a topic of more public discussion. "Quality of life" becomes a regular part of these discussions as people search for ways to live with the disease. Quotes like the one below illustrate one of the more common usages of the term:

"AIDS is essentially an outpatient disease," said Dr. Donald Abrams, codirector of the AIDS division at San Francisco General, the city's public hospital, whose Ward 86 has become a huge outpatient clinic for AIDS patients. Noting that he was once disposed to hospitalize at the first sign of pneumocystis pneumonia, another common AIDS infection, Abrams said he is "more inclined to want people at home. The more people can stay at home, the more it increases quality of life" (*Washington Post* 1/31/88).

This usage is consistent with the extensive use of the term in the medical literature, which also goes back to the earliest origins of the term. In both of the two cases above, the term is associated with a largely progressive agenda of preserving the environment, controlling growth, and improving the daily lives of the medically vulnerable.

The third area of usage involves a twist on the environmental roots of the term. It was used to describe the business environment. As anti-growth rhetoric intensified, businesses attempted to assert their idea of the ideal environment. The transition can be seen in this quote from the San Francisco Deputy Mayor James Ho in response to business complaints about growth restrictions:

"People say we're anti-growth. It's not necessarily true," he said. "Art (Agos) is intent on showing how a liberal mayor can manage a city to grow and also have compassion. The most valued thing is quality of life. It's very sellable (*Journal of Commerce* 2/2/89).

Later that year Mayor Agnos appointed business leader Arthur Latno to head a new business planning group called the San Francisco 2000 Committee. The goal of the group was to establish a consensus around how to improve the business climate in the city:

Without such a consensus, Latno said, San Francisco will continue to lose its edge on Los Angeles and San Jose, which have been able to unite in an effort to improve their qualities of life (SFC 12/28/89).

For the business community, "quality of life" refers to the level of taxes, the stability of the cities physical infrastructure, and the degree to which social problems directly effect their employees and customers.

The first regular appearance of the term in relationship to homelessness is a blending of some of these progressive elements in the service of a largely conservative agenda. Beginning in 1988, a number of different constituencies began to use the term to express their frustration with the effects of growing homelessness and disorder are having on their daily lives. Neighborhood groups like the Cole Valley Improvement Association (discussed in Chapter 4) began to express their concerns about homelessness in terms of "quality of life" (SFC 2/9/88). Comments like these in a letter to the editor of the *Chronicle* are typical of how the new term was used:

If we San Franciscans are bothered by the aggressive panhandling, the dirty streets, the rising crime level, graffiti, the vandalism and the general overall decline of the quality of life in the city over the past five years (and we see it every day, enough to get numb to it), imagine your reaction if you were returning to the city for a visit or convention after a long absence—you'd be positively repulsed (SFC 7/16/91).

In addition to neighborhood residents, business leaders continued to decry the declining social conditions in the city. The final constituency that adopts the term in earnest is the police department. During a Police Commission meeting Police Chief William Casey complained about a recent court decision restricting the arrest of panhandlers that, "the Federal Courts have taken another tool away from San Francisco to improve its quality of life" (North Mission News 10/91). The rank and file was also using

the term as demonstrated in a letter to the editor from Al Trigueiro, the President of the Police Officers Association: "Art Agnos has compromised your public safety and your quality of life. Join us in putting an end to four forgettable years of Art Agnos politics" (SFC 12/7/91).

This combination of frustrated neighborhood residents, business leaders and the police formed the basis of the political coalition that brought former Police Chief Frank Jordan into office in 1992 on a platform suffused with references to "quality of life." The overall priorities were to move homeless people out of public spaces and clean up the city. For Jordan "quality of life" meant responding to the complaints of neighborhood activists, business leaders, and police innovators.

These strands came together in 1993 with his "Quality of Life Enforcement Program." In August of 1993, Jordan announced a new initiative to reduce the visible presence of homeless people in the city. The program used the police to strictly enforce minor law violations as a way of forcing homeless people out of parks and off city sidewalks. Thousands of tickets and hundreds of arrests were made for public urination, public lodging, drinking in public, sleeping in the park, and other minor infractions. According to Jordan's chief of staff and former head of the Chamber of Commerce, Jim Lazarus, "Homelessness in and of itself is not a crime, but that lifestyle does have a criminal element, and that is what the mayor is targeting. These problems are offensive and the mayor has said enough is enough" (LA Times 8/30/93). The name of the program was soon changed to Matrix but the underlying goals remained the same and as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, they continue to shape San Francisco's approach to homelessness.

Conclusion

The “quality of life” paradigm is a complex set of practices and ideas about how to best handle homelessness and public disorder. There is, however, a clear underlying pattern that represents a dramatic shift from the policies of “urban liberalism.” The new paradigm was powerful synthesis of the “broken windows” theory, communitarianism, and urban neoconservatism. As such it united academic theorists, police reformers, community activists, business leaders, and neoconservative politicians. The media also played an important role in constructing the paradigm. Historically liberal newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* picked up on the term “quality of life” and wielded it as a broad critique of urban liberalism. As we will see in Chapter 5, neoconservative politicians responded to this dynamic and used the ideas behind the new paradigm to construct a new political coalition that was able to unseat urban liberal politicians in both New York and San Francisco.

With the election of Mayors Giuliani and Jordan, both cities were transformed from having some of the most progressive homeless policies in the country, to some of the most regressive. Rather than developing housing and social services, these new mayors were concerned with creating a series of punitive measures designed to reduce the public impact of homelessness rather than solving the problems of homeless people. In the next chapter I will explore in more detail why this radical change occurred at this particular time in these two historically liberal cities.

Chapter 3

The Crisis of the Neighborhood

During the 1970's and 80's many urban neighborhoods were experiencing significant social strain as a result of economic, political, and cultural changes. These changes threatened people's sense of security and stability and reduced their ability to deal with the problem of homelessness as it became a widespread concern in the mid-1980's. This resulted in the development of a political backlash along a broad front that culminated in a renewed effort to control localized disorder and to criminalize the visible homeless.

Homelessness emerged as a dramatic social problem for urban neighborhoods in the mid 1980's. Prior to its arrival, however, these areas were already experiencing a crisis of stability. Economic polarization, political retrenchment, and cultural disruption were straining the social fabric of New York City and San Francisco. This strain undermined the ability of local governments, neighborhood activists, and local elites to deal with the additional problem of homelessness. The result was neighborhoods that felt threatened and even besieged.

The roots of this urban crisis can be traced back to economic, political and social changes beginning in the 1960's and 1970's. The first source of strain was based largely on economic changes. During the early 1970's the American companies began a process of deindustrialization in which manufacturing was moved from the urban northeast to the U.S. sunbelt and overseas (Bluestone and Harrison 1982, McKenzie 1984). They also attempted to undermine the stability of postwar labor relations through these plant-movings or "runaway shops" as well as through contracting out to non-union suppliers

and bargaining for wage and benefit give-backs (Lash and Urry 1987). This process created an increase in economic uncertainty for lower and middle class workers at the same time that wages for top managers and investors was ballooning.

In response to this process of manufacturing disinvestment, urban governments were increasingly relying on an entrepreneurial strategy of economic development that called for the privileging of corporate headquarters and financial markets over manufacturing (Mollenkopf 1983, Judd and Ready 1986, Harvey 1989, Hall and Hubbard 1998). The results were a loss of low-skill employment opportunities and a gentrification of housing markets. The effects of this were two fold. On the one hand poor minority communities became highly socially disorganized and threatened to disrupt bordering communities (Wilson 1996), and gentrification pressures on middle income neighborhoods that threatened to displace residents (Smith 1996). Whether rich or poor, in decline or ascendancy, many urban neighborhoods were forced to struggle to maintain stability in a dynamic and threatening economic environment.

Wealthy commercial districts were threatened by the growth in disorder because of the decline in suburban shoppers and tourists visiting these areas. Middle-class neighborhoods felt besieged by the pressure of either declining into a poor neighborhood under the strain of increased social disorganization or the threat of being displaced by gentrification. Poor neighborhoods were experiencing increased unemployment, homelessness, social disorganization, abandonment, crime, and disorder. They were all struggling for a way to restore order and stability to their neighborhoods.

At the same time, government resources that could have been used to address these problems were declining. At the federal level support for cities began declining with the

dismantling of the Great Society programs following the Johnson administration and culminating with the austerity measures introduced by Ronald Reagan. In California, Proposition 13 undermined state and city resources, and in New York the fiscal crisis of the mid 1970's had a similar effect. Just when cities were in need of resources to address the effects of increased economic polarization, they were hamstrung by these government cut backs.

There were also important social changes occurring in the 1970's and 80's. The social movements for civil rights in the 1960's and the gay and lesbian and women's movements of the 1970's transformed standards of public behavior. On the one hand, these movements liberated public spaces for many constituencies that had been denied their use. Society became more tolerant of diverse behaviors in public spaces creating increased freedom for some. On the other side, however, these movements created cultural tensions for other groups, who desired more civility and homogeneity in public behavior. This cultural conflict shifted in favor of conservatives as social disorder and crime increased in public spaces in the late 70's and throughout the 80's. Crime, prostitution, and graffiti all manifested themselves before the rise of homelessness. As homelessness emerged, it became the central symbol of the urban crisis.

Competing Explanations of the Urban Crisis

While there is general agreement that American cities were experiencing significant strains in the 1970's and 80's, there have been a number of different explanations as to the nature and origin of this crisis. Social and cultural theorists have pointed to the rise in

crime and changing race relations. Political theorists have focused on the changing role of the state in regulating economic activity and funding social programs. Economic theorists have focused on the changing organization of housing and employment markets. Finally, a few theorists have attempted to explain the interrelationship of political, economic, and cultural changes that occurred during this period. This section will review the strengths and weaknesses of these different theories and how they can help us understand the urban landscape that the homeless crisis appeared in during the mid 1980's.

Cultural Explanations

As we saw in Chapter 2, a number of recent theorists have pegged the decline in cities to the rise of public disorder. James Q. Wilson and George Kelling (1982) put forward the "broken windows" theory as way of explaining the effect of disorder on neighborhood stability. Fred Siegel (1997) built on this analysis. He argued that the refusal of city governments to restore order to the social environment in the wake of the racial and political turmoil of the 1960's and 70's opened the door to more serious and deviant forms of public behavior, which led to crime, fear, and neighborhood decline. Amitai Etzioni (1995, 1996) also implicates the social liberalism that grew out of the 1960's and 70's as a factor in the rise of disorder and calls for a return to community enforcement of shared standards of public civility.

Jim Sleeper (1990) and Jonathan Rieder (1985) implicate the liberal approach to race relations in the post civil rights era as a cause of the crisis. They argue that liberals failed to stand up against the more radical cultural, social, and political demands of the civil

rights and Black Nationalist movements of the 1960's and 70's. This left urban race relations in such bad shape that social intolerance actually increased and neighborhood economic vitality was undermined. Siegel goes on to argue that the financial woes of New York and other major cities can be traced back to this problem as well. By failing to hold the tide against increased welfare payments and by accepting the argument that blacks weren't compatible with the immigrant model of economic advancement, cities created both a financial drain on their own resources and a culture of dependency among poor blacks.

Sleeper argues that "the specter of neighborhood decay" had its origins in the deteriorating race relations of the 1960's. During this period white ethnics abandoned many urban neighborhoods and retreated into enclaves, which they sometimes violently defended from racial incursions in the form of housing and school integration, in an effort to maintain their property investments. By the 1980's, this problem had moved from the margins of racial expansion to the entire city in the form of crime and fear of crime, a deteriorating school system, and a decline in city services. Sleeper quotes City Comptroller Harrison Goldin, who offered Mayor Koch the following warning in 1989:

Ed, I think that we're not going to save New York until we get a mayor who recognizes that there are an awful lot of people who want to leave her, who would leave here if they could. We need a mayor who would acknowledge that, because that's what it's going to take to begin to improve the *quality of life*. That's why businesses aren't coming to New York. That's why businesses are leaving New York. Because of the crime situation. Because of the public schools' deterioration (Sleeper 1990: p.15, emphasis added).

This statement highlights the interconnectedness of the decline of the public and private spheres. As crime increases and public services deteriorate, private investment declines

and public confidence plummeted.

Another explanation of the crisis is that racial succession created neighborhood instability. Jonathan Rieder (1985) in his study of the Brooklyn neighborhood of Canarsie, pointed out that it was the movement of blacks from overcrowded slum neighborhoods into adjoining middle and working class white ethnic neighborhoods in the 1970's that contributed to a sense of urban crisis. He focuses on the racialized battles over access to housing and school desegregation as the cause of racial conflict resulting in white retrenchment and political realignment.

These works point out the volatility of race relations in the 1980's that will play a muted role in the coming struggles over homelessness and public disorder. Sleeper and Rieder show that many people who were committed to urbanism (unlike many conservatives at the national level) were convinced that liberalism had made crucial errors in the handling of racial conflict and the cultural changes associated with it. While this argument highlights the role of political strategies and cultural responses, it fails to address the broader economic and political context within which the crisis was developing at that time. It also lacked a coherent strategy for resolving this problem. I will explore both these issues later in this section.

Political Explanations

Francis Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (1997) offer a primarily political explanation of the origins of the urban crisis. They argue that the federal government pursued a number of policies in the post war period that favored suburban and Sunbelt development

over urban development. The result was a loss of manufacturing jobs and much of the middle-class population. This process was accelerated in the post Great Society period as the federal government reduced support for urban social programs and economic development. The result was a rise in the number of unemployed people of color inhabiting the central cities, and local governments unable to meet the needs of this population.

Piven and Cloward, like Sleeper and Seigel add the important element of political strategy into the analysis of the crisis of urban neighborhoods. Sleeper and Seigel criticize liberals for failing to control the excesses of blacks in what is largely a cultural analysis. Piven and Cloward criticize conservative politicians for their abandonment of cities in what is largely an economic analysis of the effects of these political decisions. Both critiques make it clear that the strategies of politicians played an important role in the development of the urban crisis, as will be shown later in this chapter.

Economic Explanations

Another economics-based explanation of the crisis in urban neighborhoods in the 1980's. revolves around the dynamics of gentrification. According to urban geographer Neil Smith (1996) at the same time that the underclass was growing, the upwardly mobile middle class was expanding, creating pressure on urban housing markets in the form of gentrification. Gentrification placed pressure on people in rental properties and on fixed incomes, who feared displacement by increasing rents and property taxes. Some of these people were displaced, especially in areas where SRO and other low cost housing in

newly desirable areas was converted to high rents. Some of these people were forced to relocate to less desirable areas. The growing numbers and visible presence of homeless people created additional uncertainty for homeowners in gentrified areas creating a destabilizing presence as people feared that their investments would be at risk if social disorder went unchecked.

Gentrification was an important destabilizing influence in certain neighborhoods. It is important to note that in New York and San Francisco some of the neighborhoods that experienced the most dramatic political shifts during the rise of homelessness were just such neighborhoods. These were areas where people who were committed to urban living and often had historically liberal view points, came to feel besieged by homelessness and felt especially betrayed by urban liberalism and its inability to address their concerns about declining urban public life. In Chapter 5 some examples of this process will be discussed in detail.

A number of sociologists have focused specifically on the effect of economic restructuring on poor and minority urban communities. Understanding the nature of conditions in these communities is important for two reasons. First, because they become the symbol of the worst possible outcomes for communities. Middle and lower middle class residents are motivated to struggle to maintain neighborhood conditions to avoid falling into this status of most distressed neighborhood—with their problems of crime and abandonment. Second, the residents in these communities respond to the twin crisis of increased homelessness and crime with greater alarm because of the direct effect they have on their already distressed neighborhoods.

Robert Sampson (1989, 1993) offers a somewhat ahistorical and ecological analysis

of the relationship between community conditions and increased crime and social disorder. His study of urban communities in Great Britain (1989) indicates that low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility and family disruption lead to community social disorganization and increased crime. The implication of this study is that as economic conditions worsened in poor and minority communities, then social disorganization and crime would increase.

Chicago Sociologist William Julius Wilson (1987, 1996) takes this argument a step further, by placing it in a specific historical moment. He argues that structural economic changes in the 1970's and 80's created worsening conditions for African-Americans:

Urban minorities have been particularly vulnerable to structural economic changes, such as the shift from goods-producing to service-producing industries, the increased polarization of the labor market into high-wage and low-wage sectors, technological innovations, and the relocation of manufacturing industries out of the central cities (Wilson 1986).

In addition, the flight of better off African Americans from the most distressed neighborhoods created a further decline in inner-city neighborhoods. Wilson goes on to state that it was only after the downturn in these neighborhoods that cultural patterns developed that encouraged disorderly behavior, a poor work ethic, the break down of families, and crime.

While Wilson emphasized the role of structural economic change, sociologists Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (1993) argue that racial segregation has helped to intensify the decline of poor urban neighborhoods. They note that the level of segregation in the late 80's was as high as in any previous period and that this contributed to the formation of an urban minority underclass.

Urban sociologist Paul Jargowsky attempts to reconcile these competing perspectives

in his book *Poverty and Place: Ghettos Barrios, and the American City* (1997), in an effort to explain the growth of high poverty areas in American cities in the 1980's. He examines the relative importance of the factors of race, impoverishment, employment opportunity, segregation, middle-class flight, and the "culture of poverty." He finds that access to employment was the most important factor in explaining the recent rise in high poverty urban neighborhoods, and argues against the importance of racial segregation and cultural factors. He supports Wilson's basic contention that urban neighborhood declines have been the result of economic restructuring, which has in turn generated disruptive cultural patterns that affect both these communities and cities as a whole.

Scott Lash and John Urry (1987, 1994) offer an analysis of the relationship between the changing economy, culture, and politics that culminated in the crisis of neighborhoods and their movement towards increasing localism and conservatism that is based on the changing economics of the 1970's and 1980's. Since the economic crises of the early 70's there have been some fundamental shifts in worldwide economic activity. One of the results of this has been the destabilization of universal ideals that have tended to create a high level of cultural and economic interdependence in the society. The post-war Fordist compromise between business, labor, and the state charted a shared course of nation-based economic growth accomplished by increased productivity and domestic spending. This required both spending by the state and high wages for workers to generate consumer demand and increased production.

The break down of this corporatist compromise occurred as a result of changes in international economic patterns. As corporations became more global, they no longer saw the need to promote the economic superiority of one country or region over another.

Instead, they were willing to seek out the most immediately advantageous production arrangements wherever they could. This often meant fleeing high wage/unionized areas of the industrial center for peripheral low wage and low regulation countries. As a result, communities are now increasingly pitted against each other, and internally there is a growing division between those tied into the global corporate economy and those left out.

Local communities are retrenching in the face of this global economic destabilization. Deindustrialization has reduced the number of good paying working class jobs causing an economic ripple effect. Wage polarization and reduced public services are the most dramatic economic results. Socially, communities are suffering from increased crime and other social pathologies such as substance abuse, homelessness and juvenile delinquency. They are also under assault by increasing corporate penetration of local cultures in the form of advertising, consumerism, and privatization of public services and public spaces. People are struggling to develop meaning systems and mechanisms of control in the face of the economic and cultural instability resulting from this process.

In *Economies of Signs and Space* (1994), Lash and Urry are interested in the effects of a global "two-thirds" society in which social and economic polarization is increasing both globally and locally. It is producing a middle and upper class group, which is involved in the formal economy and a growing underclass with little or no direct access to mainstream economic or social activity. By the 1980's, social power was becoming a function of control over informational and aesthetic flows. As capital, culture and populations become more mobile, the importance of understanding the complex

processes of their movements becomes paramount. Those who control these processes have a greater ability to understand and exert influence over economic and social life.

For Lash and Urry, communities lie in either "tame" or "wild" zones. Tame zones are those areas where civil society is organized around the manipulation of capital and cultural flows. Wild zones are those that don't have control over these flows:

Such wild zones are characterized by a collapsing (or collapsed) civil society, a weakly developed 'civilizing process', and flight to 'tame zones' for those that are able to escape. Such tame zones are areas of economic, political and cultural security, often with strong boundaries separating them off from the wild zones of disorganized capitalism (Lash and Urry 1994: p.324).

The struggle of communities is therefore, often to create these tame zones for themselves.

Control over the appearance of public space has become increasingly important as local areas have an ever declining ability to effect underlying material conditions due to increased globalization of capital, immigration, culture and political power; they are largely left with only the ability to symbolically manipulate their environment. Sharon Zukin (1991) shows how economic elites during this period created cultural change to further their economic interests. She describes urban areas as landscapes: spaces consisting of a political, economic and cultural matrix of power. She argues that while the logic of production has historically determined the form of urban landscapes, patterns of consumption are becoming increasingly important to understanding the social and political conditions of society.

This point is developed further in *The Cultures of Cities* (1995), in which she argues that control over the visual and cultural environment are central elements in the economic development strategies of elites and local government. They are using culture and

aesthetics as a way of attracting both tourists searching for unique experiences, and business that want to be plugged into the competitive advantages that cultural innovation provide in the new symbolic economy.

Zukin goes on to offer us some cautionary tales about the consequences of a cultural strategy of development. She describes how economic elites are exerting increasing control over the public sphere through the aesthetic control of public spaces through privatization and commercialization. She outlines how a New York business improvement district, the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation, has re-created the historically dilapidated Bryant Park near Times Square as an enclave of enforced civility through the use of design features, heavy security presence, and regulation of behavior and access. This new regime of cultural control has restored the vitality of public spaces but contributed to an increased polarization and policing of the public sphere. This strategy has profound consequences for homeless people and others who are viewed as a blight on the urban landscape. In Chapters 4 and 5 we will see how commercial interests in both New York and San Francisco pursued a strategy of homeless removal in order to regain aesthetic control over central commercial districts. Christian Parenti (1999) argues that this was precisely the motivation for "quality of life" crackdowns in New York and San Francisco.

There is clearly a connection between the changes going on in the economy, politics, and culture that contributed to the crisis of urban neighborhoods in the 1980's. But what was the causal nature of this relationship? And how did it affect different groups in different places? I will argue that the economic restructuring of San Francisco and New

York in the 1970's and 80's created a high level of insecurity among residents throughout these cities. The results of this anxiety, however, were different in different areas, as were the social conditions people faced.

In commercial and tourism oriented parts of the both cities, business people began to consider visible homelessness and disorder as a threat to their economic well being. There was a fear that suburban shoppers and tourists would be deterred from visiting the central city because of the growing unsightliness and menacing appearance of the area. These groups banded together to both develop their own initiatives and to push city governments to respond.

Middle class residents were affected in two ways. On the one hand they had growing sense of insecurity about their own economic position and the threat that neighborhood disorder had on it. On the other hand they were being pressured by the forces of gentrification, which threatened to displace. The result was a heightened level activity to "preserve" the neighborhood them along a broad front.

For poor and working class residents, the effects were different. They were more concerned about the high levels of unemployment, housing shortages and serious crime in their neighborhoods. In addition they often resented being shut out of governmental decision making about the placement of homeless shelters and other facilities, which increased the sense of both crisis and helplessness.

In addition race played an important if subtle role among each of these groups. Economic restructuring disproportionately affected people of color as shown by William J. Wilson. The presence of young black and Latino men became a tangible representation of the presence of the negative effects of this restructuring, namely crime and disorder.

And since homeless people were disproportionately represented in the homeless population, they suffered the stigma of both homelessness and racial other. In communities of color, race played a role in that these communities resented the lack of attention that their social needs received in comparison to white communities. This feeling of discrimination colored their attitudes about city government and its efforts to deal with the growing crime, homelessness, and disorder problems in their midst.

I will now look at the nature and timing of economic, political, and cultural changes in New York and San Francisco that led up to the crisis of the late 1980's. I will describe the concrete practices that contributed to neighborhood decline and the competing explanations that shaped people's perceptions of the crisis. The specifics about how these neighborhoods responded to these conditions will be described in detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Economic Transformation

In the early 1970's there were a series of economic convulsions associated with a decline in corporate profits, the abandonment of the gold standard as a basic element of the Bretton Woods trade regime, and the Middle Eastern oil crisis. This period of crisis led corporations and governments to develop a new global economic regime based on shifting manufacturing to the Developing Nations, and concentrating corporate management, finance, and the symbolic economy in the Developed Nations. Low wages in the Developing Nations, cheap transportation costs, and the deregulation of capital investment made it economically worthwhile to disperse manufacturing from the core

industrial countries. This decentralization of manufacturing made both the command and control of production and financial management procedures much more complicated and interwoven; creating an incentive to centralize both processes.

Increasingly cities felt they had to choose between resisting these changes by actively supporting their manufacturing base, or embracing these changes by creating tax and zoning incentives, and creating public private partnerships, to build up their central business districts as a way of encouraging the presence and growth of corporate headquarters, finance firms, and business services. During the 1970's and 80's both New York City and San Francisco pursued this entrepreneurial strategy of economic development. Responding to new global financial conditions, each city developed policies to retain and expand their corporate headquarters, financial, consumer services, and real estate sectors.

The decision to follow this strategy had significant implications for social relations in each city, not least of which was the creation of a large population of homeless people living in shelters and public spaces in each city. The overall effect was one of economic polarization. Labor markets became polarized between those who were able to find a place in the new corporate and business services sector, and those who were forced into the low wage service support jobs. Housing markets were also destabilized as people with more money pushed up real estate values throughout these cities at the same time that a growing number of people were unable to pay the increasing prices. The overall result was a growing uncertainty about the stability of urban neighborhoods.

New York City

New York experienced the economic polarization of the 1980's more than any other American city. It was already a major financial center and had the largest concentration of corporate headquarters and associated business services in the United States. The city government was also squarely in favor of supporting the growth of the service and corporate sector and the decline of manufacturing. The Lindsay (1966-1974) and Koch (1978-1990) administrations developed numerous tax incentives that pushed manufacturing out of the city (especially Manhattan) and encourage high rent commercial and housing development even when demand was sluggish.

In 1968, the RPA, a non-profit planning group funded by major corporations, released its *Second Regional Plan*, that called for a dramatic vertical and horizontal expansion of the downtown and midtown central business districts. This plan called for a reduction in government support for manufacturing and an increase in support for high rise office development. The RPA plan was based on the assumption that, along with global population increases, New York would see a rise in population and employment. To facilitate this, the city needed to utilize its limited land as efficiently as possible through concentration of use. This meant replacing low-density and low-rent manufacturing with high-density office and residential space.

The Lindsay administration adopted many of the RPA's recommendations in its *Plan for New York City 1969* (New York City Planning Commission 1969). These included westward expansion of midtown, a new Second Avenue subway line, and the enlargement of the downtown financial district through the development of the World Trade Center and Battery Park City. However, rather than counterposing office expansion and manufacturing, Mayor Lindsay tried to support the development of both manufacturing and commercial office space. This was to be done by relocating manufacturing to the outer boroughs to make room for high rise development. Despite pledges to increase

manufacturing, this relocation policy actually substantially reduced manufacturing in the city. Shortly after the plan was released, the New York economy took a nose dive postponing the implementation of its recommendations and leading up to the fiscal crises of the mid 1970's.

Fiscal Crisis

In the mid to late 1970's, the city developed and expanded a number of tax incentive programs to try to stimulate real estate development. The hope was that a boom in high rise office and luxury housing development would stimulate the economy by creating profits for real estate developers—a precursor to the Reagan "trickle down" economics of the 1980's. These programs, including the Industrial and Commercial Incentives Program, and sections J-51, 421a and 421b of the municipal tax code, drove up land prices in much of Manhattan, forcing out lower value uses such as manufacturing and low income housing.

As the local real estate market began to improve in the late 1970's, these incentives remained in place, generating windfall profits for developers and creating a subsidy driven incentive for office space development in a period when demand could easily be met by the existing supply. The result was a glut of new high rent commercial office buildings, a loss of manufacturing jobs and low-income housing, and a continuing loss of tax revenues. As a member of Community Board 5 west of Midtown stated in 1979, "The city is giving away too much; we're still in a poverty state of mind when these builders are going to make a bundle off of new buildings in midtown" (NYT 10/14/79).

Rather than responding to these complaints about over-subsidizing development, the Koch administration enhanced the subsidies. Koch was motivated to do this for two reasons. First he wanted to ensure a flow of campaign funds for his mayoral campaigns in 1981, 1985, and 1989, and his run for governor in 1982. The largest single group of his

contributors were real estate companies (Mollenkopf 1992). Second, he felt that corporate growth was the key to the city's economic development. Koch's agenda of controlling spending and supporting private development was consistent with that of major business interests as represented by the New York City Partnership, which came to be a major supporter of the mayor (Mollenkopf 1992). The effect of this relationship to the elite business community was continued support for the policies that were polarizing the city.

In 1981, reports were issued by the Twentieth Century Fund (1981) and the State of New York (1981) calling for a global vision that would place New York at the center of an emerging world economy. These reports argued that in order to capture the position of global leader, the city had to expand its supply of office space. In 1982, the city adopted the Midtown Development Plan that called for additional subsidies to developers of office space on the west side of Midtown. This plan, along with development subsidies for the financial district and existing market and luxury housing subsidies created a tax loss of over \$1 billion a year by 1988 (Fitch 1993:282).

Employment

Employment patterns went through dramatic changes during this period. Partly as a result of city economic development policy and partly as a result of changes in corporate employment practices, a polarization of income developed. New York's real estate subsidies encouraged the trend of replacing manufacturing with commercial office space (and high-income housing). This meant that fewer middle-class manufacturing jobs were available for the city's large blue-collar population. Between 1969 and 1980, the city lost over 330,000 of its 825,000 manufacturing jobs. Some of these jobs moved to suburban areas where some workers were able to follow them. However, racial exclusion in housing and employment meant these jobs were permanently lost for many New Yorkers. The jobs that remained paid lower wages relative to the national average (Gordon and

Sassen 1992:116). By the 1990's this trend continued with the widespread resurgence of sweatshop conditions in the garment industry.

White-collar employment was being transformed as well. As corporations were restructured in the late 1970's and 1980's, they increased the number of very high paying executive positions and reduced the number of middle managers. They also increased the number of low paying service jobs. Companies that provided business services to these larger corporations soon followed suit. The result was dramatic wage polarization. The top 20% income group saw dramatic increases in wages and investment income through this period while the bottom 20% actually had a reduction in income (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 1992). In addition there was an increase in the amount of underemployment as jobs took on more of a part-time and contingent quality.

Finally, unemployment itself was a major problem in New York throughout the 1970's and early 80's. The city's unemployment rate--around 9%--was well above the national average during this period. The result was a growing population of people who were unemployed, underemployed, or working for poverty level wages. By 1987 25% of the city was living in poverty, up from 15% in 1969 (Dinkins 1987), and the economic growth of the early 80's was having little effect on those at the bottom. According to the New York State Department of Social Services,

The beginning of the economic recovery in the state has not been accompanied until very recently by even a slowing of the growth in welfare case loads. While economic indicators rose, so did poverty. The reasons appear to be related to a broad shift in the nature of the state's labor market (from low-skilled to higher skilled jobs that more often exclude the poor), and the depth of the recession, which left many people in an extreme state of hardship and dependence that takes a long time to reverse (New York State Department of Social Services 1984:36).

For those on welfare the situation was even worse. As inflation increased and benefit levels remained steady, the 1970's saw a major decline in the value of welfare payments.

During the 1980's there was also a decline in political support for welfare programs, and some benefits were cut and eligibility tightened. As a result, 1990 welfare payments were worth only 63% of what they had been in 1970 (Sykes 1990). At the same time housing costs were increasing, and federal subsidies were being reduced. By 1988 only 28% of AFDC recipients were receiving housing assistance (Sykes 1990). In 1990, market rent for a two bedroom apartment was \$593—more than twice the AFDC shelter grant and 112% of the total AFDC grant (Sykes 1990) leaving welfare recipients little room to maneuver in a tight housing market.

Housing

The polarization of the labor market created a growing group of wealthy executives who could afford luxury housing and a growing underclass that had trouble affording any housing. This process was exacerbated by changes in the housing market that reduced the supply of new low-income housing. These changes were precipitated by three developments. The first was local tax policies designed to encourage luxury housing and commercial development. The second was a decline in federal and local support for low-income housing. The third was a decline in the availability of low-income housing as a result of real estate disinvestment and abandonment associated with the "white flight" of the 1970's.

During the 1970's New York experienced a major reduction in its low income housing stock. Post war suburbanization turned into "white flight" by the late 1960's. This led to a wave of abandonment and arson through the 1970's and 1980's as landlords lost interest in reinvesting in areas that were becoming non-white and lower income—such as East New York and the Lower East Side—leaving the city with 358,000 fewer low income housing units by 1984 (Dinkins 1987). This occurred as both the number of households increased and wages dropped relative to both inflation and the cost of housing

(Goldin 1990, DeGiovanni and Minnite 1991).

The basic philosophy of the Koch administration was to help housing markets move in the direction they were already moving, only more so. Through a series of public-private partnerships and various subsidy programs, the city encouraged the gentrification process that was eliminating low cost housing. As part of the Koch strategy of real estate development, incentives such as J-51 were given to developers to rehabilitate low-income commercial and residential buildings into market and luxury rate housing. The J-51 program was created in 1955 but it wasn't until 1977 that it became a major program, expanding from \$11 million in 1977 to \$298 million in 1981. Because the J-51 incentives were given primarily to developers in midtown and downtown Manhattan, the buildings most affected were the SRO hotels that housed poor, single people who were the most marginally housed. In addition to the units lost directly from J-51 conversions, additional units were lost through illegal conversions. According to former City Council President Carol Bellamy, New York lost 80% of its SRO housing, or 108,500 units, between 1970 and 1984 (NYT, 5/18/84). Overall the city went from two hundred thousand SRO units in 1955, when J-51 was created, to forty thousand units in 1995, ten thousand of which were newly rehabilitated non-profit run SRO's (Supportive Housing Network of New York 1998). A study conducted by Winston Smith (1993) indicated that the J-51 program had not been cost effective, and that it had actually increased homelessness and decreased tax revenues.

As wage polarization increased in the early 1980's, housing developers chased the high-end market, building an addition 212,000 middle and upper income units from 1970 to 1984 (Dinkins 1987). The Koch Administration development strategies contributed to a real estate boom that had so pushed up the cost of land, that housing developers couldn't afford to build low cost housing without significant government subsidies. However, most of these subsidies had been scaled back or eliminated during the 70's and 80's. In 1971 Nixon placed a moratorium on federal housing programs as part of his

efforts to roll back the Johnson administration's "War on Poverty." The Carter administration made some increases but these were quickly undone in the 1980's by the Reagan administration, which reduced new funding and new construction support. New York's fiscal crisis of the mid 1970's made it impossible for the city government to pick up the slack. As a result, demand for low income housing far outstripped the supply. In 1983 the city's Housing Authority estimated that 10% of its units contained families "doubling up" (NYT 4/21/83). By 1987, 200,000 people were on waiting lists for public housing and the city's overall housing vacancy rate was down to 2% (Dinkins 1987).

In response to the rise in homelessness, the Koch administration initiated a 10 year \$5 billion housing program. However, this program created very few units affordable to people living off of low-wage employment or public assistance. Fewer than 20% of the units were slated to be affordable for previously homeless people (Harloe, Marcuse, and Smith 1992). The Koch administration's effort fell short of either abating homelessness or alleviating middle-class fears of housing pressures and social disruption.

During the 1970's and early 80's the city government was unable or unwilling to invest in low-income housing or to encourage a significant expansion of middle income housing. The result was that homelessness continued to be a major problem throughout the city and that middle-class communities felt threatened by both the financial pressure of gentrification and the social pressure of increased homelessness in their midst. By the time the Dinkins administration began its housing programs in the early 1990's the problem of low cost housing shortages was so great that the city had no hope of keeping up with demand. The more housing that became available, the more people who were in overcrowded and substandard housing, waited on line for the new apartments, filing up homeless shelters and intake facilities.

San Francisco

The current geography of San Francisco is the result of several waves of vertical growth over the last 40 years as building heights in the central parts of the city have continued to increase. Beginning in the late 1950's, the city embarked on a number of federally backed urban redevelopment efforts aimed at transforming some of the city's lowest income areas (the Western Addition and South of Market) into high-rent commercial and residential districts. After an initial wave of demolition in the Western Addition, significant community and labor protest emerged against these plans, putting the highly unified business community's desires for increased density on hold (Mollenkopf 1983; Castells 1983; DeLeon 1992).

With the election of Joseph Alioto as mayor in 1967, a new urban growth regime was formed (Mollenkopf 1983). It combined unrestricted real estate development with amenities for poor communities and jobs for construction unions. This coalition remained stable until 1974 when federal poverty and urban renewal financing was cut by the Nixon administration. In 1977 the growth regime came to a halt with the election of George Moscone, who placed the first significant restrictions on growth. However, his tenure ended tragically and prematurely in 1979 with his assassination. He was replaced by the pro-growth president of the city council, Diane Feinstein, who ushered in the most dramatic period of economic growth in the post-war period. From 1960 to 1980 commercial office space increased from 35.4 to 71 million square feet, and, by 1981, an additional 7.7 million sq. ft. were under construction and 5.1 million were in the planning pipeline (Castells 1983). This was followed by another slow-growth movement, which culminated in the passage of Proposition M by voters in 1986; they set significant development restrictions just as the real estate boom of the 1980's came to an end.

Employment

As San Francisco pursued a "entrepreneurial city" strategy, it too experienced a growth in income inequality, leading to the creation of a large number of low paying, part time, and temporary jobs, while manufacturing jobs disappeared. The most dramatic evidence of this shift in employment is the increase in service employment in business services, retail, and tourism. Between 1963 and 1982 service employment increased from 38,000 jobs to 100,000 jobs (DeLeon 1992), yet between 1970 and 1980, 22,000 jobs were lost in construction, manufacturing, transportation, utilities, and wholesale trade (Castells 1983). A report by the Association of Bay Area Governments showed that "the bottom two and top two income classes account for the majority of change in real income between 1978 and 1987." (quoted in DeLeon 1992).

Like New York State, California failed to maintain spending for welfare programs, and New York City and San Francisco were unable to make up the difference. During the 1970's and 1980's increases in AFDC failed to keep pace with inflation, reducing the buying power of welfare recipients. In San Francisco this was especially problematic because increases in the cost of housing were outpacing inflation. The result was a large group of low-wage workers and welfare recipients whose incomes were failing to keep up with increasing costs, especially in housing. The effect on the rest of the city was to create insecurity in the middle classes about falling either into this new underclass or having the stability of their neighborhoods undermined by the geographic expansion of this group.

Housing

In addition to changes in employment, there was a severe tightening of an already tight housing market, especially at the low end. This was the result of both government

sponsored urban redevelopment projects and the private conversion of low-cost housing into luxury units. Redevelopment decimated over 10,000 units of low income family housing in the Western Addition (Mollenkopf 1983) and thousands of SRO units in the South of Market (Hartman 1984). The Conversion of SRO buildings in the Tenderloin and surrounding areas into tourist hotels also eliminated thousands of low cost units (Shaw 1996).

During the 1970's, demand for new housing outstripped supply by 1,000 units a year, creating tremendous upward pressure on rents in large sections of the city (Hartman 1984). In many areas that had become affordable because of decreased investment this intensification of demand and reinvestment caused a disruptive pattern of gentrification that displaced numerous residents, leaving them few housing options. In fact San Francisco is the only urban area in the country that has had a reduction in its African American population, due in large part to this "pricing out" process. Vacancy rates by the 1980's were as low as 1-2% and by 1984, San Francisco had the highest housing cost in the country (Hartman 1984).

San Francisco, like New York City, was experiencing the growth of a population of low-wage workers and those on welfare while its supply of low cost housing was shrinking. This mismatch was especially hard on the most marginally housed: families on welfare, the intermittently employed, and people with physical and mental health problems who were no longer able to gain access to state hospitals, and whose government benefits were also failing to keep pace with housing costs. The result was a strong downward pressure on low-income tenants forcing those least able to compete in the new environment out on the street. Again as in New York, the effect on middle-income neighborhoods was economic insecurity and social disruption.

As the next section will describe, government intervention was also rolled back as part of the neoliberal program of reducing government intervention in housing and

employment markets on behalf of poor people. At the national level, the fiscal crises of the early 1970's created further pressure to deregulate economic activity and to reduce taxes and government spending (Block 1987). At the state level, Proposition 13 (1978) in California, and the New York fiscal crisis of the mid 1970's severely restricted state and local spending. At the same time that federal and state support to cities declined, the New York and San Francisco city governments were under pressure to cut taxes, reduce regulations, and make government services more efficient. This undercut the ability of cities to respond to the growing housing and employment crisis that was generating homelessness and undermining the stability of urban neighborhoods.

Changing Political Context

While the new global economics played an important role in shaping the economic and social context of urban neighborhoods, politics was central to both the development of this particular form of globalism and government's response to the social problems it generated. I will therefore look briefly at the role the federal government played in stimulating urban disinvestment and scaling back the social safety net that had helped communities respond to economic shocks since the Great Depression. Finally, I will look at how local government spending in New York and San Francisco was affected by these changes and at specific local and state developments that further constrained the ability of cities to respond to the crisis developing within them.

The urban crisis of the 1970's was clearly related to major economic changes occurring throughout the United States. While many areas of the country experienced this period as one of disinvestment, New York and San Francisco continued to receive significant levels of investment. The form it took and the way in which it was distributed, however, generated profound inequalities for both communities and individuals. These economic changes were not just the result of the invisible hand of the free market.

Important political decisions were made at the national, state, and local level that contributed to urban disinvestment.

During the post-war period, the federal government played a major role in making cities less attractive places to live and do business. Highway construction and low cost mortgages encouraged wealthier residents and the businesses that catered to them to seek-out the suburbs. Federal investment in defense industries in the suburbs and Sunbelt stimulated industrial expansion outside of the urban Northeast. This redistribution of economic investment was further encouraged through highway, water, and sewer infrastructure grants. As Piven and Cloward (1997) point out, this was not the only possible course of federal action:

Suppose an entirely different pattern of federal subsidies had emerged, generating large incentives for the refurbishment of older housing, mass transit, and the service infrastructures of the cities. Is it conceivable that this would have been without effect? ... Was it economics or politics that produced the urban fiscal crisis? Or, more reasonably, was it the interaction of economics and politics, in a society in which economy and polity have become ever more densely intertwined, each both cause and effect on the other (p. 386-7).

While these policies were initiated by the Eisenhower administration, later Democratic or Republican administrations did little to reverse them. Instead, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, driven in part by political pressure from urban minorities, attempted to finance government programs to treat the symptoms of this new economic arrangement. The Great Society programs did create an increase in government transfer payments and social programs, but did little to change the basic economic calculus that encouraged the flight of manufacturing, better-off residents, and the retail business that they supported.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's, even these social programs were scaled back

by the Nixon and Ford administrations, which continued to support industrialization in the suburbs, south, and sunbelt leaving urban areas outside of these regions to fend for themselves. The one kind of urban economic development program supported by Republicans was urban renewal, but it was primarily oriented towards high-end housing and elite cultural institutions, consistent with the growing social and economic polarization of cities.

In New York, the new fiscal realities of reduced federal support and declining tax revenues due to the loss of population and jobs brought city government to its knees. The Ford administration refused to support the city's efforts to renegotiate its debts with the help of a federal bailout. The city was required to turn over its fiscal management to a group of business leaders acting to secure the stability of the city's debt on behalf of bondholders. The result was that the financiers were able to impose their analysis of what caused the crisis (Lichten 1986, Shefter 1992, Tabb 1982). They blamed the city's problems on too many social services for the poor and on high wages for city workers, and not enough services for the wealthy and middle classes, whose flight from the city had undermined the city's revenue base. This analysis became one of the major weapons available to conservatives over the next 20 years. They attempted to debate municipal policy within this framework, rather than exploring the local and federal policies that created the broader economic context responsible for the crisis.

San Francisco's serious fiscal crisis was even more the result of political action than New York's. In 1978, California voters approved Proposition 13 that dramatically inhibited the ability of local and state government to raise money. Proposition 13 won handily statewide with the support of mostly suburban homeowners who were trying to

resist increasing property taxes tied to inflation and the state's rapid population growth (Kaufman and Rosen 1981, O'Sullivan 1995). In addition many people supported the measure because it coincided with a larger trend against social spending pioneered by former California Governor Ronald Reagan. Reagan and many proposition 13 supporters believed that decreased social services would demobilize urban Blacks and stem the spread of integrationist tendencies in housing and education that threatened the perceived financial interests of suburban homeowners.

Despite Proposition 13, San Francisco was able to maintain its fiscal health because of local economic expansion. The early 1980's was a period of "Manhattanization" in downtown San Francisco as commercial expansion significantly increased the amount and density of office space. As this expansion slowed in the mid and late 1980's, the city was unable to call upon its now depleted tax base to respond to the new levels of social need. The result was a municipal fiscal crisis which resulted in budget cuts and layoffs just as the homeless problem was intensifying in the mid 1980's. The entrepreneurial strategy was not able to simultaneously promote corporate growth and ameliorate the effects of economic downturns on the poor.

In the late 1970's the Carter administration responded to the urban crisis by attempting to increase the federal government's support of cities through economic stimulus packages, spending on housing, and bolstering jobs programs. Urban leaders who had supported Carter, such as Vernon Jordan of the Urban League and Benjamin Hooks of the NAACP argued that these programs did little to improve urban ghettos (Rowen 1994: p.168). Carter also stabilized spending on social programs after several years of reductions under Nixon and Ford. However, the problems had outstripped the

federal government's ability to respond to them. In the last years of the Carter administration rampant inflation further curtailed ambitious urban spending, leaving cities to fend for themselves.

During the 1980's the federal government continued to place cities at an economic disadvantage. There were significant reductions in public spending on urban social programs. Federal spending in particular was reduced or showed much smaller gains in the areas of housing, health care, welfare, and job training. Though overall housing spending didn't decline, it was focused more on vouchers for existing housing rather than the creation of new units, leaving many cities with a shortage of housing for people with federal vouchers.

There has been a tendency on the part of many advocates for these programs and some politicians to point the finger solely at President Ronald Reagan and the Republican Congress. While there can be no question that Reagan played an important policy and symbolic role in this process, the origins of the crisis in social spending clearly precede his administration. Urban neighborhoods were, therefore, feeling the strain of changes in federal support before Reagan and the rise of homelessness.

Another part of the change in political context is tied to a shift in political ideology at the national level during the 1970's and 80's. In the early 1960's there was substantial government support for decriminalizing a number of putatively illegal social disorders such as prostitution and vagrancy. Rather than treating these as problems best dealt with by the criminal justice system, it was felt that treating them as social problems would be more effective. They should be dealt with through a variety of therapeutic programs such

as counseling, health care, low cost housing, and employment training. Along the same lines, state mental hospitals were emptied with the understanding that community based care was preferable to indefinite confinement, and that many mentally ill people could lead more productive and fulfilled lives in the community.

The Federal government was also interested emphasizing rehabilitation. As part of Kennedy's anti-poverty initiatives and later in Johnson's "War on Poverty" there were substantial reforms to welfare policy that reduced the more punitive aspects of the program in favor of broader access. They also used policy experts in designing, implementing and assessing new programs targeting education, job training, health care, urban development, and housing. Billions of additional Federal dollars were flowing into programs like AFDC, the Office of Economic Opportunity, Model Cities, the Job Corps, and Head Start holding out the promise of a comprehensive solution to entrenched inner city and rural poverty.

By the early 1970's, however, the political and intellectual winds were changing. The Nixon administration which had initially supported many of these programs in the heat of urban unrest began to retrench. At the same time, a number of academic reports were issued that challenged the effectiveness of many of these programs. Studies by Jencks (1972), Mosteller and Moynihan (1972), and Levine (1974, 1977)¹ all questioned whether these programs had actually resulted in the promised improvements in poverty. Whether or not these critiques by the "new right" (Ehrenreich 1987) were correct, they became important ideological touchstones in a war against federal social spending during the

¹This process could also be seen in the rejection of criminal rehabilitation in favor of incarceration and other retributive approaches associated with Robert Martinson's study "What Works?" (1974), which challenged the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in the criminal justice system.

Nixon and Ford administrations and were a deterrent to major increases by the Carter administration.

In the early 1980's the ideological backlash against welfare and other Federal programs reached a new high with the election of Ronald Reagan on a platform of shrinking government intervention in every area except the military. Additional studies by Murray (1984) and Glazer (1988) added to the claims that the social programs of the 1960's era had not only failed to reduce poverty but had in fact increased dependency and caused poverty to become more entrenched.

During the Reagan and Bush administrations urban voters were less convinced of these claims, voting by large margins for democratic candidates. Urban mayors, including Koch and Dinkins in New York, and Feinstein and especially Agnos in San Francisco, continued to call for Federal intervention to solve poverty and homelessness and used the budget cuts of the republicans as a political shibboleth to both explain their helplessness to solve homelessness and the need to take more dramatic local action.

As homelessness and the social problems associated with it, including crack cocaine, grew in a way that directly affected urban residents in their everyday lives, support for social services in some quarters began to erode. Politically, many groups began to challenge the effectiveness and accountability of non-profit and government provided social services. As social problems continued to get worse despite increased spending, many constituencies raised the alarm bell claiming that these programs either don't work, fail to work fast enough, or actually exacerbate existing problems. These service delivery agencies also suffered an erosion of their historic political supporters. Many of these programs were started in and around the "War on Poverty" as a result of either broad-

based or specific community-based advocacy for their functions (Peterson and Greenstone 1977). However, as more and more social movements became service providers, the political mobilizations which assured their financial if not political support dwindled. These organizations became instead the most local arm of municipal governments, held accountable by funding sources not community organizing.

The Reagan administration was able to capitalize on this change of ideology in its effort to shift government support away from urban social spending and towards suburban military spending. While New York and San Francisco lost, Silicon Valley, Suburban Boston, and a host of Sunbelt areas benefited. The effect on New York, San Francisco, and most other urban areas, was to create a sense of anxiety about the ability of government to respond to social problems. On the one hand many people felt that government didn't have the ability to improve social conditions because of its inefficiency and past failures. On the other hand people who retained faith in governments ability noted its lack of resources to engage in any new major initiatives. An aura of retrenchment overhung America's cities at exactly the time when changing economic patterns were creating major social problems for those at the bottom; problems whose impact would be felt throughout the society.

Cultural Change

In addition to these macro level economic and political changes, there was a micro level cultural crisis that emerged in urban neighborhoods in response to the growing incivility in public spaces in the 1970's. This crisis had its origins in the broader cultural

changes occurring in the 1960's and 70's that led to increases in socially disruptive forces prior to the arrival of homelessness in the early and mid 1980's.

Racial conflicts that emerged in the 1960's continued to reshape neighborhoods and city politics. African-American groups fought to equalize their right to inhabit public spaces on an equal basis with whites. This was most pronounced in the south where Jim Crow laws barred them from many public spaces, and tightly regulated their public behavior. As these movements matured, African-Americans called for an overall increase in social tolerance for cultural diversity in the public sphere.

The radical student and "hippy" youth movements of the 1960's and 70's also challenged existing standards of acceptable public behavior. From the Haight-Ashbury to Washington Square Park, both San Francisco and New York were the sights for regular "be-ins" and "love-ins" where public displays of affection, loud music, and public drug use were common. As these movements were transformed into the women's and gay and lesbian movements of the 1970's there were continued calls for increased social tolerance of diverse lifestyles, including their public manifestations. In support of these movements liberal politicians and the judiciary increased individual civil liberties in the public sphere and reined in morality-based policing.

The public reactions to these movements were mixed. While many people embraced and acted on the new social tolerance, many resisted it and associated it with more serious declines in public civility. In the area of race, many communities felt, rightly or wrongly, threatened that they would have to make do with less as a result of gains made by Blacks. The racial integration of housing and schools destabilized many white urban neighborhoods contributing to suburban flight (Frey 1979) and reactionary political

movements (Rieder 1985).

Many people also associated increases in public disorder and crime with the increased social freedoms of the period. Socially disruptive behaviors including prostitution, public drinking, and panhandling, as well as more serious crime including drug dealing grew significantly, and often in the same areas as minor disorder. Many residents felt that the decline in the quality of public life contributed to neighborhood destabilization, and suburban flight. They responded by calling for stepped up police enforcement targeting disorder. However, these calls were often unheeded as police forces continued to pursue the professional model of policing, which downplayed the order-maintenance role of the police.

As a result of these cultural disruptions, many urban residents felt under siege. As crime and disorder increased, these residents searched for explanations. They focused on both the practices used to control crime and disorder and the explanations provided as to why the problem was growing and how to solve it. Urban liberals continued to argue for a root causes approach that highlighted the need for remedial social programs and centralized government intervention. They argued that the cuts in social spending made by Republican presidential administrations following the Great Society led to increased poverty and intensified social disruption of inner city communities—especially those of the poor and non-white (Piven and Cloward 1982). Local government needed to expand services and encourage economic development to make up the difference and restore economic and social stability to their cities.

Conservatives focused on the cultural shifts rooted in the social movements of the

1960's and 70's. They argued that these movements had the effect of "defining deviance down" to such a degree that there was a breakdown in the fundamental values of society leading to a crisis in public civility (Siegel 1997, Sleeper 1990). They called for increased reliance on the police to reestablish civility in the public sphere.

In the 1970's and early 1980's, urban liberals governed in both New York and San Francisco. The crisis of crime and disorder continued through this period, which indicated to many people a fundamental failure of urban liberalism: its inability to manage public spaces. Urban liberal administrations through this period were unable to develop strategies to control disorder and crime and restore public confidence in the urban environment. As a result, neighborhood residents increasingly rejected liberal explanations and practices in favor of more conservative ones.

New York

Crime

Few issues have played as large a role in shaping public perceptions of New York City in the last 30 years as crime. Images of Central Park muggers and gangs of youths on the subways evoke social breakdown and also invariably race. This volatile combination contributed significantly to the destabilization of the city's neighborhoods and the city itself. As crime went up through the 1960's and 70's neighborhoods were transformed by flight for those that could leave and an abandonment of public space by many of the rest.

Some people experienced the increasing level of crime directly through either personal victimization or communication with other victims. However, these people were a minority of the population. Most people experienced the increase in crime through media reports, which shaped their perception of the problem (Fishman 1978). (It also important to note that reported crime rates only represent a fraction of crimes committed except in the categories of homicide and auto theft, where reporting rates are very high.)

Crime rates began to increase in the 1960's and 70's. The total number of FBI index crimes went from 434,000 in 1972 to 658,000. The first wave of crime increases peaked in 1976. The level of anxiety created by personal experience and media coverage rose dramatically during the summer of 1977, when a blackout in which looting and vandalism broke out in several neighborhoods, contributing to a sense that criminals were everywhere just waiting for an opportunity to strike. Public confidence in the civility of the general public and the ability of the police to control disorder were shaken but not completely lost. And in fact during the next few years crime rates leveled off.

By 1981, however, crime was on the rise again and surpassed earlier levels. Late that year a survey indicated that 60% New Yorkers said that they or someone they knew had been mugged in the last 2 years; 80% said the problem was worse than 4 years ago (NYT 12/22/81). The survey also showed that public confidence in getting police help declined from 36% to 16% during the same 2 year period (NYT 12/22/81). New York was in crisis. Crime was out of control and public confidence in the police and courts was at an all time low. Fear of crime was now "woven into the fabric of city lives" (NYT 1/31/82).

Unlike the initial increase in violent crime, which was concentrated in poor neighborhoods, the new increase was city-wide. In fact, there were periods when crime

decreased in high crime areas and increased in middle class neighborhoods (NYT 11/18/80, 1/31/82). Crime was now a concern for all New Yorkers.

From 1982 to 1985 the crime rate stabilized again. Public confidence, however, did not recover. A 1985 poll indicated that half of New York residents viewed crime as the city's number one problem--far outpacing, schools, housing, and public transportation (NYT 1/14/85). A mood of desperation also emerged as increasing numbers of residents supported vigilante actions, such as calls for armed neighborhood patrols in Howard Beach (NYT 1/6/83) and the shooting in 1984 in which a white man, Bernard Goetz, shot three black youths who aggressively asked him for money on the subway.

The examples of Howard Beach and Bernard Goetz evoke the role of race in the city's growing crime problem. Roger Starr (1985:114) describes the problem in the following manner:

It is the nature of current crime in the city that is perhaps even more frightening than its high rate of incidence. As in the past, the newest arrivals in the city are those most responsible for anti-social behavior. That means, in general, the blacks and Hispanics. Together these groups are involved in about 80% of the crimes, perhaps an even higher percentage of the random street crimes. The difference in skin color, when it occurs, between the offender and their victims doubtless gives the victims a special feeling of danger.

The factor of race is important in understanding the visceral reaction that many New Yorkers had to the emerging homeless population, which was overwhelmingly Black and Latino (Dinkins 1987).

In 1986 crime began to accelerate again with the infusion of crack into a growing underclass of poor and homeless people. The result was a growing feeling that the basic social order of the city was coming undone. Once again, the effects of the increase were not confined to historically high crime areas. In 1986 and 1987 the murder rate in Queens

increased by 25% a year prompting local politicians and residents to declare that "local drug violence is threatening the very stability of what has long been considered New York City's most middle-class borough" (NYT 4/21/88). They felt that this was causing people and business to move away, threatening the economic and social stability of the neighborhood.

While the 1970's are often considered to be the worst crime years in New York in recent memory, in fact the early and late 80's were worse. More importantly, public confidence, which was shaken in the 70's, became unraveled in the 80's. People no longer felt safe in public spaces and did not believe that city government or the police knew what to do about the problems of crime and disorder. In addition to individual fear of crime, whole neighborhoods are beginning to feel that their stability is being undermined by crime. This breakdown in public confidence was occurring while homelessness was still an isolated problem. However, by the late 80's the crime and homelessness problems converged in many people's perceptions, creating a major crisis for neighborhoods and a powerful impetus for change.

Prostitution

New York's prostitution problem goes back to its founding, when the Dutch East India Company encouraged the presence of prostitutes as a palliative for their mostly male workforce. During the Revolutionary War, New York was turned into a garrison city for the British, and prostitutes were in great demand. By the beginning of the 20th century there were great moral crusades against the "social evil" and "white slavery" (c.f.

Committee of Fifteen 1902, Committee of Fourteen 1905). By the WWI era, open prostitution was on the decline and streetwalkers were limited to a handful of areas. By the 1960's the public impact of prostitution began to change along with public attitudes about it.

By the late 1960's the sexual revolution was increasing both the demand for prostitution and public acceptance of it. Most people still opposed prostitution, but their opposition took the form of calls for rehabilitation measures rather than criminalization. Increasingly, advocacy groups and public officials called for a decriminalization of prostitution or at least a reorganization of the criminal justice system:

Many policemen, judges and other city officials are becoming increasingly dismayed by what Supreme Court Justice John M. Murtagh calls the "utter futility" of the traditional law-enforcement approach to prostitution (NYT 8/14/67).

Not surprisingly, those most vocally in favor of punitive enforcement measures were small businesses located near zones of prostitution. Despite their complaints and occasional police sweeps the move towards treating prostitution as a social rather than criminal problem proceeded. Local judges began to throw out prostitution cases resulting from sweeps (c.f. NYT 11/10/67). Mayor Lindsay while being careful not to condone illegal behavior made it clear that he supported therapeutic rather than punitive approaches. Responding to this change in attitude, the state legislature reduced the penalty for prostitution from up to a year in jail to a maximum of 15 days and a \$250 fine.

Over the next two years the level of prostitution increased in central areas of the city, including midtown Manhattan and Times Square. These are largely non-residential areas and the people raising objections to the problem were mostly business owners, including

many quite powerful hotel owners. In this period the effect of prostitution on residential areas was limited to the lower income communities adjacent to these areas. The power of business owners, however, was sufficient to have the penalties increased in 1969 to a maximum of 90 days in jail (NYT 8/31/69). These stricter penalties were not successful in significantly reducing either the supply or the demand for prostitution. They were successful in reducing its public presence and impact, at least in the short run.

During the next several years the controversy over prostitution remained unresolved as women's groups and legal reformers continued to argue against the criminalization of women who were already being victimized by society, and local business owners and residents directly affected by the trade called for more police sweeps. More than anything else, though, it was continued demand that kept prostitution thriving on the western edges of midtown. During this period pornographic stores and movie houses established themselves and grew rapidly in the Times Square area creating a focal point for the sex trade. Periodic police sweeps seemed to have little long-term effect. It was also during this period that prostitution began to expand into outlying areas including the Jamaica section of Queens and the Fort Greene and Boerum Hill sections of Brooklyn.

By the mid 1970's a new detente had been reached on the question of prostitution. Because of growing liberalization of views about sexual activity, police increasingly took no action against indoor prostitution such as massage parlors and agencies for call girls. However, since organized constituencies existed that decried the impact of street walking on local areas, police tried to keep it as contained as possible, given the high demand. What emerged was a game of cat and mouse between police and prostitutes. One result of this new pattern was that the social divisions between streetwalkers and call girls grew.

Increasingly, streetwalkers were those women who were in the most desperate condition. They were more likely to be poor, non-white, drug addicted, and under the control of a pimp. As economic times got worse, more women in this situation appeared on the streets.

Another result of the new approach was the growth of the pornography business. During the mid-70's adult bookstores and strip clubs spread to many parts of the city, including high-income areas near the Upper East Side. These businesses were a moral affront to some local residents, but were rarely a source of serious crime or social disorder because business transactions and sexual activity happened indoors. Some residents continued to oppose these establishments but growing social tolerance and sympathetic court rulings made it difficult to attack them head on². As competition with the indoor business increased, street prostitutes often had to work longer hours and be more aggressive. However, during tough economic times even the indoor outposts of the sex industry became magnets for streetwalkers hoping to siphon off part of their trade.

By 1976, the growth in the street trade was stimulating political mobilization in some of the communities most affected. The historically liberal Upper West Side became one of the most vocal communities calling for increased penalties and police enforcement. In response, State Senator Manfred Ohrenstein, who had supported legalization of prostitution in the past, introduced a new measure to increase the penalties significantly. According to New York Civil Liberties Union Director Ira Glasser, "This is basically the same bill as the ones he refused to introduce in the past... [Ohrenstein] is feeling the heat of the community. He wants to get the unseemly stuff off the streets" (NYT 3/29/76).

² This remained the case until the Giuliani Administration changed the city's zoning laws giving the city the right to close down many of these businesses. The ultimate legal outcome of this dispute, however.

Increasingly liberal New Yorkers were abandoning abstract principles of social tolerance when confronted by the new realities of public disorder.

In the early 80's, street prostitution continued its expansion into residential areas. Prostitution became a major public issue in Long Island City in Queens, in Boerum Hill in Brooklyn, and on Park Ave. South in Manhattan. This increase in activity reached its highest level with the economic downturn of the early 1980's. As the economy improved in New York during the rest of the decade prostitution decreased. By that point, however, there was widespread political mobilization against street-level prostitution. Many neighborhoods throughout the city felt besieged by prostitution. This feeling, combined with increasing crime and reduced confidence in government ability to solve social problems, shaped people's views about the viability of public space and the stability of their neighborhoods in the period leading up to the homeless crisis.

Graffiti

During the 1960's youth vandalism emerged as a major issue. It was located primarily where young people have easy access to public places: schools and public transportation. By 1970, vandalism in the bus and subway system was costing the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) \$2.6 million a year (NYT 3/30/71). In 1971 spray paint appeared on a wide scale increasing the level and visibility of the damage being done. This is also the year that the practice that is now called "tagging" developed, in which people write their names on walls in a stylized form. This early tagging was located initially in the Washington Heights and Harlem neighborhoods and took the form of names followed by

remains to be seen.

street numbers (e.g. Taki 183) (Goldstein 1973). Within a year, however, the practice had become widespread in the transit system and on many public buildings, prompting calls for new punitive measures by Mayor Lindsay and the City Council.

Despite the creation of increased penalties in the early 1970's the practice of graffiti became more widespread and complex. Graffiti writers began to produce murals on entire subway cars or the sides of buildings. Graffiti also spread beyond the confines of poor communities, even affecting the wealthy bastion of the Upper East Side. By far the most troubling aspect, however, was its growth in the subway system where by the mid 70's it was endemic. Graffiti, combined with rising crime rates, lent an air of danger to the subways that ultimately effected ridership levels. This aesthetic assault was increasingly viewed as an assault on the foundations of urban civility. As one Staten Island resident wrote in a letter to the *Times*:

Graffiti are an offense against public space. Subway walls belong to the people—to all the people. Public space is a necessity in urban civilization, especially for those that do not have much private space...*Without decent public space, urban life is intolerable...*If [graffiti scrawlers] succeed in making the city's public spaces unattractive to a majority of residents, New York will become a backwater (NYT 4/19/73, emphasis added).

Throughout the 70's a number of measures were taken to try to stem the tide. These ranged from new police enforcement tactics, laws that decreased teen access to paint and markers, increased criminal penalties, community service programs utilizing both offenders and other youth in the abatement of graffiti, youth art programs designed to divert the desire for artistic expression into more suitable channels, and cleanup efforts ranging from neighborhood volunteer outings to million dollar city and Transit Authority efforts. None of these initiatives, however, was successful in reducing the problem.

The last of these approaches would in the end prove the most useful. By the early

80's public confidence in the subway as a safe public space was badly shaken. In 1984 Governor Mario Cuomo brought new leadership into the Transit Authority to try to clean things up on several fronts. There was a major investment in infrastructure combined with a new approach to graffiti control. After a decade of failed enforcement strategy involving guard dogs, razor wire, and specialized police units, a solution emerged in the form of the Clean Car Program. This program involved a massive infusion of funds into cleaning whole subway trains at once and keeping them clean despite repeat attacks. Once a car had been through the program, it was kept clean by pulling it from service as soon as any graffiti appeared until it was cleaned up, and then sent back into service. This same approach was also successful on some government buildings in Manhattan, but it was very expensive. Winning the war of aesthetics, however, was able to restore public confidence in the public space of the subway system.

By the late 80's and early 90's this new approach was showing signs of success. However, in the early and mid 1980's these programs were just getting started, and the graffiti problem continued to loom large as a sign of urban instability. Graffiti represented not only a surface level aesthetic defacement. It was also more than a general sign of disorder. Most importantly it was a visible public symbol of the presence of young people of color acting outside of the law with relative impunity. And this was a clear indication to many residents that the city—and thus—their neighborhoods, were headed in the wrong direction. With the economic uncertainty and government cutbacks of the 1980's, neighborhoods were in a struggle to either cash in on pockets of gentrification or be cast out into the wilderness of inner city decline and abandonment. When prostitution and crime were added to this volatile mixture, neighborhoods

throughout the city felt besieged. With the onslaught of homelessness on a broad scale in the mid 1980's, New York's neighborhoods were brought to their knees. New approaches to order and stability had to be found.

San Francisco

Crime

Like New York and the rest of the country, crime in San Francisco increased dramatically during the early and middle 1970's. The total number of FBI index crimes (including most violent crimes) went from 46,620 in 1971 to 77,284. Crime was increasing on the public transportation system and in a wide variety of neighborhoods, contributing to an increase in fear of crime among the general population. The increase in crime dovetailed with the increase in other kinds of public disorder, such as prostitution, to give the sense that, as in New York, the city was out of control.

Responding to this crime crisis, Mayor Moscone proposed a \$1.7 million infusion of funds into the police department to fight violent crime. He pointed out that the violent crime problem was widespread: "Homicidal acts have been committed in Pacific Heights as well as Hunters Point...*There are no safe neighborhoods now*" (SFC 1/27/76, emphasis added). San Francisco's District Attorney also demonstrated a renewed focus on violent crime in his department by reducing plea bargaining on violent crimes, and moving resources from the prosecution of victimless crimes such as prostitution to the prosecution of violent offenders (SFC 1/6/76).

By the early 80's major crime had fallen from its worst levels but remained well above the levels of the early 70's. Total index crimes were 70, 424 in 1980 including a record number of robberies and aggravated assaults, which contributed to an ongoing heightened fear of violence. Mayor Feinstein responded to and in some ways fanned the flames of this moral panic by raising the profile of some particularly egregious crimes and by describing the behavior of criminals as "viciousness and callousness like unleashed animals" (SFC 2/1/81), while promoting her own tough-on-crime measures.

The result of increased crime and the characterization of the problem as the result of a population of criminals "running wild" was a subtle shift in the city's politics. According to San Francisco's liberal elected Sheriff Michael Hennessey, "San Francisco's traditional liberal voting base may be shifting to a more conservative view on crime" (SFC 2/7/81).

Prostitution

Prostitution has always existed in San Francisco, going back to its roots in the wide-open days of the Gold Rush and the Barbary Coast. However, as a result of moral crusades leading up to the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition of 1915 and the efforts of the military during WWI, prostitution in San Francisco, like much of the country at this time, was driven into marginal areas and forced to keep a low profile (Kerr 1994). During the 1960's this began to change with the growth of the counterculture surrounding the previously "beatnik" North Beach. Sex shops, nude modeling, and triple X movie theaters became a cover for a burgeoning indoor and outdoor business in

prostitution. By the early 1970's prostitution was widespread in the North Beach, Mission, Fillmore, Hayes Valley, and Tenderloin districts.

As the cultural movements fostering sexual liberation gained influence during this period, social attitudes about prostitution changed for many people. In particular, the various liberal constituencies of the city viewed prostitution as a minor social problem that should be dealt with through treatment not criminal justice. Social service providers argued that prostitutes needed access to "social and vocational rehabilitation" (SFC 8/21/68). The prevailing attitude of liberal social workers was that the state shouldn't play a role in regulating sexual activity:

Relationships between consenting adults in private should not be a matter for the police — it smacks too much of the totalitarian state. As a noted American sexologist said, it should be a woman's own business if she wants to sell it or give it away (SFC 8/21/68).

This view was shared by many others. In 1968 more than a dozen local clergymen, educators, and anti-poverty figures met at Glide Memorial Church in the Tenderloin and concluded that "rehabilitation of the pimps and whores of the Tenderloin and Fillmore districts is what must be aimed for, not just the repressive measures that would drive commercial sex underground and make policemen and politicians more liable to corruption" (SFC 8/16/68). Even conservative Episcopal Reverend Robert Cromeley argued that prostitution will never be eliminated and that society should "let the girls compete with each other for the available trade...A mature society should try an old fashioned, radical plan rooted in capitalism." He added that continuing to entrap and arrest prostitutes does nothing to help them and "further treats them like cattle rather than human beings" (SFC 8/23/68).

By 1971, bills which had broad support were introduced into the State Legislature for

the legalization and licensing of prostitutes. A statewide poll showed that 50% of Californians thought "the legalization of prostitution is a good idea" (SFC 5/28/71). In 1976, the state of California, with the support of San Francisco politicians George Moscone and Willie Brown, essentially decriminalized prostitution. Law enforcement officials in San Francisco further supported this move by reducing its sweeps of prostitutes. The District Attorney, Joseph Freitas, announced, "If it's a non-violent, non-coercive activity between adults, and it doesn't involve any other crime, my office will not bother with it. We're going to concentrate on violent crimes and white-collar crime, not victimless crime" (SFC 1/6/76).

By the spring of that year, however, prostitution was flourishing as never before in the Tenderloin and spreading to other areas. This prompted calls from local residents and downtown businesses to crack down on the growing trade. The *San Francisco Examiner* exclaimed that San Francisco had become an "Open City" for prostitution (SFE 3/7/76). The increase was most dramatic in the Tenderloin with its large number of cheap hotels and its close proximity to the tourist and business destinations around Union Square. According to FBI figures, there had been a 1000 percent increase in the number of street prostitutes since the early 70's (SFC 12/28/76). By the end of the year, the DA and SFPD decided to abandon their more tolerant stance and begin a systematic crackdown. In response to the major growth of the street trade following decriminalization, efforts were made to rein in the trade, and in January 1977 a major initiative to control prostitution was implemented.

After Diane Feinstein took over as mayor following the assassination of Mayor Moscone, she confronted this continuing problem. Prostitution and calls for its

elimination were both wide-spread. In neighborhoods that were directly affected there were ongoing political mobilizations around the issue. However, there was also widespread opposition to the use of police to control the sex trade. In Fall, 1979, a grassroots movement placed a local proposition on the November ballot calling for the elimination of the vice squad and all local laws restricting prostitution, gambling, and pornography. Although the measure was defeated by a 2 to 1 margin, it was clear that there were a significant number of liberal residents who were actively opposed to treating prostitution as a criminal problem.

The city was forced to respond to the fact that there were strong mobilized constituencies calling for a complete crackdown on prostitution on the one hand and complete decriminalization on the other. The result was a period of on-going low level enforcement followed by the development of an enforcement plan targeting pimps. By focusing on the pimps, the city was saying that it took prostitution as a serious matter but that it wasn't going to focus on criminalizing the victims—the women brought into prostitution. Flyers were posted around high prostitution areas calling on women to turn in their pimps for vigorous prosecution. However, the effort failed to generate much cooperation and low level enforcement continued to limp along.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's there was a new round of calls to decriminalize prostitution. Prostitutes themselves organized in small groups to press for decriminalization and social services. In 1973, a small group of prostitutes formed COYOTE- Call Off Your Tired Old Ethics, which by 1979 was garnering significant press coverage and public notoriety. The group spun off the National Task Force on Prostitution that argued that society should "legitimize prostitution rather than ghettoize it

or license it. Any kind of regulation is bad, because it gives the pimps a stranglehold” (SFC 4/29/79). COYOTE members ran a regular newsletter and tried to mobilize prostitutes to advocate on their own behalf rather than allowing experts or politicians to make decisions about their lives for them. In 1978 their annual Hookers’ Ball hit its apex with 20,000 people attending (St. James 1996). By the mid 1980’s the group was running a number of support groups and doing AIDS education.

This kind of identity politics became very popular in San Francisco in this period following the Black civil rights and women’s rights movements and concurrent with the growth of the locally strong gay rights movement. Women’s organizations also spoke out against laws targeting prostitutes. Many groups claimed that the changing economics of the period was making it harder for single women to survive, and that “increased unemployment and cuts in welfare and food stamps [were] making women turn to prostitution for economic reasons” (SFC 7/16/83).

The early 1980’s saw the emergence of a new aspect of the issue. With the growth of the gay community, the demand for and supply of male prostitutes increased. This trade centered around the Polk Gulch area which had a large gay population but was seedier than the more upscale Castro district, due in part to its proximity to the Tenderloin and its supply of low income residential hotels. As with female prostitution, groups for and against prostitution were highly mobilized. The gay community in general terms strongly favored sexual freedom and was opposed to state intervention into sexuality due to the history of repression suffered by the community. The proposition to eliminate the Vice Division and local vice laws mentioned above, was initiated and strongly supported by parts of the gay community.

On the opposite side were local Polk Street merchants. They felt that the prostitution trade was bringing down the quality of their neighborhood and impinging on potential customers. Merchants made several attempts during the early 80's to enlist the police to increase enforcement. Given the mixed political messages, the police never prioritized such enforcement. In 1985 the situation worsened as more teenage boys flocked to the area and began sleeping in doorways and alleys in the area. In response merchants began to take direct action by photographing both prostitutes and their customers and passing out social service referral cards (SFC 6/14/85).

It wasn't until 1986 that homelessness becomes a social issue outside of the Tenderloin and South of Market areas. Numerous neighborhoods, however, were dealing with the increased disorder surrounding prostitution prior to this new problem. Residents and merchants from the mostly white Polk Gulch, to the mostly black Fillmore and the mostly Latino Mission, were all complaining about the seeming inability or unwillingness of the city and its police department to respond to their feelings of crisis. In these areas, streetwalkers and their customers harassed passers by, caused increased vehicle and foot traffic, increased noise and trash levels, and sometimes performed sex acts in plain view. It is clear that prostitution had a significant effect on many neighborhoods in San Francisco, and that these same neighborhoods would bear much of the brunt of the coming homeless crisis.

San Francisco was deeply divided over the issue of prostitution. City officials were pressured by well-organized interest groups that argued that punitive strategies to control prostitution were both immoral and ineffective. The prevailing wisdom of liberal social policy experts was that prostitution was a social problem with its roots in poverty and

sexism and that the police could only make the problem worse by criminalizing the victim and mercurially spreading the problem to other areas. As a result, the police were only used to respond to highly mobilized groups calling for enforcement for limited periods of time. Otherwise they attempted to contain prostitution in specific areas, limit its visibility, and regulate the street behavior of prostitutes and clients in an effort to mute localized complaints.

In 1996, then Supervisor Terrence Hallinan created a task force to try to bring together residents and merchants directly affected by prostitution and prostitutes and their advocates to develop strategies to improve the lives of both groups (City and County of San Francisco 1996). Hallinan argued that two-thirds of local residents felt prostitution shouldn't be criminalized, while one-third were "situationally opposed" to it not for moral reasons, but because of its effects on their individual quality of life (SF 22).³ The Task Force was unable to overcome the deep divide between the groups, however. After several meetings the group split into two factions and separate reports had to be issued, leaving the problem unresolved.

Prostitution as a social issue had its roots in both the cultural and economic spheres. Many women were driven into poverty during the 1970's and 80's by the changing labor market that required them to work--with the decline of the family wage. Women were also paid lower wages for the same work performed by men. However, the social changes associated with the political movements of the 1960's and 70's including the women's movement, the gay rights movement and the sexual revolution, all contributed to an ethos of social tolerance for sexual matters and a skepticism about the effectiveness and morality of punitive measures.

Graffiti

Like New York, the graffiti problem in San Francisco emerged initially as a "vandalism" problem in the mid 1970's. The major focal points of this problem were the MUNI public transportation system and the public schools. In each case hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage was being caused by young people in the form of graffiti and other types of physical destruction. The debates over how to handle vandalism revolved around the larger debates about how to respond to the youth culture of the post 1960's. On the one hand youth were viewed as out of control and in need of strong discipline and on the other they were misunderstood and alienated and in need of social programs to redirect that negative energy into positive pursuits.

By 1980, vandalism had moved into new areas and increasingly took the form of painting on private buildings and public spaces. Graffiti took different forms in different areas including stylized name writing in the mission, political slogans in the Haight Ashbury, and anti-Semitic scrawlings in the Sunset. In 1981, the city began to mobilize on several fronts. Individuals and neighborhood associations began to organize localized responses by trying to paint over or otherwise remove graffiti. The Chamber of Commerce began studying the problem and formed a subcommittee to push for more city action. The Board of Supervisors began the process of coordinating different agencies for a more effective response, and Mayor Feinstein created a 10-member Graffiti Removal Demonstration Task Force (SFC 9/26/81).

Initially graffiti was viewed as a general youth issue regardless of the form it took. In fact the groups that mobilized most against graffiti during this period pointed to its racist

³ Interview with District Attorney Terrance Hallinan. July 31, 1998.

and anti-Semitic characteristics as being the most disturbing. Religious groups of all denominations organized graffiti abatement events. According to a member of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, "Graffiti is not only physically ugly but it hurts people's feeling too" (SFC 10/25/81).

In 1985 graffiti took a new form, influenced by the spread of graffiti in New York and Los Angeles. Graffiti again became a widespread problem on buses and in schools. This time the cultural style of the graffiti was much more uniform and associated with poor minority youth-culture as it had been in other cities. This new culture of graffiti associated graffiti not just with youth culture but with dangerous youth culture. Graffiti took on the connotation of gang activity, crime, and lawlessness. The problem wasn't just concentrated in certain neighborhoods. Its presence on the widely utilized public transportation system—as in New York—contributed to a general sense of the city being out of control.

The cost of dealing with the problem also escalated. By 1986 the Municipal Railway was spending \$750,000 a year to remove graffiti (SFC 4/4/86). During the mid 80's a wave of punitive measures were created, indicating the scope of the problem. Sale of spray paint and wide tip markers was outlawed, rewards were offered to school children to turn in their classmates, special police units were created, and fines were increased. These new punitive measures indicated that graffiti was an escalating major social problem in the city at the same time that homelessness was becoming a citywide concern, adding to the litany of social problems in all neighborhood.

Conclusion

The backlash against the homeless in San Francisco and New York had its beginnings in the increased social disorder of the 1970's. Squeegee men, panhandlers, and people sleeping in public spaces came to be the most visible symptoms of urban environment that many people felt was out of control. The roots of these problems, like the roots of the homeless problem itself, were economic, political, and cultural. Increased economic polarization in the late 1960's and early 1970's contributed to the formation of an economic underclass that was drawn into prostitution, crime, and other forms of public disorder. Culturally, there was a movement away from the social tolerance established by the social movements of the 1960's and 70's, as social disorders such as crime, prostitution, and graffiti increased. Politically, as the homeless problem emerged in the early and mid 1980's, urban liberalism suffered a crisis in public support as more and more neighborhoods and economic elites called for immediate punitive action to restore order. The paradigm of urban liberalism was no longer able to respond to either the economic or cultural changes underway. Urban liberalism's core principles of social tolerance, the preference for social services over market reforms, and the model of expert driven centralized planning both failed to reduce social problems and alienated many important political constituencies. What was developing was a contradiction between the practices and conceptualizations of the urban liberal paradigm, and the lived experiences of people in these cities.

Understanding the nature of this crisis provides an important base for developing an explanation of the development of the new neoconservative political regime that replaced

urban liberalism. This context, however, is not sufficient by itself. Several political alternatives were available to respond to this crisis. Understanding why the neoconservative approach prevailed requires a look at the concrete political forces that attempted to respond to the crisis, and how they produced a coherent new paradigm of ideological explanations and concrete practices that better addressed the lived experiences of urban residents. The next chapter will trace the crisis of urban liberalism and the emergence of the neoconservative "quality of life" paradigm at the neighborhood and citywide levels in New York and San Francisco.

Chapter 4

The Transformation of Policing

In Chapter 3 I showed how a series of economic, political, and social changes led to a crisis of urban neighborhoods. Different groups experienced this crisis in different ways, but in each case there was a reduction in tolerance for disorder. Urban residents became increasingly wary about the presence of disorder in their midst and searched for ways to create a sense of order and civility in their everyday public lives, a way of restoring their "quality of life." What they created was a whole new approach to urban policing, which was characterized primarily by an increased use of the police to control the impact that homeless people had on the everyday lives of residents and the economic vitality of cities. But this new approach didn't just represent an increase in the number of police: it consisted of new police practices and new ideas about the best way for cities to deal with homeless and disorderly people. Because the activities of homeless people are either legal or only marginally criminal, a new approach to policing had to be developed that returned police to their 19th Century roots of order maintenance. In the process of developing these new policing practices and philosophies, they laid a large part of the foundation for the new "quality of life" paradigm.

How did this crisis result in the development of a whole new paradigm of urban social control? Two factors were required for this to occur. First, a new ideology and a new set of practices of social control had to be created. The second, a political coalition capable of institutionalizing this new ideology and new practices had to develop. This chapter will focus on the first of these two processes. I will show how a new form of urban policing developed based on the "broken windows" theory as a direct result of the failures of existing policing practices and philosophies to adequately address the rise of homelessness and the public disorder associated with it.

Local residents and business groups initially turned to the police to address disorder

problems, but their appeals were generally rebuffed. The existing approach of “professional policing” was poorly prepared tactically or philosophically to deal with these “quality of life” problems. As a result, through the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, local residents, business groups, and a handful of police reformers began to experiment with new ways of addressing public disorder. As a result of these pressures from outside and inside the police, innovation and experimentation began in fits and starts. It was only when new political leadership emerged that was committed to a broad “quality of life” program, that these innovations were expanded and institutionalized.

This chapter will explore the ways in which new order-maintenance approaches to policing were incrementally developed in New York and San Francisco. It will show how the “professional model” of policing, in place in the 1970’s and 80’s, was ill equipped to respond to the demands for public order being generated in response to increased homelessness. In order to resolve this crisis, a new approach was needed that met the needs of the police, business elites, neighborhood activists, and new, neoconservative politicians.

The Development of “Broken Windows” Based Policing

A number of works have been written about the new order maintenance-based policing since James Q. Wilson and George Kelling introduced the “broken windows” concept in 1982. Kelling and Katherine Coles further developed the concept in their book *Fixing Broken Widows* (1996), and provided a number of case studies of how the theory was used in San Francisco, Seattle, and Baltimore. William Bratton, former Commissioner of the New York Police Department in his book *Turnaround* (1998) described the process of implementing the new policing methods from an insider’s perspective. He focused on the management challenges involved in transforming the

policing philosophy of the largest police department in the United States. Eli Silverman (1999) also looked at the development of some of these new methods of policing within the NYPD. He focused on the Compstat system, which provided both greater accountability of local police commander and gave them greater flexibility and discretion in developing local crime fighting strategies. Each of these works provides important information about the nature of the new theory and the practices it has engendered.

Wesley Skogan (1990) Bernard Harcourt (1998, forthcoming), Robert Sampson and Stephen Raudenbush (1999), and Ralph Taylor (2001) have all studied the effectiveness of the new policing practices. Wesley Skogan attempted to show the connection between disorder and crime in his book *Disorder and Decline* (1990). In his study of 40 neighborhoods in several different cities he found some limited correlations between crime and disorder. Harcourt challenged the alleged connection between the presence of neighborhood disorder and more serious crime. He reexamined the data used by Skogan to support the "broken windows" theory and found that it at best supported a low level of correlation between disorder and a single type of crime: robbery. He also argued that the "broken windows" thesis had the effect of redeploying blame for neighborhood problems from poverty to the presence disorderly people, a category that is poorly defined and susceptible to racialized usage. Sampson and Raudenbush led a team at the University of Chicago that found similar results after surveying 24,000 city blocks in Chicago for the presence of physical and social disorder. They found that the key determinate of high predatory crime rates wasn't disorder but the level of poverty and neighborhood instability. Taylor studied 30 Baltimore neighborhoods and found contradictory information about the relationship between crime and disorder and argued that both may

stem from separate problems that require a broader range of social policies than just targeting physical and social disorder.

Ethnographer Mitchell Duneier (1999) pointed out in his qualitative study of the interactions between homeless street vendors, the public, and the police that the “broken windows” theory treats physical and social disorder as equal factors in creating neighborhood decline and crime. Duneier, however, attempts to separate the two. Building on the work of Jane Jacobs (1961), he argued that a stable population of street vendors provides additional eyes on the street that help to prevent serious criminality. Duneier accepted that unrepaired physical disorder signals that an area is uncared for, but argued that homeless street vendors are hard working regulars who—while they are sometimes disorderly—keep their area free of predatory criminals. In fact, instead of being a negative social force, these networks of vendors provide mutual support and encouragement that helps to improve the lives of homeless people in the area. Duneier argued that the “broken windows” theory had been applied too broadly and gave the police too much latitude in their dealings with disorderly people.

Law Professor Debra Livingston (1997) looked at the legal underpinnings of the new “quality of life” policing. She also argued that the new order maintenance policing requires a greater degree of discretion on the part of officers. This increased discretion runs counter to legal trends of the last 30 years in which police discretion has been restricted by the courts. She argued that the courts should allow local communities to play a greater role in establishing expectations concerning appropriate public behavior, and that the police should be allowed to act on these standards. This communitarian approach encouraged officers to worry less about strict enforcement of the law, and more

about restoring civility through the strict regulation of the disorderly.

Each of these studies is an important part of the process of assessing the relative merits of the new policing in reducing crime. Neither the case studies nor the evaluations, however, tell us very much about the political process that led to the institutionalization of the new policing. In order to understand this process, I will look at how the rise in homelessness, crime, and disorder created a desire for policing innovation among policing scholars, police reformers, community activists, business leaders, and neoconservative politicians. Uncovering the unlikely alliance between police reformers and community activists makes it clear that "quality of life" policing had broad public support, even in minority communities, which later objected to many of its elements. This political alliance is a central reason behind the rise of the new policing and provides an important understanding of how policing innovation develops and is institutionalized.

How Homelessness Created a Crisis in Policing

Homelessness emerged as a police problem in the late 1970's and early 1980's in a variety of forms. The most common early complaints were "aggressive panhandling," people sleeping on sidewalks, in subway trains and other public spaces, sanitation problems, and in New York in particular, the so-called "squeegee men" who try to obtain money for cleaning the windows of motorists stuck in traffic. These were all problems that had been of little concern to the police in the preceding decade as police executives pursued a professional model of policing concerned with reducing major crimes and as decriminalization of minor crimes became politically popular. The resulting conflict between growing community and business demands for action and police resistance to a return to order maintenance created a major crisis in policing practice in both New York

and San Francisco. This conflict had important consequences for both the police and the political climate of both cities.

The Professional Model of Policing

When police departments were created in the mid 19th Century (NYC 1844, SF 1849), as the industrial revolution transformed American cities, their primary responsibility was to maintain order. This meant that their emphasis was on resolving disputes that threatened the public peace and establishing standards of behavior in public spaces. Drunks were taken off the streets, suspicious persons were questioned and told to move on, altercations were broken up and prostitutes were either kept off the streets or restricted to certain areas. Irish men in particular were targeted for routine harassment and rounded up in "paddy wagons." Police stations also served as soup kitchens and homeless shelters in an effort to keep the "dangerous classes" off the streets.

If the police witnessed a serious crime they would take action to apprehend perpetrators, but "fighting crime" was not the primary function of uniformed officers. This work was done either by private citizens, who filed complaints through the courts, or police detectives, who operated in a shady middle ground between victims and criminals. Therefore, police were generally viewed as being only partly related to the larger criminal justice system of laws, courts and prisons--a status that changed dramatically in the next century.

During this period, the political control of the police was quite different as well. Police executives all the way down to beat officers were chosen based on their political allegiances. Local ward bosses hired precinct captains, who then hired individual officers in consultation with political figures. The key to getting a job on the force was political connections, not skill or experience. As a result, the police were often used as a tool of local politicians, creating the possibility of widespread corruption.

This process can be seen most clearly in the way that liquor laws were enforced (Harring 1983, Monkkonen 1981). The late 19th and early 20th centuries were beset with conflicts between nativist and immigrant constituencies. One of the offshoots of this conflict was an effort by nativist, Protestant, Republicans to restrict the alcohol consumption of mostly Catholic, Democratic, immigrants whom they viewed as being of a lower moral character. These temperance movements generated numerous sumptuary laws that limited the days and hours that taverns could operate, culminating in the Prohibition era of 1925-1933.

Given the discriminatory nature of these laws there was widespread resistance to them in immigrant communities. Therefore, local police officials were often told to look the other way when politically connected tavern owners defied them. This often involved payoffs and other perks for police executives and officers. These practices were also common with gambling and prostitution locations as long as they didn't interfere with public order.

There were two other common problems associated with this type of policing: election fraud and labor violence. Since police worked at least indirectly for local politicians, they were sometimes called upon to restrict access to voting to certain groups. Police were also used at the behest of politically connected businessmen to break up picket lines and other labor union activities.

The result of these various forms of corruption was a variety of efforts to reform police departments by removing political cronyism and instilling a professional ethos. The reform movement in policing was an extension of the larger reform movements of the turn of the century that were designed to deal with the social and political changes associated with mass immigration. These early reformers, lead by August Vollmer, envisioned a police force that was free from political interference and corruption and utilized highly trained officers who would use their discretionary judgment to reduce both crime and the social problems that were viewed to be its root cause (Carte 1975). The

goal was to use the police as trained professionals to work within communities to guide people away from violent behavior. As an example, police began to do outreach to juveniles and hired police matrons so that the police would better be able to guide ("police") the behavior of the growing immigrant class.

Professional police administrators built on the advances in scientific management in industry. They increasingly adopted hierarchical bureaucracies as a way of increasing the efficiency of growing departments and isolating the police from political influence. This led to conflicts as the professional discretion of individual officers was replaced by an almost military esprit de corps. The "professionalism" of police departments began to refer to their managerial efficiency and officer discipline, not the skilled craft approach of the early reformers (Walker 1977).

Following World War One, this military professional model was strengthened and a "science" of crime fighting developed. The first local forensic laboratory was created by Vollmer in 1916 in Berkeley, California. In 1922 Vollmer headed the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which was committed to the professionalization project, and called for the widespread creation of police labs. J. Edgar Hoover took up the call at the FBI as well, establishing a national laboratory in 1932 in the wake of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago and the overall increase in organized crime during Prohibition.

Combining the use of natural and social sciences, police professionals began to shape their public image as that of scientific crime fighters. They used police labs, criminological training of officers, and the development of specialized units to target homicides, burglary, robbery and other major crimes to indicate that police could reduce crime, not just maintain public order. This scientific approach represented a further rejection of the social work model proposed by Vollmer and other reformers. Police focused on the detection, apprehension, and prosecution of criminals and not the prevention of crime through outreach to juveniles and other problem groups and

community problem solving. As a result, the police began to be conceptualized more as the gateway to the larger criminal justice system and less as an extension of municipal social policy.

Police reform in its various guises remained a small movement until the 1930's when frustration over law enforcement's inability or unwillingness to uphold Prohibition created a political backlash that brought sweeping changes to departments all across the country. In 1931 the Wickersham Commission, created by President Hoover, exposed the corrupt practices of many departments and called for the adoption of professional management styles and the separation of police and politics. Over the course of the next several decades, the military and crime fighting aspects of professionalism institutionalized themselves and came to be the dominant model of policing.

The person who most advanced the project of crime fighting professionalism was O.W. Wilson, a protege of Vollmer's, who championed management efficiencies within police departments. Wilson built on Vollmer's desire to create well run departments with highly trained police administrators who used the latest scientific methods and functioned in a military manner; he learned this work method during World War II as Director of Public Safety in U.S.-occupied Italy. However, Wilson roundly rejected Vollmer's seemingly contradictory desire to see police work with the communities they policed. The model department for Wilson's approach became the Los Angeles Police Department with its detached professionalism and impersonal enforcement of the law independent of political or social considerations. This effort was led by Chief William Parker, a disciple of O. W. Wilson.

During the 1960's, the "professional model" developed into the "law enforcement" model. The 1967 Presidential Commission report on policing (Skolnick 1967) encouraged coordination between various parts of the criminal justice system with the police conceptualized as the gateway of an integrated system. The result was that police administrators increasingly looked to the rest of the criminal justice system for guidance

rather than to political leaders and community sentiment. Since the criminal justice system placed a priority on felony convictions, the police became focused on fighting serious crime and less interested in order maintenance.

Similar pressure to move away from order maintenance was being placed on the police by academics, the courts, and public opinion. During the 1960's, social scientists and policy makers argued that the roots of criminality were social and economic--stemming from racism and economic deprivation. Edwin Schur's *Crime Without Victims* (1965) led the movement to redefine deviancy as a social problem and not a crime problem. The outcome of this approach was an attempt to decriminalize many kinds of minor criminality such as prostitution, drug use, and loitering in both legislatures and the courts. Criminologists and police officials increasingly believed that the police could have little impact on minor crimes. They argued that these were the direct result of such larger social forces as poverty and racism, which police had no ability to affect.

The 1967 Presidential Commission on crime, made up of academics and law enforcement administrators--including the chief of the San Francisco Police Department, argued that "the ability of the police to act against crime is limited. The police did not create and cannot resolve the social conditions that stimulate crime" (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice 1967). Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark summarized the new thinking with his analysis of the issue of public drunkenness in his book *Crime in America* (1970):

In major cities police make tens of thousands of arrests annually for intoxication. The police time consumed, the diversion from other duties, and the resulting police friction with families and friends of those arrested are very substantial. Because police pick drunks off the streets, from homes, and out of parks and bars, the public has a sense the problem is being handled. Perhaps, in fact, one problem is being aggravated and several others created with this process. *Police action in arresting drunks will never prevent drunkenness, nor can it cure an alcoholic. What beneficial interest is served by picking winos off the curb, throwing them in the lockup to dry out for ten days, releasing them when their term is*

served, and then several days later picking them up again? Is this the way America wants to handle a major public health problem afflicting 7 million of its people? This obligatory practice, imposed on the police because they are there, is not only cruel and senseless—it is harmful. It hurts society and law enforcement. It fills jails and impairs the performance of vital police services. It wastes the lives of alcoholics who need medical help. *An ambitious, well-trained, professional policeman will not believe for long that he is performing a useful service when night after night he hauls drunks to the precinct station* (p. 117, emphasis added).

In addition the courts were beginning to strike down a number of law enforcement tools that had been used in the pursuit of public order. Debra Livingston (1997) points out that prior to the 1960's, the courts allowed police a great deal of discretion in their use of vagrancy, loitering, breach of peace, and other public order statutes because they were generally only used against marginal groups who had no political power to resist their abuses. As the civil rights movement emerged in the 1960's, however, these statutes were increasingly challenged and federal courts began to review the appalling misuse of these statutes. In 1972 a series of lower court rulings against order maintenance laws came to a head when the Supreme Court ruled in *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville*, that Jacksonville's vagrancy ordinance was unconstitutional, opening the door to the elimination of similar laws across the country and a number of similar court rulings. Faced with changing laws, court decisions, and public opinion, the police changed their own attitudes and tactics. Many police administrators themselves came to accept these views and removed aggressive policing of minor crimes as a priority.

The case of anti-prostitution enforcement in New York is illustrative of how departments responded to the changing attitudes about "victimless crimes" and order maintenance policing. In September 1967, the state legislature voted to dramatically reduce the punishment of prostitutes from a maximum jail term of one year to 15 days. They argued that "prostitution is a social problem rather than a criminal problem" and that "a harsh penalty failed to act as a deterrent" (NYT 1/27/69). A NYC Department of

Corrections official expressed the frustration felt by law enforcement officials: "When you see the same women coming back month after month, week after week, often arrested only hours after they were released from prison, you wonder just what the whole process is accomplishing" (NYT 8/14/67). This frustration could have been channeled in several different directions. One alternative could have been to increase the penalties. However, the prevailing sentiment at the time was towards liberalization and treatment, not incarceration—the opposite of the mood twenty years later.

Judges felt similarly about the problem. In the mid 1960's conviction rates for prostitution were between 70 and 80 percent. By 1967 they had fallen to 40 to 50 percent. According to the *New York Times*, "The gradual reduction in sentences is probably due chiefly to a growing belief among judges that prison does not deter prostitutes" (NYT 8/14/67). In 1967, local prosecutors and judges also began throwing out prostitution cases based on loitering and disorderly conduct laws claiming that they were overly broad in their definition of criminal behavior (NYT 9/27/67, 10/10/67).

The main alternative to prison was a social services approach. The Vera Institute of Justice proposed a series of "'halfway houses,' in which prostitutes would be offered a full battery of services from psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and vocational guidance experts" (NYT 8/15/67). This approach was supported by the *Times* and implemented on a small scale.

This does not mean that police enforcement against prostitution ended. Police continued to try to control the visible impact of prostitution on specific areas such as Times Square. However, the police began to conceptualize prostitution as either the expression of a broader social problem, best remedied by social workers and not the criminal justice system, or as an issue best left to politicians and civil liberties advocates. Fred Siegel (1997) provides an account that captures the philosophy of the police:

While responding to complaints from a Brooklyn residential neighborhood overwhelmed by street prostitution, a police captain explained that if his men were too forceful in removing pushers and the prostitutes from the streets, they themselves would be subject to arrest and a possible suit for a civil rights violation. An active or perhaps overly active cop, the captain explained, could destroy his career.

As a result, overall enforcement was reduced, and prostitution was allowed to continue on a modest scale in several parts of the city.

A very similar process emerged in dealing with the drug problem, during the late 1970's and early 1980's, as will be described later in this chapter. It is not surprising, then, that the emergent homeless problem was also initially handled in a "hands-off" manner. At first, both New York City and San Francisco attempted to deal with homelessness as primarily a social services problem rather than a police problem. What followed in each city was a fundamental shift in the role of the police and in policing philosophy. The social work approach was replaced with "zero tolerance," that focused on immediately reducing the visible impact of public homelessness and the disorder associated with it on the daily lives of residents and businesses.

The final aspect of professionalization was the use of patrol cars. Foot beats were replaced by radio cars that responded rapidly to calls for service and randomly patrolled neighborhoods in the hopes of intercepting crime as it occurred. This approach combined the use of new technology with scientific methods of patrol and management. However, the renewed reliance on patrol cars and scientific planning excluded community input. This further isolated police from the citizenry.

In the late 1960's this model began to show cracks. Urban rioting by blacks challenged the logic of the impersonal professional crime fighter. When the law is applied evenly to all groups without concern for their social relations, the burden of policing will fall disproportionately on certain groups, especially poor non-white ones (c.f. Fogelson 1977; Deakin 1988). For instance, drinking in public is not as common in

wealthy neighborhoods as in poor ones, where people are more likely to socialize on public streets, and so zero tolerance of public drinking laws will create a higher number of conflictual police-citizen interactions in poorer communities. As a result, rioting in the 60's was directly tied to complaints about police behavior in poor black neighborhoods.

In the early 1970's, analysis of some of the scientific methods of the police also came under criticism. The Kansas City Preventative Patrol Experiment showed that the hallmark of postwar policing—random motorized patrol—failed to reduce crime, increase the public's sense of security, or improve response times (Kelling 1974). During the 1970's and 1980's police executives and politicians came to rely on 911 emergency response systems and pointed to increased response times as the touchstone of police effectiveness. However, studies showed that these systems did not reduce crime or public fear of crime. They also diverted police resources from other types of patrol (Kelling and Coles 1996). Casual use of 911 by the public was turning the police into the agency of first resort for a broad range of problems and making it impossible for them to pursue non-emergency problems of their own choosing.

Why did professional policing last so long in the face of these criticisms? The reason was that it served a stable system for many police commanders. Within the professional model, police commanders were judged not by the crime rates in their command, but by their ability to bureaucratically manage their commands. If a commander could avoid controversy and excessive overtime, and maintain a high rate of arrests and traffic tickets, then they were judged to be effective managers. If crime rates increased, this was judged to be the result of larger social forces and not poor police management.

The combination of the decriminalization of public disorder, reliance on randomized motor patrol, 911 response systems, and other tactics that separated the police from the community weakened the police. It was the emergence of homelessness in the 1980's that brought out the cracks in the system and set one part of the groundwork for a new era of experimentation and reform.

“Quality of Life” Policing

The visible crisis of homelessness and the social disorder associated with it created both a political and philosophical crisis that forced police administrators to rethink the professional model and develop a new way to deal with disorder and incivility. During the 1980's, police scholars developed three new philosophies of policing: *community policing*, *problem-oriented policing*, and *broken windows policing*. Police reformers took different and sometimes overlapping pieces of each of these philosophies in their effort to develop new ways of responding to homelessness related disorder. Together they form the intellectual basis of the new “quality of life” style of policing.

Community policing was developed largely in response to deteriorating community relations in many urban departments as an outgrowth of racial tension. The specific elements of community policing have been much debated and varied a great deal among departments. David Bayley (1988) describes four main elements of community policing: 1) community based crime prevention, 2) prevention rather than emergency response, 3) public participation in planning and supervision of police operations, and 4) decentralization of police command. Several researchers have argued that much of community policing was actually a refinement of the professional model rather than a true break with it (Hartmann 1988, Moore and Trojanowicz 1988, Kelling 1988). In New York and San Francisco, community policing initially existed as only a special program and not an overall change in philosophy. Community police officers often were isolated from the mainstream of the department, prompting some critics to claim that community policing was often little more than an elaborate public relations measure.

The element of community policing that most represented a break with professional policing was its focus on long term problem solving. This approach was laid out in detail by Herman Goldstein (1990), who argued that police have to look for the roots of police

calls for service and develop multi-faceted, proactive solutions rather than responding to each call as a new and unrelated incident. To do this, they must study the patterns of calls for service, and determine both the underlying causes and mechanisms of crime and disorder, in order to develop strategies for reducing them. One result of this approach is that the police look at crime in spatial terms rather than focusing on specific criminal acts:

Not all substantive problems need to be defined in behavioral terms descriptive of alleged wrongdoing. They may be defined more helpfully as troublesome areas...For example, if initial analysis led one to focus on a concentration of liquor-serving establishments and adult entertainment on a city block, one might bring together incidents that might otherwise routinely be classified as disorderly conduct, assaults, prostitution, drunkenness, runaways, parking violations, and liquor license violations (Goldstein 1990: 34).

One aspect of this approach is to treat crime and disorder as spatial phenomena in which "troublesome areas," rather than troublesome people, generate crime (Braga et al 1999). As a result, the response by police is to saturate the target area with enforcement efforts to regain control of the space. The loss of control of space was the result of focusing only on calls for service as isolated incidents and not on the nature of communities as integrated, social places.

Another aspect of problem-oriented policing is that it views the police as the centerpiece of efforts to restore communities. The approach calls for the police to gather information about community problems and then mobilize themselves and other city agencies to solve the problem. This assumes that the police are the best qualified agency to make these assessments, and that the resources that they have to provide to neighborhood problem solving are the most important. One reason this approach has become popular with police departments is that it expands their scope of influence and heightens their profile relative to other city departments.

The final influence on “quality of life” policing is the “broken windows” theory. In 1982, George Kelling and James Q. Wilson wrote an article for the *Atlantic Monthly*, outlining a new approach to both fighting crime and restoring neighborhood stability in urban areas. Elaborating the social necessity of fixing small visible problems such as broken windows, Wilson and Kelling (1982) argued that the liberal model of treating public disorder as a minor problem not worthy of police and community effort permitted higher levels of social disorganization. The key to reestablishing order, and reducing major crime, they argue, is to establish tough police and communal enforcement against violations of community behavior norms. The police should return to their order-maintenance roots, and abandon the professional model of policing, used since the 1930's, which called for uniform enforcement of legal codes and a separation between the police and the community. Building on this approach, Wesley Skogan (1990) argues that small social and physical signs of disorder (trash-filled vacant lots, aggressive panhandling, graffiti, homeless encampments) play an important role in neighborhood decline. If these signs of disorder are not “cleaned up,” Skogan argues, they mark an area as unfit for the constant reinvestment of capital and commitment necessary to sustain neighborhood vitality and civility.

New York City

New York City experienced its own progression from 19th Century order-maintenance policing to professional and then “quality of life” policing. The New York City Police Department has a long history of reform efforts dating back to the later part of the 19th Century, beginning with the Lexow Commission in 1894, that ushered in Theodore Roosevelt’s term as Police Commissioner. Over the next 100 years, waves of corruption followed by reformist commissions rocked the department and served as the basis for numerous reforms in the areas of civil service reform (Lexow 1894), graft

(Knapp Commission 1972), criminal activity (Mollen Commission 1992), and police brutality (Giuliani Task Force 1997).

Some forms of professional policing emerged very early in the department. In 1914 Reform Police Commissioner Arthur Woods oversaw the raising of hiring and training standards and pushed for greater political autonomy and centralized control. During the middle part of the century, the department emphasized its scientific and technological advances and attempted to portray police officers as scientific crime fighters, culminating in the creation of the College of Police Sciences (now John Jay College of Criminal Justice) in 1965. During this period the department was also growing at a rapid rate, and most administrative focus was on managing growth not managing crime (Brown 1991).

It was also during this period that the department began to claim that a connection between social conditions and crime affected their ability to enforce the law. In 1967, then Commissioner Howard Leary testified before Congress, "There is a high correlation between crime and poverty, between racial outbreaks and unemployment, between the use of narcotics, the incidence of violence and the degree of educational, social and cultural deprivation...The police alone cannot correct any of these conditions, yet we bear on a daily basis much of the burden of the effects of these evils" (NYPD 1967). Also in 1967, the department began to issue summonses in lieu of making arrests for a number of minor crimes in an effort to reduce overcrowding in the criminal justice system. They believed that many people have roots in the community that would ensure their appearance in court—an assumption that came unraveled by the 1990's as an increasing number of people arrested for petty crimes failed to make court appearances. In 1968, the department supported the implementation of the Manhattan Bowery Project by the Vera Institute, which provided voluntary detox treatment for street drunks as an alternative to incarceration. This program dramatically reduced the 3,000 arrests a year made previously. The mid 1960's is also when a number of Supreme Court Decisions, including *Mapp v. Ohio* (1961), *Escobido v. Illinois* (1964), and *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), forced

the department to eliminate its use of coercive interrogation practices and intrusive searches. The overall effect of these developments was a broad concern with civil liberties and the decriminalization of minor crimes and disorders. Police increasingly took the role of high-tech crime fighters and shied away from low-tech, and politically, and constitutionally suspect, order maintenance.

As homelessness increased in the late 1970's and early 1980's, the police were slow to develop new approaches to deal with its impact on daily life in the city. Their professional orientation placed a low priority on the visible disorder associated with homelessness. By the early 1980's, requests for action by the police begin to increase in certain areas where large numbers of homeless people congregated, such as around Penn Station and Grand Central Station. The police, however, were slow to respond. A comment by a security officer at Madison Square Garden, located above Penn Station, summarizes the situation:

We have not had total success in getting help from our friends at the Midtown South Precinct. The police are burdened with a thousand tasks. Their attention is on serious crime. They tend to look the other way when they see a drunk (NYT 9/26/80).

Instead the police continued to focus on the increase in more serious crimes. In March 1981, the department responded to worsening conditions by creating a new centralized robbery unit. Rather than targeting minor crimes such as prostitution, drinking in public, or vandalism—as the “broken windows” theory would call for—they directed precinct resources to fight more serious violent crime (NYT 3/5/81). This indicates a continued allegiance to the professional model of policing.

According to Police Commissioner Lee Brown (1991), two forces vied for control of departmental philosophy in the 1970's and 80's. The first group was the “traditionalists,” who viewed the department as a paramilitary organization in which the primary job of police officers was arresting criminals. This was done through rapid radio car response,

random motorized patrol, and specialized units focusing on the suppression of major crimes. On the other side were the "progressives," who wanted to initiate more problem-oriented policing efforts. Reformers such as Michael Julian (who became Chief of Personnel under Commissioner Bratton) and John Timoney (who became Chief of Department) had been exposed to the "broken windows" theory and other theories of problem-oriented policing since Benjamin Ward was Commissioner in the early 1980's. Ward circulated numerous copies of the 1982 broken windows article and discussed it during management meetings. This had a profound effect on many police executives. These officers wanted to get the police out of their cars and involved in communities, a practice derided as "social work" by the traditionalists. The progressives, however, also wanted to develop new forms of targeted enforcement, and improved management techniques, not just develop positive community relations.

During this period communities began to bring greater pressure to bear on the police and the Mayor to deal with the declining conditions on the streets. There were several factors that contributed to this rise in community agitation. First was the rise in homelessness. By 1984, the number of people visibly living on the streets had grown tremendously. Second, street level drug dealing had become a commonplace occurrence, taking on the character of open-air markets with people and cars waiting in line to buy drugs, in areas like Washington Heights, Harlem, the Lower East Side, and East New York. The third reason in part explains number two. This is the dramatic decline in the number of police officers as a result of the fiscal crisis of the mid 1970's. The NYPD shrank considerably, from a peak of 30,600 officers in 1974 to a nadir of 21,800 in 1985 (NYPD 1985). This virtually eliminated the use of foot patrols, reduced the department's ability to do much other than respond to emergency calls, and made it difficult for the department to generate new programs to deal with emerging problems. Dinkins attempted to counter this trend with the "Safe City, Safe Streets" initiative to hire more officers. However, he was slow to hire the newly authorized officers. According to William

Bratton, if Dinkins had been quicker to hire those officers he would have defeated Giuliani in the 1993 election.¹ Fourth, because of concerns about corruption stemming from the 1972 Knapp Commission, uniformed patrol officers were sometimes discouraged from taking action against street-level drug dealers, and local precincts were not allowed to run undercover operations. Narcotics enforcement was left to a centralized narcotics bureau, which focused increasingly on long-term high-level investigations and not street-level enforcement. Finally, many people in the department still felt that the problems associated with homelessness were social problems and not the concern of the police.

Mayor Koch and Commissioner Ward were well aware of community concern about the decline in conditions on public streets and the “broken windows” theory that offered a way to address the problem. Koch himself noted that the most frequent complaints he received at community meetings were about “quality of life” matters and not about serious crimes (NYT 1/24/85). In the next few years, this term was to become pervasive in descriptions of the conditions of public spaces. By 1984, the department was ready to try new initiatives to counter the frustration felt by residents about street level conditions. This readiness was made possible by an increase in crime rates, which in turn led to a increase in the number of officers to 26,000 by the end of 1985 (NYPD 1985).

The main initiative was the Total Patrol Concept, begun in 1984 and expanded in stages over the next several years. The first element was the creation of Quality of Life Units, which borough level commanders assigned to work on local disorder complaints such as prostitution, narcotics, gambling, and vandalism, rather than responding to radio calls. The goal, according to Commissioner Ward, was to “put more emphasis on community-based crime control and less on centralized 911 emergency systems” (NYT 7/4/84). This program was expanded in 1985 so that each precinct had a handful of officers referred to as “conditions officers,” who focused on local street conditions.

¹ Interview with William Bratton. November 11, 2000.

According to former Chief of Department John Timoney, however, Quality of Life Units were not used effectively. Rather than being used to target specific crime patterns, they were too often used to just generate more citations in general—a kind of numbers game.²

The second element was the Community Patrol Officers Program (CPOP). The major elements of the CPOP program were 1) an orientation towards local problem solving, 2) flexibility in deployment and hours, 3) accountability of officers for specific small areas (i.e. beats), 4) community involvement in identifying and prioritizing community problems, and 5) building police-community relations (Farrell 1986). This program had many of the hallmarks of community policing initiatives common across the country in this period. However, it was not well received by the traditionalists within the department, and implementation was slow and poorly supervised. According to Fred Siegel (1997, p.191), “Lee Brown gave after dinner speeches extolling the virtues of community policing, [but] he rarely expended administrative effort to implement it.”

Another initiative, developed for the Lower East Side and later expanded to a few other locations, was Operation Pressure Point, which targeted street level drug dealing. In 1984, the department “saturated the area with a centrally coordinated uniformed and undercover police presence, including foot patrols, mounted officers, helicopter surveillance, and drug sniffing dogs” (NYPD 1985). While the operation was initially judged a success by local residents, the results seemed to be best in the more gentrified parts of the neighborhood (Zimmer 1987), and complaints continued in poorer areas and in areas outside the boundaries of the program. In addition, the results did not last long, and drugs reemerged as an ongoing concern through the early 1990’s.

With the election of David Dinkins as mayor in 1989, the supporters of reform and community policing were given the upper hand, with the appointment of Lee Brown as Commissioner. Brown immediately began the implementation of a series of community policing measures, including the expansion of the CPOP program to every precinct in the

² Interview with John Timoney. January 19, 2001.

city. He was a strong believer in problem-oriented policing:

The Department will move from an incident-responding orientation to a problem solving orientation. Problem solving focuses police officer attention on the underlying causes of the problems that are reflected in a pattern of citizen requests for assistance. Repeat calls to the same problem will not be treated simply as isolated incidents (NYPD 1991:13).

But according to former Chief of Department John Timoney and former Chief of Personnel Michael Julian, CPOP failed to deliver on its promises. For many officers CPOP was a way of getting a flexible schedule and more days off. It meant attending community meetings rather than difficult or undesirable assignments. Brown never had the management tools in place or broad enough support within the department to fully implement his ideas. In addition, Brown, following Dinkins' lead, believed that true crime prevention was based on revitalizing communities, not increasing aggressive police enforcement. In the view of reformers within the department, like Julian, going to community meetings was not the kind of community problem solving the police were good at. What was needed was targeted enforcement of specific crime patterns and what Timoney described as "prevention through apprehension."³ To do that, local precincts needed greater flexibility to target local problems as they saw fit, rather than just responding to 911 radio calls. Julian and others would get their wish for this change soon enough.

The election of Rudolph Giuliani as Mayor of New York in 1993 has been pointed to--by him and others--as the necessary catalyst for the NYPD's adoption of concerns about "quality of life." It is clear, however, that this agenda was well underway during the Dinkins administration, in response to growing pressure from residents and businesses at the neighborhood level and citywide. Several developments make this clear. The first was the innovations created by the Grand Central Partnership, a business group, beginning in the late 1980's. The second was William Bratton's use of "broken windows" and

³ Interview with John Timoney, January 19, 2001.

problem-oriented policing in the subway system beginning in 1991. The third was Mayor Dinkins' response to the community mobilization in the Lower East Side that placed pressure on local police administrators, leading to the forced closure of Tompkins Square Park in 1991. The fourth was the 1993 program initiated by central police executives to rid the city of "squeegee men."

Grand Central Partnership

Faith in the ability of the police to respond to disorder remained limited in many areas, however. One constituency that consistently expressed this view was commercial interests. The late 1980's saw the formation of numerous business improvement districts (BID's) that attempted to restore order through the hiring of private security guards and sanitation workers to reduce the impact of both behavioral and visual disorder. The Grand Central Partnership (GCP)—a BID, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5--and BID's in general, put direct pressure on the police and the City to take disorder more seriously. The GCP did this essentially by providing an alternative example of how to reduce crime and restore order and by attempting to directly replace some of the central functions of the police, thus threatening their institutional scope. They did this by hiring private security guards, social workers, and outreach workers. The goal was to use a carrot and stick approach to remove homeless people from inside the Grand Central Terminal and immediately surrounding blocks. This effort was a concrete example of a problem-oriented approach to reducing disorder as part of a strategy for taking back control of an important public space. These efforts were very successful and provided a model for other BID's and city government.

When William Bratton took over the transit police in 1991, he was well aware of the efforts of BID's in general, and of the Grand Central Partnership in particular. Grand Central Terminal was one of the first places he visited as Transit Police Chief, to see how the GCP had been able to achieve such improvements. The GCP wasn't Bratton's first exposure to problem-oriented methods, but it did serve as an important example. Bratton felt that BID's were crucial as both public-private partnerships, and as sources of innovation, following the decline in city services as a result of the fiscal crisis.⁴

In three cases, the GCP initiated policing functions that were taken over by the police during the Giuliani administration. In the first, the GCP took over security for the streets surrounding Grand Central Terminal. Their primary concern was to target homeless people as a source of disorder by providing social services, high-visibility security guards, and low visibility intimidation by homeless outreach workers. In the second case, the GCP signed contracts with banks to provide security at ATM machines, by preventing panhandling and sleeping in the ATM vestibules. Third, the GCP negotiated contracts with nearby neighborhood associations to provide outreach services in homeless encampments in the area.

One example of this third case is the attempt to remove an encampment adjacent to Tudor City, a middle-class housing complex on Manhattan's East Side near the United Nations. The encampment had been in place for several years and resisted isolated police efforts to remove it. A member of the Tudor City Association (TCA) said that they had made repeated efforts to get the police to take action against the encampment by enforcing existing laws. Every time they met with police they brought a lawyer with them to indicate their willingness to take legal action against the city if things didn't improve.⁵ This tactic was not successful, however. According to one TCA member, "The police do come in and move them out but they just go to another park in the area and come back."⁶

⁴ Interview with William Bratton. November 11, 2000.

⁵ Interview with Harry Laughlin. October 19, 1995.

⁶ Interview with Harry Laughlin. October 19, 1995.

As a result, the TCA turned to the GCP, which had been successful in removing an encampment near the 34th St. Esplanade. The TCA paid \$2,600 for a 60 day outreach effort (Our Town 3/10/94) that was really a removal effort. The GCP used low-paid homeless people connected to their drop in center to visit the area repeatedly to try to get people living there to access housing and other services. This was successful in getting some people to leave the area. Many others, however, refused these offers and were removed with threats of beatings (Parenti 1994). While the GCP was only partially successful, the fact that a middle-class, mostly white neighborhood group put so much effort into removing an encampment, sent a strong message to the city that dissatisfaction with both the police and social service providers was growing.

However, the police were still not ready to treat order maintenance as a priority. Kelling and Coles (1996) claim that the department was still too insulated from community input of any kind. They point out that while Commissioner Ward had implemented problem-oriented methods in the CPOP program, "community policing...was implemented as an add-on, well outside the mainstream of policing in New York City" (Kelling and Coles 1996: p.114). And as Timoney and Julian noted, Commissioner Brown made community policing a more central initiative but he lacked the management resources to implement it effectively.

Dinkins attempted one other innovation in policing in 1991. In order to fight the growing crack trade and an overall increase in crime, Dinkins asked the state legislature to approve a measure to be called Safe Streets, Safe City that would provide a substantial increase in funding to both the police and social services for youth. The measure passed, and the number of police officers began to increase. As part of this program, Dinkins emphasized the use of community policing to control crime. For the first time, community policing was described as the dominant philosophy of the department and not just an odd-on program. This philosophy called for decentralizing decision-making, increasing the number of CPOP officers, reducing time spent responding to 911 calls, and

more opportunities for individual officers to engage in problem solving. Dinkins believed that this would both reduce crime and improve relations between the police and the community.

At the same time Commissioner Brown resigned from office to take care of his critically ill wife. He was replaced by Raymond Kelly, who was well aware of the writings on problem-oriented policing. According to Julian and Timoney, Kelly understood that much of CPOP and Safe Streets, Safe City, was not working because there was no management commitment to their goals. There were more police than ever, and more community police officers, but they were not being used strategically to fight crime. Timoney described it as having "more cops not doing anything."⁷ They were left to operate largely within the old framework of either responding to radio calls or "glad-handing" the community. Kelly was unable to change this dynamic because Dinkins was still tied to a community relations oriented approach to community policing, not a "prevention through apprehension" model. In addition, Kelly had to deal with a serious corruption scandal before the department could be shaken up. Kelly was successful in cleaning up the worst of the corruption problems and in strengthening a number of management tools, but he was unable to move the department towards problem-oriented policing.

Subways

Up to this point, however, the police were still not dealing directly with the problems associated with homelessness. The first real efforts began when William Bratton was hired by MTA Chairman Robert Kiley to run the ailing Transit Police in 1990. During the 1970's, the NYC subway system had suffered enormously. Youth gangs roamed the system at will, fare evasion was common, and graffiti covered almost every inch of

⁷ Interview with John Timoney. January 19, 2001.

subway cars, inside and out. The city's fiscal crisis compounded the problem, bringing cleaning, upgrading, and policing the subway system to a standstill. By the early 1980's, the system was in a tailspin, with ridership declining and revenue stagnant. Crime was on the rise, and no one seemed to have any ideas about how to attack the problem.

Kiley believed that the key to restoring public confidence in the subway system was in improving the physical infrastructure of the system and eliminating the sense of disorder. When the fiscal problems of the 70's gave way to the Wall Street boom of the 80's, track and station improvements were begun with funding provided by the state. Moreover in 1984 TA President David Gunn initiated the Clean Car Program. The program operated by cleaning a set of cars, and then keeping them clean by pulling them out of service as soon as any graffiti appeared, thus eliminating the sense of accomplishment for graffiti writers. Throughout the mid 1980's the physical appearance of the subway infrastructure improved and on October 12, 1989, the last graffiti-covered car was taken out of service.

The war against disorder, however, was far from over. Crime was still a major problem, with fair evasion and robbery widespread. Added to this was the burgeoning homeless problem. Just as the physical infrastructure was improving, the social and visual environment was becoming more disorderly and menacing. By 1988, air conditioning was standard on all subway cars, major improvements had been made in the condition of stations, as well, and ridership had started going up. However, as the homeless situation worsened, ridership levels began to fall off again, creating budget shortfalls for the TA (NYT 11/19/88). In addition, the cost of maintenance of trains and stations was beginning to increase, as crews had to clean up after homeless people.

Up to 2,000 people a night were sleeping in the subway system and panhandling was widespread on cars and platforms (NYT 7/22/89). Since the subway became a primary gathering site of homeless people, many agencies performed outreach there and gave away food and clothing. While this provided some improvements in the living conditions

for the homeless, it turned the subway system into a giant public homeless encampment, complete with people changing clothes, going to the bathroom, and engaging in a myriad of legal and illegal activities that were inconsistent with the usual activities of a transportation system. As a result, many passengers sensed that the subway system was out of control, which encouraged criminals to move in and riders to move out.

In April 1988, a survey of 1,299 subway riders showed that panhandling and homelessness were the top two sources of "unease" in the subway system. Sixty-three percent of respondents also said that there had been a significant increase in the number of homeless people in the last year (NYT 10/25/89). Another survey of 996 adult riders in September 1988 showed that 75% of respondents listed fear of crime as one of their top two or three concerns about the subway. Getting to work on time was first (86%) and "filth" was third (59%). Transit officials, argued, however, that the actual levels of crime were lower than the levels of fear. The survey asked people to estimate the number of serious crimes each day on the subway. The actual level was 25 to 30 but 52% of respondents answered 50 or more and 36% said at least 100. This suggests that fear of crime was closely connected to the appearance of disorder rather than to actual experience of crime. In fact only 11% of riders who expressed fear of crime on the subway had themselves been victims (NYT 9/29/88). The TA took the problem of fear very seriously, however, because it effected the overall success of the system. According to Gunn, "If people's perception is that there is a lot of crime, and that keeps them out of the subway, then there tends to be more crime. It's really important on our agenda that we continue to create the impression *that someone is in control down there*" (NYT 10/2/88, emphasis added).

In addition to the twin pressures of declining revenue and increasing costs, Mayor Koch began pressuring the TA because conditions on the subway were becoming a political liability for him in the upcoming mayoral election. As a result, in 1989, Kiley and Gunn hired policing scholars George Kelling and Bob Wasserman to investigate the

functioning of the Transit Police and determine whether they should be merged with the NYPD, as Mayor Koch was urging, as a way to restore order to the system. Kiley knew Kelling and Wasserman from his years in Boston as Deputy Mayor and later head of the MBTA, the Boston Transit Authority. Kelling had co-authored the "broken windows" theory, and was doing research and consulting work. Wasserman had worked for the Boston Metropolitan Police and the Boston Transit Police and was well-versed in problem oriented policing.

Kelling and Wasserman argued that the unique physical environment of the subway argued against the merger, and instead suggested that the subway was an excellent location to try out his new "broken windows" based methods of policing (Bratton 1998). In order to do that, the leadership of the MTA needed to reorient the Transit Police. In spring 1989, Kiley heard about William Bratton--who was then head of the MBTA Police--by Kelling and Wasserman who lobbied to have him made head of the New York transit police.⁸ Kelling and Bratton had gotten to know each other through a series of seminars on policing at the Kennedy School of Government. Wasserman and Bratton had worked together for several years at the Boston Police and Boston Transit Police. Both Wasserman and Kelling knew that Bratton had been a strong proponent of problem oriented and order maintenance policing before the "broken windows" article had been written, and it was Wasserman who had first introduced Bratton to Herman Goldstein's writings on problem oriented policing (Bratton 1998). Bratton was already well known to Kiley. In 1990, Alan Kiepper replaced Gunn as president of the TA, and he agreed to act on Kiley and Gunn's recommendation to hire Bratton as chief of the Transit Police (Bratton 1998).

Bratton kept Kelling and Wasserman as consultants to develop strategies for restoring order on the subways. In keeping with the "broken windows" strategy, they looked to low-level disorder as the key to cracking more serious crime patterns. In addition to

⁸ Interview with William Bratton, November 11, 2000.

prioritizing fare-evasion and robbery, they focused on the disorder associated with homelessness. The challenge was to find a way to restore order without appearing to be specifically attacking the homeless. Kelling describes this concern in some detail in the section "Claim the Moral High Ground" in *Fixing Broken Windows* (Kelling and Coles 1996, p.222):

From the very beginning in the New York Subway, we understood that allowing others to frame the issue of disorder as "homelessness" would have been an organizational, legal, and political trap. Organizationally, it would have conceded to police that order maintenance was only a peripheral function—divorced from policing's core function of preventing crime. Legally, it would have permitted advocates to fix the terms of litigation and ambush the MTA and police with legal arguments about "harassing the poor." Politically, it would have evoked knee-jerk responses to homelessness, a problem serious in its own right but fundamentally different from the one the MTA was dealing with — lawlessness.

Responding to these concerns, they drafted a series of carefully worded regulations based on specific disorderly behaviors rather than on the status or appearance of homelessness. These included new rules that forbade lying down on stairs or platforms, blocking free movement, panhandling, and carrying open containers of alcohol. They also instituted a program of aggressive outreach by social workers and police officers in trains, stations, and tunnels to try to get homeless people to go to shelters. According to Gunn, "We're not trying to solve the problem of the mother and two kids who lose their apartment. We're trying to get them out of the stations" (NYT 11/19/88). The TA had managed to turn the "homeless" problem into a "policing problem."

In October 1989, the Transit Police instituted Operation Enforcement, "designed to restore order to the subway system," according to an MTA spokesman (UPI 10/24/89). The effort was directed initially at the Grand Central Terminal and later expanded throughout the system, generating thousands of citations and removing many people from

the subways. Police officers engaged in periodic crackdowns but couldn't sustain the effort. At the same time their union leadership spoke out against the plan. Public officials, including Governor Mario Cuomo and homeless advocates, also spoke out against the plan. They argued that the city still did not have services in place to accommodate people being driven out of the subways in the middle of winter. By early 1990, enforcement efforts waned, as police became frustrated about ejecting homeless people, who simply walked back into the subway system. A TA spokesman described it "like a tide – it keeps on rolling back in" (NYT 1/24/90).

In April 1990, William Bratton took over as chief of the Transit Police. He quickly applied a "broken windows" based strategy to the crime and disorder-ridden system. Bratton ordered the Transit Police to focus on three areas of subway crime that he felt would be the linchpin to restoring a sense of order to the subways. These areas were robbery, fare-beating, and general disorder--mostly associated with homelessness (Bratton 1998, Kelling and Coles 1996, NYC Transit Police 1991). In a 1991 report, the Transit Police made it clear that they were repudiating the professional or law enforcement model of policing:

For a generation, police have considered themselves to be professional law-enforcement officers whose primary responsibility was to respond to crimes in progress and apprehend criminals. Responsibilities other than apprehending criminals, such as conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and order maintenance frequently were ignored (NYC Transit Police 1991: p.6).

The new patrol strategy incorporates certain fundamental principles from the community policing model.

1. Problem solving as opposed to crisis response
2. Preventing crime as opposed to just reacting to crimes in progress
3. Order maintenance as both a goal in itself and as a means to control more serious crime (p.10).

These are the core elements of the new "quality of life" policing strategies that Bratton would later bring to the rest of the NYPD.

One of the hallmark elements of the new strategies was the development of new enforcement techniques for farebeating. The Transit Authority estimated that 170,000 people a day were jumping the turnstiles. In the past the Transit Police, had paid only limited attention to what was now essentially the theft of \$1.15 by each individual. However, the total number of evasions was costing the Transit Authority \$80 million a year, and more importantly, according to the police, was contributing to a sense among riders that the system was unregulated and out of control:

When farebeaters and token thieves infest a turnstile area, the public is welcomed to the subway by the *spectacle of pervasive crime*. If this can happen in plain sight of the token clerks, people wonder what happens in the dark corners of a deserted station (NYC Transit Police 1991: p.9, emphasis added).

According to the new strategy, large-scale undercover operations would arrest farebeaters, check them for weapons, drugs, and outstanding warrants and issue them a summons to appear in court; those possessing weapons or drugs would be held for arraignment. As a result, a clear message would be sent to both minor and serious criminals that the subway was no longer an easy picking ground.

This strategy, combined with undercover operations targeting robbery, reduced the felony crime rate in the subways by 75% by 1994 (Kelling and Coles 1996:152). However, Bratton and Kelling felt that restoring riders' confidence in the subways required an even broader reduction in the appearance of disorder. The main source of that visible disorder was the growing number of people living in subway stations, trains, and tunnels--a situation that was a problem for both riders and the homeless. More than 200 homeless people died in the subway system between 1988 and 1991.

In keeping with the broken windows approach, the general attitude of the Transit Police was that they must use a zero-tolerance approach towards rule breakers to regain

control of the environment and restore civility:

The police must demonstrate, time and again, that they will act swiftly to correct rules violations. Only when the pattern of consistent enforcement is established will the habitual rule breakers *begin to change their behavior* (NYC Transit Police 1991: p. 17, emphasis added).

However, the rules that could be used against disorderly people were unclear. Since homelessness itself is not a crime, new tools had to be developed that focused not on the condition of homelessness but on the behaviors associated with it. Kelling played a major role in the development of these tools. He argued that rules needed to be as clearly and logically stated as possible, to withstand both legal challenges and to provide officers with clear guidance (Kelling and Coles 1996). The new rules prohibited panhandling, peddling, lying down, carrying open alcohol containers, and obstructing the free movement of passengers or trains. From 1990 to 1991 summonses increased by 35 percent and ejections from the subway increased by 473 percent.

In addition to stiff new rules directed at disruptive behavior, the Transit Authority directly targeted the homeless with two other programs. One was an outreach program that used social workers to seek out homeless people and offer to transport them to social services. The other was a program of inspecting tunnels in search of homeless encampments and ejecting people living there.

Clearly, innovation was driven by growing customer dissatisfaction with the system and a management interested in trying new approaches to restore order and, ultimately, ridership levels. The Transit Police were not under direct scrutiny from community groups in the same way the NYPD was. For the public, the pressures were more diffuse. Kelling and Coles (1996) and Bratton (1998) each point to a general sense of crisis and the importance of political leadership in creating a climate that was conducive to major policy changes. At the time, selection of this management and the resources to support it came from both Democratic governor Mario Cuomo and Democratic mayor David

Dinkins. Governor Cuomo appointed MTA chief Alan Kiepper and made available \$40 million for capital improvements and police overtime pay to implement the new broken windows strategies. Mayor Dinkins supported this initiative through his "Safe Streets, Safe City" program, which significantly increased the number of Transit Police officers and civilian personnel.

New ideas in policing, however, ultimately made these innovations possible. The three people most associated with these new ideas were Bratton, Kelling, and Jack Maple, a lieutenant in the Robbery Squad and long-time Transit Police officer. Maple was responsible for the decision to increase the use of decoy operations to control robbery, dramatically increase the number of fare-beating arrests, and run checks for outstanding warrants on those who were arrested. Kelling, co-author of the 1982 "broken windows" article, developed the new regulations dealing with disorder and homeless people in the subways and played a role in bringing Bratton in to head the Transit Police. All three men were well aware of the weaknesses of the professional model and the emerging literature on order maintenance policing. The success of this "brain trust" set the groundwork for immense changes in the NYPD.

The Lower East Side

The Lower East had a 1990 population of over 50,000 people, mainly whites (primarily in the west) and Puerto Ricans (primarily in the east). The area is high density residential, with retail stores, restaurants, and bars the only major business sectors. During the 1980's and 90's the area experienced significant gentrification in the western half of the neighborhood contributing to some inter-ethnic tension, but more widely a heightened level of political activity (Abu-Lughod 1994a, Smith 1996, Mele 2000). From the 1970's to the mid 1990's the area had high crime rates and a brisk drug trade, especially on the eastern and southern edges, which were predominantly Latino.

There was a great deal of community mobilization on the Lower East Side in the late 1980's and early 90's around the problem of disorder in the neighborhood--including street level drug dealing, street peddlers, opening of a new homeless shelter on 1st St., conditions around the 3rd St. shelter, and most importantly, homeless people sleeping in Tompkins Square Park. The NYPD was reluctant to take on these "social problems" because, despite Operation Pressure Point and CPOP, disorder control was still a low overall priority for the department. In addition there was a vocal neighborhood constituency, manifest in the local Community Board, which supported a social services model to dealing with the homeless problem. There was also a large contingent of political radicals, anarchists, and "squatters" who demanded that homeless people be allowed to camp in neighborhood parks and squat abandoned buildings (Mele 2000). As a result, a growing number of people began to call for police action to restore order in the park and the surrounding neighborhood and to initiate various neighborhood watch and patrol efforts. The balance of power between supporters of social services and those calling for punitive measures was beginning to shift.

A number of people have looked at different aspects of the conflict around Tompkins Square Park. Most of these works have looked at the problem from the perspective of residents opposed to gentrification (Abu-Lughod 1994b, Gordon 1994, Smith 1996), local squatters (Van Kleunen 1994, Mele 2000), or homeless people (Greshof and Dale 1994), or they have focused on the role of the police or the city (Sites 1994, Smith 1996, Mele 2000). No one has looked at this conflict from the perspective of the residents who actively supported the crack down. In this section, I will show how and why these local residents became a powerful force for change in the neighborhood.

In 1987, residents on 13th St. formed Thirteen Resolved to Evict All Dealers (THREAD), which organized block patrols to try and dissuade dealers. They eventually called in the Guardian Angels to supplement their patrols, supplying them with free housing (provided by a local landlord) and funds (they raised \$2,500 in \$5 and \$10

amounts and organized 46 buildings to support them). The Guardian Angels were formed in the 1970's as an all volunteer organization intended to give citizens an opportunity to restore order in public spaces through organized patrols. This was in response to a crisis in confidence in the ability of the Police Department to effectively fight crime and restore order on their own. In practice, the group tended to be made up of young people who were hired by local business groups to maintain order on their streets by rousting "undesirables" such as homeless people, drug dealers, and young people hanging out.

Similar efforts were undertaken by the Extra Place Neighborhood Association (EPNA), which was started on 1st St., and East Villagers Against Crack (EVAC), which targeted the area between 12th and 17th Streets, and 1st and 4th Avenues. These groups were motivated by the fact that Operation Pressure Point appeared to be driving dealers from targeted areas further east into their neighborhood. At a THREAD rally, one local activist said that the event "is a signal that the community will not settle for Pressure Point breaking drug dealing in one area, simply to have it moved to another...If there are insufficient number of police to cover the problem, then the City must supply sufficient personnel like the CPOP officers. Additionally, the City must bring the Narcotics Investigation Unit for the Borough and make a major sweep of the area to harass dealers to prevent them from settling in" (Villager 9/3/87). These groups held frequent rallies (Villager 4/2/87, 9/3/87, 4/7/88, 7/28/88) built links with local elected officials (V 9/3/87, 4/7/88, 7/28/88), had frequent meetings with the police (V 10/8/87, East Villager 5/89, 6/89) and organized letter writing campaigns to Mayor Koch (Villager 10/8/87).

In the area near the Bowery, members of BASTA, a neighborhood association formed to fight the placement of shelters, frustrated about the growing problems associated with the homeless population, were unsatisfied with the police response. The primary problems were garbage, noise, and street level drug use and dealing. In the late 1980's, to the dismay of local activists, the police were not actively dealing with these violations. According to one BASTA member, "We were not very pleased with the police. We got

impatient and walked out of a meeting with the commander who was doing a presentation on heroin in Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle *when we were concerned about our block*" (emphasis added).⁹ One person recalls the police told them, "You live on 3rd Street, what do you expect? You should move!"¹⁰ Eventually, the police performed periodic sweeps, but the community sentiment was that the police were only sympathetic, and gave good advice, to activists, but were otherwise useless in helping them regain control of the area. One action the police did take was to release statistics showing that 46% of crime in the precinct occurred in the area around the homeless shelter, and 15% of those arrested gave the shelter as their address (Villager 9/15/88). However, in a meeting with community residents, Police Commissioner Ward clearly stated, "The problem is beyond the police...While they continue to make arrests, *something more fundamental needed to be done*" (Villager 9/15/88, emphasis added). In order to press the city to take action, BASTA filed suit against the city, organized meetings with top administration and police officials, and built alliances with local elected officials.

Another problem that mobilized local residents to pressure the police on the Lower East Side was street peddlers. A series of organizing efforts began in 1986, with the formation of the groups Save Our Streets and the Second Ave. Task Force; both attempted to pressure police to take enforcement action against the peddlers. In 1988, We Are Resolved, Peddlers Are Total Hell (WARPATH) criticized the seeming unwillingness or inability of the police to consistently shut down the illegal open air markets along 2nd Avenue, that sold used and sometimes stolen household items. WARPATH called for a combination of social services and police enforcement, but the police bore the brunt of their criticism. A prominent 2nd Ave. merchant described the frustration with the police:

⁹ Interview with Howard Hemsley, February, 23, 1999.

¹⁰ Interview with Howard Hemsley, February, 23, 1999.

There is urinating in public, constant noise, and no law enforcement. I've been here for 22 years— I've lost all respect for the Ninth Precinct. The situation is appalling (East Villager 6/88).

A local resident reported that his wife was once "attacked by a 'peddler' bearing a stick. Upon calling the Ninth Precinct, he was told that they were too busy to respond" (East Villager 6/88).

In 1989, local residents dropped water balloons from rooftops onto peddlers and poured ammonia on the sidewalks in front of their buildings to drive them off. The local precinct finally responded to the growing intensity of neighborhood anger. Deputy Inspector Michael Julian had just been put in charge of the Precinct in the wake of the Tompkins Square Park riot and was committed to using a problem-solving approach to order maintenance. Julian was chosen for this difficult assignment because he had a background in the CPOP program, lived in the neighborhood, and was viewed by Commissioner Ward as someone who could communicate with any group.¹¹

Upon taking over, Julian was immediately pressured by the local business community to do something about the peddler problem. He responded by assigning his Conditions Unit of eight officers to work on the problem. He split the unit up into two person teams so that they could maintain coverage at all times rather than just doing occasional concentrated sweeps. He also decided to increase the number of arrests and then follow up with warnings and a constant police presence (East Villager 5/89). The ultimate solution, however, was to arm these officers with a new tool. Julian, after consulting the District Attorney's office, determined what the legally permissible peddling locations were on St. Marks—based on the presence of other sidewalk impediments—and painted the outlines of these reduced number of spots. Rather than having a hundred tables set up, the new painted slots were limited to a couple of dozen. This clear indication of the legal standard gave beat officers the backing they needed for consistent tough enforcement.

¹¹ Interview with Michael Julian, January 30, 2001.

This was the point of critical nexus between local political pressure by newly mobilized residents, merchants' political action groups, and innovative police managers. Julian was clearly using problem-oriented methods in addressing the peddler problem-- methods he would use again in confronting the squeegee problem. And all of this occurred before Rudolph Giuliani was elected mayor.

A much better known example of this process is the effort from 1988 to 1991 to evict the homeless encampment in Tompkins Square Park (Abu-Lughod 1994, Smith 1996). There were important political forces in the neighborhood that tried to block police enforcement actions in the park. They were trying to protect the rights of the people living there, to make a broader political statement about the failure of the Koch and Dinkins administrations, and to provide real solutions to the problem of homelessness. One result of this effort was that the police were largely unwilling to insert themselves into a politically controversial situation. They took a hands-off approach to the park during the mid 1980's. This allowed the encampment in the park to grow, providing cover for drug dealing and petty theft. Overall, the park became unsanitary and inhospitable to recreational uses.

Another aspect of the problem was the large numbers of young people who congregated in the park late at night making noise that disturbed nearby residents. According to a member of the Tompkins Square Park Neighborhood Council, the noise in the park did more to precipitate the clearing of the park than the homeless encampment.¹² It is hard to separate the two however, since it was the presence of homeless people that prevented police from enforcing the midnight curfew, which in turn made it more difficult to evict young people hanging out. In addition, the local police did not take the noise problem very seriously because it fell into the category of minor disorder. The local precinct captain promised to send a patrol car on Saturday nights, but added, "We will throw them out as best we can. We will write summons (sic) but many of these kids could

¹² Interview with Steve Vincent, March 12, 1999.

care less about a \$50 summons...I'll put a cop out there and we'll see how it goes. *But other things take priority*" (Villager 8/18/88, emphasis added). At this point the police were unable or unwilling to take a comprehensive approach to solving the problems associated with either homelessness or noisy youth.

By the late 1980's local frustrations with conditions in the park and police inactivity had grown so great as to cause the political realignments discussed in Chapter 3. The primary result of this was that after several years of opposing the enforcement of an existing midnight park curfew, Community Board 3 voted, on June 28, 1988, to request additional police in the park. The Board also asked that a noise curfew be enforced and that disruptive people be dispersed from the park (Villager 8/18/88). While CB3 and the local captain agreed that the homeless would be allowed to remain, this was the opening that was needed for local groups to press the police for more dramatic enforcement. What followed on August 6th-7th was the Tompkins Square Riot. While the homeless were not evicted during this riot, it served to raise the stakes of allowing any disorderly behavior to continue in the park as people became more intensely polarized over the issue. Over the next three years, in numerous demonstrations and public hearings concerning the park, several groups pursued a strategy of trying to equate the closing of the park with an attack on homeless people. They were successful in equating the two, but it also allowed the opposition to argue that the park needed to be closed to everyone, not just to disruptive youths. As a result, in the summer of 1991, the Dinkins administration moved ahead with plans to completely close the park for a one year renovation. That served to empty the park of homeless people, drug dealers, and young people. Local residents and the city government felt that the only way to control disorder was to radically reorder the use patterns of the park.

The development of the homeless issue on the Lower East Side exemplifies how widespread grassroots mobilizations in the 1980's made specific demands for changes in policing at the neighborhood level, and in turn created a crisis within the professional

model of policing. The possibility that residents would take the law into their own hands undermined the authority of the police and the rule of law. However, it was only after the department brought in Michael Julian, who had the experience and inclination to adopt new methods that went against the previously dominant model that the "broken windows" approach began to take hold. As a result, community support for the police improved significantly, though resentment towards the mayor remained strong. By the mid 1990's crime began to drop in the neighborhood along with the citywide trend. From 1993 to 2000 major crimes fell by over 56% in the 9th precinct (NYPD 2001a). This served to consolidate support for the new policing methods and encourage further calls for "quality of life" crackdowns.

Squeegee Men

The final example of the emergence of "quality of life" policing prior to Rudolph Giuliani's election was the crackdown against squeegee men. These men, who would wash the windows of cars stopped at traffic lights at major intersections coming into and out of the city, were symbols of the newly perceived menacing nature of New York City. While these men themselves committed very few crimes, they were identified by the public with the overall increase in crime, and the disorder problems associated with homelessness and drug use. By the early 1990's they came to represent a city out of control, a police force unable to deal with the most visible sources of disorder, and a mayor who was letting this all happen.

Mayor Dinkins, who had never played a direct role in the police department, ordered Commissioner Kelly to do something about the squeegee problem. The decision to focus on resolving the squeegee men problem came from Commissioner Kelly's office rather than local commanders. The new approach was developed during an election year in which Rudolph Giuliani was challenging Mayor Dinkins for being soft on crime and

disorder. Kelling and Coles (1996) suggest that it was the threat of Dinkins' losing the election that motivated this innovation within the office of the commissioner. Michael Julian, who worked on this problem with Kelling, shares that assessment as well.¹³

Kelly asked George Kelling in 1993 to work with the department to study the nature of the problem and develop a comprehensive strategy for resolving it. They found that, despite the claims of homeless advocates and civil libertarians, most of the squeegee men had home addresses, and most also had a criminal record. It was also clear that half of them had a substance abuse problem and were unemployed and possibly unemployable. The main innovations of this new strategy were the decisions to both focus on an activity that was at best only a minor crime and to bring the full resources of the police to bear for a sustained period.

A report prepared by Julian and Kelling (1994) makes it clear that the squeegee issue was understood by the department as part of a larger problem of disorder and crime. As long as open incivility was allowed to flourish, the city would spiral into decline. The report begins with a discussion of the role of civility in making urban neighborhoods livable:

Tolerance of, indeed pleasure in, diversity and pluralism can only be achieved and maintained when people behave in minimally civil ways -- and when people who have a stake in the community encourage civil behavior and discourage uncivil behavior (Kelling 1994: p.4).

This is very different from the kind of discourse normally present in police reports. The influence of the "broken windows" theory is clearly in place. Moreover, it emphasizes the extent to which the new approach to policing was seen as the linchpin of creating a new experience of the city.

Procedurally, the primary innovation was the elimination of summonses in the enforcement process. Previously, people stopped by the police for squeegeeing where

¹³ Interview with Michael Julian, January 30, 2001.

given a summons on the spot, that ordered them to appear in court at a future date to face the charges against them. The problem was that few of those cited ever appeared in court, and because the charges were very minor, warrants squads were never interested in trying to enforce the resulting bench warrants. This was similar to the enforcement problems associated with fare beating on the subways, and the solution was also similar. In this case, local precinct officers, rather than the centralized warrant squad, were allowed to enforce the warrants. Now the local precinct could actually take offenders into custody and hold them in the system until they appeared in court, 24-48 hours later. This incarceration was longer than any the judge was likely to order upon conviction, so the police were now in a position practically to mete out punishment on the spot rather than waiting for the reluctant judicial system. The initial trial use of this new method turned out to be very successful in clearing out targeted intersections and was eventually expanded citywide. This confirms that the conceptual framework of "quality of life" policing, that has always been identified with Giuliani, was in place within the police department prior to his election in 1993.

In all the cases described above, the distinction between the homeless problem and a more general problem of disorder was blurred. Many of the people in the subway system, street peddlers, and squeegee-men were not technically homeless, and the battles over Tompkins Square Park had as much to do with noise caused by young people as with the homeless encampment. The blurring of the difference between the homeless and young people was done by both liberals and conservatives. Progressives argued that disorder was an unavoidable consequence of homelessness and that the only way to resolve it was to solve the broader social problem of homelessness. The threat of increasing disorder became a stick that advocates waved to demand that the city provide more services for the homeless.

For conservatives, equating the homeless and noisy youth was a way of arguing that homelessness as a social category wasn't being criminalized, just specific behaviors, and

that taking action against these disorderly behaviors was a way to restore public confidence in public spaces and to reduce crime. This was the approach taken by Giuliani. During 1993 Dinkins continued to address homelessness directly with calls for increases in housing and social programs. Giuliani, however, focused on the issue of disorder. He wanted to frame the problem of homelessness not as the result of increasing inequality and declining resources but as the result of declining standards of public civility, a climate of permissiveness, and irresponsibility. The social problems of the city became the problem of public order under the rubric of "quality of life," a shibboleth that spoke to the everyday experiences of middle and upper class New Yorkers who were tired of the visible disorder associated with homelessness and who ultimately voted for Giuliani. The solution, according to Giuliani, was to increase the use of the police to control disorder on the streets and to restrict social programs, ensuring a reduction in the climate of liberal permissiveness.

East New York

East New York, Brooklyn, is a large area of mostly poor residents of color at the northeast extreme of Brooklyn. Its demographics are very different than those of the mostly white and gentrifying Lower East Side. Its crime problems in the 1980's and 90's were also very different. Rather than a concern with nuisance crimes, noise, low level drug dealing, and homeless people sleeping in parks, East New York was besieged by some of the most serious crime in the city. The area led the city in homicides for several years in the late 1980's and had high rates of armed robbery and burglary. As such, it can serve as a test case to determine if the failures of professional policing and the appeal of "broken windows" policing were experienced across a wide variety of neighborhoods. If so it would stand in contrast to the arguments of Neil Smith (1996) and Christian Parenti (1999). Smith argued that the back lash was only present in those areas undergoing

gentrification, such as the Lower East Side. Parenti argued that the process was located primarily around central business districts such Grand Central Terminal in New York and Union Square in San Francisco.

While residents of East New York did sometimes use the term "quality of life," it was in connection with serious forms of criminality. This might suggest that "broken windows" based policing might have developed without the rise of public homelessness. What is interesting about the case of East New York, however, is that while local residents were critical of professional policing and supportive of "broken windows" based policing, it was not a site of innovation until after Giuliani took office. In this section I will discuss the failures of professional policing in East New York and the successes of the new "broken windows" based policing practices. In Chapter 6 I will look more closely at the political implications of this process.

In the middle of the 20th century East New York was a largely Jewish area with modest middle class homes. During the 1960's and 1970's large numbers of African Americans and Puerto Ricans moved into the neighborhood. By 1980, 70% of residents were black or Hispanic. In response, whites fleeing the area abandoned many homes, which either became vacant lots or were replaced by high-density public housing. During the 1970's East New York began to be in serious trouble. The 1977 blackout generated looting that destroyed many local businesses that were never rebuilt; banks redlined the area, and thousands of federally subsidized home mortgages were foreclosed. By the 1980's and 90's the area was besieged by drugs and crime and regularly led the city in the number of homicides. By the 1980's the neighborhood had become one of the most dangerous in the city. As the *Daily News* put it, "Violence and other evils are as common to East New York as shopping malls and supermarkets to suburbia" (*Daily News* 3/1/85). In the late 1990's, however, the area experienced some of the greatest reductions in crime and saw the construction of hundreds of new units of single family moderate-income homes.

According to Michael Farrell, the commander of the local 75th Precinct at the time, drugs, robbery and burglary were the number one problems in the mid 1980's. In a pattern that continued through the mid 90's, drugs were the center of the crime problem and proved extremely difficult to address. As one narcotics sergeant pointed out, "we've got one of the best narcotics teams in the city, we cant stop drugs; we can only put a dent in it" (Daily News 3/31/85). This was a familiar refrain for professional policing. It indicated a belief that social forces are at work in driving the drug trade that policing will never be able to correct them on its own.

By the late 1980's, a new drug problem emerged: crack. This highly profitable new drug generated huge markets because of its potency and low cost. It also generated a tremendous amount of violence as drug dealers competed for prime locations. East New York was well suited for the trade because of its large number of vacant buildings that could easily be converted into fortified sales locations and "crack houses," where people could go to use the drug. The "crack house" became the symbol of the growing crack trade and the inability of the police to effectively intervene. A neighborhood businessman provided a stark example of the situation at the time to a reporter visiting the area:

That's the most notorious place in the neighborhood - a crack den. Addicts come here from all over. The neighbors and civic groups have complained for months, but nothing happens. The police say they can't do anything (Daily News 3/29/87).

People were beginning to feel that the neighborhood was out of control and that the police were powerless to help.

In response to the situation in East New York and several other parts of the city besieged by the crack trade, the city created T.N.T., the Tactical Narcotics Team, which brought a large number of officers into an area for a short period to try and break up the entrenched drug markets. The initiative was created in 1988, under the Koch administration, and first operated in Jamaica, Queens, and East Harlem, in Manhattan.

The goal was to try to respond to the growing influence that drug activity had over the daily lives of poor communities:

Narcotics investigators have said the program is aimed in large part at improving the "quality of life" in drug-ravaged neighborhoods. It uses a strategy of saturating the streets with undercover teams, who focus on low-level dealers and their customers. The information gleaned from them is then used to assist other investigators in moving against major drug dealers (NYT 1/4/89).

Like Operation Pressure Point in the Lower East Side, T.N.T. was an attempt to use the most intensive professional policing methods to respond to community complaints about entrenched crime problems. But it was unable to fulfill this task.

In 1989, T.N.T made its first foray into East New York. The police department saturated the area with narcotics officers and closed down a number of the crack houses. However, the effects were short lived as they moved on to other parts of the city. According to a lieutenant at the 75th Precinct, "Sometimes [with T.N.T.] what you do is displace crime" (NYT 1/5/89). While some residents appreciated the short term benefits and the appearance of an effort by the police, frustration was growing. The United Community Centers outlined the problem in an article in the liberal community newspaper *The Link*:

The official response to this rising tide of crime and fear has been totally inadequate. Police and city officials concentrate on high visibility sweeps and mass arrests that generate publicity for politicians and coverage on the television news. But one-shot police actions bring no solution to the long-term problem of how to rebuild our deteriorating communities. Despite claims of success by city and police officials and over 1,500 arrests in a two month campaign, the Tactical Narcotics Team (TNT) anti-crack drive in East New York's 75th precinct is a law-enforcement "dud"...a drive through the community shows that little has changed (The Link 3-4/89).

The T.N.T. sweeps were the best that professional policing had to offer. The department

utilized a variety of "tactical" tools such as intelligence gathering and the coordinated deployment of large numbers of officers. From the point of view of the department the program was relatively successful because it was a complex operation carried out in a professional manner. Success was judged by internal technical standards and short-term external publicity and not by any actual long-term reduction in the drug trade.

Not only did the drug situation in East New York not improve after several T.N.T. sweeps, it actually got worse. According to the United Community Centers:

It is time to reconsider the TNT strategy. Two TNT campaigns have failed to bring any long term reductions in crime and violence in our community. TNT cannot improve the *quality of life* in East New York. (The Link 9/92, emphasis added).

Frustration with the situation reached such a high level that the United Community Centers and several other groups approached the local congressman, Major Owens, about getting the federal government involved in the local crime problem. Owens' response was to call on Mayor Koch and Governor Cuomo to declare a "State of Emergency" in East New York. His primary demand was for the "restoration of funding for all schools and other programs to levels that existed before the 1975 fiscal crisis" (The Link 5-6/89). New resources to fight crime, however, played a more prominent part than in previous criticism of government budget cuts and neighborhood decline by the community. Rep. Owens wanted the Governor to deploy military police and National Guard troops to the area to combat drug-related crime. He also demanded that the number of police officers in the 75th precinct be doubled to "collect all illegal weapons and close down drug selling operations" (The Link 5-6/89). While the mayor and governor never declared a state of emergency, Rep. Owens was able to generate public interest in the problem and even got some representatives of the Governor and the New York State National Guard to tour the neighborhood. In the end Cuomo agreed to allow the National Guard to help in cleaning up several abandoned lots in the neighborhood (The Link 4/90).

The TNT program continued to be a source of community tension. By 1992, community concerns about TNT were being echoed by the *New York Times* (8/28/92) and the Vera Institute of Justice, both of which criticized the effectiveness of the program. In September 1993, during the mayoral race, a large community meeting was held with the Tactical Narcotics Team, in which many residents expressed their frustration with the project (the Link 11/93). Merchants were also frustrated. One storeowner described T.N.T. in the following way:

The neighborhood would be safe for a little while. But when the police left, these guys would come back. It was like playing hide-and-seek (NYT 7/25/94).

T.N.T. was the best that the professional model of policing had to offer and it was not working.

At the same time as T.N.T. was underway, the department had begun its efforts to develop community policing. As discussed earlier, the department's community policing program—CPOP—was begun by Commissioner Ward during the Koch administration. With the election of David Dinkins in 1989, crime rates reached their peaks, and Dinkin's response was to continue T.N.T. and expand the CPOP program. As discussed above, CPOP was an attempt to include the emerging problem-oriented approach to policing. As such it required the active participation of community residents in identifying crime problems and developing solutions.

As many critics have pointed out, the CPOP program was rarely successful in pursuing its problem-oriented approach. In East New York the problem was compounded by the inability of the community to play a meaningful role in crime control. Crime in East New York had become so bad, and faith in the police so low, that residents were shutting themselves into their apartments and homes. Mel Grizer, Executive Director of the United Community Centers, said that during this period it was hard to get residents

involved in the community because they were afraid to go out at night.¹⁴ According to the *New York Times*, however, residents did not want to cooperate with the police:

Officers have started green thumb programs, growing cabbage and tomatoes in vacant lots where crack houses once flourished; coordinated street clean ups and most significantly, reached out to the area's youth in hopes of changing their attitude about the police. But such efforts go only so far in East New York, which often resembles a war zone with its many charred buildings, trash filled vacant lots and barren streets... The rules that govern the everyday existence of the people who live on these streets prohibit them from developing close ties with the police, enveloping them in a code of silence almost as strong as that of the "blue wall" of silence that is said to exist among officers (NYT 7/18/93).

In addition, more and more people were carrying guns for their own protection, as the level of gun violence became widespread. Community policing was not up to the task of mobilizing the community to participate in retaking the streets and the community knew it. Several community activists recalled the early 1990's as a period when the police were unable to respond to both their general and specific requests.¹⁵ In the words of one such activist:

You get a good cop doing their job and relations can work well. But right now there's no sense of community. There's no sense of relations getting better. As far as police protection, people in the community felt completely written off (Daily News 4/22/93).

Whether it was reducing the overall level of gun violence or getting rid of a particular drug operation pointed out by local residents, the police were unable to win.

It was clear that David Dinkins did not get support in East New York for his crime fighting strategies, and that the police felt significant community pressure to try something different. While Dinkins supported the idea of community policing as a

¹⁴ Interview with Mel Grizer, February 26, 2001.

¹⁵ Interviews with Mel Grizer, February 26, 2001; Anthony Mammina February, 12, 2001; and Zachary Brown February 20, 2001.

strategy to be more responsive to community concerns, he and the Police Department were unable to actually implement the needed changes in East New York. In this case, the election of Giuliani made a crucial difference.

East New York experienced as much of a crisis in policing as the Lower East Side or the subway system. The major differences between East New York and the Lower East Side were in the type and amount of crime involved. On the Lower East Side, drug dealing was a concern, but it was rarely associated with the same level of violence. In East New York, the violence connected to the crack trade paralyzed the neighborhood. Getting rid of crack houses was not about removing an aesthetic eyesore. Getting rid of people hanging out in parks was not about reducing disorder. They were both about stopping the up to 10 homicides a month in the neighborhood. What residents in East New York wanted wasn't an end to minor disorders, but an end to armed robberies, muggings, and shoot-outs.

The disorders associated with homelessness played almost no role in the policing changes in East New York. Residents were aware of the homeless problem in their community but, as Zachary Brown of the East New York Weed and Seed program put it, "Homelessness didn't fit the notion of a public nuisance. Everyone knew these people as family members and friends."¹⁶ Perhaps as a result, East New York was not a site of significant policing innovation prior to the Giuliani administration, as it was in places where homelessness and public disorder were major concerns.

In 1992 Joseph Dunne was assigned to command the precinct. He was well versed in the "broken windows" theory and was eager to try out new methods of crime fighting. He tried to respond more directly to community calls for service, but was limited by the institutional orientation towards programs like TNT and the poorly conceived and implemented CPOP. It wasn't until Bratton took over as commissioner and transformed the resource allocations and decision-making structure within the department, however,

¹⁶ Interview with Zachary Brown February 20, 2001.

that Dunne was able to begin reducing crime and win community support. These crime reduction trends continued with crime falling 56% from 1993 to 2000 (NYPD 2001b). This helped solidify initial support for the new commander as well as Commissioner Bratton and for some Mayor Giuliani.

There are three important dynamics involved in the examples described above. The first is that the professional model was undermined by its inability to reduce either the disorder associated with homelessness or more serious crime. The second was that "broken windows" based innovations were begun in those areas that primarily suffered from low-level "quality of life" problems and not high crime areas. Finally, crucial experimentation and innovation based on the "broken windows" theory were well underway prior to the arrival of Giuliani in 1994, in response to increasing homelessness, disorder, and crime.

In all the examples discussed above, community residents and business leaders were upset about the increase in crime and disorder and felt frustration at the inability of the police to adequately address it. Local residents formed crime watch groups and organized to pressure the police to remove homeless encampments and clear out areas of disorder. Business leaders formed business improvement districts and experimented with new punitive approaches to restoring order.

In East New York, the biggest problem wasn't homelessness and disorder, but homicides and armed robberies. These serious crimes were supposedly the types of problems that the professional model of policing was best equipped to deal with. This is perhaps why East New York and other high crime areas were not the locations where "broken windows" based innovation first happened. It was because places like the Lower East Side and Grand Central didn't have more serious crime that the professional model was so vulnerable to criticism and where the "broken windows" theory and its emphasis on low level disorder seemed so appealing. As we will see in the next section, however, it

was the ability of these new police practices to address many community concerns about serious crime that strengthened the public acceptance of both "broken windows" based policing and the larger "quality of life" paradigm.

Finally, prior to Rudolph Giuliani's election in 1993, there was no coordinated process of tactical innovation. The examples above make it clear that innovation was occurring in various parts of the police department, throughout the late 1980's and early 1990's. As local precincts encountered community resistance, they sought new methods to deal with disorder related to homelessness. However, isolated neighborhood innovations were not sufficient to put a new paradigm into place city-wide. The adoption of "broken windows" policing was not the result of a democratic process of local commanders building pressure from the bottom until citywide police administrators agreed to adopt the new methods. These central administrators were themselves responding to political pressures from other sources, including neighborhood activists, and important business leaders. Within the department there was also pressure for change. A number of reformers were aware of the academic writings concerning the new models of community, problem-oriented, and "broken windows" policing that offered the police new strategies for addressing the emerging disorder problem. These models also enhanced the role of the police relative to other city departments. Even with all these pressures, though, the department chose not to adopt "quality of life" policing on any large scale. What was still missing was the prodding and support of a new mayor who could set the political stage for the institutionalization of "quality of life" policing.

Giuliani and "Quality of Life" Policing

When Giuliani took office he immediately began to reshape the policies of the NYPD. He wanted to make order maintenance one of its central goals and provided political support for the creation of new policing resources and the redirection of existing

resources. He did this through the hiring of a new police leadership that was well acquainted with the new "broken windows" based methods, and by using the bully pulpit of the mayors office to call for reduced tolerance for incivility and a faith in the central role of the police in establishing a new urban order.

Upon taking office, Mayor Giuliani brought in William Bratton to be Commissioner of the entire NYPD, with a mission to implement "quality of life" policing department-wide. For Giuliani and Bratton, "quality of life" had come to mean a number of different things. Most directly it stood for taking strong enforcement action against minor disorders, as called for in the "broken windows" theory. It also became the catchall phrase for any innovations in policing and social services that were based on the use of enforcement to restore order and gain compliance with normative behavior standards. This conflation of order-maintenance policing and other policing changes was both a politically powerfully tool in building support for these measures, and a long-term liability for the mayor as some of these measures became deeply unpopular.

The department's institutional shift of focus towards disorder became evident early on. Under the direction of the new Chief of Department, John Timoney, the NYPD issued a series of "Police Strategy" reports that outlined the new approach of the department. *Police Strategy No. 5: Reclaiming the Public Spaces of New York* (1994) deals directly with the disorder problems associated with homelessness. Like the report on squeegee men, this document focuses on the question of restoring public civility as the ultimate goal of policing:

A decent society is one where people feel free to pursue education, enterprise, and entertainment that create a sufficient standard of living for themselves and their families and contribute to an atmosphere of mutual respect for their fellow citizens. A decent society is a society of civility (NYPD 1994:4).

The report tries to avoid directly pointing to homeless people as the problem and instead

talks about reclaiming public spaces. While homelessness itself is not pointed to, specific behaviors associated with it such as peddling, panhandling, and squeegee cleaning, are listed as some of the many sources of disorder and incivility. Rhetorically, the new administration is trying to isolate behaviors from status as a way of avoiding political backlash and legal sanctions. This is a strategy that Kelling and Coles (1996) laid out in detail in their book.

The report states that the new strategies are the "linchpin" of efforts to reduce both crime and fear. It refers specifically to the "broken windows" theory and Wesley Skogan's (1990) follow-up study and claims that, "by working systematically and assertively to reduce the level of disorder in the city, the NYPD will act to undercut the ground on which more serious crimes seem possible and even permissible...The NYPD will work to uphold a uniform standard of civility and mutual respect in all the neighborhoods of the city" (NYPD 1994: 5).

Mayor Giuliani and his Police Commissioner implemented "quality of life" policing as a system-wide approach rather than as a series of isolated experiments. This process of institutionalization took several important forms. The first was a shifting of resources and discretion from the center to local precincts. This allowed for ongoing innovation, in keeping with the problem-oriented approach. The new resources include more officers to work outside of patrol or specialized units, so that they can focus on "quality of life" conditions. Building on the anti-squeegee campaign, the department increased its use of arrests for minor violations and the denial of Desk Appearance Tickets for repeat offenders as a way of targeting disorderly areas such as encampments and areas where people congregated near homeless shelters. In addition, the report called for the creation of new laws that would give the police more tools for enforcing civility. Giuliani put his political capital behind the creation of these new laws, including restrictions against panhandling near ATM machines and "aggressive begging." The new expanded role for the police was being institutionalized with Giuliani's help.

The effect of these measures was to break up visible concentrations of homeless people, especially in Manhattan. Communities could now call on the police to have encampments removed and instead of an occasional sweep, the police were ready to bring extensive resources to bear for an extended period through the use of a new "Encampment Task Force" (Newsday 6/9/94). In 1994, the Task Force targeted 40 locations—mostly in Manhattan--for demolition or surveillance.

In August 1994, the city brought in the Task Force to close down an encampment on 1st Ave., near Tudor City, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Prior to the arrival of the Task Force, Tudor City residents were very upset about the lack of responsiveness on the part of the police. Residents had met repeatedly with the police department and threatened legal action against the city over their lack of responsiveness. While the police did patrol the park on occasion, they told residents that from their point of view there wasn't any criminal activity going on in the camps, and so there was little they could do.

With the new administration there was a significant change in the point of view of City Departments and the Police. The effort to remove the camps began with several weeks of outreach by the Department of Homeless Services, which offered people placements in shelters and SRO apartments in the South Bronx. This was followed up by frequent visits by Parks Enforcement Officers who notified people that the park's 1:00 a.m. curfew would begin being enforced on a specific date. Finally, the Police, Sanitation, and Parks Departments descended on the site and removed the few people remaining, along with any left over belongings, and cleaned up the park. The Police then continued to enforce the curfew by returning to the park several times each night over the next several weeks, and the Parks Department's employees discouraged people from congregating there during the day.

By late 1995, most of the visible encampments in Manhattan had been removed, prompting advocates to complain that the problem of homelessness had merely been

swept under the rug. Homeless people increasingly moved to areas on the margins of Manhattan or into the outer boroughs. They also avoided congregating in groups, and learned when certain areas were less well policed. As a result, homeless people became isolated from social services. According to two outreach workers, "It's become more difficult to engage people because they're more frightened. The problem's not solved – but it's a lot harder to do the outreach" (NYT 11/12/95).

By 1995 Giuliani could point to significantly improved crime figures for the city. He claimed that these reductions in crime were the direct result of his "quality of life" policing efforts:

We are setting higher standards of behaviour (sic.) so that people who are inclined to commit a serious crime will say to themselves: 'In a city in which they arrest you for aggressive panhandling, imagine what they are going to do to you if you commit a serious assault' (Financial Times 6/3/95).

Giuliani's claim was that aggressive enforcement aimed at incivilities will send a message that someone is out there watching what's going on and as a result criminals should clean up their act or steer clear. By getting rid of disorderly homeless people, more serious criminals will be deterred because public spaces will appear more regulated and orderly. The result was that homeless people's pariah status was intensified and institutionalized. They became the symbols of crime and disorder that had plagued the city, and it became the city's official policy to get them out of sight through police enforcement efforts.

Targeting homeless people and "quality of life" crimes was not the only new policing policy being pursued in this period. Bratton also developed new management techniques that allowed the department to track crime trends in real time on new computer mapping software. These maps were available to local precinct commanders and top executives. These two groups would meet on a regular basis to discuss the crime trends in specific

precincts and the strategies being used to address them. These meetings became known as "Compstat" for the initial name of the computer file they used, which stood for "compare statistics."

As part of this process precinct commanders were given more discretion over the use of police resources. They could request additional officers and specialized units. They could redeploy patrol officers to work on solving specific crime and "quality of life" problems. The flip side of this increased discretion was increased accountability. Commanders were no longer judged on their ability to avoid scandals, but by their ability to produce concrete reductions in crime.

The new process was put in place in East New York early in 1994. During 1994 Deputy Inspector Joseph Dunne began using this new discretion, and by the end of that year had won widespread approval from the neighborhood. At a community meeting held in September, several speakers praised him. Interviews with several community activists all indicated that significant changes in the precinct began with the tenure of Dunne, and that improvements in the areas crime situation could be seen by 1995. The current head of the 75th Precinct Community Council summed up the difference:

Dunne was responsible for the clean-up of the neighborhood when he became Commanding Officer of the 75th precinct. He was loved by the community and respected by the officers. Before Dunne there was no response to calls.¹⁷

Dunne had utilized the new flexibility and problem-oriented approach championed by Bratton. He identified crime patterns and deployed specialized units both to retake specific blocks and parks, and systematically go after specific criminal enterprises.

During the mid 1990's crime dropped off dramatically in East New York and across the city. There are many theories about the cause of this crime reduction and the

significance of changing police policies (Kelling and Coles 1996, Bratton 1998, Silverman 1999, Blumstein and Wallman 2000, Karman 2001, Taylor 2001, Harcourt forthcoming). What is important for this dissertation is not answering that question, but understanding the role crime reduction played in cementing support for the new policing methods.

It is easy to imagine that there would have been significant discord with the police in East New York following the defeat of David Dinkins and the election of Rudolph Giuliani. Giuliani was viewed very negatively by the community, which voted heavily for Dinkins. Dinkins had tried to emphasize respectful community policing and racial healing. Giuliani extolled the virtues of aggressive policing and a general ethos of intolerance. Despite these grounds for antagonism, the NYPD, during the mid 90's, won begrudging and sometimes enthusiastic support.

Clearly East New York was never going to provide Giuliani, a Republican mayor, with significant electoral support. However, for the first few years of his administration, he was able to mute criticism about crime from communities of color throughout New York, allowing him to institutionalize a radical new approach to urban policing and to implement a broader "quality of life" program. By gaining the approval of many African Americans as well as conservative, moderate and even liberal whites, because of his policing strategies, Giuliani was able to undertake an overall strategy of treating welfare and homelessness in a more punitive manner. Without the success on serious crime, implementing the rest of the agenda would have been much more difficult because of resistance from communities of color and white liberals.

Ironically, it may turn out that the reductions in serious crime had little to do with the

¹⁷ Interview with Anthony Mammina February, 12, 2001.

“broken windows” aspects of the new policing practices that Bratton implemented. Many of the reformers who Giuliani brought to power, including Bratton, Timoney, and Julian, credit Compstat for reducing crime, and not the rounding up of homeless people.

According to Timoney, homelessness was only a concern in Manhattan below 95th Street, and “arresting homeless people had nothing to do with reducing homicides.”¹⁸ The case of East New York illustrates this. It was a precinct with the highest homicide rates, and its residents were concerned about drugs and guns, not homelessness and low level disorder. The tactics used to deal with these more serious problems were often quite different from those used in lower Manhattan and the subways. The tactics in East New York were based on the targeted utilization of officers to go after specific crime hot spots.

Some “quality of life” tactics were used—such as rousting people off street corners for open alcohol containers—but this was effective to the degree that it was linked to specific patterns of serious crime. To the extent that it wasn’t, it undermined support not only for the police in general, but for the entire “quality of life” paradigm more generally. When the police laid siege to entire neighborhoods, as they did in East New York and many other poor communities, they alienated many people who had become supporters of the new policing. Seemingly random stop and frisk, buy and bust, and car-stop operations served to criminalize entire neighborhoods. Both Bratton and Julian have said that after the crime reductions of 1994-96, the city should have moved to “less of a war footing.” It was its failure to do so that eventually led to a questioning of the new policing methods and a serious set back to the political career of Giuliani and many of the punitive ideals he espoused. In Chapter 6 I will describe this process in more detail, but it was the over-reliance on aggressive enforcement efforts that have led to a broad questioning of

¹⁸ Interview with John Timoney, January 19, 2001.

“quality of life” policing especially in places like East New York.

The emergence of new “broken windows” based policing practices in New York was the result of a contradiction between the existing model of policing and the social disorder caused by the emerging homeless problem and the overall increase in crime. This conflict occurred at the level of individual neighborhoods, where the police and communities tried to come to grips with the conflict by developing new policing methods that would later be adopted citywide. At the same time, central police executives were trying to deal with the growing citywide contradictions. New academic ideas and neighborhood level innovations provided them with a new paradigm that directly addressed the disorder problem and increased their position of power relative to other city agencies. In contrast to urban liberalism, under “quality of life” the police department became the lead agency in dealing with a wide variety of social problems by bringing them into the new “broken windows” framework.

The process by which this developed was not the result of either strictly bottom-up “democratic reform” by the general public or top-down “manipulation” by elites. The pressure for reform was the result of a contradiction that caused all segments of the society to seek out new approaches to disorder. Business elites, individually and through business improvement districts, called for many changes that were later adopted. At the same time, however, local communities—some with a progressive history—were also calling for similar innovations.

San Francisco

Nationally, San Francisco played a central role in the development of "broken windows" based policing innovations. The political response to this new form of policing was quite different, however. In New York, opposition came from communities of color. They were upset about the high level of harassment associated with new aggressive policing tactics including "stop and frisk" practices in which tens of thousands of young Black and Latino men were stopped and searched by police as a way of controlling disorder and crime. In San Francisco, no such sustained community-based opposition developed to new policing tactics. The reason for this difference is that San Francisco focussed its aggressive tactics only on the homeless and not on high crime neighborhoods.

In 1993, a year before Giuliani became Mayor of New York, San Francisco Mayor Frank Jordan was pursuing punitive policing measures towards homeless people under the Matrix program. Like New York, San Francisco's process of innovation was rooted in the failures of professional policing. Residents and business leaders throughout the city were dissatisfied with the San Francisco Police Department's ability to restore public order as the homelessness crisis intensified through the late 1980's and early 1990's. Unlike New York, San Francisco did not have the intensity of violent crime that was associated with the crack trade in areas like East New York. As such, its process of innovation can be more directly tied to the pressures of homelessness related disorder.

Despite the liberal leanings of its citizenry, the San Francisco Police Department was

slow to develop many of the reforms associated with professional policing. From its origins in the Gold Rush of 1849, the department was highly politicized, had less training than many other big city departments, was frequently accused of corruption, and viewed itself as under siege from the community. In the post World War II era, the SFPD did adopt many of the technological innovations of other cities, such as motorized patrol and the development of specialized central units, however, a 1971 study of the department stated, "A highly professional, efficient and sociologically alert police force is needed in a metropolitan city like San Francisco... we do not have one" (Committee on Crime 1971). Professionalism began to take hold in earnest in the late 1970's, with the advent of improved training, 911 response systems, and efforts to eliminate corruption.

By the late 1980's the failings of the professional model were already becoming apparent, and the department began to develop their first community policing program. It was at this point that the explosive rise of homelessness created new challenges, as in New York and ushered in the new style of "broken windows" policing. This section will review the factors that contributed to the development of "quality of life" policing in San Francisco. I will focus on the role of neighborhood activists, business elites tied to the tourism and retail sectors of the economy, internal police innovation, and political leaders.

I will begin this analysis by looking at the history of how the SFPD has handled public order issues with a focus on their policies towards prostitution. During the later part of the 19th Century San Francisco had a reputation as something of an open city, with its notorious and largely unregulated neighborhoods of the Barbary Coast and Chinatown. Up until WWI the police openly tolerated prostitution as long as it was restricted to these

parts of the city. During WWI open prostitution was eliminated as part of the War effort. While police occasionally tolerated geographically contained prostitution in the following decades, by the 1950's they began to enforce the law rigorously.

In the late 1960's, the department began to come under pressure to reform its aggressive tactics against what many people considered victimless crimes. This was a period during which there were several waves of youth pilgrimages, including 1967's "Summer of Love," as well as a general loosening of moral standards. This was also the period when gays began to exert political influence in the city; gays had a historic opposition to vice crimes enforcement. By the early 1970's, San Francisco had largely decriminalized minor vices as a response to what the *San Francisco Chronicle* described as the "new morality." Prostitution laws were only enforced when prostitution was "performed blatantly in a public place," and punishment for possession of marijuana was reduced to a citation--the same as a traffic ticket (*San Francisco Chronicle (SFC) 4/28/73*). Public drunkenness was also viewed as a social, not a criminal problem. Police supported the creation of non-jail facilities for public inebriates, and half of all drunks arrested were released before going to court (*SFC 4/28/73*). There was also minimal enforcement of pornography and obscenity laws. These developments, however, were not uncontested. Police officials often chaffed at having their hands tied.

In 1975, the state legislature passed new laws that effectively decriminalized a variety of sex acts and marijuana statewide. The author of this legislation was George Moscone, who was backed by the new gay and lesbian constituencies as well as existing progressive forces. Moscone became mayor of San Francisco in 1976 and brought in a new police chief--Charles Gain--from outside the department. Gain had strong

community ties and professional experience. Gain promoted new central administrators, created additional training, and tried to end the patronage system. Chief Gain, along with the newly elected District Attorney, made it clear that the Police Department and DA's office were going to focus on serious crime and would reduce enforcement of vice crimes. This policy, however, led to an influx of streetwalkers. Anti-prostitution enforcement was stepped up after complaints from Union Square hotel operators. Despite additional enforcement, the leadership of the Police Department continued to believe that prostitution should not be a criminal matter. Chief Gain even attended the annual Hookers' Ball in late 1977 in a show of moral support, drawing heated criticism from some conservatives.

In the 1980's, crime continued to increase, causing Mayor Diane Feinstein to focus on policing as a public policy priority. She did this by continuing efforts to professionalize the department. Federal law enforcement money went primarily to install new technology, at that time, and, in an effort to capture this money the Feinstein administration brought in a new Computer Aided Dispatch system to prioritize service calls and reduce response times.¹⁹ In keeping with national trends, she and the department believed that quick response would instill confidence in the population, especially those that had been the victims of a crime. One effect of the effort to increase response times was the dismantling of most foot patrols in favor of motorized patrol. The Feinstein administration also supported the creation of numerous special units controlled by, and based at, Police Headquarters. District stations were also directed largely from headquarters. However, many officers began to feel that quick response and centralization were not reducing crime, or the fear of crime and were making it

impossible for officers to develop creative, local solutions to crime problems.¹⁹ It was in this environment that Mayor Art Agnos took control of the department.

Shortly after taking office, Agnos was confronted by residents in the Haight Ashbury neighborhood, complaining about people living either in Golden Gate Park or in their cars in the general vicinity. As discussed in Chapter 3, Agnos' response was to forestall eviction of these people until such time as he could develop a more comprehensive plan for alleviating both the conditions that bothered residents and the circumstances that made people homeless. Agnos' Homeless Coordinator, Steve Leplant, said that the city needed time to develop a plan so that people wouldn't be moved simply from one part of the city to another (SFC 1/14/88). Chief of Police Frank Jordan was also concerned about the homeless "moving from the park to the Great Highway to the Marina Green. That would just be displacement, creating a problem for someone else (SFC 1/15/88)." This point of view was shared by professional-oriented members of the police department.

The department continued to have ambivalent feelings about their role in addressing the problem of homelessness. In 1989, the head of the Police Officers Association, Mike Keys, said that while the encampment bothered him he understood the mayor's position and only wanted him to be consistent in what he asked police to do. Officers didn't want to be criticized by advocates and the homeless for the low level enforcement authorized by the mayor (SFC 7/15/89). Chief Jordan had a similar view, and sympathized with Agnos' general analysis of the situation: "Homelessness is the result of social problems and generally not a matter for the criminal justice system. Everyone has the freedom of independence. We can't force a person to leave an area *unless he is committing a crime*"

¹⁹ Speech by Frank Jordan, June 1997.

²⁰ Interview with Lt. Jim Speros, SFPD, August 7, 1998.

(SFC 10/15/89, emphasis added).

It was during this period that the Police Department began to develop its community policing philosophy. After several ranking officers returned from an observation of the New York City Police Department, Capt. Mike Hebel of Mission Station initiated a community policing program (CPOP) that began to utilize problem-oriented policing methods, including a renewed use of beat officers:

Since the officers are expected to be very familiar with their beats, they'll be able to identify trouble spots and try to prevent persistent problems, such as public drinking in a particular spot or continuous noise complaints against a neighbor, from recurring. Officers will also act as liaisons to other government services, such as health care, housing, jobs and substance abuse (*San Francisco Independent (SFI)* 9/13/89). This approach included a social services perspective, which holds that since minor criminality was tied to social problems, the police could only be one part of the solution. Captain Hebel saw a connection between disorder and poverty and drug use. He "believed working with recovery and community groups, rather than just more arrests was the ultimate solution to the [disorder] problems. 'I have got to get them into some kind of recovery program [he said]'" (*New Mission News (NMN)* 9/90).

Hebel developed this community policing initiative largely on his own, without support from Mayor Agnos or Chief Jordan. This approach was initially successful in inspiring confidence in many groups that something was being done about the growing disorder of the streets. However, full implementation of CPOP was hampered by several limitations. The program was not seen as a department-wide priority. Officers were frequently pulled off their beats for emergencies, to cover radio calls and special assignments. One captain said, "I know how important beat work is but our first priority is to staff our radio cars" (*SFI* 4/15/89). There were also complaints within the department that CPOP officers spent too much time talking to a small group of police supporters on their beats and weren't engaged in activities associated with traditional notions of fighting crime such as responding to crimes in progress.

Despite these problems, Agnos ordered the program expanded in 1991, but without

developing the problem-solving orientation.²¹ Later in the Agnos administration, the program was expanded, but it grew too quickly and too broadly for the rest of the department to be educated about its philosophy and methods, creating widespread resistance to it among officers. Community policing was viewed as a public relations effort that had little to do with crime fighting.²² Therefore, the department was left largely unchanged by the attempt to implement community policing. While it was praised when it was in effect, the department as a whole was regularly criticized for its unwillingness or inability to respond to a growing sense of disorder in the public sphere.

As in New York, the result of this inability to focus on the impact of homelessness on people's daily lives was a firestorm of criticism from residents throughout much of the city. As noted in the previous chapter, numerous new community organizations were formed during this period in response to deteriorating conditions in public spaces, such as aggressive panhandling, homeless encampments in parks and on sidewalks, and public intoxication. One of the primary tasks of these groups was to pressure the police to respond to their complaints about minor quality of life crimes, as illustrated by the following accounts from interviews and local newspapers:

It's really become a quality-of-life issue. I feel like unless we get killed or seriously hurt, *not much is going to be done*. When we report little things - car break-ins, vandalism, noise - we're often told that *not much can be done* (SFI 7/24/90, emphasis added).

When I called the police after I was mugged, they were here in two minutes. But when it comes to the broken car windows, the panhandling, the drunks, *you can just forget it* (SFI 7/24/90, emphasis added).

There was no enforcement of the public drinking laws. People were doing illegal stuff; camping in the park and nothing was done. We called the police and the mayors office and *nothing happens*. Most captains like to pretend that there is no crime. They would tell us that big crime is down. If so, why didn't they deal with quality of life issues. Everyone knows that

²¹ Interview with Lt. Jim Speros, SFPD, August 7, 1998.

²² Interviews with Lt. Jim Speros, SFPD, August 7, 1998; Chief Anthony Ribera, SFPD, August 17, 1998; Capt. John Newlin, SFPD, August 18, 1998; Capt. Greg Suhr, SFPD, August 20, 1998.

major crimes are a priority. but if quality of life problems are not addressed then what good is lower major crimes (emphasis added).²³

The cops say they have community policing. but they don't have enough officers so there's no commitment. You call in to the station and they put you on hold, or they keep you on the phone asking questions and *don't do anything about the problem* (emphasis added).²⁴

I don't believe San Francisco has ever really had a community policing program. There were never consistent foot beats or efforts to create good community-police relations.²⁵

The Agnos administration failed to address the concerns of these residents. The administration continued to talk about long-term solutions and a constrained role for the police. In September 1991, Police Commissioner Kecker, responding to an angry crowd upset about deteriorating street conditions in the Mission said, "The homeless and begging problem isn't going to be solved by the police. It's going to be solved in some other way, I hope" (NMN 10/91). Responses like this did not instill confidence in either the Police Department or the Agnos administration.

Not all the criticisms were focused on the Police Department, however. Some people also felt that both Mayor Agnos and civil libertarians were tying the hands of the police:

The police always said they couldn't do anything, because Agnos said hands off. Then John Crew [of the ACLU] rewrote the police code so there are no loitering laws or other leverage that the police could use to do anything. *I guess it's liberalism gone bad. It just went too far* (emphasis added).²⁶

These comments are based on several incidents. In 1988 the Police Commission Agnos appointed made it clear that they were not interested in criminalizing the homeless. At the urging of the ACLU and the Coalition on Homelessness, they passed a "Rights of the Homeless" document that was distributed to both police officers and homeless people. It

²³ Interview with Ed Murray. July. 23. 1998.

²⁴ Interview with Karen Cromie. August 12. 1998.

²⁵ Interview with Hilda Burnstein. August 18. 1998.

²⁶ Interview with Carol Glosinger August 11. 1998.

pointed out that being homeless is not a crime and outlined the legal right not to be stopped and searched without probable cause, not to be asked for ID without cause, and to receive the same police services as others. In 1991, the ACLU was successful in getting a Federal Court to rule that the California law against panhandling was unconstitutionally vague, leaving too much discretion in the hands of police.

Comments like the one about the ACLU indicate that community mobilization was beginning to focus on the Agnos administration and what was seen as one of his core constituencies: civil libertarians. People were trying to indicate that they felt that there had been a general decline in standards of public behavior that needed to be corrected and that Agnos' policies were responsible for this condition. By passing a "Rights of the Homeless" document rather than a rights of the community document, the mayor was seen as favoring a climate of tolerance for social disorder rather than supporting community calls for restoring order. In a recent interview a police captain described that era as having "an aura of permissiveness" that the police were prevented from reversing (SF 40). The combination of this sense of police disinterest and ineffectiveness, and the problems of Agnos' overall homeless program as outlined in Chapter 3, created a political crisis for him. The result of this was a shift in electoral politics that brought in a new mayoral administration headed by the former Chief of Police Frank Jordan--who had resigned during the Agnos administration. The new mayor had a clear mandate to strictly enforce "quality of life" violations.

During the campaign, Jordan advocated an increase in policing of homeless people, the creation of new anti-homeless laws against panhandling, a refocusing of social services towards outreach --including mandatory detox and mental health services, and greater involvement by businesses, charities and local communities--to remove people from the streets (SFC 9/1/91). Later in the campaign, he even suggested that a work farm be created at the San Bruno jail to house homeless people who refused other services. Before details about how voluntary participating in this project would be were released,

the plan was dropped because of legal objections raised by civil libertarians and homeless advocates.

Frank Jordan and "Matrix"

Jordan took office in 1992 and immediately began to implement a new approach towards the minor crimes associated with homeless people. As discussed in Chapter 3, Jordan was trying to create a new political base for punitiveness, independent of the liberal Board of Supervisors and the Police Department. He did this by initiating Proposition J, a ballot measure to outlaw "aggressive panhandling." This new law was designed to both give the police new tools for dealing with disorder and place the blame for disorder squarely on the shoulders of people living on the streets and in public places. The measure passed by 55% to 45%, and established Jordan's connection with a broad public sentiment in favor of punitiveness. Proposition J served to bolster the strength and credibility of the new conservative community activist movements.

The police were given this new tool, to add to other nuisance laws, which allowed them to begin a more systematic effort to remove homeless people from public spaces in the central city. Shortly after some small-scale sweeps, in August, 1993, the Police Department implemented the Matrix program. "Operation Matrix" originally referred to an effort to do more "problem-oriented" policing. Each month two or three district stations were given extra officers to deploy as needed. Each station captain made a determination of how best to utilize these officers. During the summer of 1993 the station captain for the Central district received numerous complaints from local merchants and hoteliers in the Union Square area about panhandling, people sleeping in doorways,

public urination and other problems associated with homelessness.²⁷ He therefore made this a priority, assigning several officers to the task.

According to Anthony Ribera, chief of the department at that time, that effort at Central station was tremendously popular with local business interests. Mayor Jordan was contacted by some of these people, as well other supporters from the downtown business community, who urged him to expand the program, and he ordered the Police Department to begin similar intensive enforcement efforts throughout the downtown area and later citywide.²⁸ The new plan called for the rigorous enforcement of nuisance laws against urinating in public, setting up lodgings, public drinking, aggressive panhandling, trespassing, obstructing sidewalks, use of shopping carts, sleeping in vehicles, and sleeping in the parks at night. Over the next year thousands of citations were issued in an effort to clear these public spaces by force.

Matrix represented Jordan's attempt to implement a "broken windows" philosophy of policing. Jordan and his new police chief, in keeping with the "broken windows" philosophy, wanted to focus on crime prevention by reducing the number of specialized units, putting more officers on the streets, giving local captains more discretion in the development of crime prevention strategies, and redeploying centralized resources to the district stations.²⁹ In Jordan's conception, broken windows represented a dramatic expansion of the role of the police as the front line for almost all city services: "Even potholes become a police matter, because it shows that someone cares about the neighborhood."³⁰

Since the same fundamental contradiction existed between the methods of professional policing and the need to reverse the decline in the conditions in public spaces in New York and San Francisco, the same kinds of forces were mobilized to call

²⁷ Interview with Chief Anthony Ribera. SFPD. August 17, 1998

²⁸ Interview with Chief Anthony Ribera. SFPD. August 17, 1998

²⁹ Interview with Chief Anthony Ribera. SFPD. August 17, 1998; Speech by Frank Jordan. June 1997.

³⁰ Speech by Frank Jordan. June 1997.

for change. Reform efforts within the department during the Agnos administration set the groundwork for many of the innovations adopted under Jordan. Several of the commanders who played a role in the early innovations went on to play central roles in implementing the new "quality of life" strategy. Outside the department there was the same combination of grassroots and elite forces pushing for changes as in New York. Neighborhood mobilizations in the Haight Ashbury and Mission Districts showed that even historically progressive neighborhoods had constituencies that mobilized in favor of using the police to control disorder. But, business interests also played a clear role in pressuring Jordan to expand the Matrix program. However, it was Jordan's response as mayor that unified these diverse groups. Direct pressure on the police by downtown business groups and neighborhood activists had not been successful, but with direct pressure from Jordan, "quality of life" policing was soon the dominant policing philosophy and Matrix the dominant policing practice.

Jordan wanted to use the police as the primary agency in dealing with the homeless problem. He believed that homelessness was a social problem at root but that the solution wasn't just to throw money at it but to use a tough love approach to get people into treatment. As part of Matrix, he developed an outreach plan that paired social workers with police officers in a carrot and stick approach. The police represented the "stick" that would get people to choose treatment over harassment and jail.

Operation Matrix focused primarily on the central tourist areas around Union Square and the Civic Center Plaza area where "Camp Agnos" had been located. In its early phases, the program was largely successful in moving homeless people out of these areas. However, Jordan did not create any new shelter beds or other services, so people simply were relocated to less heavily policed areas, including the Haight Ashbury—just what Agnos and Jordan (as chief) had feared. Responding to complaints from residents around Golden Gate Park, and triggered by a shooting incident, Jordan initiated Matrix II in the summer of 1995. This targeted people camping and congregating in Golden Gate Park.

and started a series of drives to empty out the park. The primary result of this initiative, however, was to drive homeless people into residential areas that had previously been without a significant homeless presence.

The failures of Matrix to reduce the overall numbers of homeless people, and its unintended consequence of actually increasing the number of people with a "homeless problem" in their community, led to the same political problem for Jordan that it had for Agnos. Matrix created an explanation of the city's problems that served a larger ideological agenda of turning economic and social problems into police problems. It also reduced disorder in some tightly targeted areas, but it did not allay people's broader concerns, especially those of people who were now politically oriented towards the quality of life agenda. In fact, some groups increased their activity and ratcheted up their criticism of the police by calling for more police efforts at order maintenance.

In 1993, a new Haight Ashbury anti-crime group called RAD, Residents Against Druggies, was formed to address street level drug dealing and drug use. They organized volunteer patrols to try and take back their streets by focusing on disorder and showing that the community was watching. This was designed, according to one RAD member, not as a solution in itself, but as a way of pressuring the department to take quality of life issues more seriously and devote more resources to beat patrols. RAD members felt that Matrix was effective, but that it wasn't used consistently. Problems were addressed and then the police would move on, allowing the problems to return.³¹ As Jordan's term as mayor came to an end, there was dissatisfaction in the public for his handling of the homeless situation. Several political analysts and police officials stated that Jordan had turned Matrix into an ideological issue rather than developing it as a policing tool.³² According to one police administrator, Jordan's first mistake was giving the program a name that opponents could easily latch onto: "Matrix was immediately perceived as a

³¹ Interview with Joe Kanopka, August 1, 1998.

³² Interviews with Randy Shaw, June 26, 1998; Lt. Jim Speros, SFPD, August 7, 1998; Calvin Welch, August 12, 1998; Capt. Greg Suhr, SFPD, August 20, 1998.

hammer against the homeless. It created an expectation of crackdowns by merchants and residents that couldn't be fulfilled."³³

There was also dissension within the police force concerning Matrix. Many officers felt that Matrix put them into the middle of an ideological war between the mayor and homeless advocates. Rather than focusing on the effectiveness of these new police practices, the mayor and homeless advocates discussed the larger implications of pursuing a punitive strategy of social change. This undermined the support for Matrix within the department because Jordan appeared to be losing this larger ideological battle. For the police it became a no win situation because the problem of homelessness was not going to be solved by them no matter what they did. In the end, the Police Officers Association—the police union—backed Willie Brown against Jordan for Mayor. According to an official in the Brown administration, the reason the POA abandoned Jordan was that Matrix made the police look bad to the public, and that jeopardized their contract negotiating position.³⁴

Progressives were uniformly opposed to Matrix. Their anger took the form of numerous demonstrations by groups representing the homeless such as the Coalition on Homelessness, Food Not Bombs, and Religious Witness. These organizations gave out free food to homeless people in the parks, held vigils and hunger strikes, and protested outside Mayor Jordan's house. In addition the Coalition on Homelessness produced a monthly newspaper called *Street Sheet* that continually reported on the implementation of Matrix, including both individual stories and overall statistics. One consistent theme was that Matrix was generating 20,000 citation a year for minor crimes, diverting city resources from social services. In the first year of Matrix 60 people a month were being jailed for failure to pay fines and make court appearances stemming from Matrix citations (*Street Sheet* 11/94). In the legislative arena, progressive supervisors spoke out against

³³ Interview with Lt. Jim Speros. SFPD. August 7, 1998.

³⁴ Interview with Calvin Welch. August 12, 1998.

Matrix and in March 1995 passed a resolution, sponsored by Supervisor Angela Alioto, that condemned Matrix as an attack on the homeless.

In an effort to tone down the growing criticism of Matrix, and with hopes of obtaining additional federal dollars, Jordan initiated a new strategic plan on homelessness called "Continuum of Care: A Five Year Strategic Homeless Plan, 1995-2000." A section on civil rights in the Plan represented the efforts of a number of social service providers to highlight the heavy use of the police by the Jordan Administration. After several long debates, no resolution could be reached about the content of the section, so two points of view were put forward. Service providers argued that "the enforcement of laws which prohibit life-sustaining conduct presently violates the constitutional and civil rights of homeless people" (Jordan 1995: 152). The other position, taken by the Mayor's Office and neighborhood merchants and residents, was that "all persons, whether they be homeless or not, must adhere to existing laws and be held accountable for their behavior...The city has the responsibility to enforce various codes in order to ensure that all residents have access to clean and safe public spaces" (Jordan 1995: 152).

Jordan's insistence on maintaining a more punitive language, in both the report and publicly, was largely the result of pressure by his supporters in the business community and a small but highly mobilized group of residents in areas heavily affected by homelessness. However, his use of Matrix as an ideologically driven policy generated its own internal conflicts. By claiming that this approach could solve homelessness, Jordan created an expectation among the public that the police were unable to realize. This created conflict within the department as officers expressed their displeasure at being used as part of an ideological battle. It also created a backlash in many communities that experienced no reduction or an increase in homelessness and disorder, undermining both the political pressure that helped put Jordan in office and the grassroots and departmental support for the new approach. The result was that Jordan was voted out of office and Matrix was dismantled.

Willie Brown

Jordan's replacement, Willie Brown, campaigned on a platform that specifically opposed Matrix. Brown said that the law needed to be applied rigorously, but that homelessness itself was not a crime: "What Matrix has done is simply move people from Civic Center and Union Square to other parts of the City and Neighborhoods" (SFE 10/19/95). At one point he even flirted with the idea of having formalized camps in Golden Gate Park as had been done during the 1906 earthquake (SF 31). Instead of focusing on homelessness, Brown promoted the need to fight narcotics and serious crime. In an op-ed piece in the *Chronicle* Brown laid out his priorities for the police:

1. Fix the broken-down 911 system. It's inexcusable that almost daily the system crashes.
2. Beef up both the Muni [bus and subway] and narcotics details.
3. Reassign desk officers to the streets.
4. Stop using police to herd the homeless from one neighborhood to the next.

Police should be used to fight crime, not poverty, and as they become increasingly more visible on the streets, aggressive panhandling, muggings, vandalism, and other crimes will inevitably go down.

The two key elements to the proper deployment of police are: a) community policing whereby officers walk beats and get to know neighborhoods first-hand; and b) rapid response teams of patrol cars and undercover units that can swiftly move as crime patterns shift (SFC 11/28/95).

This program represents a rhetorical return to professional policing with its focus on serious crime, high visibility, rapid response and specialized units. Item "b" is also very similar to some of the reforms instituted by Bratton in New York, such as the Anti-crime and Street Crimes Units and their use of Compstats.

Brown did not, however, propose that the police role in homelessness should be

eliminated. Like Jordan, he viewed the police as the front line of a social services approach. In his campaign literature Brown argues that the city should "utilize the police as an integral part of neighborhood-by-neighborhood relief efforts for dealing with the homeless, but limit law enforcement to dealing only with those people who truly are criminals, predators, or aggressive panhandlers" (Brown, 1995). This begins to sound very similar to Jordan's public statements as well. Jordan consistently stated from his early days through the *Continuum of Care* document that the police and social services had to work together.

After Brown took office in 1996, he dismantled Matrix and reassigned some of the senior staff in charge of it. He also brought in a new police chief--Fred Lau--the country's first Asian American police chief. Despite claims of a new approach to homelessness, advocates found that the police were continuing most of the same practices without calling them Matrix. In fact, citations for nuisance crimes actually went up during Brown's first two years in office. Brown said that while it was inappropriate to create a rhetoric of scapegoating the homeless, it was necessary to continue to enforce nuisance laws in order to reduce the impact of homelessness on communities and businesses.

By 1996, as a result of improved city budgets and public support for crime fighting, the number of officers had increased significantly. Brown and the police department responded to complaints from children's advocates by creating a special force to patrol public parks and playgrounds: "Operation Park." The stated purpose of the operation was to make parks safer for all users. However, police reports on the operation made it clear that the primary problems were related to homelessness and were treated as such:

In conclusion we would like to illuminate the most persistent problems occurring in our Parks. These problems are "public drunkenness," "fighting," "homeless encampments" and "public urination /defecation." We have continuously taken police action where needed, and have provided alternative solutions to several of the problems plaguing our parks. i.e. homeless shelter and de-tox centers (SFPD Memorandum 8/27/97).

This unit did not have the stated objective of rousting homeless people, but it had the same effect.

After two years of constant police enforcement targeting homeless people around Golden Gate Park, the number of encampments remained high. The city claimed that it quickly removed any encampment it discovered in the park, but in November, 1997, Brown was badly embarrassed when he stated this on television, only to have live cameras point out a variety of encampments in the park. The mayor's response was a major mobilization of police and park personnel to clear the park, along with an intensification of anti-homeless rhetoric. The mayor went so far as to instruct the police to obtain heat-sensing helicopters to locate and root out well-hidden camps and individuals in the park.

While Brown dismantled Matrix and discontinued the ideological rhetoric of the Jordan administration, he was still confronted with essentially the same pressures as Jordan. When Brown attempted to move back to a professional model complaints about homelessness continued unabated, and Brown's inability to resolve the problem through housing and social services left him little choice but to embrace the punitive "quality of life" model. To do this, Brown sent several members of his top staff to New York in 1998 to study the NYPD. The result was a citywide adoption of "quality of life" policing targeting minor disorders such as prostitution, public drinking, and sleeping in the parks.

Brown's decision to adopt "quality of life" policing methods--despite his liberal orientation--indicates that the predominance of this new form of policing was not just a result of political decision making. It was a response to a broader economic and political crisis that limited political options. As long as Brown was unable or unwilling to create substantial changes in the basic functioning of housing and labor markets, and the provision of social and health services, he had little choice but to adopt repressive measures if he hoped to stay in power. Art Agnos had shown that the urban liberal

strategy of tolerance was a clear road to political disaster.

Unlike in New York, "quality of life" policing in San Francisco was always primarily used against homeless and disorderly people, and not as an overall crime fighting strategy. The only high crime neighborhood that experienced these new policing tactics with any regularity was the Tenderloin. This neighborhood is made up of the city's poorest and most transient residents, and is racially mixed. As such they never developed the political capacity to effectively resist these aggressive police tactics. The only constituencies that routinely opposed these measures were advocates of the poor and homeless and civil libertarians. These groups did not have enough political clout to roll back the new policing tactics. The strongest weapon they had were legal challenges to the law, but with the growing conservatism of the courts, they were unable to be effective in this venue.

Conclusion

In both New York and San Francisco the professional model of policing was a reasonable response to the twin problems of increases in serious crimes and police corruption in the 1970's. As economic and social conditions changed in the 1970's and 80's, new strains were put on the police and the professional model. In the 1970's, serious crime was accompanied by increased minor crime and disorder in the form of prostitution, graffiti, and drug sales. This alone, however, was not enough to displace the professional model. It was only with the emergence of widespread homelessness in the mid 1980's that the model began to break down. The combination of pressure from elites and neighborhoods (both wealthy and poor) forced the police to look for new policing strategies. While alternative strategies were being developed by academics, both the NYPD and SFPD began experimenting with various new forms of policing. However, it was the election of neoconservative politicians in both cities that led to the

institutionalization of a new "quality of life" model of policing based on the "broken windows" theory.

"Quality of life" policing served not just as a set of new police practices, but as a new way of thinking about homelessness, disorder, and neighborhood stability. The "broken windows" theory proved useful to the police because it framed neighborhood revitalization as a policing issue. Its implementation required additional expenditures on police and gave them greater clout in relationship to other city departments. It was appealing to the new politicians also because it allowed them to link disorder to cultural issues rather than economic ones. This allowed them to continue to advocate reductions in social services and support for existing labor and housing markets without appearing to be deaf to neighborhood concerns. The "quality of life" model was supported by business and real estate owners because it directly addressed the disorder disrupting their businesses without calling for costly new social programs and higher taxes. Finally, the "quality of life" model was appealing to neighborhood residents because it directly and immediately addressed disorder, which had been so lacking in the urban liberal approach. In the next chapter I will explore the process by which Jordan and Giuliani were able to construct this new conservative coalition based on the "quality of life" paradigm.

Chapter 5

The Crisis of Urban Liberalism

In Chapter 3, I outlined how the changing economic, political, and cultural circumstances in New York and San Francisco created a rise in homelessness and a fear of social breakdown. This urban crisis could have been addressed in a number of different ways with varying implications for both urban liberalism and homeless people. In Chapter 4 I described how pressure from neighborhood activists, business leaders, and police reformers began the process of developing a new approach to policing based on the "broken windows" theory. In this chapter I will discuss how these same groups came together under the leadership of neoconservative politicians to institutionalize "quality of life" as a new paradigm of urban social control.

Through a series of neighborhood case studies in both San Francisco and New York I will show how the central tenets of urban liberalism were unable to address the changing social conditions that emerged in the 1980's in connection with the rise in homelessness. I will describe how the combination of increased homelessness, and the feeling that neighborhoods in both cities were in decline, created a political conflict at both the neighborhood and city-wide levels that mobilized local residents and merchants, elite business interests, and political entrepreneurs, creating a crisis in the governing paradigm of urban liberalism. This resulted in a dramatic change in the political leadership and governing philosophy of each city.

In 1990, urban liberal administrations in New York and San Francisco were still

committed to alleviating the problem of homelessness through the use of social services. These efforts, however, were unable to improve the conditions in public spaces that people associated with homelessness. An increasing number of parks became homeless encampments, public transportation became the site of widespread panhandling and sleeping, and many commercial areas had a growing numbers panhandlers present 24 hours a day. Increasingly, the perception of the homeless as families in need of shelter and individuals suffering from economic hardship was replaced by the iconic images of the "aggressive panhandler" and the "squeegee man." As part of this development, neighborhood political groups increasingly rejected the long-term comprehensive planning approach of the urban liberals and called for immediate punitive intervention to reclaim public spaces.

By 1994, both the Agnos and Dinkins administrations had been voted out of office in large part because of their inability to reduce the level of homelessness and moderate its effect on the everyday lives of the rest of the population. Frank Jordan and Rudolph Giuliani, who replaced them, both campaigned on a platform of scaling back the social services approach and replacing it with a series of "tough love" measures designed to force homeless people either to enter rehabilitation programs and shelters or face eviction from public spaces and incarceration.

But this new approach was not simply the result of a change in mayoral administration. These changes were located in the political reorientation of individual neighborhoods, in different sectors of the business community, and in city agencies such as the police and social services, prior to the election of Jordan or Giuliani. In this chapter, I will focus on the political changes going on in specific areas of each city and

how these related to larger political shifts that together transformed the way each of these cities came to deal with the problem of homelessness.

In Chapter 3 I showed how the entrepreneurial strategy of urban development brought with it the social consequences of increasing crime, homelessness, and disorder. It did this by encouraging an economic and social polarization and by reducing the ability of local governments to respond to emerging social problems. Urban political leaders had a limited set of policy orientations to choose from in responding to this crisis. They could have tried to move away from the entrepreneurial strategy and use government to redistribute goods from wealthier groups to poorer ones in the name of social justice, which had been a central part of the preceding model of urban governance. This would have involved significant government intervention in housing and employment markets, and a significant expansion of welfare state benefits. They could have maintained entrepreneurialism and responded to the growing crisis through a massive expansion of the mechanisms of punitive social control. This would have meant using the police and other agencies to mask the symptoms of economic and social polarization by driving them out of public view, and reducing their direct impact on residents in their daily lives. This was the approach taken by Giuliani and Jordan. Either of these approaches would have addressed the desire for public civility on the part of most residents. Urban liberals, however, attempted a middle path that, in the end, satisfied no one. They maintained the entrepreneurial strategy of development and responded to the resulting social problems with a limited set of social programs able to assist only a select few on an individual basis, while appealing for social tolerance.

In this chapter, I will argue that the approach taken by urban liberals was destined to

lead to political failure. The three main constituencies committed to urban liberalism in the 1980's were African Americans, public sector workers, non-profit social service providers, and white "club-house" democrats. Together these groups put Art Agnos and David Dinkins in office in the late 1980's. As homelessness, disorder, and crime increased in the early 1990's, the first three of these groups remained loyal to these liberal politicians. The final group, traditional white liberals, who had historically supported the Democratic Party, however, defected to the neoconservatives—Frank Jordan and Rudolph Giuliani. They did this because urban liberals were unwilling to directly address their everyday "quality of life" concerns through either major new investments in housing, employment, and social services, or the creation of new styles of policing targeting these "quality of life" problems.

These historically liberal community activists, combined with business groups, and traditional conservatives, laid the basis for a new political coalition capable of displacing the urban liberals. This chapter will show how "club house" democrats were becoming increasingly estranged from urban liberalism because of its inadequate response to the "quality of life" crisis. These activists felt that the centralizing tendency of urban liberalism was resulting in an abandonment of their neighborhoods. It's emphasis on limited social programs was seen as an inadequate response that too often served to enrich and empower a handful of politically connected service providers, rather than effectively ameliorating neighborhood social problems. Finally, urban liberalism's emphasis on social tolerance in the face of a breakdown in the basic social fabric of urban society seemed to these activists to be at best naïve, and at worst a cause of the crisis.

New York City

I will now focus on the development of homelessness as a political issue in New York City, beginning with a description of the early approach to homelessness at the level of city-wide policy. This will set the context for looking at how the homeless problem developed in four specific locations, highlighting the different types of political actors who became involved with the issue and the nature of their responses. These areas are the subway system, Grand Central Terminal and environs, the Lower East Side, and Tudor City. These different sites show that the political crisis of urban liberalism was going on simultaneously in different places and among different constituencies including business associations, local residential associations, and the general public, and how different forces were mobilized to take action at the city-wide level.

New York has always had people who on a given night have no home. In the 19th Century local police stations housed hundreds of people each night and operated soup kitchens as well. For much of the 20th Century, the infamous Bowery was the city's skid row, the center of a small population of street alcoholics and the very poor who lived in shelters and single room occupancy (SRO) hotels. The numbers of these people ebbed and flowed within a narrow band along with economic conditions--with the major exception of the Great Depression which witnessed an expansion of unemployed peoples' shanty towns or Hoovervilles in many parts of the city.

In the postwar period, the homeless again became concentrated in the Bowery and numerous social services congregated there and pursued various strategies to reduce their numbers. In 1961, one of the most ambitious of these was the Manhattan Bowery Project,

created by the Vera Institute of Justice, that intended to reduce the number of street inebriates by offering them voluntary shelter and treatment as an alternative to repetitive short term incarceration. By the 1970's this approach was showing signs of success. At the same time housing advocates were condemning conditions in the city's SRO hotels and it appeared that the number of homeless people and the conditions in which they lived were going to continue to improve. This optimism was cut short, however, by the dramatic expansion of the homeless population, first in the Bowery and later city wide that transformed thinking about the problem and the kinds of strategies that would be needed to address it.

In 1976, with the increasing pace of economic changes, deinstitutionalization, and the decriminalization of public intoxication, the presence of homeless people outside of the Bowery began to increase noticeably from Midtown to the Upper West Side. By 1979 social services were unable to meet the requests for shelters and the conditions of the shelters were deteriorating under the strain. As a result, Robert Hayes, a private attorney working under the auspices of the Legal Aid Society, filed suit in 1979 to force the city to provide additional beds in the Bowery and improve conditions. Over the course of the next two years the population of homeless people expanded in number and location, prompting the city to settle the ongoing Hayes suit by signing a consent decree that would guarantee a shelter bed on demand first to single men, in 1981, and then, in 1986, to families.

The Hayes agreement created an entitlement for homeless people. The city—with financial support from the federal and state governments—had to provide at least emergency shelter to anyone who requested it. This became an expensive burden for the

city. However, it did little to either reduce the level of homelessness or entice the most disorderly people off the streets. This meant that the city had to spend much of its available social service funds for a program that was failing to meet either of these important objectives for a homelessness program. In the next section we will see that San Francisco chose a different path. They decided not to make emergency shelter widely available and use the funds to develop more comprehensive services. However, San Francisco suffered the same problem. They had a large population of homeless people sleeping out of doors—some of whom were a source of disorder—and they never invested adequate funds to develop sufficient permanent exits from shelters and other services to actually reduce the overall number of people who were homeless.

Another result of the Hayes consent decree was that New York had to find places to locate homeless shelters. The Koch administration conceptualized the homeless problem as a temporary emergency that would be alleviated once the recession of the early 80's gave way to a new cycle of growth. They did not engage in long term planning or develop complex mechanisms for getting people off the streets, out of the shelters, and into permanent housing until the final months of Koch's administration. They also did not build up a relationship with neighborhoods affected by homelessness to develop cooperative strategies for reducing the impact of the problem and sharing in the burdens associated with solving the problem. Instead, the Koch administration consistently alienated local communities by forcing shelters into their communities without their input.

In 1981 the Community Services Society estimated that the homeless population had grown to 36,000, but there were only 3,200 shelter beds (CSC 1981). Koch's response

was to call for the construction of numerous large shelters in armories that would accommodate hundreds of people. In response, local communities through their Community Boards called for the creation of smaller neighborhood based shelters. Several Boards actually developed specific requests for shelters in their communities to give the people sleeping on their sidewalks a place to go (NYT 8/30/81). These communities resisted the imposition of large facilities, which they believed would cause a decline in neighborhood conditions. The Koch administration, however, continued its approach and accused neighborhoods of NIMBYism.

As the demand for shelters grew, the city negotiated an agreement with the courts that would allow them to set up shelters with 24 hours notice on an emergency bases, bypassing existing land use planning rules in order to meet the need. What started as an emergency measure became standard procedure as the administration continued to develop only large armory shelters and negotiations with communities broke down. The results, according to Robert Hayes, were devastating:

This kind of crisis management undermines the work we do with communities. We've been going through [East New York] looking for possible sites and to have one rammed down their throat overnight on court order makes it difficult" (NYT 10/27/81).

The Koch administration continued to locate shelters on an emergency basis through the early and middle 80's. By 1985, Koch had won his third term in office with a coalition consisting of community based service providers, benefiting from the end of the 70's fiscal crisis, municipal workers, with whom Koch had made favorable contract deals, and private developers. At this stage, Koch had a favorable outlook towards government problem solving and inclusive social programs, and a moderate tolerance of social diversity. However, these were about to change under the pressure of the growing

homeless problem.

During 1985 conditions on the streets became much worse, and complaints about homeless people increased. Additional shelter space did little to either improve conditions or reduce complaints. As a result, Koch embarked on a new two part campaign to clear the streets. The first part was the creation of a cold weather emergency plan that authorized the police to take a person to a homeless shelter against their will if the temperature fell below 5 degrees (NYT 1/23/85). The second program brought psychiatrists into major transportation hubs such as Grand Central Terminal, Penn Station and the Port Authority Bus Terminal, and on the streets to hospitalize homeless people forcibly if they appeared to be unable to take care of themselves. According to Mayor Koch, "We believe that anyone who chooses to be out on the streets in the cold when we offer that person an opportunity to go to a shelter, that person is not competent" (NYT 11/14/85). The Coalition for the Homeless argued that the new policy "demonstrated the inadequacy of the city's shelter system. If the system were more humane, the police would not be needed to bring the homeless people in" (NYT 12/7/85).

In 1987 Koch attempted to expand the policy. A greater range of people were now classified as being unable to care for themselves and the period of involuntary confinement was extended. It quickly became clear, however, that the city did not have the psychiatric capacity to handle a new influx of patients. The shortage in services that had contributed to the increase in the number of people living on the streets prevented their involuntary commitment. By the end of the year, though, the state came up with money for 50 additional beds so that the program could go forward on a limited basis.

This created stiff opposition from homeless people, advocates, service providers, and civil liberties attorneys. Homeless advocate Robert Hayes argued that the solution to the homeless problem wasn't forced hospitalization but increased housing and adequate voluntary services. New York Civil Liberties Union attorney Norman Siegel argued:

The real obstacle to mental health care for the homeless is the serious shortage of beds for psychiatric patients caused by a lack of community mental health programs in New York City. Whenever government proposes to remove citizens from the streets and confine them involuntarily in a mental hospital, fundamental civil liberties are at stake...The courts have repeatedly made clear, government does not have the power to hospitalize harmless people who are capable of meeting their basic survival needs, even if they appear to be disheveled or their standard of living is considered low (NYT 9/17/87).

The conflict over the policy came to head in November when the first person picked up under the new policy sued the city for release with the assistance of the NYCLU. Joyce Brown was drug addicted, unemployed, mentally ill and living on the streets. However, she had survived several winters on the street and was able to argue convincingly in court that she was capable of taking care of herself. The decision to forcibly hospitalize Miss Brown came directly from the mayor who spoke to her during an outreach trip and was stunned to learn that she might not meet the criteria for confinement. The mayor had argued that the very decision to stay outside in the winter was evidence enough of severe mental defect. Within days a court ruled that Miss Brown could not be held, striking a blow to the mayor's new plan. However, the feeling persisted in the mayor's office that the city should continue to try to remove homeless people from the streets forcibly as both a humanitarian gesture and a way to address complaints about the deteriorating quality of life.

Civil libertarians and advocates continued to oppose this policy throughout the Koch administration. Some psychiatrists and civil libertarians even teamed up to condemn the mayor's policy as one of "out of sight out of mind," and accused some doctors of responding to "political imperatives" (NYT 11/27/87). They pointed out that the program did not change the fact that the city had inadequate mental health facilities to deal with the true level of need for housing and support services. These groups increasingly came to embrace the policies of then Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins, who argued against involuntary treatment and shelter and in favor of more comprehensive service

plans.

The next major policy initiative of the mayor was the creation of 20 new large armory style shelters as a way to meet increasing demand. The proposal called for the creation of 15 family shelters for 100 families each and 5 adult shelters with a capacity of 200 each. The Mayor called for the shelters to be distributed across the five boroughs with the consultation of local Borough Presidents in a bid to mollify local resistance.

This policy was opposed by local communities and by the borough presidents of Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. These three borough presidents argued that the mayor's continued reliance on giant armory shelters was not doing anything to solve homelessness and was adversely affecting the quality of life of the communities in which they were located. Instead, they called for "a long-range solution that would enable the homeless to break the welfare cycle. And we can do this without negatively effecting existing communities" (NYT 10/8/87). They called for the creation of permanent housing through the rehabilitation of abandoned city-owned buildings and the creation of dispersed low-density clusters of new construction. Even Robert Hayes, the force behind the creation of shelters, began arguing that they were the wrong way to go and that the city should shut the system down (NYT 11/23/87).

While Dinkins supported the shelter plan, he did so because he felt that there was an immediate need for shelter and that the outer Boroughs needed to share the burden. He made it clear, however, that he also felt that long-term solutions were needed that focused on the creation of permanent housing and comprehensive service delivery systems. In March, 1987, he issued a major report called "A Shelter Is Not A Home" (Dinkins 1987), in which he focused on the development of a comprehensive strategy for dealing with homeless families. The plan calls for the creation of permanent and long-term transitional housing and a system of support services to prevent and end homelessness. It criticizes the Koch administration's reliance on shelters and its overall "crisis" footing:

The City administration must recognize that its proposal [for more shelters] represents an expensive form of planned obsolescence. The continual infusion of capital dollars into creating emergency housing which cannot be adapted for secondary permanent housing is short sighted (Dinkins 1987: p.99).

A consensus was developing among service providers and political leaders that the large-scale, short-term emergency shelter system was doing nothing to improve conditions in neighborhoods or reduce the homeless population.

By 1988, the mayor's approach was coming unraveled. Court challenges and a lack of facilities kept the number of forced hospitalizations down (NYT 12/14/88), and the shelter plan was moving ahead very slowly. Koch's initial attempts to use the police to control homeless people was also being rejected. In February the State Courts struck down the anti-loitering law and in general, other nuisance crime laws were not being enforced (as will be discussed in detail in Ch.5). According to the New York Times, "Mayor Koch has ruled out using the criminal laws, the courts and the police to deal with the homeless except in extreme situations. 'There are other priorities in this town'" (NYT 12/14/88).

Koch's approach to homelessness pushed the boundaries of urban liberalism. He still believed that concerted government action was required. However, he increasingly turned to punitive measures to control the homeless problems, though without completely moving from a social services to policing orientation. He was also willing to alienate civil libertarians in an effort to respond to more communitarian concerns about declining public conditions. By the mayoral election of 1989, New Yorkers had to decide whether to continue the move away from urban liberalism or to reembrace its fundamental tenants.

Within the service provider community, the tide had turned against emergency and punitive measures to deal with homelessness and groups that opposed Koch's various policy initiatives began looking for a new candidate to support. That new candidate was

David Dinkins. He campaigned on a platform of developing a comprehensive array of temporary, transitional and permanent housing and support services. Dinkins was also committed to the idea that government could mobilize to solve social problems. He was a life-long political insider committed to the social programs of the Great Society. Further, with his roots in the civil rights movement and his admiration for New York's "beautiful mosaic," Dinkin's was clearly a supporter of social tolerance and civil rights.

Dinkins defeated Koch in the primary. An analysis of the results indicated that homelessness was the third most frequently mentioned concern of voters, and that those that considered it a major issue voted heavily for Dinkins (Arian et al 1991). In the general election of 1989, Dinkins faced former federal prosecutor and neoconservative Republican candidate Rudolph Giuliani. Giuliani focused on his ability to fight crime, which was a major issue at the time. In the end, those voters who felt that crime was the most important issue voted for Giuliani and those that felt that homelessness was a major issue voted for Dinkins (Arian et al 1991). The election was very close with Dinkins winning by less than 50,000 votes. The margin of difference was white independent voters. Among this group, the policy emphasis was the same as for the general electorate. For Dinkins to hold on to these voters, he had to show progress on homelessness or risk losing them to Giuliani.

One of Dinkins' major initial efforts was the continuation of Mayor Koch's \$5 billion, 12 year housing plan. Dinkins committed the city to spend \$2.1 billion over the next 4 years creating 63,000 new apartments (NYT 5/17/90). Dinkins also pledged to make these units more affordable to homeless people than the Koch administration had. Dinkins' goal was to dramatically reduce the use of emergency shelters and hotels and get people into permanent housing, a priority supported by homeless advocates and the liberal constituencies who had supported his election. In addition, the Mayor was developing a wide array of social services including drug treatment and mental health services to help people to remain in their housing.

This sense of possible improvement was short lived, however. Later that year, the city faced the serious financial crisis described in Chapter 3. As a result, the city was beset by additional demands for services but had fewer resources to provide them. By the end of 1989 the city had almost eliminated the use of hotels for homeless families. Instead about 2,000 families were housed in a handful of shelters and numerous transitional apartments. However, by late 1991 there were 4,700 families (and 7,000 single adults) staying in the shelter system and the numbers were continuing to grow. And at the same time, rhetoric coming from the media and neighborhood activists against the homeless and the disorder associated with them was worsening. Dinkins' efforts to lure the homeless off the street through improved shelters and affordable housing had not worked due to the level of demand, and public frustration was growing.

In response, Dinkins commissioned Andrew Cuomo to head a panel to restructure the homeless services system. In January, 1992, the panel called for the development of 21 "day assessment" shelters that would function as multi-service intake facilities and provide specialized services to accommodate the needs determined at the centers. They also called for these services and city homeless shelters to be run by non-profits. Most importantly, the plan called for the development of permanent housing over the construction of additional shelters. One example of the misplaced priorities in the system was that the city spent \$18,000 a year to keep a drug addict in a "dangerous, drug infested armory shelter" when drug treatment could be provided at the same cost (NYT 5/16/92).

Dinkins initially resisted this plan because it challenged his existing strategy of dramatically increasing the number of small scatter-site shelters as a way of moving people off the street. He said he would study the plan and make recommendations over the next two years, delaying implementation until after the 1993 mayoral election. However, in September, 1992, Dinkins announced that he would implement most of the panel's recommendations. This represented a major victory for liberals. The city was now saying that it would embark on a "unified policy" to increase the amount of permanent

housing, and the level of substance abuse, mental health, and vocational services, and bring in non-profit organizations to do much of the work (NYT 9/22/92: A1). Many homeless advocates and the *New York Times* applauded the plan (NYT 9/22/92: A26).

At the same time, however, the number of homeless families continued to increase, doubling over the previous year (NYT 9/23/92) while city revenues remained depressed. As a result, by January, 1993, Dinkins was forced to scale back the services part of the plan and focus instead on permanent housing. He also changed the recipients of the housing to include many non-homeless, working-poor families as a way of increasing the stability of the housing locations. Dinkins also continued to be troubled by resistance to shelters and services by communities throughout the city: "I have been particularly put out by the efforts of some on the City Council to say 'You must get out of hotels,' and the same people explain how they can't have any facilities in their neighborhoods. I've had it" (NYT 7/5/93).

Dinkins was now caught between espousing a liberal program and not having the financial resources or political support to implement it. This fundamental conflict was aggravated by the fact that the numbers of homeless people both in the shelter system and out on the streets was continuing to increase. This left the mayor vulnerable to the criticisms that either his liberal policies were flawed or that he was incapable of implementing them. This was exactly the course of argument made by his Republican challenger in the fall election, Rudolph Giuliani.

Giuliani said the mayor had "tried hard and failed" to reduce the homelessness problem, and had created additional public bureaucracies rather than bringing in non-profits to run homeless services (NYT 8/5/93). He argued that the city should get out of the housing business and allow the free market to provide housing. In addition he called for restricting shelter access to 90 days for many homeless people as a way of forcing them into the private employment and housing markets. He claimed that the shelter system was benefiting people who weren't making an effort, instead of the working poor,

by tying so many services to homeless status (NYT 9/17/93).

The differences were now set between the liberal advocates of government-provided permanent housing and comprehensive social services, and the neo-conservatives calling for punitive measures to force people to return to market mechanisms. In addition, Giuliani made it clear that the problem he was really focusing on wasn't homelessness, but restoring neighborhood "quality of life." Giuliani's main rhetorical initiative didn't concern shelters or permanent housing but instead, the elimination of "squeegee men," who were demanding money from motorists for cleaning their windows while stopped in traffic. Relying on the "broken windows" theory, he argued that the key to restoring public order wasn't providing additional services for the poor and mentally ill but aggressively cracking down on illegal and disruptive public behavior; and that by doing so, civility would be restored to public spaces.

It was the issue of "quality of life" that undid Mayor Dinkins. A *New York Times*/WCBS-TV poll, less than a month before the election, showed that 62% of New Yorkers felt that the "quality of life in New York" had gotten worse while only 9% felt it had gotten better. These results were higher than those saying that either the economy or race relations had declined. The poll also showed that 63% of New Yorkers felt that the City should "get tougher with homeless who make a nuisance of themselves," compared to 55% prior to the 1989 election. In the end Giuliani won election by a slim margin, made up largely of white independent voters. This swing constituency abandoned Dinkins and his liberal efforts to reduce the homeless problem and its impact on communities and embraced a punitive approach to restoring order to communities.

I will now describe in much more detail how the urban liberal approach to homelessness mobilized new political forces, that were the leading edge of a city-wide change in homeless policies. The examples I am going to use are the Lower East Side, Grand Central Terminal, and Tudor City in Manhattan, and East New York in Brooklyn.

The Lower East Side

In the early 1980's this neighborhood was controlled politically by two camps. The first was centered around the mostly Jewish housing projects on Grand Street, the base of such political leaders as Sheldon Silver, who was speaker of the State Assembly. This group functioned very much like a Democratic machine in which constituencies that actively supported the machine received preferential treatment in the form of social programs and government subsidies for housing and government services. The machine also groomed candidates for a range of public offices, creating an integrated set of political leaders able to influence policy on the local, state and federal level. The machine tended to support redistributive social policies of benefit to the middle class. Theirs was a state-centered approach that was based on a belief that social problems could best be addressed by government action.

The other major grouping was a coalition of social service providers and community activists made up of both white and Latino residents. These groups came of age in the 1960's and 70's in a variety of local struggles, including affordable housing, police accountability, and youth services. During the 1970's many of these groups formed non-profit community based organizations in an attempt to institutionalize some of the political victories they had won. This grouping had its power base in the local Community Board and in its relationship to governmental and foundation bureaucrats. These groups believed that some degree of local activism was needed in addition to government action. They argued for increased local control of government programs and resources and the growth of the non-profit sector. Neither group had complete control over any one sphere and conflicts were common at the Community Board and the ballot box.

In the course of the 1980's these two groups were challenged for power by newly mobilized community groups concerned about drug sales and a variety of disorders

associated with homelessness. The eventual focus point of this new level of community activism was the homeless encampment in Tompkins Square Park, in the northern center of the neighborhood. By the early 90's these groups had transformed local politics and supported the implementation of a variety of measures designed to control disorder in public spaces. They prioritized order maintenance over on-going efforts to develop comprehensive solutions to the underlying social problems that contributed to public disorder.

There were four major events that mobilized this new political grouping: 1) the rise of street level sales of crack, 2) an increase in illegal street peddling and fencing around 2nd Ave. and St. Marks Place, 3) the opposition to homeless facilities in the southwestern part of the neighborhood, and 4) the conditions in Tompkins Square Park (TSP). I will now describe each of these and discuss the ways in which the approaches used by urban liberals contributed to these mobilizations. They did this by refusing to work with local residents on the locating of homeless facilities, by failing to take measures to alleviate the worst conditions on streets and in parks, and by preaching social tolerance in the face of a breakdown of public civility. This failure of urban liberalism created a wedge between social service providers, who remained loyal to the mayor, and traditional democratic activists, who defected—first in their support of Antonio Pagan for City Council, and later with their support of Rudolph Giuliani for Mayor.

The first arena of conflict revolved around the provision of homeless services in the western part of the neighborhood that included sections of the Bowery--the historic skid row of New York. During the mid 80's this area had one of the city's largest homeless shelters located on East 3rd St. in which adult males were given meals, shelter, and referrals to other services. The primary consequence to residents was a burgeoning crack-cocaine trade on adjacent streets as homeless people bought and sold crack creating a market that drew in other buyers and sellers. As a result, crime rates in the area went up 26% during the mid 80's (*Villager* 1/29/87). Residents also complained of noise, garbage,

and human waste on their stoops and sidewalks.³⁵ These were concrete problems that affected residents in their everyday lives.

As part of Koch's 1986 shelter plan, the City announced its intention to build an additional shelter on East 1st St. that would accommodate up to 100 families. This engendered a new coalition of local residents and merchants called BASTA (Before Another Shelter Tears Us Apart) that brought together existing groups and mobilized many people who had not been politically active previously. BASTA's members were racially mixed, and most were long time supporters of the Democratic Party. Joining BASTA was the Cooper Square Committee (CPC) a community based housing and social services provider formed in 1959 to oppose a nearby urban renewal project that would have displaced low income residents. Since then they have been one of the central tenants' organizations and low income housing and social services providers in the neighborhood.

The relationship between Cooper Square and BASTA was tenuous. Several members of BASTA felt that Cooper Square had been promoting itself as a community based organization for many years but had never attempted to deal with the problems created by homeless people utilizing the 3rd St. shelter. "We didn't trust Cooper Square to do the job or help fight [the proposed 1st St. shelter]. They had been around for years without addressing 3rd St."³⁶ Support for BASTA from the Community Board was also weak. One BASTA member attributed this to the increasing political power of local social service providers. "Support from Community Board 3 eroded because [City Council member Miriam] Friedlander appointed new social service oriented members [to the Community Board]."³⁷ This was viewed as part of general political shift in the electoral base of the neighborhood from local political clubs to non-profit service providers. This conflict was indicative of the general tension between some community activists and local social

³⁵ Interview with Howard Hemsley, February 23, 1999.

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³⁷ Interview with Howard Hemsley, February 23, 1999.

service providers and would prove to be a force in undermining political support for David Dinkins and urban liberalism in general.

The groups claimed that the area was already the site of a disproportionate share of homeless and drug treatment services and that these services had a detrimental effect on the community. A BASTA member pointed out that, "according to HRA's own statistics, the vast majority of the homeless are from Brooklyn and the Bronx. They have been forced into this neighborhood by HRA policy, and not any so-called tradition of refuge on the Lower East Side" (*Villager* 6/11/87). They also complained about the ability of the City's Human Resources Administration to adequately run the facility given its poor track record in addressing community complaints concerning the 3rd St. shelter.

People were especially angered by the process by which the city selected this and other shelter sites. The CPC had been in negotiations with the city for several years about creating a mix of low income and market rate housing on the sight chosen for the proposed shelter in an effort to develop much needed permanent housing. The local Community Board had suggested 5 alternate sights for smaller size shelters that were not utilized and were not consulted about the siting or size of this shelter. This created a great deal of alienation of residents from local government. One local resident described it as a "slap in the face," and another, "[an] example of the contempt the city has for our community" (*Villager* 1/29/87). Borough President Dinkins also wrote a statement opposed to the shelter asking, "what planning principles did the City Administration have in mind when it proposed to put another shelter for single adults in a community board which already shelters between 20-25% of the City's homeless individuals, only one block away from the central intake facility for the entire five borough system" (*Villager* 6/11/87). State Senator Manfred Ohrenstein highlighted how the area's historic openness towards homeless people was being undermined:

The record of responsibility of the people of the Lower East Side has demonstrated the humanity and compassion of the community towards the homeless and helpless who sought food and shelter here. To introduce another shelter in the area would severely strain existing services in the neighborhood (*Villager* 6/11/87).

In response to these complaints, the Community Board abandoned its previous support for new shelters and voted overwhelmingly against the planned shelter in its advisory capacity.

The Lower East Side was an area that had traditionally welcomed the less fortunate. It was a center of socialist activity in the early part of the 20th Century, a site of Hoovervilles during the Great Depression, and radical political activity in the 1960's and 70's. This tradition of "refuge" and "openness" was ignored by the city in their development of citywide homeless shelter plans. Rather than adjust their plans to suit what the neighborhood was eagerly willing to accept, they tried to impose a shelter that was viewed negatively by almost everyone in the community. As a result many of the moderate and even ardent supporters of the need for increased service for the homeless became alienated from this approach, and increasingly began to look at more punitive options.

Later that year the City dropped plans to build the shelter and local residents went on the offensive against conditions at the 3rd St. shelter. The shelter had become the intake center for the entire City shelter system in 1988. A local resident accused the City of, "dumping 2,000 homeless men into a residential neighborhood without adequate supervision or facilities. The city has created an urban free-fire zone where anything goes" (*Villager* 10/13/88). Community members felt that a lack of services and supervision meant that people were free to roam the streets and get into trouble instead of making progress on improving their situation. A Community Board Task Force set up in 1977 recommended in 1988 that the shelter no longer be used as an intake facility but only as a shelter with support services. When the City refused, BASTA, with the support

of local politicians, filed a lawsuit claiming that the City's conversion of the shelter into an intake facility did not follow proper land use procedures. Support for the lawsuit, however, was not universal.

Many groups including those associated with Sheldon Silver, the Community Board, and the Cooper Square Committee were unhappy with elements of the shelter but did not want to disrupt the shelter system or appear to be anti-homeless. These groups continued to feel an attachment to the social services model and were reluctant to make a total break. BASTA, however, was willing to make that break. They were not tied into the social services system and were able to mobilize large numbers of residents, business owners, and real estate developers to speak out against conditions around the shelter. In September--using an Alinsky style organizing campaign (Alinsky 1971)--they forced the Deputy Mayor, Police Commissioner, the HRA Commissioner, and local politicians to attend a "community accountability session" on the shelter, in which local officials had to answer to community complaints in a mass meeting. This event helped mobilize more residents to become involved with BASTA and successfully generated negative publicity against the city. BASTA now using progressive grassroots organizing tactics to fight against the provision of social services, while the service providers chose to rely on their connection to elected officials who financed their work.

By the end of the year the City agreed to convert the facility back into a shelter and to include social services. BASTA members wanted the services because they felt that drug and mental health treatment might reduce the anti-social behaviors of the people living there. These two victories represented a partial shift in the balance of power in the neighborhood. The Community Board showed that there were limits to its support of specific programs, though it maintained its generally pro-social services stance. It also created a new set of neighborhood leaders tempered by the conflict. The most important of these was Antonio Pagan, the president of the Third Street Block Association who went on to win the local City Council Seat. At a rally in July of 1988 Pagan expressed his

feelings in a greeting to those assembled:

Welcome, to the greater Third Street Area. Welcome to the place the City has forgotten. Welcome to the place everything goes. Welcome to fear and terror. Welcome to nowhere. (*Villager 7/28/88*).

The other was Howard Hemsley who was president of the First Street Block Association and goes on to serve on the Community Board and to provide guidance to new community organizations around Tompkins Square Park.

These and other members of BASTA had been historic supporters of progressive politics. BASTA founder Howard Hemsley is African American and had volunteered during Jessie Jackson's two presidential runs and had supported liberal candidates as far back as McGovern. BASTA Co-founder Antonio Pagan is a gay Latino who had worked for a number of progressive causes in the past. As the homeless problem worsened and as the existing urban liberal political leadership refused to address their concerns about the declining quality of public life, these two people and several others would begin to look for a new politics of community activism that treated the most local of concerns as paramount.

The fight to oppose the 1st St. and 3rd St. shelters provides an example of several weaknesses of urban liberalism in dealing with the growing homelessness problem. First, their reliance on non-profit social service providers as their electoral base was problematic because they had had years to reduce the impact of homelessness on the community and failed to do so. Second, the city continued to keep the management of the homelessness problem centralized to such a degree that community wishes were ignored even when a good faith effort was made to work with the city. The result was that community activists with a history of liberalism were becoming alienated from the local Democratic Party and were beginning to look for alternatives.

The next major mobilizing issue was the problem of street level drug sales. This issue affected several areas of the community and engendered a series of community groups dedicated to reducing the drug trade by becoming a visible presence on the street and by putting pressure on the police to take action. These groups were discussed in Chapter 4 for their role in transforming local police practices. At this point, it is important to note that they became mobilized because they felt there was a dramatic decline in the conditions of public streets and that the police and city government appeared unable to adequately address the problem.

The movement involved taking direct immediate action instead of waiting for the City to solve the problem in some comprehensive way. These new organizations organized rallies, volunteer street patrols, and one group even brought in the Guardian Angels. The Guardian Angels epitomize the loss of faith in local government and the desire to take local action to restore order in the face of a deteriorating public sphere. Images of the Guardian Angels riding a subway system that appeared to have been abandoned by both the police and the public symbolized the height of the City's deterioration in the late 1970's.

The frustration with long-term planning can be seen in the following description of a rally held by one of the new groups:

As EVAC founder John Woods admitted the next day, the only mistake in organizing the event, "was in inviting more than one politician." As EVAC proposes an immediate, local, public action, the audience grew impatient with the politicians' often lengthy discussion of long range and international cures for their local drug problem (*Villager* 4/7/88).

These politicians focused on foreign affairs and drug interdiction efforts and downplayed the role of local police enforcement. A representative from the Mayor's Office made the latter part explicit: "It is easy to say that, if you quadrupled the police force and arrests, it would make a difference. But history belies that would make it

better" (*Villager* 4/7/88). The result of this movement was an increased reliance on local police as neighborhood problem-solvers and an antipathy to long-term, root-causes approaches. Instead people wanted immediate local action taken to drive out the visible presence of disorder. The primary long-term influence of these groups was on the police who were forced to respond to their calls for disorder control in the form of street sweeps of drug markets (as will be discussed in Chapter 4). They also became part of a broader constituency that supported Antonio Pagan for City Council and advocated a hard line against the encampment in Tompkins Square Park.

The third issue of concern was the presence of illegal street peddlers on both St. Mark's Place and Second Avenue. Residents were upset about people selling used personal possessions, stolen goods, and miscellaneous junk, and even more legitimate booksellers. The overall effect was of a late night bazaar that generated noise, garbage, people sleeping and relieving themselves in doorways; the stands were viewed as a cover for a variety of illegal activities. Here is one resident's description:

The streets look great early in the morning after they have been cleaned, and they deteriorate gradually until 1 a.m. when it looks like *Night of the Living Dead*. Zombies walk through the crowds of 'peddlers' ripping open garbage bag after garbage bag. It's not our outside any more. It is the scummiest block in the city (*East Villager* 6/88).

The area had a history of street peddling going back to the mid 1970's. However, in the late 80's the problem got much worse causing local residents and merchants to form WARPATH (We Are Resolved, Peddlers Are Total Hell). Local residents and merchants attributed the escalation to the expansion of the nearby 3rd St. shelter that had recently been transformed into the city-wide intake facility. As a result, hundreds of additional homeless men were congregating in the area. The City did not do much to address the

problem other than wash the streets down in the morning. Through the 1980's local residents and merchants had attempted to pressure the city to improve conditions. Two previous organizations had been formed: Save Our Sidewalks and the Second Avenue Task Force (established by the Community Board). Both had been unsuccessful and had disbanded in frustration. Another local resident expressed the frustration felt by

WARPATH members:

There is the appearance that anything goes here, and if you give that appearance, anything *will* go. It's an issue of people who contribute to the neighborhood versus people who take from the neighborhood. It's a confrontation in terms of lifestyles. The [political] leadership Downtown is one of benign indifference and a lack of local concern from the politicians (*East Villager* 6/88).

A quote from another resident indicates the growing disdain for civil rights advocates and the breakdown of social tolerance:

I'm very happy that there are people out there that share my attitude towards this problem. I hope we succeed. Although the city passed recently the law forbidding the police to arrest or even to harrass [sic] those bums and drunkards (Civil Liberties Union forced the City to do so) I hope still something can and should be done (*East Villager* 7/88).

This issue mobilized people who were upset about the very concrete deterioration of conditions in their immediate environment and the seeming inability or unwillingness of local government to take action to address it. As a result, those involved took on a set of attitudes that were critical of both local politicians for failing to respond to local needs, and civil libertarians who failed to acknowledge the effect social tolerance was having on their neighborhood. The ideological battle lines were being drawn. Any expressions of "civil rights" or "social tolerance" were becoming equated with a public culture that was out of control. Anyone who was soft on panhandlers, drug dealers, street peddlers, or visible homeless people was contributing to the downfall of public civility. The solution

was increasingly evolving into demands on the police for stepped up enforcement activities. As I showed in Chapter 4, the initial resistance by the police to take such action only served to further mobilize and radicalize these community activists.

The last and most important arena of political mobilization in the East Village was the homeless encampment in Tompkins Square Park (TSP). During the mid 1980's a growing number of homeless people began moving into the park. What had been a daytime congregation quickly turned into an around the clock encampment that by 1988 numbered between 150-200 people. The community response to the deteriorating conditions in the park was mixed. The Community Board and The Friends of Tompkins Square Park supported the encampment as a way of highlighting the Koch administration's lack of support for affordable housing and social services to deal with homelessness. On the other side were a growing number of neighborhood groups made up of merchants and residents including the Avenue A Block Association and the Tompkins Square Park Neighborhood Council that wanted more immediate action taken to clean up the park. By 1991, however, support for removing the encampment had broadened considerably and the park was closed for over a year by the Dinkins Administration for extensive renovations.

There were two aspects to the TSP problem. The first was the growing homeless problem which made parts of the park unusable and contributed to the sense that the park was out of control and dangerous. The second was the presence of noisy young people each evening who used the park as a place to congregate and play music, often well into the night. It was this latter problem that became the wedge issue that in the end brought about a more substantial backlash against the homeless people living there and precipitated the closing of the park.

During 1987-88 several local groups began to organize against conditions in the park. The lead group during this early period was the Avenue A Block Association made up of local residents, merchants, and landlords. The issue of closing the park was first raised

officially in August of 1987. The Parks Department proposed closing the park for renovation as a way of removing the encampment and the noisy young people. This effort was resisted by the Community Board, which had a neighborhood-wide constituency, as well as the more immediate Friends of Tompkins Square Park group.

On August 2nd the local police commander arranged a meeting with a select group of community residents from the Avenue A Block Association and the Precinct Community Council to garner public support for enforcement of a curfew in the park. This body bypassed the existing Parks Committee of the Community Board and appeared to be a way for the police to obtain community "cover" for a curfew enforcement action which they knew would be unpopular. On August 6th the police attempted to close the park at 11 p.m. based on the previously unenforced park curfew. They attempted to remove only the noisy youth and not the homeless encampment. What resulted was a bloody confrontation between police and young people as people resisted the eviction and emergency assistance calls from the outnumbered police brought in hundreds of unsupervised officers who indiscriminately beat demonstrators and passers-by.

Over the next two years there were ongoing confrontations in the park and various political venues. The community was deeply divided over the deteriorating conditions in the park and the solutions being proposed. The overstepping by the police brought a stinging rebuke from the local Community Board and many progressive residents. However, the new conservative groupings were gaining in strength as frustration over the increased level of disorder associated with the park increased.

In September of 1988, the Community Board voted overwhelmingly in favor of a statement drafted by its own Tompkins Square Park Task Force calling for the park to be left open and that the homeless be allowed to remain. It also called for a regular, but non-punitive presence of police and Parks workers as a way to reduce disorder without evicting the encampment. This established that the community was in favor of maintaining the homeless presence until the city could provide adequate alternatives.

Over the next 9 months, more conservative forces increasingly challenged this position. In addition, pressure was mounting from conservative residents and the media (*Daily News* 7/11/89) on Mayor Koch to take action against homeless encampments around the city. In response, he ordered the police to remove the structures from the park on July 5th without any consultation with the Community Board or local politicians. The result was numerous clashes in the streets with protesters and a round of protests by local political leaders and the Community Board, ending in a resolution restating the Board's support of the homeless encampment. However, the move was applauded by the media and conservative political forces in the neighborhood. The *New York Times* ran an especially pointed editorial that summed up the growing conservative sentiment about the park:

...people have lost sight of the principle behind the city's decision to remove the makeshift homes: the parks belong to the people - all the people. To turn them into a shantytown is to rob the larger community of its park.

Some people say they are willing to pay that price for the sake of the homeless. That assumes the homeless have no real choices. But they do. The city runs shelters for people who have no place to live. Whatever the inadequacy of those shelters, is living semi-exposed in a park, with barely more plumbing than a campsite, really any better?

What's more, not all of those living in the Tompkins Square park were homeless, if the homeless are defined as poor people without the financial or mental resources to support themselves. The shanty population included radicals angered about neighborhood gentrification, drug addicts, skinheads, self-proclaimed anarchists and people furious at the city for tearing down an abandoned building where they had been squatting. It seems sadly clear that some people in the park cynically used the plight of the truly homeless to further their own agendas.

New York does lack affordable housing. New waves of affluent residents do unsettle and upset neighborhoods like the Lower East Side. Homelessness is a tormenting social problem. But to solve these problems by creating another - unusable parks - is no solution. The Parks Department, by enforcing old rules and new, is only trying to give the park back to the people it belongs to: all of them (NYT 7/8/89).

This is the first statement by the *Times* in favor of punitive action to eliminate a homeless encampment. It is clear that the particular circumstances surrounding Tompkins Square Park made it easier to make this statement at this time. The fact that the conditions in the park could be described as the result of disingenuous political disruption and not just on the presence of the truly needy made tolerance for disorder much lower. This equating of Tompkins Square Park with a general sense of disorder and radical activism, and not the specific state of the homeless made punitive backlashes more acceptable and ultimately more successful. The door was now open for a broad attack against disorder and with it the homeless.

Now, rather than the backlash being restricted to long time supporters of law and order politics, new, more liberal community activists became involved in the effort to evict the encampment. The following letter to the editor from a member of the St. Mark's Block Association illustrates how once the condition of the park was redefined as an order problem, liberal concern for the homeless was displaced by a new communalist concern with access to social goods like the park:

I've always considered myself very liberal, but now anyone who [doesn't] support the tent city is made to feel guilty. [The anarchists] pop up in the park or at Community Board meetings and try and make us liberals, who care about the homeless but don't believe in their anarchistic agenda of allowing anything and everything, feel guilty.

The anarchists don't care if you can't sit on a park bench in Tompkins Square because every available spot reeks of urine. The anarchists don't care if you can't walk your dog in the neighborhoods only green place because the dog run is filed with tents and debris. They don't care if your child can't use the playground because it is filthy. They don't care if you can't sleep at night because of the noise from the park. They don't care if you can't walk on the sidewalk because peddlers have taken up the walking space.

Most of we [sic] "bad" liberals have lived in the East Village for many years and are far from upwardly mobile. I've been here for 14 years and made under \$20,000 last year. We've fought hard in the war against gentrification and we too think Mayor Koch's housing policies stink. We

rallied for commercial rent control, we voted for Jesse Jackson, we oppose funding the contras and building the nuclear home port. We're pro-choice and pro-gay and lesbian rights. We want money appropriated to build housing for the homeless and for low income people. We want money for AIDS research and for health care in general. If we lived in any other neighborhood, we "bad" liberals would be branded flaming leftists, but not in today's East Village. We even have a councilwoman who thinks tenting in the park is O.K.

I refuse to be intimidated into silence. The tents must go. Their symbolic point has been made and attempting to put them back up is not fair to the neighborhood. City parks belong to everyone, not just the loudest segment of the population (NYT 7/26/89).

This letter captures the dual frustration with both the ineffective policies of the Koch administration and the growing weariness at having to endure the declining conditions in public spaces. Given these pressures the community became divided into two camps. Those supporting the homeless as a way of protesting the city's failed homeless policies and those that opposed the camp because it was no solution for either the homeless or the community.

In October of 1989, there were two public meetings that exemplified the new lines of conflict. On October 19th the CB3 Parks Committee met. About 150 residents spoke out against conditions in the park and called for the full enforcement of park regulations and the installation of a curfew to prevent young people from congregating and homeless people from sleeping in the park. There was also a suggestion that the park be closed completely for renovations as a way of restoring order. Many residents expressed their feeling that the park was "out of control" and that what had been a problem with noisy youths was now a broader problem of disorder in the park being defended as help for the homeless:

If you really want to see something done for [the homeless], then get the shantytown and the big rats out of there. The media and the political people look at the homeless, but they don't see the crack-smoking, the area's car break-ins, and the filthy and unsafe conditions (*Villager* 10/26/89).

We're not heartless yuppies—we're mothers with children. I can't go into the park without being harassed. The police are not enforcing the law. The place is knee-deep in excrement. What is wrong with this neighborhood (Vincent 1990)?

Despite these sentiments, the Community Board again voted not to remove the encampment or close the park. The Board held to its belief that simply evicting the homeless from the park was no solution. However, a major shift was about to occur.

On November 16th the City announced that a new support services center would be opened near the park and that all tents would be removed. This plan was developed with the cooperation of the local City Councilwoman Miriam Friedlander, whose supporters on the Community Board had previously opposed efforts to remove the encampment by force. For the first time she begins to use the rhetorical line that, "The park should be for use by everyone in the community. We're talking about the homeless, as well as the children of the community" (NYT 11/16/89).

It was also during this period that a new community group formed called the Tompkins Square Park Neighborhood Coalition (TSPNC). The primary purpose of this group--comprised of people living adjacent to the park--was to see order restored to the park. According to one of the founders, the initial motivation wasn't evicting the homeless but getting rid of the all night noise that was being caused by young people under the cover of the lack of a curfew in the park.³⁸ However, by late 1989 conditions had deteriorated to the degree that TSPNC began to actively call for the removal of the encampment:

Before the August '88 riot, there were approximately 20 to 30 homeless people living in the park. While nobody liked that, it's a citywide problem, and nobody was too upset. But since the riot, the park has become hostage to a purported activist homeless group. The entire park has been taken over. Sanitary conditions are deplorable; in some areas there's obvious

³⁸ Interview with Steve Vincent. March 12, 1999.

drug use. It's a quantum leap. People in the neighborhood think this is too much (NYT 12/7/89).

The group started as a series of "bitch sessions," and grew quickly. People were drawn to the group through personal contacts and flyers that were handed out asking "Are You Tired of the Homeless in Tompkins Square Park? You're Not Alone." This flyer proved very effective in bringing people out to meetings by both capturing their anger and their sense of resentment about being attacked by both radicals and liberals for expressing any disapproval over the encampment.³⁹

The group attempted to express itself through the Community Board. However, they soon came to feel that the political environment had become poisoned by the radicals disrupting the meetings and the failure of the Board to take action because of their fear with being equated with either the reactionary policies of the Reagan years or the increasingly punitive Koch administration. They viewed the Community Board as being under the control of the heads of social service agencies in the neighborhood—many of whom were appointed by Councilwoman Friedlander.⁴⁰

As the conflict continued, their frustration with the existing political leadership of the neighborhood increased. They began a letter writing campaign targeting local officials: "we felt our community leaders were unwilling to address problems in the park, and even more disturbing, unwilling to actively solicit the feelings of people living around the park" (Vincent 1990). The existing liberal leadership of the Community Board was more concerned about maintaining its base of power than risking the inclusion of a potentially disruptive constituency. Peoples' frustration with this situation caused them to look for alternative leadership within the community. They called up people from BASTA who had successfully fought off the 1st St. shelter, and had consistently spoken in favor of addressing the disorders associated with homelessness immediately rather than waiting

³⁹ Interview with Steve Vincent, March 12, 1999.

⁴⁰ Interview with Steve Vincent, March 12, 1999.

for long term solutions.

The TSPNC soon reached out to other groups who shared their frustration. They created a new alliance that brought some of the experience of BASTA into the TSPNC. The first major act of this new group was a community meeting concerning the park held in June of 1990 to discuss creating a curfew for the park. This meeting brought out over 300 people including several people who were active in defending the encampment. Despite the heated exchanges between the two sides, members of the TSPNC were pleased that they had brought out so many people, indicating that there appeared to be a shift in the balance of local opinion about the park.

In response to this shift, the Mayor ordered that Tompkins Square Park be completely closed for renovations. This was the tactic that had been used in midtown Manhattan as part of the revitalization of Bryant Park, which had been a refuge from Times Square for drug dealers and users. In a statement that mirrored those of the conservatives, Deputy Mayor Bill Lynch said:

We tried a number of things and then the realization came to us that we weren't going to get people out of the park, so we had to remove them from the park. Where the debate has to be is over the quality of the facilities that we provide for the homeless and not whether they can sleep in parks or on streets or in vacant lots. This is not an acceptable policy for the homeless or for the people who have to use the parks and streets (NYT 10/28/91).

The administration claimed that it had made significant headway in improving the availability of services for the homeless and that as a result, public encampments would no longer be tolerated. This was largely a response to the increasing demands by communities to restore the "quality of life" to their neighborhoods. For the first time in a decade, it appeared that the city might be getting the upper hand on both the problems of homelessness and public order.

This action, however, came too late to prevent the consolidation of a more conservative political force in the neighborhood. In the spring of 1991, the TSPNC along with Puerto Rican/Hispanic Political Council formed the Democratic Action Club (DAC) with the purpose of running mutual member Antonio Pagan for the City Council that fall. Pagan got his political start as a member of the 3rd St. Block Assoc. and BASTA. He was then one of the BASTA leaders brought in to be co-chair of the TSPNC. He was also the head of the Lower East Side Coalition for Housing Development, which utilized public and private grants to build subsidized housing in the neighborhood.

Three major constituencies backed Pagan. The first were the traditional Democratic party supporters associated with BASTA, WARPETH, and TSPNC who were looking for someone who would act on their desire to see order restored to the park and liberal political leaders displaced. The second were Puerto Ricans. Pagan who is Puerto Rican, had close ties to the mostly Puerto Rican tenants of the Baruch Houses public housing complex on the neighborhood's eastern edge. This included a close relationship with the head of the tenant association Roberto Napoleon who was a product of 1960's and 70's anti-poverty programs. Napoleon was viewed as a political opportunist by some in the neighborhood for delivering Puerto Rican votes for candidates of the Silver machine in return for increased funding for his social services organizations. In the mid-1980's in fact, the City removed him from control of one of these agencies because of corruption (*Shadow* 8/91). The final constituency was local restaurateurs, landlords, developers, builders, and contractors hoping to expand gentrification in the neighborhood. The bulk of his campaign contributions came from this latter group with whom he had worked as a housing developer.

Pagan attempted to portray himself as the candidate of both the poor and the entrepreneurial. Working-class Puerto Ricans, as well as the middle classes, were sick of having their neighborhood held hostage by radicals with the tacit support of the liberal political establishment under the leadership of Miriam Friedlander. Because of his

support from developers, landlords, and local business people. Pagan was viewed by many as a supporter of gentrification. The main theme of his campaign, however, was the need to address the problems in Tompkins Square Park on behalf of residents who felt they could no longer use the park:

The most central issue [in the campaign] seems to be the contentious problem of how to deal with the encampment of homeless people in Tompkins Square park. While Friedlander has remained sensitive to the civil liberties of the homeless there, and is sympathetic to their assertion that they have nowhere else to go, Pagan applauds the City's recent sealing of the park (*Villager 6/27/91*).

A Pagan supporter adds, "The park was totally taken over by anarchists. The people deserve to have passable streets and parks which can be used for parklike purposes" (*Villager 6/27/91*). A Friedlander supporter responds, "[Pagan] is on the side of gentrifiers and unsympathetic to the needs of the homeless. He's been redbaiting Miriam, saying that she hasn't done anything about the homeless situation in the park, but he hasn't offered any reasonable solutions" (*Villager 6/27/91*).

Pagan was adept at sidestepping the gentrification accusations and instead arguing that conditions in the neighborhood needed to be improved for everyone. His backing in the housing projects--based on ethnicity--gave credence to his claims that his interests weren't crassly economic. Pagan was able to take advantage of the fact that local progressives felt forced to defend the homeless encampments for their symbolic value as a protest against Mayors Koch and Dinkins. It was a symbolic effort because the local power structure didn't have the economic resources or political power to implement any policies that would manifestly improve the underlying problems of a lack of affordable housing, drug treatment, mental health services, or low wage employment. The shortfall of this strategy is that it left residents with a sense of powerlessness in the face of the declining "quality of life."

Pagan, on the other hand, by defining the problem as one of public order, was putting it into a realm that can be addressed on a parochial level. Unlike the provision of housing and social services, policing is done at a very local level and is subject to local control to a higher degree. When the struggle over homelessness was being waged at a local level, those who define the problem in a way that can be addressed at that local level have an advantage over those who can only wage it at a general, rhetorical one. Much of the transformation to punitiveness in political outlook is a move from the abstract and universal to the concrete and particular.

In October Pagan won the Democratic primary by 121 votes, insuring a victory in the general election that November. Pagan's success came from his ability to combine the support of locally powerful economic interests and traditionally liberal, now neoconservative neighborhood activists through the articulation of a plan for immediate local action to restore order. This winning combination would prove equally successful for Giuliani two years later.

Grand Central

An area where the rise in visible homelessness had a major effect on public perceptions and public policy was Grand Central Terminal (GCT) a major subway and commuter rail transportation hub. Throughout the 1980's there were large numbers of homeless people living in and around the station (Stringer 1998, Bolnick 2000). They were creating problems for commuters trying to use the station and Midtown business interests trying to maintain property values and encourage shopping and tourism. The Metro North Railroad (MN) that oversees the station made numerous halfhearted attempts to keep homeless people from congregating there with only minor success. By the winter of 1985 the city's homeless problem had become so large that MN president Peter Stangle—citing humanitarian reasons—ordered the terminal open to them on an

emergency basis leading to up to 350 people sleeping there each night (NYT 2/11/85). This created a lot of ambivalence among both MTA administrators and the public. According to MTA spokesperson Susan Gilbert, "It does tend to turn Grand Central into a homeless shelter, and we don't want to do that. The homeless people should be taken to a shelter. The terminal is not the place that they should be helped and treated" (NYT 2/11/85).

By the early 1990's the MTA was enforcing a new set of rules designed to drive homeless people out of the station and a local Business Improvement District (BID) was using strong arm tactics to help keep the terminal and surrounding neighborhood free of congregations of homeless people. This new approach was motivated by the growing displeasure of local businesses and large commercial property owners over the declining conditions in and around the terminal. In addition to pressuring the Transit Authority to take more aggressive action, they taxed themselves \$5 million a year to provide security and outreach services to reclaim public spaces from the homeless. Together, the MTA and business interests provided a model of how new aggressive efforts could successfully reduce the impact of homelessness in a specific local area in the short term without having to rely on comprehensive solutions to the homeless problem.

The city's Human Resources Administration (HRA) responded to the problems in Grand Central by offering direct transportation to shelters three nights a week and the Coalition for the Homeless (CFH) brought free food, medical care, legal assistance and cleaning supplies to people living there. The Coalition also pointed out that many people were afraid of the shelter system and called on the mayor to make 1,000 beds available in city hospitals as an alternative. However, Mayor Koch refused to do this and on February 11th he announced that because of increased crime in the station that it would no longer be left open overnight sending people either into shelters or out into the night (NYT 2/12/85).

Efforts to keep the terminal free of homeless people were not successful, however,

and by the next summer large numbers of people were again inhabiting the station and surrounding areas prompting local business leaders to discuss methods of clearing the station. In July, real estate developer Peter Malkin announced the formation of the Grand Central Partnership (GCP), an informal business group that became an official Business Improvement District (BID) in 1988.

In the wake of the late 70's fiscal crisis New York State granted the City the right to charter local BID's in 1981. They gave the BID's the right to tax local property owners to raise funds that could be spent to provide services beyond those offered by the City. This included hiring security guards, providing extra sanitation services, and making physical improvements in sidewalks and street lighting. The first job of the GCP was to improvement the conditions in and around Grand Central Terminal.

The GCP worked with the Transit Authority and Metro North Police to reduce the number of people living in the station. In 1989, Metro North developed rules for the terminal that were designed to provide new tools for the police to drive homeless people out. The new rules banned washing clothes in restrooms, changing clothes in restrooms, giving away food, lying on floors, platforms, stairs or landings, occupying more than one seat and creating unreasonable noise (NYT 9/17/89). This approach was similar to the efforts by the Transit Police to eliminate the disorderly presence of homeless people on the subways. The effort, however, was unsuccessful and by the winter of 1990 an estimated 2,000 people were living in the Terminal and surrounding streets (NYT 11/15/90).

It was at this point that the GCP became actively involved. Governor Cuomo and Mayor Dinkins signed a contract with the GCP to provide social services including a drop-in center and referrals to shelters and other homeless emergency services. As part of this program, the GCP began paying homeless people a stipend of \$50 a week to perform outreach to other homeless people in and around the terminal. At the same time, the Transit Authority spent millions of dollars on physical changes to make access to

underground hiding places more difficult and created a MN Police Homeless Outreach Unit designed to root the homeless out of underground tunnels and other out of the way locations. By 1992 the program was dubbed a success for removing large number of people from the terminal, even though the police acknowledged that social services had "provided help for only a fraction of the people who once lived beneath Grand Central" (NYT 3/17/92). The combination of physical barriers, intensified zero tolerance policing, and intensive outreach was very successful in improving conditions within the terminal.

The GCP eagerly took credit for the improvement and began to expand its homeless services and broader order-maintenance efforts. In 1992, its general counsel, Andrew Mansel, drafted a new local ordinance designed to limit the presence of sidewalk vendors. The measure was approved by the City Council and Mayor Dinkins in 1993 (Duneier 1999). In 1993 the GCP began contracting out its outreach services to banks trying to keep their ATM vestibules free of homeless people. At this point they had a \$500,000 contract to provide security in the ATM vestibules of several major banks and were receiving \$500,000 in grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Several residential neighborhoods near the terminal also began to approach them for help in removing homeless encampments.

In July they were hired by the New York Community Trust to provide outreach services around the East River Esplanade and several other locations in the Midtown area. The outreach consisted of teams of formerly homeless individuals who tried to get currently homeless people to come to the GCP drop-in center. This effort was successful in moving people out of targeted areas--mostly by driving them to other nearby locations. One of these locations was the public park and plaza across from Tudor City, a residential enclave on First Avenue and East 42nd Street that will be discussed in the next section.

This effort continued for six months until the Trust was unable to raise additional funds. As the money ran out the GCP approached individual communities and solicited funds to continue outreach. Short-term contracts were signed by some communities, but

frustration about the cost of services and allegations of brutality by outreach workers brought this practice to an end. At the same time, the city began to develop more comprehensive approaches to dealing with homeless encampments that proved more effective and longer lasting than the GCP methods.

The GCP efforts were now scaled back to the area immediately surrounding the terminal. By early 1994, however, evidence mounted that some of these outreach teams were using physical intimidation and brutality as part of their work (*New York Observer* 1/17/94, 11/21/94). In addition, several employees filed suit against the GCP for failing to pay minimum wages (*New York Observer* 11/21/94). In July 1995, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development sustained the charges of brutality and canceled all federal funding of GCP social services (NYT 7/6/95). In 1998 the federal courts ruled that the GCP had failed to abide by labor laws and ordered that back wages be paid to homeless workers. As a result, many services were scaled back and the GCP lost its stature as a shining example of business led solutions to homelessness and public disorder.

The GCP has since brought in outside evaluators to revamp their homeless program and restore its image. Mayor Giuliani, however, has abandoned his blanket support for BID's. He has forced the head of the GCP, who also managed two other major Midtown BID's, to abandon his multiple roles and the \$300,000 in salaries they produced. However, the GCP continues to support order-maintenance efforts and still considers George Kelling and James Q. Wilson to be the guiding intellectual sources for their work (Duneier 1999).

The growth of the GCP indicates that there was a significant crisis in the ability of city government to maintain order and provide basic social services. The homelessness crisis in Grand Central Terminal and the surrounding area forced residential and business groups to develop independently controlled and financed innovations to restore order. This desire was so powerful that many people were willing to look the other way--at least

initially--from the illegal tactics being used to make it happen. Business leaders and residential groups were focused on getting results, which the city was unable or willing to provide. The result was gross violations of the rights of homeless people on the one hand, and a political shift away from support for government-led therapeutic strategies to restore order. The following section will show how this process played out in more detail in the residential area of Tudor City, just blocks from Grand Central Terminal.

Tudor City

Tudor City was built as a planned community in the 1920's and early 1930's with its own restaurants, shops, a bowling alley, and park. It was intended to accommodate middle-class workers in the emerging Midtown business district, allowing them to walk to work and to have access to the cultural amenities of Manhattan. It was designed to be an aesthetic refuge from the surrounding city and was constructed in uniform Tudor style. The development takes up most of four city blocks, and breaks the grid street pattern with a series of dead ends and retaining walls. At the time that it was built, the properties to the east were largely slaughter houses and coal storage yards. To create the sense of a serene enclave, the eastward facing sections were built atop a twenty foot retaining wall, and eastward facing windows were kept to a minimum (an unfortunate fact, in that they would now face the United Nations).

Tudor City is a mostly white middle-class area with a population of roughly 3,000. The cost of apartments has been kept down by rent stabilization and the small size of the apartments. Local residents have a tradition of community activism, including a well-organized tenants group that was capable of substantial mobilizations to protect local interests. When real estate developer Harry Helmsley attempted to construct office towers in their park residents tore down construction fencing and sat down in front of bulldozers until a court injunction was obtained. They were also adept at working with local

politicians and community groups to resist development in the surrounding area and protect services.

In the 1990's these concerns about parks and aesthetic preservation were transformed into an anti-homeless, pro-police agenda involving the eviction of homeless people from public spaces adjacent to the neighborhood. This example, like that of the East village, highlights the way in which a culturally tolerant and politically liberal community with a high level of concern about the quality of public spaces was quickly drawn into a punitive approach towards the homeless.

In the early 90's around 20 homeless people began regularly camping in a small sidewalk park along one of the east facing walls of Tudor City. Their small encampment began to be a source of garbage and human waste and residents began to express concerns about their presence in the area. From 1993 to 1996 the residents' association, The Tudor City Association (TCA), developed a number of strategies to try and dislodge the campers. The progression of different strategies demonstrates the failings of the liberal approach to social problems and how many progressives have come to support "quality of life" policies.

In early 1993, the TCA had just changed leadership and the group took the homeless encampments on as a major issue. Residents expressed concerns that the presence of homeless people made them unwilling to travel in that area because of fear of crime. They accused the homeless people of being drug dealers and complained that they urinated near their buildings and created a trash problem. Eventually sanitation at the site became a major issue as rats were noticed in adjoining basements and human excrement was regularly seen in the area. The TCA president continually cited this issue. He noted that exterminators had to be brought in to try and get rid of the rats, which remained an on going concern a year after the removal of the camp. He and others were also deeply concerned about the presence of human waste. In addition to the obvious health concerns, the sanitation problems represented a strong visual sign of the breakdown of basic

standards of civility and marked the park as off limits to residents.

Fear of crime was also an oft-repeated concern, with residents attributing a recent increase in crime to the presence of the encampment. Local police officials agreed to regularly check on activities in the park. They conducted regular walk-throughs and surveillance. Despite this, they never observed criminal behavior there and told residents that they did not feel it was a source of crime.

Residents decided to learn more about the availability of services to homeless people in the region. After investigating city and non-profit services, one member said that the TCA felt that there was no shortage of services available including emergency shelter, food, benefits advocacy and various treatment services. They decided that homeless people needed to be told about these services and that the city should play a role in encouraging them to accept them.

It was decided to call a meeting with the Department of Homeless Services and explore options. Residents brought with them lawyers to give the impression that legal action would be taken if the city didn't cooperate. However, rather than forcing the city to take on the whole burden, residents decided, as a show of good faith, to enlist the services of outreach workers from the Grand Central Partnership. They were hired with TCA money to encourage people in the camp to voluntarily accept services and leave the area. According to TCA president Harry Laughlin: "Until the City can get its act together, and can provide housing and jobs for everyone, the GCP outreach program is an answer to this problem in our area." (*Our Town* 3/10/94). As in the East Village, residents of Tudor City were no longer willing to wait for possible long-term solutions—even when they supported these in principle. Instead they were demanding immediate action. And in this case they were willing to pay for this action themselves rather than wait for a City bureaucracy that was slow to answer their demands.

Responding to reports from homeless people of brutality by GCP outreach workers, the NY Coalition for the Homeless and its volunteer offshoot Streetwatch challenged the

efforts of the GCP near Tudor City. Together these groups succeeded in preventing the use of violence by GCP outreach workers. As a result, the GCP was unsuccessful in removing any of the people living in the park. The GCP, for their part, characterized the campers as "hard-core service resistant" people who were more interested in doing drugs than improving their situation. After a meeting at which the GCP gave its side of the story and local campers organized by the Coalition for the Homeless gave theirs, the GCP contract with the TCA was canceled.

With the failure of the GCP effort, residents pressured the city to use its outreach workers to try and get people to voluntarily leave the park. Association members understood that just using the police was no real solution: "The police do come in and move them out but they just go to another park in the area and then come back."⁴¹ They hoped to solve the problem by getting people into services that would change their situation and get them permanently off the streets. After several months of outreach, however, the encampment remained. As a result, residents called additional meetings with the city to discuss other strategies. An agreement was reached in which the Parks Department would conduct daily cleanings of the park, forcing people to move their belongings each day. In addition, city outreach workers would continue to try and entice people into services. It was hoped that this combined carrot and stick approach would get people to leave the park by entering services that would help them. After several weeks of this, however, people refused either to accept services or leave the park voluntarily. The city would not sustain the commitment of resources and the daily clean-ups stopped.

Finally, residents had had enough. They were no longer willing to use long term strategies to solve their problem. They wanted people removed from their parks immediately and permanently. By 1993, residents had adopted a tougher strategy of regular police sweeps:

⁴¹ Interview with Harry Laughlin, October 19, 1995.

These people severely disrupt the quality of life of everyone living near these camps. We paid for outreach prior to police sweeps to show our good intentions. Now, it's like the tough love approach at many of the treatment centers. We have to start enforcing the laws against camping. Sooner or later people will realize they need help. It doesn't help them to leave them wallowing in these conditions; dying of exposure.⁴²

Another frustrated resident with a history of progressive neighborhood and labor activism said about the homeless campers:

They're terrible. The city has got to get on them. They make a mess; they urinate everywhere. These people don't want to work, they're bums. You can offer them jobs and they won't take them. You can't do anything with them. We can't have them living around here. People pay big rents to live around here. They rob you; they're dirty and filthy.⁴³

The frustration had become too great. Residents were no longer willing to defer their desire for control over these public spaces.

Residents had attempted to utilize liberal strategies to solve the concerns that many progressive neighborhoods are confronted with. These methods failed to solve their problem and they moved to an enforcement-oriented approach. The police came in to clear the park and an existing curfew and ban on structures (tents and shanties) was enforced. By late 1995 no one was living there at night and few were present during the day.

During this period a new long-term strategy was also agreed to. City Councilman Andrew Eristoff agreed to use part of his annual capital appropriations budget to make significant renovations of the park. This allowed the park to be fenced off during construction. When construction was finished, the improved facilities encouraged more use of the park by local residents making it a less attractive place for homeless people to spend their time. Additional park supervision by the Police and Parks Department

⁴² Interview with Tudor City resident October 29, 1995.

workers was also used to enforce park rules and insure that people weren't allowed to establish new camps.

East New York

The issues in East New York are quite different those in the other examples. East New York is not located in Manhattan. It is a low-income black and Latino neighborhood in Brooklyn, far from the centers of power. While homelessness was a cause of concern there, both the effect of homelessness and the nature of local concern took very different shapes. None of the homeless people sleeping near Tudor City came from Tudor City. Instead they came from neighborhoods like East New York: areas that had provided housing of last resort for many individuals and families. In East New York homeless people were viewed more ambiguously, either sympathetically as former neighbors, friends, and relatives or as a threat to the already besieged neighborhood stability. This conflicted sensibility prevented community residents from expressing hostility directly at homeless people. As we saw in Chapter 4, serious crime was a more potent concern. Instead community ire was more generally directed at the city and neighborhood politicians as a result of their perceived mishandling of the problem and their mistreatment of the community in the process. Many residents felt that local politicians built up the non-profit social service agencies that were their base of political support rather than directly addressing the community's problems.

What was similar in East New York was the role of urban liberalism both within the community and in its relationship to citywide politics. East New York was closely tied to

⁴³ Interview with Ella Kurt, October 29, 1995.

liberal political leaders, especially David Dinkins. Political power in the community was also tied to the social service providers that were some of the neighborhood's largest employers and a handful of local real estate developers whose development plans were generally tied to government housing and social programs. Power therefore flowed towards officials with strong ties to citywide officials who supported the social services provided by neighborhood non-profits. As a result, as in the Lower East Side, neighborhood dissatisfaction at how the homelessness problem was being dealt with was often expressed towards these local politicians. Unlike the Lower East Side, no significant political opposition emerged to challenge or replace this Urban Liberal establishment from a "quality of life" orientation. Instead local leaders used the lack of independent political actors and the success of "quality of life" policing in reducing crime in the neighborhood as a cover for developing closer ties to the powerful Giuliani administration.

Many residents of East New York were sympathetic to the plight of homeless people and the need to address the underlying housing and employment problems that were contributing to the crisis. After the white flight of the 1960's and 70's, the decline in low skill employment citywide, and the residue of the 1970's fiscal crisis, East New York was in crisis. As described in Chapter 4, the area had suffered a dramatic reduction in its housing stock. The economic restructuring of the 1970's and 80's discussed in Chapter 3 had an especially profound effect on the neighborhood resulting in high unemployment and poverty levels.

In the wake of these changes, the city added to the problem through a series of budget

cuts resulting from the 1970's fiscal crisis. These cuts continued through the 1980's and into the 90's. *The New York Times* described the effects of the fiscal crisis on the neighborhood in an article in the mid 80's:

East New York...was poor before the city's fiscal crisis, and poor it remains. But in basic ways the cutbacks have made a deep impression on the neighborhood's appearance, the texture of its political life and, perhaps most palpable of all, the expectations of many of its residents.

They are changes of neglect rather than abuse, the kind of changes that come by letting parks sit unrepaired, ignoring broken street lamps, letting potential landmarks go to seed, losing programs that once provided jobs, watching buildings that once housed families remain condemned and boarded over, seeing a dream of new housing and new schools dissipate into resignation and, at times, despair (NYT 7/4/85).

Community Activist Mel Grizer in testimony before the City Council described the effect of the budget cuts of the 70's and 80's in class terms:

When the community organizations and residents organize for a decent *quality of life*, they are undermined because the city government ignores the needs of its working and poor constituents (*The Link* 9-10/88).

Budget cuts were undermining the social stability of the neighborhood resulting in both declining physical conditions and diminished political capacity.

One specific and cruelly ironic aspect of the neighborhood's crisis was its housing shortage. The neighborhood had a large number of low-income people unable to afford housing surrounded by empty buildings, that the city left abandoned and deteriorating. In response to this a large "squatters" movement emerged in the early and mid 1980's. By 1985 the city alone had taken possession of over 6,000 vacant buildings (2,500 of them in East New York) that were left unrenovated (NYT 8/2/85). Squatters, organized by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), began illegally

moving into these building and rehabilitating them with their own resources. The city's response was to have the squatters evicted and arrested. Many local residents began to question why the city was warehousing empty buildings while there was a growing homeless population.

It was precisely this analysis that caused many people to question the emergency shelter approach put forward by the Koch administration and Gov. Cuomo. An editorial from the politically leftist United Community Center summarizes the position held by many residents about the contradictions in government policies that favored business oriented programs over housing and employment:

Gov. Mario Cuomo's recent speeches call for the construction of temporary shelters for the homeless and tax incentives for business. Unfortunately neither proposal solves the major problems facing New York. The Governor promises "compassion for the poor" but compassion is not a substitute for adequate housing and decent jobs.

Temporary shelters are not a solution to homelessness. New Yorkers need hundreds of thousands of new homes. Not only are there thousands of homeless families, living in shelters and welfare hotels, but there are over 50,000 illegal double ups in New York City public housing alone.

If New York is committed to improving living conditions for its citizens, the state government should be raising money for a massive construction campaign to build more public housing. Instead, the Governor and State Legislature are cutting tax rates for businesses (*The Link* 2/87).

In fact the most substantial state program to help the neighborhood was a State Economic Zone, a type of urban enterprise zone that provided tax breaks to business that located within an industrial zone within the neighborhood. Unfortunately this effort failed to produce many high paying jobs for local residents.

Between 1983 and 1988 the city and state combined had created only 2,400 units of

new housing despite the growing homelessness and housing crisis (*The Link* 3/88). This lack of action on housing and jobs led to antagonism when the city began to locate numerous homeless shelters in the neighborhood, often without community input. By 1988 East New York had the highest concentration of homeless shelters in the city.

Most people in the community viewed the homeless problem as a housing problem, and were therefore skeptical about emergency shelters as a solution. They also objected to the negative effects shelters had on surrounding areas. One community activist summed up the consequences of concentrated homeless shelters in a poor community:

I'm talking about homeless people with serious substance abuse and psychiatric problems dumped without supportive services. They are merely housed, without thought to teaching them how to live in an apartment again. They're non-productive drains on the economic system and are now destroying the quality of life in this community (NYT 7/16/89)

In 1984 a new family shelter was opened by the Koch administration on Forbell Ave. There were no hearings or discussions held with the community before the opening of the shelter because it was placed there on an emergency basis. For local residents this was viewed as an additional burden on an area already suffering from numerous social problems. According to community activist Anthony Mammina, who lived near the shelter, there were many problems at the time. Relatives of people in the shelter would congregate and even sleep in cars in the area. Trash, noise, and car break-ins became a constant problem and the city was slow to respond. Finally after 12 weeks of picketing by local residents, new streetlights were put in, streets and sidewalks were fixed and a greater effort was made to monitor shelter residents and their friends and families. In the opinion of Mammina and others, however, the city's Human Resources Administration

regularly lied to and misled residents and reneged on agreements.⁴⁴

This is an example of resistance to homeless shelters based on localized "quality of life" concerns similar to those seen in the Lower East Side. The difference is that the residents who were frustrated by their interaction with the city continued to support liberal politicians. Mr. Mammina and many of the people he worked with in the area supported David Dinkins in both 1989 and 1993. It was only well into Rudolph Giuliani's second term that Mammina and some others began to express support for the mayor who championed their "quality of life" concerns. The reason for this slow transformation was tied to the fact that there was a broader understanding of the economic roots of homelessness in East New York.

This more resistant attitude can be seen in opposition to shelters in 1988. During this period, many community activists and neighborhood groups clearly tied their opposition to shelters to broader economic concerns not just local and immediate "quality of life" concerns as this article from *The Link* indicates:

Despite the fact that the central section of East New York will soon have the largest concentration of homeless shelters in New York City, Mayor Koch and local real estate interests seem determined to cram even more homeless and poor people into the neighborhood.

Concentrating the homeless in East New York hurts both the homeless and the community. These shelters are not homes. They get the poor and the sick off the streets of Manhattan, but they do not change and improve people's lives. Hotel and shelter residents end up isolated from friends and families, hospitals, parks or playgrounds. Meanwhile, the already strained resources of the East New York community are further stretched.

East New York needs a plan for redevelopment and rebuilding. New York City's homeless need homes not shelters. The city cannot be permitted to abandon both East New York and the homeless to a future without hope (11-12/88).

⁴⁴ Interview with Anthony Mammina. February. 12. 2001.

In this statement there is no mention of crime, dirt, disorder, or any of the other common "quality of life" related concerns so consistently expressed in middle class parts of the city.

In February of 1988, the local Community Board, controlled by the Borough President and local City Council member Priscilla Wooten, approved another shelter for the neighborhood. This gave the neighborhood 4 major shelters, housing 1,500 people and 2 smaller shelters (The Link 3/88). This raised questions about why so many facilities were being located in East New York, and what role citywide and neighborhood politicians were playing.

At the citywide level a number of poor communities were questioning the policies governing the location of homeless shelters around the city. Neighborhoods like Harlem, the South Bronx, and East New York felt they were bearing the bulk of the burden. During the late 1980's, however, it was hard to determine exactly what the distribution of facilities was. The city refused to produce maps or comprehensive citywide lists of facilities. Instead they would provide neighborhood level data for any neighborhood that raised concerns about locating new facilities in their area. The result of this lack of oversight caused many residents to accuse the city of outright discrimination. According to a community activist in Harlem, "People perceive [the homeless policy] as a plan on the part of the city to make our lives so miserable that we will flee and the city will be able to take our buildings" (NYT 7/16/89). The city responded by denying any intentional discrimination and instead pointing to various factors that made locating the facilities in these areas expedient. According the head of the City Planning Commission, "The city

has no deliberate policy of concentration, and the city worries a great deal about it. I believe if there is some concentration, it derives from using opportunities as you find them and putting facilities where the need is" (NYT 7/16/89).

Many homeless advocates and community activists criticized exactly this prioritizing of expediency over developing an overarching plan. In the words of the head of a South Bronx non-profit housing developer, "We fell the thrust of being targeted for these populations. It is my firm belief that if we had a vision for the entire city and we could really put that in place, then if there is a crisis with AIDS or homeless (sic.), we wouldn't have to overreact" (NYT 7/16/89). The irony is that while the city routinely refused community input under the guise of leaving it to the experts to deal with complex land use situations, the experts were not actually engaging in much systematic thinking about the problem. Many neighborhood Community Boards asked the city to involve them in developing an overall emergency shelter plan, but the city refused and instead often bypassed community land use procedures in the name of expedience.

In response to this a coalition of community groups put forward a "Fair Share" plan to be included in the City Charter. The plan would "require the planning commission to devise rules to assure that neighborhoods receive their fair share of city projects, both desired ones like playgrounds and libraries and unwanted ones like jails and drug-rehabilitation centers" (NYT 10/20/89). In November of 1989 the charter revisions—including the Fair Share plan--were passed by local referendum. This is an indication of the extent to which local neighborhoods felt alienated by the centralized and bureaucratic planning procedures used by the city.

Some East New York activists also felt frustrated with neighborhood politicians. The

most central neighborhood politician dealing with homelessness during this period was City Council member Priscilla Wooten. Several neighborhood leaders indicated that Wooten was a product of the white political club in Canarsie that exerted a great deal of political influence in the district going back to when the area was mostly white. In this case the white Democratic Party regulars supported Wooten's limited social services orientation because it prevented demands for more radical changes in the distribution of government resources.

Wooten, like Friedlander, in the Lower East Side, was also tied politically to the local non-profit social service providers in the neighborhood. As such she supported plans from the city government if it involved increased spending on social services in the neighborhood. Often these services and the jobs they created were seen as beneficial to the community. Other times, however, residents viewed these programs as ineffective, or even detrimental to the community. As such, her allegiances towards the urban liberal establishment of white democrats and social service providers created a conflict between the interests of the political establishment and some local residents.

One example of this conflict concerns the placement of shelters. One community activist argued that Wooten played a central role in pushing shelter approvals through the Community Board in return for political favors from citywide politicians.⁴⁵ In addition local politicians benefited from the siting of shelters and other programs through patronage systems. Non-profits, unlike city agencies, are not subjected to civil service rules. People can be hired and fired on the basis of political connections and allegiance. One clear example of this involved the East New York Urban Youth Corps. The Youth Corps. was involved in a number of housing development and management efforts. The

executive director was very popular in the community and highly regarded by city officials and other non-profit executives. In an effort to improve efficiency at the agency he had exercised increased oversight over construction contracting. As a result he refused to allow a contractor who had performed poorly on past jobs to bid on a large new initiative. It turned out that the contractor was the head of the local political machine and within days the executive director was fired at his desk without explanation. Several community activists pointed to this incident as an example of the intertwining of politics and patronage in the neighborhood.

The result of this dynamic of patronage and intimidation was that political opposition was slow to develop. Most community leaders develop their skills coming up through the non-profits, which are one of the few professional political training grounds for local residents. At these non-profits, however, skill is not the most rewarded characteristic. According to a community organizer who had worked at the Youth Corps. and other local non-profits, political leaders "see talent as a threat. They don't deal with issues. They are more concerned with maintaining their personal power."⁴⁵ In the words of another long time community activist, "local politicians are more concerned about who speaks first at an event than the issues. They are mostly concerned with getting jobs for their cronies. The worst example is the local schools where corruption is rampant."⁴⁶ Since these political leaders received better treatment under Dinkins than they had under Koch, it is no surprise that they remained loyal to Dinkins despite community pressure about the deteriorating crime and social services situation.

Some community activists explain this lack of independent political action as being

⁴⁵ Interview with Mel Grizer, February 26, 2001.

⁴⁶ Interview with Eze Van Buckley, February 26, 2001.

the result of neighborhood social disorganization on several levels. Historically East New York did not have the kind of community-focused institutions that areas like Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant had. During the civil rights movement, East New York was in transition racially and few grassroots organizations developed that were accountable to the local African American community. One non-profit executive described the situation in the following way:

There are no membership driven community-based organizations, except perhaps the middle class churches. In the 60's and 70's there were a few groups that knocked on doors and distributed newspapers, but there's none of that now. Without that there are no checks or balances in place. This allows situations like the one at the East New York Urban Youth Corp. and produces CBO's that are less than demonstrably productive.⁴⁸

The other problem was that in the following decades, funding for non-profits and community organizations was focused on the provision of direct services such as housing and child care and left little room for systematic community organizing. As the same person went on to add, "If there is no funding for community mobilization, then it won't get done. I'm working as hard as I can to do the minimum to fulfill the demands of funders."⁴⁹

The final problem was that as a poor minority community, residents were firmly allied with liberal minority politicians. It is hard to imagine a circumstance in which a liberal African American mayor would not receive deep support. It is therefore no surprise that in 1989 and 1993, Dinkins won the neighborhood with over 90% of the vote. This loyalty on the basis of race and historic support for minority and poor communities,

⁴⁷ Interview with Mel Grizer. February 26, 2001.

⁴⁸ Interview with Zachary Brown February 20, 2001.

⁴⁹ Interview with Zachary Brown February 20, 2001.

made it very difficult for residents to mobilize for an alternative. Giuliani on the right held little appeal for voters in the area, and there was no opposition from the left available. At the neighborhood level, local activists such as Mel Grizer, complained that whenever an opposition emerged it was based on personal popularity or skill and not a political program that differed from those of existing politicians.

At the citywide level, David Dinkins represented the most progressive politics that could find broad electoral or financial support. Candidates who called for dramatic changes in the housing and employment markets or in the structure of local taxation and spending were unable to get on the political map. Urban liberalism had a lock on progressive politics in part because of its connection to minority communities. As long as politics in those communities was based on support for a patronage suffused social services system and not grass roots mobilizations, there was little possibility of a politics of systematic change to emerge.

Even though East New York residents never supported the broad "quality of life" agenda or Giuliani, they played an important part in the maintenance of the new paradigm. The ability of the "quality of life" approach to policing to associate itself with dramatic crime reductions, along with growing dissatisfaction with urban liberalism, muted criticism of the new paradigm. A community that could have been expected to be a continual thorn in the side of Giuliani was, for the most part, politically quiet through the bulk of his first term. In fact there was so little community mobilization against the mayor that most of the neighborhood's politicians actually endorsed Giuliani in 1997 in his race against a stalwart of urban liberalism Ruth Messinger. Messinger was the Manhattan Borough President and was closely identified with defending many of the core

elements of the urban liberal approach including support for increased funding for welfare and education. She was socially tolerant, preferred rehabilitation to punitive approaches to crime, and surrounded herself with a number of well-known experts on a range of policy subjects. Her message of rolling back the new "quality of life" approach fell on deaf ears and she was badly defeated in the election.

From the perspective of East New York, Giuliani's hold on power had become so strong, and support for Messinger was so weak that neighborhood politicians felt it was better to try and ingratiate themselves with someone who was clearly going to win reelection, than to stand with neighborhood opposition which was passive, poorly articulated, and ambivalent about the standard-bearer of their cause. As a result, Giuliani was able to further strengthen the "quality of life" paradigm in his second term. He continued to cut back welfare in favor of workfare. He promoted more punitive measures towards homeless people while adding fewer units of new housing to the city than any mayor since the Great Depression. Finally, he promoted the police as the front line of the battle to restore civility to the city. As I will discuss in Chapter 6, it was this last part of his program that eventually undermined his personal political power and the "quality of life" paradigm.

In each of the examples above, the City's pursuit of its urban liberal agenda failed to improve conditions for homeless people or for the neighborhoods affected by homelessness. In the case of the East Village and Tudor City, historically liberal neighborhoods became the epicenters for the new punitiveness. In the case of the Grand Central area, elite business interests mobilized their own resources to reduce the effects

of homelessness. Tudor City and the Grand Central Partnership, shared the tactic of taking independent action as a way of pressuring city government to do increase its efforts. In East New York support for urban liberalism was muted and opposition to "quality of life" was demobilized by both the reductions in crime and the tension between opposition to Giuliani and the lack of a clear alternative to the discredited methods of urban liberalism. Overall a new pattern was developed in which communities demanded immediate local solutions to a complex national problem.

San Francisco

As was shown in Chapter 2, San Francisco, like New York, was experiencing a citywide homeless problem by the mid 1980's. Its central commercial spaces and neighborhoods were confronted by a massive increase in disorder on the heels of the social and economic disruptions of the 1970's. This section will look at how the escalation of homelessness affected the San Francisco Haight Ashbury neighborhood and the central Civic Center area and how the city and various constituencies responded. In the end, the pattern was very much the same as it was in New York as urban liberalism gave way to punitiveness first in individual neighborhoods and then citywide.

Dianne Feinstein was the first San Francisco mayor to have to deal with the new problem of homelessness. She became mayor after George Moscone was assassinated in office in 1978. While Moscone had been a progressive who championed neighborhood slow-growth measures and social tolerance, Feinstein was politically more centrist and pro-development. While a centrist, Feinstein was still a believer in activist government. She played an important stabilizing role after the assassination of Moscone, allowing people to focus on new initiatives, and making a more activist government possible

(DeLeon 1992). She also received substantial support from the politically significant gay and lesbian community, based on her commitment to social tolerance.

Feinstein favored a treatment orientation towards social problems. Prior to the emergence of the homeless problem, she appointed a "blue ribbon panel" to discuss ways of reducing the impact of "street inebriates" in the central business district. This panel made up of business leaders, mayoral staff members, and a prominent black religious leader, called for "expansion of the city's alcohol treatment centers and more efforts to divert inebriates from jails to long term recovery facilities" (SFC 8/20/81). This indicates that the basic orientation of the Mayor and civic leaders was towards treatment and away from criminalization. With her support for government activism and social tolerance, Feinstein had a clear urban liberal orientation. Like Koch in New York, though, there were limits to her social tolerance, and rehabilitative orientation, and these limits would be tested by the homeless crisis to come.

Feinstein's initial response to homelessness was largely one of emergency management. In the early 1980's, social service providers approached the Mayor, telling her that demands on existing "skid row" services were increasing dramatically, causing her to reach out to churches to help take up the slack with some limited government financial support. The thinking during the Feinstein administration was that the growing homeless problem was the result of a short-term economic downturn. Yet during the mid 80's demand for homeless services doubled almost once a year. In 1983 alone, demand for shelter beds rose from 400 to 1200 a night (SFC 3/26/83).

The mayor responded to the increase by developing a voucher program to put homeless people in low-cost SRO hotel rooms. Large amounts of city money were used to place people in cheap hotels without services rather than on long-term efforts at creating affordable housing. At the same time, Feinstein was coming under increasing pressure to improve conditions in the central city where homeless people were congregating. In 1984 the police—at the urging of business leaders and City Hall--

conducted several operations to drive off “loiterers” from the Union Square and Powell Street retail areas (SFC 9/5/84). These efforts were sporadic, however, and lacked a broad base of support. The editorial board of the *Chronicle* offered the following note of caution:

There is no doubt that the Hallidie Plaza-lower Powell Street area needs a bit of beneficial policing. But this is a public plaza and a public street. Colorful characters have every bit as much right to hang out on them as gentlemen in three piece suits (SFC 9/6/84).

Referring to homeless people as “colorful characters” indicates that the public mood still favored at least a degree of social tolerance—something that would change drastically over the next decade.

By 1986, what had been a problem confined to the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods began to emerge as a city-wide problem. Increasing numbers of homeless people were appearing in the Mission, Haight Ashbury, and Castro districts as the city wide estimate of homeless people reached 5,000 (SFC 4/7/86). The Mayor’s response was an outreach effort by police and social workers to try and get homeless people to go to existing services. However, even this more aggressive program to respond to community complaints was done with an eye towards protecting civil liberties and offering treatment. According to the Department of Social Services, “The police will not intervene with anyone unless they are ‘totally gone through alcohol or are a danger to themselves or others’” (SFC 7/10/86).

Haight Ashbury

It wasn’t until Art Agnos succeeded Feinstein as mayor in 1988 that a fully developed strategy for addressing homelessness emerged. Shortly after taking office, Agnos was

confronted by residents in the Haight Ashbury neighborhood complaining about people living either in Golden Gate Park or in their cars in the general vicinity. Agnos' response was to forestall eviction of these people until such time that he could develop a more comprehensive plan for alleviating both the conditions that bothered residents and the circumstances that made these people homeless. Agnos' homeless coordinator, Steve Leplant, said that the city needed time to develop a plan so that people wouldn't be simply moved from one part of the city to another (SFC 1/14/88). Then Chief of Police Frank Jordan was concerned about the homeless, "moving from the park to the Great Highway to the Marina Green. That would just be displacement, creating a problem for someone else (SFC 1/15/88.)"

During the next month many local residents, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, campaigned against the Mayor's tolerant stance. They continued to express their displeasure with conditions they associated with having people living in and around the park. Leplant reported that in December and January complaints from residents had "increased dramatically." The major complaints were "aggressive panhandling, feces and urine, garbage and trash, lost parking places and mothers with children who are afraid to use their park (SFC 1/25/88)." On February 2nd, the *Chronicle* ran an article entitled "Transients Flocking to the Haight: Neighbors and Merchants Upset" to highlight the results of Agnos' "tolerant" approach. Agnos' response was that a real alternative was needed, "moving transients out of the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood without another place to put them achieves nothing (SFC 2/8/88)."

Agnos continued to allow people to live in their cars and instructed police to try and distinguish between those who were acting criminally and those who were simply homeless. This left many neighborhood residents angry with the mayor and the police department. Some residents who were unhappy about the homeless problem put part of the blame on the police for failing to treat the disorder associated with homeless people as a serious police matter. Instead, the police viewed it as a low priority matter. There

was no effort by the police department at this time to try and drive large numbers of homeless people out of the area. Periodic sweeps were performed but the police department viewed these as stopgap measures designed to respond to the most vocal of community demands and not as a realistic strategy for dealing with the overall problem of homelessness.

It was during this period that a new neighborhood association--the Cole Valley Improvement Association (CVIA)--was formed. This new group consisted primarily of homeowners who had moved to the Haight in the 70's and 80's in part because of its diversity and tolerant attitudes. However, the growing numbers of homeless people, which expanded dramatically during the no enforcement period, caused many people to reach a breaking point. Alan Merbaum, head of the Association, was quoted as saying, "I've been aggressively panhandled and verbally abused. I'm a liberal-minded person, but I have a family and a job and own a house. Is that against the law?" (SFC 5/29/88). Another member of the group stated how the problem had politicized her,

I was totally unpolitical before [the homeless problem]. I became active because nothing was being done. You can't have mentally ill people pulling down their pants in the middle of the street. You come up against people who feel its their right to live on the street and act in this way. I think we should have toilets and be exemplary in the services we provide *but they should behave appropriately*(emphaisis added).

Another leader of the group told a story of how she had lost her basically liberal outlook:

I moved to the Haight because I wanted to live in a diverse urban neighborhood. I was a lot more liberal than I am now. I let a guy live under my stoop. When I discovered this guy living there, I let him stay for awhile. But then I was afraid of opening the garage door with him around so I started taking my dog with me for protection. I was afraid but I still felt sympathetic because it was cold and raining outside. But eventually I found needles and trash in my bushes and my friends pressured me to call the police. So I told him he had to go. Now I take a broom and drive people off of my stoop and tell them not to come back. I feel like I've

been taken advantage of. *This neighborhood made me less liberal* (emphasis added).

Dirt and fear of strangers without homes or jobs pushed people's liberal tolerance to the breaking point. This resulted in new organizations demanding immediate and, if necessary, punitive action from the city.

By July, after failing to find an alternate site for the car campers, Agnos decided to begin enforcing existing laws against sleeping in car to the applause of local residents. The *Chronicle* also expressed its approval in an editorial stating, "Mayor Agnos has at last reacted properly to correct an intolerable situation that is affecting the health and well being of an entire neighborhood (SFC 7/20/88)." Even with the enforcement of the anti-car camping rules, the police still didn't believe that their actions constituted a solution to homelessness.

Residents, however, came increasingly to view the police as the agency of last resort in trying to deal with their complaints concerning homelessness. Within city government, the Police Department was the most decentralized and accessible to direct community interaction. Each District Station held monthly community meetings and captains attend all kinds of meetings throughout their district. In addition, other agencies were either being scaled back during this period or were very centralized and not accustomed to direct community input. The Health Department and Department of Social Services held monthly commission meetings, but these were centrally located, away from individual neighborhoods and were focused primarily on bureaucratic issues and not on addressing specific local social problems.

The Mayor had succeeded in alienating a number of politically active residents and in mobilizing against him others who had either been supporters or politically uninvolved. These new groupings were frustrated with the centralized orientation of city government, and the ineffectiveness of social services and the police, and had rejected social tolerance

in favor of social order. As a result, these new constituencies brought pressure to bear on the Police Department, local social service providers, and municipal agencies to be more aggressive towards homeless people. But it was the Police Department that was most vulnerable to their demands and in the end the most responsive.

Civic Center

In June of 1989 a new crisis emerged for Agnos. A group of homeless people had been camping in the Civic Center Plaza across the street from his office in City Hall for several months and public pressure concerning the same conditions as seen in the Haight was mounting. As before, the mayor resisted pressure to remove the encampments until a master plan for dealing with homelessness was developed. In the mean time, a program of cleanups and social worker outreach was implemented. Given Agnos' social work background, he firmly believed that the problem of homelessness could be handled by bringing people in off the streets, and addressing their individual problems and needs. Until that could be done, the mayor was loath to whitewash over the problem with police sweeps and other punitive measures. "I know that as a former social worker, personally, [Agnos] has found it difficult not to be able to provide all the services he'd like to provide. But given the city's financial situation, it just can't be done. -Mayoral Aid Scott Shafer (SFC 7/16/89)."

During this period the City and County of San Francisco had significant budget shortfalls causing a small reduction in social services spending. This occurred in the context of much greater cuts in federal spending. While the Federal McKinney Act provided some new money for shelters and other emergency services for homeless people, overall federal spending on housing and other social services declined dramatically up to and during this period. Agnos' desire was to be able to create a large new social services system for homeless people and while some emergency money was

present for shelters and social workers, the funds for construction of housing or the creation of new jobs was not.

Unlike the Golden Gate Park area, there is no residential area directly adjacent to Civic Center Plaza. It is instead the center of a collection of local and state government buildings: a showplace for the city. As a result, city-wide business and political groups took the lead in criticizing conditions in the park and the mayor's program. The *Chronicle* ran an editorial stating:

Merchants in the area, tourists, convention goers at Civic Auditorium and patrons of the Symphony and ballet have all complained about panhandling, frightful insanitation and occasional violence that are surely destroying an historic San Francisco square. The Agnos Administration is moving too hesitantly in its attempts to clean up the plaza. Anyone looking out the window can see that a more dynamic effort must be made to return this area to the general public (SFC 6/19/89).

Richard Hongisto, moderate member of the Board of Supervisors, expressed the anger that many people felt with the Mayor's long term orientation towards this problem: "Everyone wants to talk about *ancient history*, federal history, Republicans...and nobody wants to talk about *people 15 feet away*. I don't want to hear about what happened a decade ago. I want to know what you're going to do tomorrow" (SFC 7/19/89, emphasis added).

The police continued to have ambivalent feelings about their role in addressing the problem of homelessness. In 1989 the head of the Police Officers Association, Mike Keys said that while the encampment bothered him he understood the mayor's position and only wanted him to be consistent in what he asked police to do. Officers didn't want to be criticized by advocates and the homeless for the low level enforcement authorized by the mayor (SFC 7/15/89). Police Chief Frank Jordan had a similar view. In addition he sympathized with Agnos' general analysis of the situation, "Homelessness is the result of social problems and generally not a matter for the criminal justice system. Everyone has

the freedom of independence. We can't force a person to leave an area unless he is committing a crime" (SFC 10/15/89).

In late July the Mayor's staff had completed its master plan entitled *Beyond Shelter* (City and County of San Francisco 1989) which called for the development of two multi-service centers to shelter and assess about 500 people each night. They would also be the conduit to a variety of social services including mental health and substance abuse counseling, affordable housing and job training. The document also set concrete goals for the development of additional services and more affordable housing.

Just prior to the release of the plan, the Mayor had the plaza cleared by police. While the plan was praised by the papers and many residents, advocates pointed out that shelters were already turning people away and that few new services were in fact available. In fact, even after the multi-service centers were opened, the city had to implement a daily lottery system. This system turned away hundreds of people a day in addition to those who were unable to spend much of the day going through the lottery process. Under pressure from a variety of political constituencies, the Mayor had chosen to clear the park before the new plan could be implemented. As a result, homeless campers soon returned to both Civic Center Plaza and Golden Gate Park. Without services actually in place there was little the Mayor felt he could do and so the sweep of Civic Center was only temporary. The Mayor once again allowed people to sleep outside without fear of police harassment.

The Plaza continued to be a major congregation point for homeless people. Frustration with the city's handling of the problem was evident in a constant barrage of letters to the editor, editorials and op-ed columns. Most attacked Agnos for failing to act decisively. His efforts to shield the homeless while the problem was given expert consideration were especially chastised, "I want my so called civic leaders to get the homeless off the streets, out of the doorways and out of the parks. They can raise my taxes if that's what it takes. Only let them stop talking about the problem and grapple

with it . before San Francisco becomes unlivable” (SFC 1/21/90). “I am sick of politicians afraid to act. who do nothing but talk. discuss. send to committee. kowtow to one special-interest group then another. who can’t give up running for the next office instead of dealing with the problems at hand” (SFC 2/18/90).

Agnos’ response was another “plan” to end sleeping on the streets. He once again held out the idea that he could solve the homeless problem if there was simply better planning: “We can end sleeping on the street as a commonplace occurrence as we see it today, and we can do that this year” (SFC 3/8/90). Coalition on Homelessness director Paul Boden pointed out that this was creating an unrealizable expectation that could cause a backlash: “People based on what he’s saying now to the media and corporate folks, are going to expect people off the streets” (SFC 3/9/90).

Reaction on the right did in fact move in this direction. Neoconservative Supervisor Bill Maher called for the immediate removal of homeless people from city parks and criticized the mayor’s actions as being too permissive: “The real issue is: Are you going to establish some social expectations and enforce them? Street people are not going to conform their behavior unless we insist” (SFC 4/16/90). He also reiterated the theme of communal rights: “Children can’t go to the playground in Golden Gate Park anymore. There are needles and broken bottles in the sandbox...We’ve basically taken the park away from 99 percent of society”(SFC 4/16/90). Finally, he rejected the idea that complex government plans involving a variety of services would work. “The supervisor is tired of waiting for social programs with questionable financing and even less certain start-up dates... those programs ultimately may be worthy, but he said that in the meantime ‘we are totally ignoring the detrimental impact that it (homelessness) is having on everyone else’”(SFC 4/16/90).

Some downtown business interests and local merchants also spoke out against the Mayor’s long term planning. The city’s Convention and Visitors Bureau commissioned a survey that showed that 23% of tourists polled listed street people as the thing they

disliked most about the city, up from 5% in 1983. The general manager of the San Francisco Hilton said. "It's not that the city needs new laws... We just need to enforce the ones that already are on the books. But every time the police try to enforce the laws they're told "hands off" by the mayor's office. I think that is why it has gotten so bad in the past two years" (SFC 5/18/90).

In early July, Agnos, responding from intense pressure by both conservatives and liberals (*San Francisco Weekly* 5/8/91), ordered that the two multi-service centers proposed in *Beyond Shelter* be opened--even though they were not completed--and that Civic Center Plaza be cleared of homeless people. This created a backlash among homeless advocates who claimed the mayor was criminalizing the homeless for political purposes. The mayor responded with an opinion piece in the *Chronicle* that defended his approach of addressing root causes, connecting homeless people with health and social services, rejection of anti-homeless laws, and the implementation of the multi-service centers (SFC 7/21/90).

Opinion polls conducted in June (*San Francisco Examiner* and KRON TV) and September (SFC) of 1990, showed that homelessness was ranked as the number one concern of local residents, establishing it as a major campaign issue. The mayor's primary rival was former police chief Frank Jordan, setting up a contest between the social worker and the police officer and their corresponding approaches to homelessness.

During the campaign, Agnos continued to outline a program of social services and long term planning while Jordan focused on more punitive and short term approaches. He reasserted that homelessness was a local problem and that the history of the federal government's role was irrelevant as either ancient history or unchangeable. Therefore, it was incumbent on the city to reestablish social order before the homeless crisis destroyed the city by eroding the "quality of life" for local residents and destroying the all-important business climate and tourist trade. Jordan advocated an increase in policing of homeless people, the creation of new anti-homeless laws against panhandling, a

refocusing of social services towards outreach to remove people from the streets-- including mandatory detox and mental health services, and greater involvement by businesses, charities and local communities (SFC 9/1/91). Later in the campaign, he even suggested that a work farm be created at the San Bruno jail to house homeless people who refused other services. Before details about how voluntary this would be were released, the plan was dropped.

Matrix and the New Punitiveness

Frank Jordan was elected mayor in 1991 by a slim margin. His first major initiative was to create a new law making "aggressive panhandling" illegal. Rather than try to push the law through a hostile Board of Supervisors, he took it directly to voters in the form of a local ballot initiative (Proposition J). After a long battle against a poorly funded "Vote No" campaign run by the ACLU and the Coalition on Homelessness the measure passed by a vote of 55% to 45%.

This was a kind of political leadership in which Jordan circumvented the established urban liberal political establishment in favor of encouraging the ongoing mobilization of conservative neighborhood activists. He was able to encourage this mobilization both by generating new policies and analysis and by obtaining significant financing for these measures from downtown businesses who were also interested in reducing the public presence of homelessness and shifting municipal policy from social services to policing as way of justifying reductions in municipal taxes and spending.

The police had this new tool as well as a number of other nuisance laws with which to begin more systematic harassment of visible homeless people. After some small-scale sweeps, in August of 1993, the Police Department implemented the Matrix program. "Matrix" originally referred to an effort to do more "problem-oriented" policing (Goldstein, 1990). Each month two or three district stations were given extra officers to

deploy as needed. Each station captain would make a determination of how best to utilize these officers. During the summer of 1993 the station captain for the Central district was receiving numerous complaints from local merchants and hoteliers in the Union Square area about panhandling, people sleeping in doorways, public urination and other problems associated with homelessness. Over the next year thousands of citations were issued in an effort to clear these public spaces by force.

While Matrix was somewhat successful in pushing people out of these central areas, it did not appear to reduce the overall numbers of homeless people. Turn-away figures at shelters remained constant or increased and the overall demand for services indicated a steady to increasing number of homeless people. The main result was that people were forced into other parts of the city. One of the main areas of refuge was the Haight Ashbury and Golden Gate Park-areas that already had a significant homeless population.

In the Fall of 1993 Jordan had another measure put on the ballot (Proposition M) that would outlaw the blocking of public sidewalks. This would be an additional tool for the police. Unlike Prop. J this measure failed, though only by a 49%-51% difference. Like Proposition J, however, residents of the Haight voted for this measure in greater numbers than they had for Jordan. While the Haight had supported Agnos in 1989 (75%), their support had eroded from 1985 (85%). Propositions J (39%) and M (32%) both did much better than Jordan had in 1989 (25%) suggesting that there was a general shift towards the right during this period and that these specific quality of life initiatives were more popular than Jordan himself. A similar pattern of voting behavior existed in the Mission district which also has a progressive voting history, but was heavily affected by increasing levels of homelessness and related public disorders in the 1980's. While a majority of people in these neighborhoods never became supporters of Jordan, the growing numbers that did were an important "neo-conservative" swing constituency needed to form a coalition with traditionally conservative parts of the city.

As the number of homeless people increased (especially along Haight Street), activity

by local residents in favor of the “get tough” approach increased. This quote from the CVIA newsletter is indicative of these groups’ view on how to reduce the impact of homelessness on the neighborhood.

When a group of people sits drinking on the sidewalk heckling passersby; when raggedy teens line the street asking for spare change until it feels more like running a gauntlet than walking to the grocery store; when men urinate in public with no compunction; it causes one to ask: What are my rights? What is public civility? *What are the baseline standards of decorum and mutual respect that make communities work?*

The homeless advocates tell us that, until there are enough free services for everyone who needs them, we have no moral right to ask that people not use the street as a toilet or city parks as campgrounds. A recent appellate court ruling strengthened this case.

But what if people won’t use shelter beds even when they are reserved for them? So maybe we don’t have to wait for more shelters before we say *no*. It’s taken a long time for someone to make the first move and Mayor Jordan has done it. When police started citing sleeping on the street, a lot more single-occupancy rooms were found (*CVIA News* 2/94, emphasis added).

Within this one article we have all three of the elements of the new paradigm: 1) a rejection of long term state planning in the form of a range of free social programs, 2) a rejection of a social services model of rehabilitation in favor of a punitive model of policing, and 3) a rejection of the civil rights of individual homeless people as upheld by the courts, in favor of the rights of communities to establish their own norms of acceptable behavior and enforce them at the expense of the minority who do not conform.

Mayor Jordan was able to offer symbolic support to these groups by making public statements that mirrored these views. He had difficulty, however, in actually implementing Urban Neo-conservative policies to a degree that brought about noticeable improvements in public spaces. According to one homeless advocate, “There is nothing there because Jordan didn’t start with anything. They [the Jordan administration] only

care about how this plays in public...and it all falls apart when it hits the implementation stage" (SFC 10/6/93).

As a result, many groups continue to organize independently of the city and Mayor Jordan. In the Haight Ashbury, angry residents formed Residents Against Drugdees (RAD) as a way of attempting to take back their streets from disorderly behavior in a Guardian Angels style. Residents went out on patrol in large groups in areas where both drug dealers and homeless people were known to congregate. Members of the group drew a clear connection between the liberal social attitudes of the 60's and 70's and the disorder problems they were experiencing in the 90's. According to one RAD member the problem of drugs had worsened after the 1967 Summer of Love:

We who live here are afraid what will happen is the same as the early 70's when the Haight was just closed down by the drug dealers...I think the Haight has invited this problem because we have been a live-and-let-live, very tolerant neighborhood and the drug dealers are taking advantage of that (SFI 9/24/93).

Jordan was a strong supporter of this group—attending their events and even holding a press conference at one of their target sites. However, he was unable to offer them more than this symbolic support. Members complained that they could not get the Police Department to work with them on targeting these areas for sustained enforcement (S.F. 23). Problems with the Police Department will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, but it was clear that the Department, even when enforcing Matrix, was not having a lasting effect on conditions in public spaces, outside of the Union Square area.

Jordan also had a hard time getting his Department of Social Services and the non-profit agencies it has contracts with to provide the services his plan called for. When the Mayor announced plans to use social workers and police together on outreach, many social workers spoke out against the plan and some refused to participate. Others worked

closely with advocates in organizing a publicity campaign against the proposal. A statement to the City and County Board of Supervisors from the broad based Service Providers Network in October of 1993 captures the sentiment of many social workers and agencies towards the Mayor's approach:

Most of us in the network have been and are frontline workers, and know how difficult it is to access resources needed to get oneself off the streets. Most of us work in programs that have been around for over 10 years. Many of us have been discouraged about speaking up in regards to policy decisions that affect our ability to provide effective and humane services to the poor and homeless in the city for fear of jeopardizing our funding. But never in my ten years of being a social worker in the city have I seen *resources so minimal for so many*, and never have I seen a program as punitive and ridiculous as Matrix (*Street Sheet* 12/93, emphasis added).

This attitude made it difficult for Mayor Jordan to orient services towards short-term improvements in public conditions by using punitive methods to force people off the streets and out of town.

During the fall mayoral campaign, Jordan faced off against Willie Brown and Roberta Achtenberg on the issue of homelessness and the Matrix program--again judged by residents to be the number one political issue (SFC 10/30/95). Jordan continued to support Matrix and claim that it was the key to restoring order to the streets and reducing the impact of homelessness on the city. He also called for restoring order through the rejection of permissive attitudes towards the homeless that he claims characterized the Agnos era.

For Jordan the struggle over how to address homelessness was an *ideological* issue. He was trying to make a political point about the cause of the city's problems and the nature of the solution. If he could successfully convince people that public disorder was the key source of economic and social disorganization then a punitive approach to policing would be the logical next step. By focusing on police enforcement, the goal was no longer to end homelessness, but to improving the city's "quality of life." The

alternative was continued social permissiveness and increased social spending with the concomitant threat of higher taxes. "Quality of life" became the shibboleth for an urban neoconservative agenda of reducing social services spending by turning social problems into policing problems.

This approach, which had been so successful four years earlier was creating significant problems for the Mayor. Once homeless advocates focused in on the ideological implications of Matrix, the debate began to shift away from the negative effect of homelessness on communities towards the failure of Matrix to actually reduce homelessness. The Mayor turned Matrix into an ideological issue, and he was losing that battle. His two main opponents for reelection both came out squarely against Matrix on this basis. Candidate Achtenberg claimed that,

"Matrix is a superficial, facile, politics-based solution. What San Francisco wants and needs is a comprehensive, efficient approach such as stepped-up production of affordable housing. To criminalize the homeless is the wrong way to go" (SFC 8/17/95).

Willie Brown also tried to focus his campaign away from the issue of homelessness and instead focus on broader economic development strategies—a return to the "global city" strategy. While Brown spoke out against Matrix, he did so in a way to suggest that Matrix was flawed because of its ideological qualities and not its practical procedures. In fact, Brown made it clear that he would continue to enforce the laws and that he did not intend to allow the kind of lax policing policies and climate of permissiveness that were blamed for the creation of encampments in Civic Center Plaza under Mayor Agnos. "You need a dose of both strict compliance with the law and a proper approach to the eradication of poverty," he said. "I want to make sure that Frank Jordan and his crowd cannot suggest that I am trying to re-create Camp Agnos (SFC 10/11/95)." The difference was his refusal to rhetorically scapegoat homeless people as the source of the city's woes.

This approach turned out to be very popular with voters who brought Brown into

office by a significant margin. He set out to implement "global city" strategies including financing public works improvement in the downtown area. On the homelessness front, he immediately disbanded the Matrix program and set about organizing a major conference to develop a plan to solve the homeless problem. These initiatives appeared to head San Francisco in a new direction. The pressures and constraints on local urban officials in the US in the 1990's made the implementation of these initiatives untenable, however. Without directly addressing the economic and social implication of a the "global city" strategy, there was little Mayor Brown, or any other mayor could do.

The first sign of this breakdown was the cancellation of the homeless summit. After several months of exploratory meetings with homeless advocates, service providers, academics, community groups and business interests, the mayor decided that a conference that would result in a broadly acceptable plan was impossible. The next sign of trouble was on the policing front. Despite Brown's dismantling of Matrix, advocates found that the police were continuing most of the same practices without the name. In fact, citations for nuisance crimes actually went up during his first two years in office. Brown said that while it was inappropriate to create a rhetoric of scapegoating the homeless, it was necessary to continue to enforce nuisance laws in order to reduce the impact of homelessness on communities and businesses. In 1996, Brown responded to complaints from children's advocates by creating a special force to patrol public parks and playgrounds. "Operation Park" did not have the stated objective of rousting homeless people, but it had the same effect.

Support for increased services also remained low. Evidence of this came in the form of two measures to try and rein in the power of non-profit social service providers. The first was a resolution by progressive Supervisor Tom Amiano calling for non-profits to hold yearly public hearings on their operations similar to those of a commission or Board meeting. Amiano was motivated by a lack of public accountability among service providers, especially those serving the HIV/AIDS population. The second was

Proposition I, which went before the voters in 1998. Prop. I, proposed by conservative Supervisor Leland Yee required additional public notification periods before city-funded programs could be located in communities. This measure received significant support from CVIA and other conservative neighborhood associations around the city and was passed by voters. The success of these measures and the diversity of their proponents indicates that the traditional liberal base for non-profit service providers has been seriously eroded both at City Hall and in the neighborhoods.

The Brown administration, despite its often-liberal rhetoric, faced the same political and economic conditions as Agnos and Jordan, and as a result, has pursued most of the same policies. In the absence of massive increases in federal spending on housing and social services or an increase in local taxes, there was little Brown could do to alleviate the immediate impact of homelessness. Therefore, he was forced to use most of the same measures developed by Jordan. After two years of constant harassment of homeless people around Golden Gate Park, the number of encampments remained high. The city claimed that it quickly removed any encampment it discovered in the park, but in November of 1997, Brown was badly embarrassed when he stated this on television, only to have live cameras point out a variety of encampments in the park. The mayor's response was a major mobilization of police and park personnel to clear the park, along with a ratcheting up of anti-homeless rhetoric. The mayor went so far as to instruct the police to obtain heat-sensing helicopters to locate and root out well hidden-camps and individuals in the park. In September of 1998 he initiated his own Matrix-style sweep of Haight Street at the request of members of RAD and local merchants. The Brown administration now openly touts the need for order-maintenance and has been sending top officials, including their homeless coordinator, to New York City to study their methods of disorder control. And unlike Jordan, Brown was better able to mobilize municipal resources behind his approach. According to one political insider:

Brown implemented the same policies as Jordan, but didn't make a political point out of it. He lowered the expectations of the public for action. Brown was also a better administrator than Jordan and was feared more by department heads because of his broader political power. As a result he was able to pursue policies more aggressively.⁵⁰

Rather than returning to the failed "quality of life" paradigm, Brown tried to take homelessness off the public agenda. And to a large extent he succeeded. Advocates repeatedly noted that after the summit collapse, homelessness was no longer a topic of discussion by the mayor, and that news media coverage of the issue was almost non-existent. Brown had abandoned both "quality of life" and urban liberalism as an organizing social policy paradigm. One of the reasons for this was that he lacked a coherent explanatory framework of the causes of and solutions to homelessness. This left him vulnerable to criticism from the left and the right.

From the right, Frank Jordan attempted a comeback. He was able to garner support from some of the neighborhood activists and local elites who had supported him in the past. He attempted to recapture the "quality of life" vote that had propelled him into office three years before. However, many groups that had supported him in the past no longer accepted the basic legitimacy of this approach and he fared poorly in the election.

Brown was challenged from the left by Board of Supervisors President Tom Ammiano. Ammiano called for a more radical approach to the homeless problem that moved beyond urban liberalism and its calls for expanded social programs (Ammiano 1999). Instead he argued for direct government intervention in housing markets. While previous mayors—especially Agnos—had made efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, this was done on a small scale and usually involved converting

⁵⁰ Interview with Randy Shaw. June 26, 1998

existing privately controlled units into non-profit operated supportive housing. Ammiano called for government to increase the actual supply of units through new construction. He also pledged direct intervention into housing markets by forcing private landlords to keep vacant units on the market rather than warehousing them, in hopes of securing higher lease rates in the future. This would be done through incentives, and when necessary, the use of eminent domain to bring properties into full use. The city could declare that it needed the properties for more important public purposes and buy out the owners and use them to provide housing.

Ammiano also called for increases in the availability of treatment services. Previous mayors have also advocated this, but have been hampered by the limitations of the existing tax structure. Ammiano put forward a strategy for overcoming this dilemma by calling for radical changes in the tax code that would seek out new sources of revenue from major downtown corporations and high-end wage earners. These "tax the rich" initiatives had the backing of local labor unions and many community groups, and could have raised millions of new dollars.

In addition, Ammiano had a different approach for handling the immediate local effect of homelessness on local neighborhoods. Rather than relying on either short-term punitive tactics or long-term changes that required people to accept the problems around them in hopes of future improvement, he called for the city and neighborhoods to work together on non-punitive forms of disorder abatement. In his home neighborhood and political base of the Castro, Ammiano supported an initiative by local residents, homeless advocates, and area non-profits to take immediate non-punitive steps to restore order. Residents and merchants were polled about their specific concerns. Advocates and

service providers—including some from the city—developed methods to address these specific concerns. One example of a problem was that homeless people in the area were scaring off customers from stores because of their dirty appearance and smell. In response, a plan was developed to make a local high school locker room available for showers after school and on weekends. In addition to addressing people's concerns it both improved the quality of life of homeless people and put them into regular contact with social workers who could try and coax them into treatment services, when available.

Despite these challenges, Brown was able to win reelection. What is interesting is not that Brown won, but that Ammiano posed a serious threat while advocating policies far outside of the mainstream of urban politics. Ammiano joined the race at the last moment as a write-in candidate without a campaign war chest. Brown had raised millions of dollars allowing him to buy large amounts of television time, which Ammiano could not afford. Brown had also received advance endorsements from many progressive constituencies that might have supported Ammiano if he had entered the race sooner, including unions and gay and lesbian organizations. Ammiano did so well, because San Francisco had a large constituency of leftists who wanted the city to end its support of entrepreneurial development strategies and redistribute resources from the rich to the lower and middle-classes.

After winning reelection, Brown continued his basic approach to homelessness, which was low profile harassment, resulting in tens of thousands of citations. In the end, the forces behind the new punitiveness were not only ideological. Brown's liberal rhetoric and his attempt to treat homelessness as a pragmatic problem were not sufficient to bring neighborhood activists and elites into his political fold. The concrete realities of

the declining conditions of the city continued to undermine any attempt at a liberal approach to the problem. Brown was forced to take immediate punitive action to maintain his political support. The goal again shifted from ending homelessness (as Agnos and initially Brown had proclaimed) to ending complaints about the conditions homelessness was creating. To do this, a strategy of removal was the only option despite Brown's election-year appeal to liberal ideals. To remain in power, political leaders must either stop pursuing entrepreneurial development strategies and address the root causes of homelessness, disorder, and crime as Ammiano proposed, or they must engage in an expansion of punitive efforts to treat the symptoms of the economic and social polarization of the city.

Conclusion

The dramatic political transformations that occurred in New York and San Francisco share some important features. In each, urban liberalism was ill equipped to handle the growing homeless problem in a period of economic polarization and government austerity. By pursuing "global cities" economic development strategies, these administrations were both maintaining the level of homelessness and reducing the resources that the city would have available to deal with it. As part of this orientation towards free markets and trickle down economics, both cities tried to explain homelessness in largely cultural terms rather than political economic terms. Both Giuliani and Jordan were able to use the shibboleth of "quality of life" to turn homelessness into a public order issue rather than an issue of failed housing and employment markets. This

dovetailed with the concerns of residents over the declining quality of life and the desire to see immediate action taken.

The shift in paradigms from urban liberalism to "quality of life" was not just the result of a change in mayoral administrations. Its roots were in the economic and political strategies of entrepreneurial governance and social tolerance of the 1970's and 1980's. This historical context left few options available to political leaders. As homelessness increased and its affects on communities engendered *revanchist* political mobilizations, something had to be done to restore order. This was true of the Agnos and Dinkins administrations as well as those of Giuliani and Jordan. Even when Brown attempted to reestablish urban liberalism he was forced back into a punitive posture. Urban liberals were not able to maintain their core principles and remain in office.

The fundamental practices and conceptual explanations of urban liberalism were being undermined by the lived experience of residents in both cities. The efforts of urban liberals to control the social problems associated with homelessness were failing. The creation of shelters, small amounts of permanent housing, and social services were unable to remove disorderly people from public spaces, causing an increased frustration for neighborhood activists and local elites. The visible presence of homeless people was growing, and their impact on the daily life of the city was becoming more disruptive. At the same time, the philosophical basis for these practices was being challenged. The urban liberal model of centralized expertise, social tolerance, and reintegrative social policies didn't seem to have a positive effect on the problem. The claim that the roots of homelessness were an absence of these efforts no longer rang true. More and more groups were unwilling to wait for long term solutions that seemed to be based on a

description of the homeless as economic refugees rather than disorderly menaces, which was how many people experienced them. Increasingly people began to search for alternative practices and explanations that would deal more directly with the reality of their everyday experiencing of homelessness and disorder.

At the local level, dissatisfaction with urban liberalism and its approach to homelessness manifested itself among two important political constituencies. The first was local neighborhood activists, who didn't have a direct stake in local urban liberal political machines that were organized around non-profit social service providers and the local elected officials that funded them. These activists took direct action to try and reestablish public civility through immediate actions both with and without the cooperation of the police or other city agencies. The establishment of neighborhood patrols, the inviting in of the Guardian Angels, and the constant pressure on local police executives were some of the methods used to directly challenge the urban liberal model.

The second constituency was businesses with strong ties to the local economy. These "place-based" elites created business improvement district hired private security guards, opened alternative services, as part of a carrot and stick approach to retake control of public spaces in high profile business areas such as Grand Central Terminal in New York and Union Square in San Francisco. These efforts were in direct conflict with the social services and social tolerance orientations of urban liberalism, and indicated a clear political shift towards a neoconservative agenda. What remained was the need for new neoconservative political leaders who could develop a clear conceptual program that could combine and mobilize these constituencies.

In New York, Mayor Koch attempted to deal with the homeless problem on an emergency basis, using limited state resources to alleviate the worst symptoms of the problem. As the crisis worsened he tried to expand the governmental response but continued to alienate communities by bringing in shelters without their consent and ignoring their recommendations. At the symbolic level, Koch showed only limited compassion for the homeless, employing a series of paternalistic motifs in his efforts to force people into treatment and services. This combination of inadequate services, lack of compassion, and inability to actually improve conditions brought about Mayor Koch's downfall.

Mayor Dinkins attempted to increase the overall availability of services and housing, but was severely hamstrung by the fiscal problems of the early 90's. Symbolically, he treated the homeless with much more sympathy, but once again, in the absence of material improvements in public civility, his symbolic stance was turned against him, just as it had been turned against Mayor Koch. In the end, Dinkins was replaced by someone who was able to capitalize on the growing frustration over the symptoms of governmental failure and build on the growing constituencies that were now committed to improving visible conditions in the short-term without regard for long-term solutions.

Mayor Giuliani didn't believe that the state was capable of solving social problems through coordinated social and economic planning. Instead, he believed that the state's best role was to use coercion to establish a new public civility within which market mechanisms would be able to most effectively reduce social ills. By doing this, Giuliani was able to pursue a short-term strategy of restoring civility without having to invest in costly and time-consuming housing and social services programs. This allowed him to

present his policies as being a clear alternative to those of Dinkins. Mayor Dinkins stood for long-term state intervention in the market, social rehabilitation through social programs, and broad social tolerance. Giuliani stood for market mechanisms of social change, backed by short-term state initiated efforts to restore confidence in public spaces, rejection of therapeutic reform strategies in favor of punitive ones, and a lowering of social tolerance under the banner of communalism.

In San Francisco, Mayor Agnos came to power in much the same way as Dinkins. He represented the fullest expression of urban liberalism. He combined governmental efforts to successfully solve social problems through expert planning and coordinated use of resources, the use of therapeutic strategies to integrate people with social problems back into society, and social tolerance towards those acting outside of the normative order. Like Dinkins, Agnos was also confronted by severe financial constraints in his effort to improve conditions for homeless people and communities effected by homelessness. In the end his approach failed to provide results for either the homeless or the neighborhoods, generating a strong backlash sentiment captured by Frank Jordan.

Mayor Jordan, more than even Mayor Giuliani, turned homelessness into an ideological issue. His repeated calls for getting tough with the homeless, suggested that he had a radically new approach that would be able to bring about some of the immediate improvements that communities were clamoring for. However, unlike Giuliani, Jordan was not able to affect these changes. In part, he was hampered by the same lack of resources that had plagued his predecessor. However, he was also foiled by the inability of two parts of his own government to carry out the new approach: the Police Department

and the Department of Social Services. In Chapter 4, I showed how the Police Department failed to live up to the ideological claims made by Mayor Jordan. The result was that a new mayor was elected who both toned down the ideological attacks against the homeless, thus placating key constituencies, while more effectively mobilizing city agencies to take immediate remedial and punitive actions, creating the new neoconservative approach under the guise of urban liberalism.

In both New York and San Francisco, the shift from urban liberalism to urban neo-conservatism is marked by a change in mayoral administrations. However, the broader change in political philosophy is not caused by this shift in any simplistic fashion. In fact, the elements of this new philosophy were in place in different ways in each city well before Rudolph Giuliani or Frank Jordan was elected mayor. However, their election as mayor did play an important role in institutionalizing the new philosophy. In the case of San Francisco, though, this process outlived its proponent--even with the election of a proclaimed liberal--indicating that the forces that helped bring Urban Neo-conservatism into place were more powerful than the electoral strengths of any one official

In New York's East Village, the turn to urban neo-conservatism occurred not under mayor Giuliani, but under Mayors Koch and Dinkins. The homeless crisis in this neighborhood was more pronounced than in almost any neighborhood and the shortfalls of urban liberalism were most apparent. In this environment, the political philosophy of urban liberalism was challenged and replaced by urban neoconservatism from the level of block associations up to the local City Councilperson. The transformation was so powerful that Mayor Dinkins was forced to respond to it by closing down Tompkins Square Park in 1991--despite the objections of many of his historic supporters in the

neighborhood.

In Midtown, the Grand Central Partnership was a product of the lack of faith by powerful business groups in the ability of the city to solve the major social problem of homelessness in the short-term. They taxed themselves to create a quasi-government that they could control to carry out immediate remediation efforts in their local area. This created a model of local punitive action against the homeless that was successful in evicting the homeless from the public spaces in and around Grand Central Terminal. This model was utilized more broadly by the Giuliani administration to evict encampments, such as the one at Tudor City. In fact, it was only after the city was committed to taking aggressive action against the homeless that the Tudor City encampments were successfully removed.

In East New York, urban liberalism was undermined but never completely displaced. Local residents were frustrated by the negative effects numerous homeless shelters were having on the neighborhood. However, that frustration was directed mainly at neighborhood and city-wide politicians—who made up the urban liberal establishment--and not homeless people themselves. In addition, Giuliani was successful in tying the “quality of life” paradigm to the reduction in crime, bringing him and more directly the police some support in the neighborhood. As a result, political support for urban liberalism became muted allowing a further institutionalization of the new “quality of life” paradigm. The ability of the new paradigm to politically demobilize communities like East New York allowed Giuliani to easily win a second term.

In San Francisco, the crisis in the Haight Ashbury and Civic Center areas did not in itself produce a new political paradigm in those areas. The response concerning these two

areas did articulate the shortfalls of urban liberalism and a set of alternatives that became the new approach as implemented by Mayor Jordan. However, Jordan's homage to the new paradigm was not enough to keep him in power in the face of deteriorating social conditions.

On the other hand, Brown's homage to urban liberalism was not sufficient to prevent him from suffering the same criticisms as Agnos. So, he turned towards the same short-term punitive measures that Jordan had used in an effort to forestall the mobilization of an electoral coalition that could unseat him. He was confronted by the same reality as Mayors Agnos and Jordan had been: a major homeless crisis effecting the quality of life in local neighborhoods, and insufficient funds to address the problem in a comprehensive, long term manner. As a result, he too was forced to pursue the only strategy available to local political leaders under these circumstances: the remediation of the worse symptoms and hope for better days.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The rise of homelessness in the 1980's generated a profound crisis for urban liberalism. Homelessness came to be the symbolic center of a series of social and physical disorders that engendered popular and elite demands for punitive measures designed to restore the "quality of life." Urban liberals were unable to respond to these problems because of their pursuit of the "entrepreneurial city" model of economic development and their commitment to the liberal social policies of centralized expert planning, individualized rehabilitation programs, and social tolerance. This combination of policies made it impossible for urban liberals to reduce homelessness and disorder through either short-term punitive measures or long-term therapeutic means. As a result, many community activists and business leaders began to develop an alternative approach to urban governance that embraced punitive measures in defense of their "quality of life." I will now review in more detail the four basic factors that led to the transition from urban liberalism to "quality of life:" 1) the crisis of urban neighborhoods, 2) the failures of professional policing, 3) the inability of urban liberal social policies to reduce homelessness and disorder, and 4) the rise of neoconservative politicians.

The Crisis of the Neighborhoods

The first factor I discussed was the crisis in urban neighborhoods that laid the groundwork for a broad backlash against liberalism. Rieder (1982) and Sleeper (1990) and Siegel (1996) have all looked at this crisis as well. They provide an explanation of

the crisis based on the politics of race and disorder. They argue that the adoption of the libertarian strains of the New Left by urban liberals led to a moral relativism that allowed disorder to flourish, which quickly escalated into both serious and minor crime that undermined people's sense of security. The result was a fear-driven withdrawal from public spaces by the upper and middle classes and tourists, which led to a decline in the overall economic health of cities.

This explanation fails to take seriously the economic and political context that contributed to the disorder and crime of the 1980's. Urban America was undergoing dramatic economic pressures starting in the 1970's that transformed the position of poor urban residents in housing and employment markets. The dual scourges of declining employment opportunities and inflated housing costs pushed millions into the margins of society. Those with the fewest skills and the most problems ended up homeless.

Government at all levels contributed to this process. The fiscal retrenchment of the 1970's and 80's undermined the ability of cities to address the problems associated with these economic changes. Cut backs in state funding to cities further weakened them. New York and San Francisco further undermined their situation by pursuing the "entrepreneurial city" approach to economic development, which inhibited their ability to raise taxes and enhance social welfare and redistributive programs. As homelessness, crime, and disorder increased throughout the 1980's, urban liberals failed to abandon these failed policies. They did not attempt to address the growing economic polarization by raising taxes and intervening in labor and housing markets, or dramatically increasing the availability of social services. Instead they set about treating the symptoms in a piecemeal fashion.

As discussed in Chapter 3, New York and San Francisco were both suffering from financial difficulties because of tax policies outside of their control. Agnos and Dinkins were both interested in expanding municipal programs for social programs and affordable housing, but were unable to finance these programs without a major new source of funds. Since the entrepreneurial approach prohibited raising taxes, they were left without additional resources. Instead they attempted to coordinate existing services to better serve the homeless population. This often resulted in prioritizing services for those that had the fewest problems, to try and get them back into the mainstream. Many of these efforts were successful in getting the families and working poor that were the invisible homeless into stable living situations.

This strategy, however, left the visible homeless literally out in the cold. This group needed much more intensive efforts to resolve their homelessness. Many suffered from severe mental illness and needed either long term hospitalization or extensive community-based services—starting with supported housing. Others—including many of the mentally ill—needed drug treatment. These services were usually available only after long waits that failed to take into account the multiple problems of homeless people that interfered with their ability to remain on waiting lists for extended periods. New York and San Francisco were unable to provide enough of these more expensive services. In their effort to do the most good with the fewest resources, they helped many people, but they lacked the resources to rebuild and maintain public spaces. The task of restoring these spaces, therefore, was left to the police.

So why didn't the mayors of New York and San Francisco raise local taxes to make up the difference? The reason was that, despite their protests to the contrary, cities were

engaged in the same general neoliberal economic strategy as the federal government. The "entrepreneurial city" strategy relied on the corporate sector for economic growth. The way to encourage this sector was to deregulate it and to provide it with financial incentives in the form of tax breaks and enhanced services such as new publicly financed infrastructure projects. The hope was that the jobs created would generate new economic activity and increased tax revenues. The problem was that much of the wealth created by these incentives never circulated within the city itself. Many of the jobs that were created were either low wage or were offset by losses in more heavily taxed sectors, such as manufacturing. In addition, the bulk of the wealth created by this strategy ended up in the hands of a relatively small number of people who were connected to these cities by work, or corporate ownership, and not residence. Holders of equities in these companies were often under no obligation to pay taxes to these cities either.

As long as this economic approach predominated, there would be little in the way of additional tax revenues for social programs. There would also be little desire to intervene directly in employment and housing markets. In a free market environment, cities are not likely to increase the regulations on these markets. There was no move to expand the overall stock of affordable housing. There were no attempts to extend the reach of rent control. There were no threats made to real estate owners who abandoned or warehoused housing units. In employment, there was no effort to create public works projects or raise the local minimum wage. Without these changes, there was no way to reduce both visible and invisible homelessness.

There were also important negative cultural changes underway in the 1970's and 80's that contributed to the political backlash against urban liberalism. There were elements of

the rise in crime and disorder that had their roots in a cultural response to racial and economic exclusion. When Siegel describes street toughs demanding a tribute in humiliation from middle-class passers by, he is providing stark evidence of this reality.

There is also a great deal of truth in the claim that society's ability to respond to disorder with calls for conformity were undermined by the libertarian ideals of the social movements of the 1960's and 70's. It is disingenuous, however, to discuss that process without pointing out the roots of those impulses in the social repression experienced by women, minorities, gays, and other socially marginal groups, who have benefited in profound—if incomplete—ways from these struggles. Urban liberalism's orientation towards social tolerance represented an important step forward for these groups. Unfortunately, this commitment existed only at the social level and not at the economic level. Social tolerance is no solution to poverty, crime, and homelessness by itself. Without substantial governmental intervention into the economy, social tolerance is a hollow position.

This is not to say that a return to communitarian impulses is completely undesirable. Amitai Etzioni's claim that liberalism's libertarian bent undermined the interconnectedness of individuals that successful communities rely on has some merit. What is needed, however, isn't an authoritarian approach that relies on the police to enforce community standards, as the "broken windows" theory calls for. Instead, communities should be strengthened by having a greater say over the government policies that affect them, and that economic development strategies should include the needs of specific communities not just the needs of corporations. What we need is a democratization of communities not a repression of diversity.

The "quality of life" paradigm spoke to the concerns of local residents. They wanted increased control over government policies in their neighborhoods. This desire for control became stronger as social problems increased in the 1980's. Unfortunately, this impulse for control was often expressed in authoritarian terms at the neighborhood level. "Quality of life" encouraged local control, as long as it was punitive in nature. It did not empower local residents to demand greater control of economic policies or social services.

The Crisis of Professional Policing

George Kelling and Catherine Coles (1996) argued that the failures of the professional model of policing engendered a reform movement within policing. These reformers eventually introduced "broken windows" oriented policing in the 1990's. William Bratton (1998) and Eli Silverman (1999) described the implementation of this new style of policing in New York. Robert Sampson and Stephen Raudenbush (1999), Mitchell Duneier (1999), and Ralph Taylor (2000) have all outlined failures of the theory. Sampson, Raudenbush, and Taylor have all pointed out that crime is more closely tied to poverty and race than disorder, while Duneier has indicated some of the positive aspects of disorder. These writers fail, however, to explain the connection between the political changes going on in New York and San Francisco and the rise of this new style of policing.

I have showed that there was a connection between the ideals of urban liberalism and the professional model of policing. They share a tolerance of minor disorder. Just as urban liberalism attempts to focus on the root causes of social problems, professional policing focuses on more serious crime. The police in New York and San Francisco in the

1970's and 80's tended to view disorder and homelessness as social problems best dealt with by the social services system and not the police department. The work of the police was to reduce major crimes through the use of technology, training, and expertise. This model, however, was unable to adequately respond to either disorder or serious crime. As a result, pressure began to mount from residents and business owners to develop a new model.

On the Lower East Side residents were frustrated that the police were not dealing with people sleeping in parks, low level drug dealers, and street peddlers. In East New York, residents were upset about widespread crime. In both cases the police were unable to address these problems within the professional model. Similarly, residents in the Mission and Haight Ashbury Districts in San Francisco felt that the police were ignoring their calls for increased policing of homelessness related disorder and crime.

There were police officers in each city who wanted to transform professional policing. They were aware of the "broken windows" theory and problem-oriented policing. They attempted to develop new programs based on these theories, such as community policing. These programs failed, however, because the overriding orientation of professional policing made it impossible to fully implement them. San Francisco's community policing program, developed in the Mission District, failed because of a lack of support from the department and many rank and file officers. New York's program also failed because of a lack of institutional commitment, and a feeling on the part of officers that it was not real police work, but instead social work.

As a result of the inability of the professional model to address crime and disorder, residents and business owners developed their own alternatives and continued to pressure

the police. They created block watches, anti-drug campaigns, and business improvement districts--with their own security forces. These efforts became a constant thorn in the side of local police commanders. Community meetings were dominated by calls for more police action to deal with "quality of life" issues. By the end of both the Dinkins and Agnos administrations, new initiatives, targeting homelessness and other "quality of life" problems began to take hold, even though this contradicted urban liberalism's orientation towards non-punitive methods and social tolerance.

With the elections of Frank Jordan and Rudolph Giuliani, these pilot efforts were transformed into citywide policies. Matrix in San Francisco reoriented departmental resources towards flexible deployment of officers at the discretion of local commanders. In those areas with disorder problems, this resulted in zero-tolerance crack-downs on minor crimes and infractions as a way of driving disorderly people out of these areas. In New York, zero-tolerance polices were implemented citywide. Unlike San Francisco, which primarily used these methods to target homeless people, New York applied these methods to high crime areas as well. This created a backlash among minority communities, whose residents resented the criminalization of their everyday lives. In San Francisco, no similar backlash developed because these policing methods were used primarily against a homeless population that lacked the political resources to raise substantial objections.

The Crisis of Urban Liberalism

The "quality of life paradigm" was an ingenious response by neoconservatives to the deteriorating social conditions in New York and San Francisco. Frank Jordan and

Rudolph Giuliani understood that there was great frustration with the basic tenets of urban liberalism in the face of growing crime, homelessness, and disorder. They directly challenged urban liberalism's reliance on centralized, government-led planning and decision-making, inadequate social services, and social tolerance, and were able to articulate an alternative that resonated with many community activists and business leaders.

In each of the neighborhoods I examined, residents expressed their frustration at liberalism's centralizing and expert-driven tendencies that denied input from community actors. They also expressed the belief that social work strategies were incapable of addressing the intensity of the homelessness and disorder problem. They were especially upset at the lack of accountability of municipal and non-profit service providers who often pursued an agenda at odds with those of the community. These service providers were not motivated out of a social permissiveness, but were instead following the funding policies of government and major foundations that rarely saw a useful role for communities to play in solving their own social problems.

This suggests that if urban liberals had pursued neighborhood-oriented, not just neighborhood-based, remediation efforts, which took into account community concerns, that the full extent of the backlash might have been avoided. In numerous cases, neighborhood residents made credible offers of assistance in the early stages of the homeless crisis only to be rebuffed. Tom Ammiano, in San Francisco, also proposed a broad-based effort at neighborhood-oriented remediation efforts, but was unable to win control of the mayor's office, which would have provided him with the resources to carry it out.

The Koch and Dinkins administrations in New York and the Feinstein and Agnos administrations in San Francisco regularly alienated local residents in their handling of the homelessness problem. In New York, the locating of homeless shelters based on centralized planning or no planning was seen as an affront to local neighborhoods, even those that were generally supportive of providing services to homeless people. The Koch administration's reliance on the emergency placement of shelters to bypass community participation in land use decisions created a great deal of bad will that coalesced into an almost universal sentiment of "not in my backyard." Even after that, Community Board 3, in the Lower East Side, was ready to work with the city on the development of a comprehensive shelter and services plan for their community. Instead, the city continued to develop facilities as it saw fit, despite community protest. This led to the creation of BASTA, which became the center of a new political movement that eventually replaced the liberal Miriam Friedlander on the City Council with one of its own members, who fought against the placement of homeless services in the neighborhood, and encouraged the eviction of homeless encampments. East New York residents felt that they were a pawn in a larger political process that used their neighborhood as a dumping ground for the unwanted in return for perks for local politicians. Their status as a low-income minority community both undermined their political weight at City Hall and the political resources they had available to resist this process.

In San Francisco, Mayor Agnos' *Beyond Shelter* plan was initially viewed as a model of progressive government. It called for a series of measures from intake and assessment to the provision of permanent housing. This plan, however, was based on a long-term time frame and did little to address the magnitude of the immediate problem. As a result

people became frustrated by the Mayor's appeals for more time to get the plan to work. People eventually rejected the idea of long-term planning in favor of immediate punitive measures, such as clearing Civic Center Plaza. In the end, *Beyond Shelter* was vilified by both residents and homeless advocates for its failure to take into account either the immediate needs of local neighborhoods or the larger political and economic context, which made its implementation so difficult.

Both Agnos and Dinkins extolled the virtues of social services in dealing with the homelessness problem, as well as crime and disorder more generally. This orientation, however, was flawed in two important ways. First, these cities were unable to finance these services at a sufficient level to actually reduce the problems. Second, the programs that did exist were often unresponsive to the communities in which they were located, increasing community skepticism about the effectiveness of a social services strategy of dealing with the problem. These programs were able to help only a portion of the homeless population and alienated middle-class residents.

In San Francisco's Haight Ashbury, local residents attempted to work with local social service providers to directly address the community's problems. They asked the Free Clinic to target cocaine use, which was prominent in the areas, rather than heroin. The clinic, however, continued to deal primarily with heroin, which was the target of more funding streams. The city's Department of Public Health was not viewed as any more responsive, by either residents or homeless advocates. It was clear that they were financially unable to provide the kind of residential mental health and drug treatment services that would have gotten many of the most disorderly and disruptive homeless people off the streets.

On the Lower East Side, many residents felt that social services were not directly addressing the problems in the community. The city shelters were felt to be poorly run and inaccessible to many of the most troubled and troublesome homeless people. There and in Tudor City, residents felt there was a core group of "service resistant" homeless people who were not being reached by the existing system, and that these were exactly the people who were having the most negative effects on these communities. These "service resistant" people often are suffering from mental illness and substance abuse problems that could be addressed through a safer and more comprehensive social services system. While there have always been a small number of people who have decided to drop out of society, communities and the police have always dealt with them without it transforming the political structure of their cities. In the 1980's, however, the visible presence of homeless people congregating on public sidewalks and parks upset the political balance of many American cities.

In East New York, the Lower East Side, and the Haight Ashbury, the creation of new shelters and social service facilities was generally viewed as a source of additional problems, not a way of addressing existing community needs. There was no linkage between the homeless people located in these neighborhoods and the services being offered. A better linkage could have restored a degree of political order, that might have allowed a more progressive response to homelessness to develop.

For residents in both New York and San Francisco there was a great deal of ambivalence concerning shelters. While there was almost universal agreement that people should have a place to go, there was also a feeling that shelters were not functioning as a part of any kind of long-term solution. In New York, state law mandated the creation of a

vast system capable of housing almost everyone who demanded shelter. This was a tremendous drain on the city's resources. Many advocates and residents felt that these facilities were poorly run and did nothing to get people into a permanently stable living situation. Mayor Dinkins attempted to provide additional permanent housing as well but didn't have the resources, because of federal and state cut backs, and a slowing economy, to provide enough housing for homeless and doubled up families, much less single adults, who were the source of so many "quality of life" complaints.

In San Francisco, the city and homeless advocates made a conscious decision to try and avoid spending all the city's resources on shelters. Agnos' *Beyond Shelter* made it clear that the city would use shelters as intake facilities designed to assess people and place them in appropriate transitional and permanent facilities and housing, rather than just warehousing people. In addition, the city made an effort to work with social service organizations to create a wide variety of supportive housing arrangements. The best of these facilities provided permanent housing with voluntary mental health, drug treatment, and other social services. The problem was that there were no resources to provide an adequate amount of this housing in the context of the "entrepreneurial city" strategy. Therefore, there were large numbers of homeless people who couldn't get from the shelters into permanent housing, or from the streets to the shelters. In the end it didn't matter which approach was taken, both New York and San Francisco were left with a large population of homeless people who were not served by the shelter system and as a result remained a source of community complaints. Both cities were, therefore, forced to adopt punitive actions to try to restore order.

This failure of the social services and shelter systems was a huge blow to urban

liberalism. It created a wedge between two of its core constituencies. Both non-profit social service providers and the unions representing city employed service providers were strong supporters of increases in social spending. One effect of these increases was that new facilities had to be created, raising the ire of nearby residents and businesses. Once again, if these services had been provided based on community needs and not a centralized plan, then they might have been able to maintain more neighborhood support for a social services model of dealing with homelessness. Instead, these services were increasingly viewed as unresponsive, ineffective, and a burden on communities. My research has shown that many formerly liberal community activists began to turn away from urban liberalism in favor of a more punitive, immediate, and communitarian approach to restoring order.

Finally, urban liberalism's emphasis on social tolerance flew in the face of people's feelings of fear and anger over deteriorating social conditions. This backlash against tolerance was intensified by the loss of faith people felt in the procedures used by government and social service providers. Residents in the Haight Ashbury wanted to work with their local non-profit service providers, but were rebuffed. Residents of Tudor City felt that they had to threaten legal action to get the city to respond to the deteriorating conditions near their homes. In this context, appeals to social tolerance rang hollow. People demanded immediate punitive action from city government and the police, and also took matter into their own hands, creating neighborhood watches and new political organizations.

Many business leaders also rejected urban liberalism. Businesses with ties to specific places have a strong interest in maintaining public order. The tourism, retail, and real

estate businesses in particular have long tended to support measures that insure that the socially marginal are prevented from having an effect on commercial and tourist districts. In the past, however, this effort has relied on a close working relationship with municipal authorities. What was different about the 1980's was that local government was not in a position to provide the basic services required by these elites. As a result, they set about creating them for themselves in the forms of business improvement districts and other mutual assistance groups, which became a major economic and political force in most large American cities during this period.

In New York, BID's proliferated and came to provide a wide range of services cut back by the city following the 1970's fiscal crisis. I focused on the role of the Grand Central Partnership, the largest and most powerful of these BID's, which was the source of many innovations. Their creation of a range of homeless services showed that the business community was no longer content to rely on the city to handle social problems in high profile areas. The GCP played a crucial role in developing the new "broken windows" practices that would be praised by Bratton and Giuliani and later adopted by the Giuliani administration.

In San Francisco, businesses in the financial district and Union Square areas banded together in informal business groups to finance extra services and lobby the local government for additional services. This group tried to restore order through increased clean ups and uniformed security guards. Candidate Jordan worked closely with these groups who supported his campaign. When elected he took their advice and dramatically expanded and institutionalized "broken windows" enforcement tactics through his Matrix program.

These new entities represented a rejection of all three of urban liberalism's central social values. They were decentralized, and didn't rely on support from local government. They rejected a social services approach in favor of surveillance and punitive sanctions. Finally, they took immediate action to establish new standards of public behavior, in keeping with the views of the majority. This rejection of urban liberalism by business and residential groups, many of whom had been a part of the liberal coalition of the post New Deal and Great Society era's, was a significant blow to liberal politicians. However, there was one additional element that was required to complete a political transition to neoconservatism, the rise of neoconservative political leaders.

The Rise of Neoconservative Mayors

Constructing an alternative to urban liberalism required more than the disaffection of business elites and neighborhood activists. What was needed were political entrepreneurs who could articulate a critique of urban liberalism and provide a coherent alternative. Rudolph Giuliani and Frank Jordan were each able to build on the frustration of community activists and business leaders and offer an analysis that fit their immediate experience of disorder and decline. They each borrowed from the conceptual analyses offered by neoconservative writers such as Siegel, Sleeper, Etzioni, and James Q. Wilson by blaming urban decline on a permissive attitude towards homeless and disorderly people. They also used crime and disorder as indicators of the need to "get tough" with minorities who had been given too much social freedom by urban liberals.

Giuliani and Jordan each focused on the term “quality of life” as the linchpin to neighborhood and municipal recovery. Both politicians were well aware of the “broken windows” theory and understood its call to aggressively target minor disorder as a strategy for reducing crime and restoring public confidence in public spaces. The new “quality of life” paradigm was appealing to business leaders because it placed the blame for social problems on the disorderly and called for police enforcement rather than increased social spending as the solution. It was appealing to neighborhood activists, because it said that immediate action could be taken to restore order. It placed a premium on establishing community-approved norms of public civility that so many felt were lacking. It was appealing to police reformers as well, because it placed them at the center of municipal social policy--expanding the scope of their functions, and protecting them from budget cuts.

Once Giuliani and Jordan were in office, they set about institutionalizing this new “quality of life” approach within city government and especially their police departments. Jordan established broom brigades that emphasized the role of the community in cleaning-up their neighborhoods. More importantly, he implemented the Matrix program, with its aggressive enforcement tactics aimed at the homeless and other disorderly groups. Giuliani brought in William Bratton, who had done more to develop “broken windows” policing than any other police executive in the country, to head up the NYPD. Bratton quickly backed away from the professional and community policing models in favor of aggressive order maintenance tactics.

The new “quality of life” paradigm came together because it addressed the practical and ideological needs of enough specific groups to create a political coalition capable of

winning. It contained just enough elements of respect for community interests to overcome the historically liberal orientation of residents in these cities. It also provided reassurance to elites that their views about taxation and open markets would not be countered by community concerns about growth and fiscal shortfalls. This is not to say that this was the only possible outcome. It is conceivable that a different paradigm could have emerged that addressed the concerns of enough groups in a different way, but clearly urban liberal politicians were not capable of adjusting to this new reality and neoconservative politicians were.

Urban liberal mayors in New York and San Francisco embraced the "entrepreneurial city" model of development as a way of uniting several important political constituencies under the banner of growth. Construction unions and corporate business leaders wanted city government to play a bigger role in subsidizing corporate development through tax breaks and by assuming a greater share of the risk in speculative real estate development projects. In addition, urban liberals broadened their coalition by emphasizing the role of social services in responding to poverty, crime, and homelessness. This brought public sector unions and non-profit service providers into the urban liberal camp. Urban liberals also relied on the historic support of African Americans, based on their support for the Great Society and Civil rights initiatives of the 1960's, and traditionally Democratic white ethnic residents, based on their support of the New Deal policies of the Great Depression.

According to Rieder, Sleeper and Siegel, it was the conflict between these latter two groups in the 1960's and 70's that undermined urban liberalism. As African Americans

made increasing demands for greater equality of outcome in the economic and political systems, this was viewed by whites as being at their expense. These demands eventually took radical cultural and social forms as well, that further alienated white liberals. As a result, by the 1960's rising crime and the threat of educational and residential integration was driving a wedge between these two groups, causing whites to look to more conservative political leaders.

This explains an important part of the story about urban politics in the 1970's. However, urban liberals remained in office In New York, San Francisco, and many other American cities after this period. It wasn't until the 1990's that this changed. The reason for this change was the rise in homelessness and the inability of urban liberalism's dual strategy of economic entrepreneurialism and social tolerance to respond to that crisis. There was no way that urban liberal mayors could both subsidize corporate development and adequately address the related problems of crime, disorder, and homelessness within the urban liberal social framework. Their options were to either abandon entrepreneurialism or their social framework, and they did neither.

I have shown that it was precisely this conflict between worsening social conditions, related to the growing economic and social polarization related to the "entrepreneurial city" strategy, and the adherence to the core urban liberal social values of centralized expert planning, individual oriented social rehabilitation programs, and social tolerance, that alienated historically Democratic whites from urban liberalism. There were, therefore two developments that finally brought urban liberalism to its knees. The first was the continued support of entrepreneurialism despite its effects on the poor. The second was the conflict between the supporters of social services and civil liberties and white

Democrats. If municipal and community based social service providers had been more responsive to the specific needs of their communities, then urban liberalism might have been able to sustain itself by convincing white community activists that they were making a good faith effort to address their "quality of life" concerns as part of a larger strategy of rehabilitation.

But would more responsive social programs have been enough to solve the problems of crime and homelessness? Probably not. These programs were never sufficiently well funded to adequately address the severity of these problems. A massive infusion of new resources would have been required. It would have meant transforming the social services approach, and its emphasis on the individual, to a more structural approach, emphasizing changes to the basic structure of housing and labor markets. The solution to homelessness will not be found in a handful of outreach teams and some new drug treatment slots. Twenty-five years of destroying low-income housing and low skill manufacturing jobs, along with the downsizing of mental health and drug rehabilitation programs cannot be overcome by a few more social workers, no matter how well intentioned. This is the central contradiction that urban liberalism was unable to overcome.

The Future of the Broken Windows Theory

Where do recent developments in New York and San Francisco leave the "broken windows" theory more generally? Aggressive order maintenance policing is under direct assault in New York, and will likely be substantially changed by the next mayor. In San

Francisco, the Brown administration is still committed to "broken windows" based policing and social policy. However, a different approach is emerging in the wings, that treats disorder as a social problem and not a policing problem. Social services based efforts like those in the Castro, show that disorder can be addressed without criminalizing the disorderly. Given that Brown has had to abandon those aspects of the "quality of life" paradigm that scapegoat the homeless, and the presence of credible challengers, it seems likely that a new approach will emerge there as well.

In the last few years there have been a number of studies produced that are critical of the central concepts of the "broken windows" theory. Bernard Harcourt (1998, forthcoming) directly challenged Wesley Skogan's findings in *Disorder and Decline* (1990). He reexamined Skogan's data and found that at best, there was a statistically significant relationship between disorder and robbery in only 5 out of the 40 neighborhoods in his sample. Harcourt goes on to argue that the basic concept of using misdemeanor arrests as a deterrent to more serious crime is mistaken and that it encourages the scapegoating of vulnerable populations. Instead, he argues that poverty, neighborhood stability, and race are much more important factors in predicting the level of serious crime in a neighborhood.

A major study in Chicago by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) questioned the basic connection between disorder and crime that the theory posited. They observed 23,000 streets segments in 196 neighborhoods, and found that physical and social disorder were poor predictors of crime rates. The degree of poverty in a neighborhood turned out to be a much more accurate indicator of crime rates, thus reestablishing the presence of poverty as a major factor in the level of crime.

Ralph Taylor (2001) found similar results in his study of the linkage between crime, disorder, and neighborhood decline in Baltimore. He found that while there were some lagged effects of disorder on crime rates, that the much more consistently important factors were the race and social status of neighborhoods. "Incivilities may be better interpreted as a result of an economically disadvantaged neighborhood rather than as a symptom of a disorderly or disorganized neighborhood" (p. 374). Taylor also found that physical disorder and social disorder were independent phenomena. They did not always occur together and their effects were different. He concludes that "incivilities may not reflect an underlying disorder, but rather a constellation of only loosely connected, somewhat separate problems that may each require somewhat unique policy responses" (p.22).

The social phenomenon that continues to provide the most support for the theory is low crime rates. New York City, which pursued these policies the most, has seen some of the largest drops in crime, leading many other police departments to examine and often emulate their tactics. However, crime rate evidence is diminishing as well. Some other cities have had equally dramatic drops in crime without adopting the new tactics. San Diego has seen major crime reductions, yet pursues the kind of community policing tactics specifically rejected by Bratton in New York. Boston has seen very dramatic reductions in violent crime that have been attributed to an innovative community-police pact in which the police work with the community to try and divert minor offenders from the criminal justice system, but combine efforts to root out those whom they feel are a threat to the community.

Andrew Karmen (2001) questions the role of police tactics in the reduction of crime

in New York. He shows that there were a number of other factors at work, such as the decline of the crack-cocaine trade. He also points out that crime rates began their drop in 1990, well before the systematic implementation of “broken windows” policing initiatives.

Finally, civil libertarians and minority communities are creating pressure to abandon the most widespread and aggressive aspects of the new policing. Following the killings of unarmed African American’s Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond, and the controversy surrounding racial profiling, there is a consensus among leaders of minority communities that a new style of policing is needed. To aid in this effort the U.S. Justice Department held a series of meetings between community activists, police executives, academics, and police union representatives in Washington beginning in the summer of 1999. According to then Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee of the Civil Rights Division, the objective of these meetings was to improve data collection of police conduct, and discuss possible alternate policing tactics that are effective, but respect citizens’ civil rights.⁵¹ All the major candidates in the 2001 mayoral election in New York have indicated they want to make significant changes in policing policies in New York. Even former Commissioner William Bratton has argued that the police department should quit antagonizing minority communities in the wake of dramatic crime reductions.

Why was it that “quality of life” police emerged in New York and San Francisco and not San Diego and Boston? All four cities have pursued an “entrepreneurial city” model of economic development, had an increase in crime, homelessness, and disorder, and operated within the professional model of policing during the 1980’s. The difference was

in the degree to which they pursued these policies in conjunction with the social policies of urban liberalism. While Art Agnos and David Dinkins attempted to create homeless policies based on social services and social tolerance, Boston and San Diego did not do so to the same degree.

Boston is a historically liberal city, and under Mayor Ray Flynn, they did pursue a number of urban liberal social policies. However, the role of governor in Boston is much more central than in New York or San Francisco. When Michael Dukakis was governor, the city of Boston was given resources and an ideology that supported a social services and social tolerance approach. By the late 1980's, this was beginning to generate significant resentment. The result, however, was not the displacement of Flynn, but of liberal state policies. Voters elected Republican William Weld governor in 1990. This represented a dramatic shift in state politics. Weld campaigned on a platform of reduced tolerance for crime, homelessness, welfare, and disorder. His policies reduced the city's reliance on an ideology of social services and offered people seeking more punitive approaches a focal point for their anger. This gave the police department more room to develop alternative to professional policing that were not based on the "broken windows" theory and its obsession with physical and social disorder. Instead they gravitated towards problem oriented policing, which is more nuanced in its targeting of crime patterns than zero-tolerance "quality of life" policing.

San Diego represented a similar case. They never pursued urban liberal social policies, so there was never any need for a backlash against it. Professional policing suffered a crisis, but it was replaced by a number of community policing innovations, rather than "broken windows" based policing. This is not to say that homeless people in either

⁵¹ Speech at John Jay College, April 14, 2000.

Boston or San Diego were free from police harassment. Quite the contrary. What was different is that the debate over how to police disorder and homeless people never rose to the level of changing the political life of these cities.

What was most remarkable about the criminalization of homelessness in New York and San Francisco in the late 1980's and early 1990's was that the most marginal members of society played a central role in realigning urban politics. They became the symbols of decades of urban decline and the failure of urban liberalism to correct the problem. In the process, they engendered a whole new set of social control practices and conceptualizations of the causes and solutions to social problems. These practices and conceptualizations were never only about homelessness, but it took their visible and seemingly intractable presence to create a new political order.

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