

'Managing' Poverty:
Care and Control in Peruvian Street Children's Everyday Lives

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines the contradictory and complementary ways in which both neoliberal development and children’s rights legislation shape national development and child poverty in Lima and Cusco, Perú. It uses childhood as a lens through which to more critically analyze struggle over meanings of development, poverty and appropriate uses of public space, looking at the ways in which children’s rights and neoliberalism shape the regulation of poor children through a number of spaces, including social services, urban space, and street children’s everyday lives. The project is based on 14 months of in-depth ethnographic research, participant observation and interviews with street children, as well as conversations with policy makers, educators, government officials and social workers. My research design was specifically concerned with both recognizing children as active producers of knowledge and with connecting their everyday experiences with broader systemic changes and processes of development and governance. Rather than focusing on either a *macro*-scale or a more *localized* analysis, it links the subjectivity of the poor both with political-economic shifts and discourses and with identity projects. By focusing on street children’s everyday lives, this dissertation combines work on the governance of poverty, most of which has remained focused on the global north, with insights from critical development scholars regarding a need for a historical and sociopolitical account of poverty to actively politicize the ways in which Peruvian street children negotiate control, care and survival.

Despite beliefs that children are outside of politics, childhoods play important roles in shaping national development and reproducing particular value systems. This dissertation considers how linking dominant development ideologies with the language of children’s rights serves to mitigate critiques that development negatively affects the poor, reinforcing dominant development ideologies by allowing them to be packaged in a more socially acceptable way. It analyzes in what ways children’s rights discourse provides moral justification for international intervention and the increased regulation of

childhood based on Western models. In doing so, it contributes to critical poverty and development studies by linking narratives of development, childhood and rights with the maintenance of poverty.

However, rights themselves are subject to competing interpretations and have also provided an important organizing tool for local social movements, such as Peru's child workers' movement.

Additionally, children themselves are not simply passive in the face of increased state intervention.

They 'manage' their poverty in varied and often creative ways, engaging in spatial strategies to evade police and social workers' efforts to regulate their behavior, creating work opportunities for themselves in the street, and in some cases, even playing up their own poverty and vulnerability in order to more successfully street vend. There is a danger, however, in celebrating all acts of survival as resistance.

Instead, many forms of children's agency represent contradictory resistance; while in some ways they create more opportunities for themselves or avoid increased state regulation their actions often lead to further marginalization or work to exclude them in other ways. This necessitates both a more nuanced analysis of resistance as well as a need to more closely examine the indicators being used to measure international development and urban 'revitalization'. My project concludes with an in-depth discussion of how feminist care ethics can inform more inclusive rights-based approaches to development.

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Dedication

For Sea Monkey,
and children everywhere

Chapter 1: 'Managing' Poverty: Care and Control in Peruvian Street Children's Everyday Lives

Near University Park in the center of Lima, 9 year-old Silvia and her younger sisters sit on the curb playing school. Silvia pretends to be the teacher, instructing her younger sisters in their lessons as they pretend to scribble with imaginary pencils on the pages of a discarded notebook they found in the trash pile on the corner. A drunken man leers nearby, watching the girls curiously. In a few hours, Silvia will head to Lima's main plaza to sell candies for the afternoon. As she walks, she will pass by the municipality's new billboard display depicting all the progress that Lima has made through its urban recuperation projects. One of the billboards features the park that Silvia and her sisters used to play in. Now gated off, Silvia makes do with sidewalks and street corners, occasionally stopping to peer enviously through the gates and hoping someone will pay her admission fee into Lima's spectacular new water park. Despite various campaigns emphasizing the importance of investment in education and childhood for the development of the country, Silvia's opportunities for formal study remain limited to her imaginary games.

1.1 Introduction

Various discourses about development as economic growth, urban revitalization, or improvements in education take on competing meanings in the lives of children like Silvia. Childhood itself becomes a central site of struggle over meanings of development, poverty and appropriate uses of public space. This dissertation examines child poverty in Perú, considering the ways in which global processes are transforming childhood, and in turn, how children themselves resist, rework and adapt the contexts of their everyday lives. In particular, it considers the contradictory and complementary relationship between international children's rights discourses and neoliberal models of international development. I argue that the spread of 'modern' understandings of childhood has not been subject to the same critiques as have international narratives of development. Yet, childhoods play important roles in shaping national development and reproducing particular value systems (Ruddick, 2003; Katz, 2004). Through a detailed examination of the ways in which child poverty is framed and understood, this dissertation speaks back to mainstream understandings of development and poverty. It is based on 14 months of field work in Perú, and over 100 interviews with government officials, police, program directors, educators, social workers, and street children themselves. A focus on both Lima and Cusco

provides valuable insight into the ways in which ethnicity, poverty, and geography interplay and influence youth identity and approaches to livelihood and further demonstrates the unevenness of both neoliberal and rights-based approaches to development.

I argue that linking dominant development ideologies with the language of children's rights serves to mitigate critiques that development negatively affects the poor, reinforcing dominant development ideologies by allowing them to be packaged in a more socially acceptable way. Children's rights discourse provides moral justification for international intervention and the increased regulation of childhood based on Western models. In doing so, childhood ironically serves as a trope through which to naturalize problematic assumptions of neoliberal development. By combining an analysis of neoliberal development with that of children's rights, this research contributes to studies theorizing neoliberalism as a social construct which must be constantly reproduced (England & Ward, 2007; Larner, 2003; Peck & Tickell, 2002). However, because children's rights are subject to multiple interpretations, and are similarly contested, reworked and negotiated by children themselves, I reveal spaces for alternative approaches to development.

More specifically, I examine the ways in which international aid, a reliance on 'technical' experts and the circulation of Western understandings of childhood as universal all work together to reinforce authoritative poverty knowledge, or conceptualizations of poverty as a problem of bounded nation states or individual people and families, rather than as a result of relational processes. In the past decade, international development and financial organizations' (IFIs) made poverty reduction a big component of neoliberal development post Washington-Consensus, giving added weight to the importance of their explanations for poverty and the best ways to reduce that poverty. While poverty reduction efforts have been critiqued as little more than repackaging of structural adjustment policies of the 1980s (Hulme, 2010; Sheppard & Leitner, 2010), as I elaborate on in the next section, little attention has been paid to the ways in which understandings of childhood and appeals to morality have been key in legitimating poverty-reduction efforts, and spreading dominant understandings of poverty and development. Although children themselves may rarely be included in shaping international development policy, I argue that *images* of children are invoked, often in highly moralistic ways, to justify particular development discourses. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), as the mostly widely ratified human rights legislation, has played a big role in spreading ideas of what constitutes childhood. As such, it arguably provides legal support for addressing child poverty by providing children with a set of rights to which countries have universally (with the exception of the US and Somalia) committed to respect.

Yet, a need to support children's rights is couched in highly moralistic tones that shares remnants of development discourses, centering knowledge and expertise in the West as a model that all modern nations must embrace. In this dissertation, I examine the ways in which supposedly universal understandings of childhood are manipulated to gain support for particular ideas of what development looks like and how it should occur. In particular, I suggest that children's presence in the street is now seen as a sign that a country is not developed. Such an understanding has the potential to legitimate international interventions in the form of both aid and technical assistance, and in doing so, distracts attention from ongoing inequalities and dispossessions perpetuated by other aspects of neoliberal development. Ideas about how to help the poor are framed in moral terms, emphasizing both the goodness of those who are helping, and the moral failings of those being helped. While poverty-reduction programs are often cloaked in morality, in practice, they are often more focused on advancing neoliberal agendas than on social justice, or even the good of those they are purportedly helping. Development, especially as it concerns children, then becomes about normative values. Parts of Perú are poor because they do not take care of their children. Instead of sending them to school, they force them to work. To be a moral country, the government needs to embrace anti-child labor legislation, sending a clear message that the 'cultural' practice of child labor will not be tolerated. Such language puts the onus for poverty on the Peruvian people themselves, or the government for permitting such behaviors, rather than on relational aspects of poverty.

I examine to what extent children's rights legislation and discourses unwittingly end up reinforcing neoliberal subjectivity, both in recognizing children as independent rights-bearers, and in reinforcing a focus of neoliberal governance on regulating and protecting the street child in accordance with the international standards established by the CRC. In what ways do neoliberal governance and children's rights discourse ironically work together to reinforce authoritative understandings of poverty? Alternatively, I combine a relational analysis of poverty with an analysis of how children themselves rework, resist, and adapt to the contexts of their daily lives to challenge the ability to carry out neoliberal economic policies in the name of children's well-being. Relational analyses of poverty examine how socio-economic, historical and political processes of exclusion and adverse incorporation and practices of governing and representing the poor contribute to the (re) production of poverty (see Mosse, 2010; Lawson, 2012). Such an analysis responds to critical poverty scholars' argument that to understand poverty, it is not the poor themselves that we should be looking at but local, national and international social relations that produce poverty (Green, 2006).

I address sets of questions about three related topics: development and poverty, urban governance through social services and the regulation of public space, and childhood. The broad questions guiding this research include: How are narratives of childhood intertwined with narratives of development and poverty? How do children's rights serve as a way for neoliberalism to reinvent itself and how do they offer alternative spaces? In what ways do children's rights reinforce authoritative conceptions of poverty? How do children themselves resist, rework and reproduce these notions?

More specifically, I consider: 1) How do narratives of childhood inform and shape current mainstream development thinking? How has the balance of who takes responsibility for poor children shifted under neoliberal development? What is the role of international and local NGOs in shaping responses to child poverty and reaffirming certain understandings of development and modernity?

2) How have children's rights discourses affected shifting responses to child poverty? What has been the impact of children's rights and anti-child labor legislation on this marginalization? What does the regulation of street children tell us about the neoliberal subject? How is childhood regulated in and through space?

3) How does an examination of street children's lives challenge dominant understandings of development and poverty? How are street children represented in Peruvian society? How do children resist and negotiate these identities? And with what consequences?

I answer these questions through an examination of neoliberal development in a range of spaces, including social services, public space, and children's everyday lives. Each chapter speaks to a different scale at which identity subject formation takes place. Recognizing both childhood and space as fluid and always under construction challenges the inevitability of neoliberal development models. I am particularly interested in neoliberalism not only as a way of describing a set of economic policies that I suggest have exacerbated the poverty of the children in this study but also as a particular model of regulation and governmentality. Thus, I "employ neoliberalism to signify the extension of market logics into multiple aspects of social life, the promotion of the private sector as the solution to social problems, the advancement of economic growth without regard to social equity, the decline of state-sponsored social service and the growth of policies that hold individuals responsible for their own well-being" (Atia, 2008, 2). I look at the redrawing of boundaries between civil society, the market and the state and how these institutions are involved in the construction of autonomous responsabilized neoliberal subjects (England & Ward, 2007). In what I refer to as discourses of neoliberalism, I examine how certain values are spread in a way so as to naturalize them and make them seem like common sense.

Some scholars have found fault with such broad definitions of neoliberalism, suggesting neoliberalism has become a term for both everything and nothing at the same time. Barnett (2005, 8) argues that political economy understandings of neoliberalism are incompatible with feminist and post-structural focuses on discourse and governmentality because “they imply different models of the nature of explanatory concepts; different models of causality of determination;...different normative understandings of political power.” Yet, looking at the shifting role of the state in conjunction with the regulatory discourses that have accompanied that shift is essential to understanding the way in which policies are accepted and reproduced. For example, switching to a public-private partnership to fund Educators of the Street, the Peruvian government’s only program directly targeting street children, was directly linked to an ideological anti-child labor shift, as I argue in Chapter Three. It is only when considering how neoliberal policy shifts have exacerbated inequalities in tandem with shifts in regulation and governmentality that it becomes clear how neoliberalism impoverishes certain groups of people while simultaneously punishing them for their own impoverishment.

New forms of global governance shape ways of thinking about poverty and responses to that poverty. Governance is put into practice “by way of institutions and agencies, including the state; by discourses, norms, and identities; and by self-regulation, techniques for the discipline and care of the self” (Ferguson & Gupta, 2002, 989; Foucault, 1991). As mentioned, the idea of neoliberalism goes beyond free market economic policies to involve a specific normative organization of the state, the social and the subject. This type of rationality governs the criteria of truth for these domains (Brown, 2006). Under a neoliberal rationality, the state must construct itself in market terms as well as promote the idea of citizens as rational economic actors in multiple spheres of everyday life. Moral autonomy is then measured by one’s capacity for self-care (Brown, 2006). In section 1.2, I analyze shifts in the governance of poverty, and how they necessitate different conceptualizations of poverty to provide moral rationale. As I elaborate on shortly, neoliberal governance of the poor focuses on teaching them to exercise self-help and entrepreneurship, and in doing so, masks the political-economic developments through which poverty is created and maintained. It also fosters distinctions between the entrepreneurial poor and the undeserving dependent poor. According to Rose (1996), the neoliberal subject is characterized by responsabilization, individualism, autonomy and self-regulation. But what does this look like when the neoliberal subject is a child? How do neoliberal rationalities and children’s rights combine with or contradict each other to shape the governance of poor children and how does this necessitate different ways of thinking about both poverty and childhood?

When considering such questions, I invoke a Foucauldian analysis of power, arguing that discourses are both socially produced and socially producing. Foucault (1977, 1991) suggested that dominant discourses remained powerful because they came to be understood as 'natural'. Yet, Foucault has been critiqued for not paying significant attention to how, and in what contexts, various subjects come to resist mentalities of dominating institutions (Mitchell, 2002). In this sense, a focus on cultural aspects of social reproduction, through the experiences of street children themselves, provides a detailed account of reproduction and resistance to, dominant forms of knowledge. In doing so, I challenge the idea that children and young people are simply recipients or victims of global change (Ruddick, 2003; Aitken, Lund & Kjørholt, 2008). By examining the lives of Peruvian street children, who are in many ways at the margins of capitalism, we can better understand how certain processes come to be understood as normal (Ruddick, 2003).

When I discuss street children, I am referring to any children who work or spend a large portion of each day in the streets. This includes both children who return home at night, and those who now sleep in the street or rent rooms. There was a surprising amount of resistance to including such a wide subject population, and on multiple occasions I had social workers and educators tell me that I should choose to focus on one population or the other. Yet, by distinguishing between street children and working children, street children are treated as deviant, in need of social intervention from above, and actively pathologized. As I elaborate on throughout the dissertation, the label 'street child' is highly linked to delinquency and drug use, an idea that is reinforced by relabeling children that do not fit this image, rather than expanding representations of who counts as a street children. In this way, Watkins' (1993) discussion of throw-away populations is useful. Street children are not considered to contribute in any meaningful way to the economy. They are not working for a wage, but rather doing odd jobs on their own, tasks that some do not consider 'work' and that are not even formally regulated by the Ministry of Labor. In fact, in some countries such as Guatemala and Brazil, police actually considered street children so expendable that they rounded them up and shot them (Human Rights Watch, 1994; Seitles, 1997). And in Perú, the expendability of children and their labor has made them particularly vulnerable to urban clean-up campaigns, as I argue in Chapter Four. The way in which street children are linked with narratives of delinquency and substance abuse serves to position them as inherently outside the realm of 'normal' childhood and in need of reform.

In this way, sleeping in the street is increasingly depicted as a lifestyle choice (see Watkins, 1993; O'Connell, 2001; Schram, 2000), masking the link between the rise of drug use and delinquency with neoliberal policy and decades of violence. It also conjures up and depends on certain imagined

geographies of the street, which I elaborate on in Chapter Four. While some literature on street children is more sympathetic, in depicting children as coming from broken and dysfunctional homes (Wright, Witting & Kaminsky, 1993), they and their families are pathologized, and children who fail to benefit from interventions are further criminalized. In contrast, narratives about poverty and ‘working children’ emphasize their vulnerability to ‘street life’ and their need for protection-by implication from those already living in the streets. While such discourses similarly serve to justify intervention and reform, working children are depicted as more deserving than street children, a topic I elaborate on in the following chapter.

Choosing to include both those labeled as ‘street’ children and those labeled as ‘working’ children is a political decision that forces recognition of poverty as relational. Children’s positions and identities are constantly shifting and contextual. I focus on the ideological, institutional and political conditions and processes that contribute to children being identified as street or working children, highlighting the way neoliberal economic changes and discourses combine with rights legislation. In the following chapters, I interrogate the various ends that these labels serve, looking at the ways in which representational strategies reinforce class differences (see Lawson, Jarosz & Bonds, 2008; Green, 2006). Although aware of the limitations, I do sometimes distinguish between street-sleeping children and street-working children when relevant to my analysis.¹

By exploring urbanization and development through the lens of childhood, this study brings attention to the fact that young people’s lives are deeply implicated in the reproduction of, and resistance to, neoliberalism. I look at development both as 1) spatially uneven material processes and 2) as discourses about how the world works (Lawson, 2007b; Katz, 2004; Hart, 2002). Hart (2002) argues that it is necessary to explore the ‘disciplinary power’ of development, or the extent to which people become good, docile, governable citizens, alongside geographically uneven profoundly contradictory sets of historical processes. I am particularly concerned with the ways in which certain narratives of development, such as those that equate progress with the achievement of supposedly ‘universal’ indicators of child well-being, may reinforce authoritative forms of poverty knowledge and serve to further marginalize street and working children.

Many critical geography scholars emphasize the important role of geographical imaginaries of the Third World in producing spaces. Here, I consider not only geographical imaginations of the so-

¹ The category in which each young person is placed has consequences for opportunities and well-being, a topic I discuss in greater detail in Chapters Three and Five.

called Third World but also the way certain understandings of the United States and modern cities similarly shape Peruvian policies and programs. I argue that imagined images of what modernity looks like are linked with normative versions of childhood, essential to understanding neoliberal governance in Perú. The Peruvian government is actively working to challenge representations of Perú as a ‘developing’ country. News reports frequently emphasize that Perú is in on track to join the nations of the first world. Yet, what that means is rarely interrogated. I suggest that a desire to join the ‘first world’ reinforces conceptions of development as following imagined Western paths. At the same time, however, in order to access aid, NGOs and government agencies must portray Perú as inherently lacking the resources for development. Because Perú has been experiencing rapid economic growth for the past few years, international aid organizations have been withdrawing financial support, and moving to more ‘needy’ countries. Some government officials and NGO staff working on issues related to child poverty are very concerned about this shift. They were vehement in their emphasis that Perú was in fact still a very poor country, highlighting the uneven distribution of growth and the tendency of the Peruvian government to define development as investment in physical infrastructure rather than social needs (personal interviews, 2009-2010). This contradiction gets at the heart of competing interpretations of development, indicating that the way development is defined has clear consequences for policies and programs addressing child poverty.

Narratives of childhood are central to understandings of modernity and development, as is made especially clear through Perú’s newest Plan for Children and Adolescents. The introduction of the Plan emphasizes that when Perú celebrates 200 years of independence in 2021, it is essential that they find themselves on track in their development. To do this, reads the plan, it is necessary to invest in the development of children and adolescents. The Plan does not shy away from directly stating the role of children in achieving status as a ‘first world nation.’ “Our great national goal to be a nation of the First World will only be possible if the indicators that graph the situation of our children and adolescents are also of the first world. In this way, the Plan seeks to contribute to our national goal” (MIMDES, 2011, 8).² Such a quote specifically conjures up images of a line on which Perú is advancing, with the United States and Europe further along the line, and in doing so, reinforces the idea of development as a uni-linear process, in which countries in the Global North are more advanced than countries in the Global South. The plan also justifies investing in children in order to “increase the competitiveness of the country” (MIMDES, 2011, 13). In doing so, it reaffirms the idea of global competitiveness as a primary goal of development, rather than greater equality, well-being or a range of other possible objectives. In

² Unless otherwise stated, all translations are mine.

this sense, I suggest that childhood is becoming a lens through which to naturalize development as growth and progress, modeled after imagined experiences in the global north. Determining development goals based on Western conceptions of childhood, which emphasize childhood as a time for school and preparation for adulthood, marginalizes alternative understandings of childhood and well-being, such as those depicting children as active (and current) contributors to the well-being of themselves, their families, and their societies, as will be elaborated on (see Cussianovich, 2006).

1.2 Adapting Neoliberalization: A New Emphasis on Poverty Reduction

My work contributes to studies analyzing the ways in which dominant understandings are reproduced and naturalized. Neoliberalism is an ongoing ideological project that takes different forms at different scales (Peck & Tickell, 2002). In order to survive, especially in the face of massive criticism following the ‘lost decade of development’ in the 1980s and more recent economic crises, neoliberalism must constantly reinvent itself. Its success depends on finding new ways of representing the world that (re)establish the legitimacy of the market economy and the disciplinary state (Jessop, 2002). Elsewhere, scholars have highlighted the role of poverty reduction policies and the Millennium Development Goals in ironically promoting neoliberal development. This dissertation specifically considers another ‘surprising’ partner. I examine the way select narratives of childhood and utilization of children’s rights have served as a way for neoliberalism to reinvent itself. By understanding neoliberalization as something that “is produced in and through human actions performed in geographically discrete but deeply intertwined and interconnected places,” we can open up possibilities for resisting and reworking it (England & Ward, 2007, 19). I briefly review key critiques of poverty reduction before arguing that children’s rights provide an even more morally acceptable way with which to justify intervention and the spread of neoliberal forms of governance.

In response to growing critiques of structural adjustment, a lack of growth, and in some cases, increasing poverty, the World Bank, IMF and other dominant development agencies, were faced with a crisis in legitimacy. In order to maintain some semblance of legitimacy, they began to revise their recommendations, emphasizing empowerment, good governance, and social capital, in what Williamson (2000) has referred to as the post-Washington consensus. Most central to this analysis, the World Bank now recognizes poverty reduction as key to development in the global south (Cling, 2003) and Hulme (2010) even posits that international development has been redefined as global poverty reduction. On the one hand, this represents a significant shift from viewing development as economic growth. However, critical development scholars have raised questions about whether the supposed emphasis on poverty reduction and increased participation is actually a way to repackage the same neoliberal policy

agenda. In fact, in order for heavily indebted countries to receive any form of debt forgiveness, they had to come up with Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), over which the IFIs had nearly complete oversight. And the requirements to qualify for loans to fund these new strategies remain nearly identical to those outlined in previous structural adjustment policies (Sheppard & Leitner, 2010).

Critics of the international campaigns against global poverty see it as rich world posturing while attempting to impose new forms of control and conditionality on developing countries. An emphasis on poverty serves to combat disenchantment with the Bretton Woods institutions and reestablish international legitimacy (Cling, Razafindrakoto, & Roubaud, 2003), while the same organizations continue to promote economic policies that simultaneously exacerbate poverty. Hulme (2010) highlights several aspects of this critique, including a false promise that enhances the image and legitimacy of wealthy countries and powerful organizations but which they do not intend to keep, as a compromise that means that developing countries are discouraged from pursuing genuinely alternative national development strategies, or as a sell-out that weakens efforts to achieve human rights around the world and/or replace capitalism with a more egalitarian and socially just alternative. In particular, he raises concern that an emphasis on poverty-reduction may serve to support “the creation of an account showing that the spread of capitalism would continue to benefit all of the world’s people” (Hulme, 2010, xxi), while allowing economic globalization to continue. Along similar lines I argue that in the case of child poverty, formally supporting children’s rights legislation may serve to counter claims that governments are neglecting social development, helping them gain international approval and reducing resistance to neoliberalism while requiring little more than semantic changes. At the same time, I am particularly interested in the ways in which children’s rights legislation, in assuming that there is a model of child development that is universally applicable, facilitates increased intervention into the lives of poor children (Pupavac, 2001; Boyden, 1994), a topic I return to in section 1.6. In such regards, I consider whether children’s rights, like PRSPs, may actually help spread neoliberal models of governance and ideas about poverty, while also legitimating ‘expert’ technical assistance as neutral, thus depoliticizing it.

1.3 ‘Universal’ Paths to Progress: Neoliberal Development and Child Development

In this section, I suggest that a focus on childhood exposes some of the contradictions in recent trends in neoliberal development and poverty discourse. Development framings simultaneously rely on and seem to ignore, children. Understandings of children frame norms of progress and modernity, with the implication that experiences of the global north can (and should) be copied in the global south. Yet, by focusing on street children’s lives I problematize ways of measuring both poverty and progress, and

highlight how discourses about universal experiences of childhood legitimate international interventions.

Development ideologies provide support for particular techniques of power and practices of government (Hart, 2001; Lawson, 2007b). Thus, the power of aid stems from the way it represents the global south as in need of governance, converting recipients into subjects of intervention and donors into natural rulers. According to Rojas (2004, 97) "Aid to the poor is one of liberalism's preferred instruments for governing those declared unfit for self-government." In what ways do children's rights and the spread of 'universal' understandings of childhood similarly legitimate and shape 'child-saving' efforts? I ask for whom and for what purpose various conceptions of childhood are employed, examining how are conceptions of childhood are made to work with or contradict dominant development narratives.

Among critical development analyses focused on Latin America (Bebbington, 2000; Radcliffe, 2001), Green (1998) specifically addresses the negative effects of structural adjustment on children. However, his work does not show how understandings of childhood are used to promote these very agendas, something I address. In much the same way as whole nations are represented as underdeveloped, and thus in need of guidance and intervention, children themselves are understood as in need of protection and paternal instruction (Gagen, 2008). Aitken, Lund and Kjørholt (2008, 5) argue that development theory essentializes children to become-the-same (as us), limiting possibilities for the future, just as so-called developing nations are coerced to become-the- same (as us). Such theorizing denies both children and nations their own trajectories, histories and possibilities for different futures. Conceptions of space are essential to this process. Massey (2005) argues that presenting globalization as inevitable involves presenting spaces as without their own trajectories and histories, at an earlier stage in the same narrative. Many development theories serve to equate spatial difference with temporal difference; countries are viewed as simply behind the West in their path to development. Discourses that spatially depict certain places as further back in time legitimate the expertise of those from the most 'developed' countries. If everyone is going in the same direction, then it seems natural that those already there will teach others how to arrive (Sheppard & Leitner, 2010).

I extend such arguments to conceptions of childhood, looking at how countries with child labor are conceived of as simply further back in the process of development, with assumptions made that as they develop, child labor will (and should) disappear. 'Experts' from the International Labor Organization (ILO), UNICEF and others can then play a morally legitimate role helping countries eliminate child labor without having to debate whether such an end goal is even desirable in and of itself, as I explore in

Chapter Three. Nieuwenhuys (2008) argues that the rhetoric of anti-child labor activists allude to notions of a better life. However, assuming that child labor will disappear with development fails to consider how the elimination of child labor in the US and Europe actually coincided with new forms of child exploitation in the colonial periphery (Nieuwenhuys, 2008). I push beyond arguments that conceptions of childhood are subject to much the same types of thinking as are ideas of progress to specifically reveal the way narratives of childhood work to reinforce narratives of development. By challenging the way in which development discourses ‘turn space into time’ (Massey 2005) and thus deny young people new ways of configuring their lives (Aitken et al, 2008, 9), I recognize space as socially constructed and constantly changing. In doing so, I show how children themselves are also dynamic, with multiple shifting identities, challenging other scholars’ claims that following economic growth, childhoods will merge together to resemble each other, or more specifically, to resemble childhood as portrayed in the global north, as child labor disappears and children take their natural place in school and the home (see Post, 2001).

While critical scholars have urged attention to the way in which development discourse excludes certain people on the basis of gender, class and race/ethnicity, much less attention has been paid to age as an exclusionary characteristic. Some of the main critical reviews of development literature have zero references to children in their indexes (for example Lawson, 2007b), despite their clear emphasis on how multiple and shifting identities and subject positions shape how people experience, influence, and conceive of development. I argue that while children themselves, especially street children, often lack significant power to shape dominant development discourses, interventions in the ‘name’ of children are actually essential to the reproduction of various development strategies. I specifically examine how imagined understandings of childhood map onto imagined understandings of development, and in doing so, address the absence of childhood in much development literature. In what ways do appeals to childhood as a time of schooling and play shape beliefs about international development? How do such understandings coincide with, and even legitimate neoliberal practices of governance? I argue that childhood is a particularly effective way through which to reproduce aspects of neoliberalism because it serves to unite a wide range of actors, including those that are normally quite critical of more typical neoliberal development projects. Pressures to adopt certain approaches to development are being smuggled in under the guise of new discourses around children and youth (Ruddick, 2003). Dominant discourses about childhood, just as in development, support specific understandings of the world while eliminating others. Aitken, Lund and Kjørholt (2008, 4) argue that efforts to rescue children, taking them

out of labor and putting them in classrooms, “are couched in problematic progressive and development terms that foist adult agendas on young people.”

In the past two decades, a wide range of institutions and academics, ranging from the World Bank and UNICEF to Amartya Sen and Jeffrey Sachs, argue that investment in human capital and education is key to development. Education, almost always equated with formal schooling, is seen as essential to bringing those excluded from economic growth into ‘development’ (Laurie, Andolina & Radcliffe, 2003). International development agents and academics highlight the role of schooling in helping countries compete in a globalized market and achieve more rapid economic growth (Porter, Sachs & McArthur, 2001; OECD, 2007, as cited in Wyn, 2009). On an individual level, education is praised for providing young people with the skills necessary to lift them out of poverty. Yet, the emphasis on getting children enrolled in school fails to consider whether children actually benefit from school enrollment. By neglecting either the quality of education or the availability (or lack thereof) of jobs following school, assumptions that development will automatically follow from education are weakened. In fact, because the Peruvian government has successfully increased formal enrollment rates, the value of a secondary degree may actually decrease.³ In countries such as India, even obtaining a university degree no longer guarantees upward mobility, as social connections and cultural capital are necessary to obtain limited secure employment (Jeffrey, 2010). But in assuming that school enrollment is the best way to ‘lift people out of poverty’, such concerns are often overlooked. By indicating that all children do not experience school, work and poverty in the same ways, I challenge meta-narratives of what development looks like and how it will unfold. However, it is important to recognize that schooling itself has long been considered an important part of social mobility within Perú. In this sense, I am not arguing against investment in schooling, especially because so many poor Peruvians themselves express great desire and faith in the role of schools. In fact, it is specifically because of this faith that I challenge the assumption that school will automatically lead to development, and instead urge a more nuanced consideration of the work that ‘education as development’ is being asked to do.

Children’s agency: Insights from Childhood Studies

I suggest that an emphasis on the socially constructed nature of childhood and children as agents in their own right provide a useful lens through which to challenge mainstream theories about international development and poverty. However, there is currently very little engagement between childhood studies and critical development studies, something this dissertation will address. Childhood

³ Research elsewhere shows that the greater the number of people with a degree, the less the (economic) returns of sending a child to school (Cogneau, 2003).

itself is a socially constructed concept, shaped by historical, social and cultural factors (James & Prout, 1997). This has implications for theorizing about social reproduction and development and coincides with formal advances made in the field of children's rights. Until recently, social scientists failed to consider age as a social variable equivalent to others such as gender, class and ethnicity on any broad scale (Cheney, 2007). Alternatively, childhood studies scholars recognize children as social actors in their own right. Children are not just passive objects of social processes and structure (James & Prout, 1997). Even in situations of exploitation, children demonstrate agency (Aitken, et al, 2008), maneuvering through the often contradictory nodes of discursive childhood categories that might otherwise serve to constrain them.

I respond to Matthews and Limb's (1999) challenge that much children's geography focuses on the mundane, such as children's play spaces, without connecting to other critical debates within geography. By providing a grounded account of the relationship between childhood and development narratives, I challenge the inevitability of neoliberal development narratives, revealing certain taken for granted truths as political. Although they do not always make the connections clear, Katz (2004) and Swanson (2010) offer key insights into childhood's relationship to development. Katz (2004) provides a useful framework for examining how shifts in children's everyday lives are tied to capitalist transformation. While Katz's work is important in challenging children's traditional exclusion from studies of global transformation, she does not explore the discourses of poverty representation or the moral power of children's rights and development narratives. In contrast, Swanson (2010)'s study of child migrants in Ecuador's urban spaces is one of the few that specifically explores how children rework and respond to dominant ways in which they are represented by media and international organizations. By suggesting that begging may be a rational strategy for indigenous children to create more opportunities for themselves, she challenges representations of child beggars as vulnerable victims. However, Swanson does not as directly address social reproduction, or the way in which values get reproduced and legitimated through children, in her study. In this sense, I combine Katz's emphasis on cultural aspects of social reproduction with Swanson's critical analysis of neoliberal development in the global south. By doing so, I open up the possibility that street children's actions may simultaneously challenge dominant representations of them and their poverty while also reproducing certain aspects of neoliberal governmentality, an idea that I explore in Section 1.7 on agency and resistance.

If an inability to represent one's self or participate in political processes is a key explanatory factor in the maintenance of poverty (Mosse, 2010; Hickey & Bracking, 2005), then poor children, who because of their age are automatically excluded from more formal political processes, are going to have

even have less space in which to challenge problematic conceptions of poverty. Their identities and autonomy are forfeited, and they are forced to travel the ‘development path’ mapped out for them by others (Rist, 1997, 79). Focusing on street children themselves, and how they interpret poverty, serves to decenter poverty knowledge. In challenging representations of poor children, I expose the ways in which neoliberal interventions are justified in their name. In the following section, I build on insights from critical poverty scholars to show the way that dominant understandings of childhood, as reflected through the language of development institutions and children’s rights NGOs, serve as one way to naturalize neoliberalism.

1.4 Poverty Reduction and the Spread of Authoritative Poverty Knowledge

In this section, I highlight the key role that the World Bank’s new emphasis on poverty reduction plays in spreading particular ways of framing poverty and models of governance, before applying such an analysis to international children’s rights NGOs. Global development organizations put forward dominant spatial imaginations of other people and places that provide ‘truths’ about how the world should be (Power, 2003). The poverty-reduction agenda of which ‘good governance’ is a part, is framed in both moral and technical terms, and is focused on ending corruption and providing governments with the proper knowledge to run their countries, while paying less attention to lack of resources and other constraints on governments. Thus, aid is a key instrument of global governmentality (Rojas, 2004). Although on some level an emphasis on poverty reduction may just be a new form of structural adjustment, I suggest it also serves to legitimize the neoliberalization of social services, as I elaborate in Section 1.6. In particular, I am concerned with how “actual political and economic processes that are producing different material geographies of inequality are masked and hidden behind the representations of agencies such as the World Bank which ignore the material production of poverty in countries where it has lending operations” (Power, 2003, 170). While the World Bank itself has come under significant scrutiny, organizations such as UNICEF and the ILO are rarely critiqued. In fact, even Hulme (2010), who actively challenges the World Bank’s new emphasis on poverty, positions the approach of the Bretton Woods Institutions against that of the United Nations Development Program and other branches of the United Nations. My work challenges this assumption, by considering how children’s rights as promoted by UNICEF and the ILO may also share a surprising affinity with neoliberal development. Are all approaches to development that emphasize children’s rights really as alternative as may be assumed? For example, in what ways does UNICEF problematically reinforce normative paths to development and in what ways does it offer spaces to resist or mitigate some of neoliberalism’s worst effects?

I briefly analyze the politics of poverty knowledge, showing how forms of governance and ways of defining poverty are mutually reinforcing. Discourses of poverty are important because of the way that they legitimate policies and inequalities that serve to (re)produce poverty. For example, the value placed on 'efficiency' or 'cost-effectiveness' under neoliberal forms of development justifies addressing some people's needs over others. I then extend such analyses to consider ways in which the governance of children may similarly work to reinforce conceptualizations of poverty that serve to blame the poor for their own situations, thus legitimating a range of interventions. I conclude the section by arguing that a focus on street children's own experiences and views of poverty challenges the idea of expert technical knowledge being promoted by international development agencies, and reveals insights into the poverty as a relational phenomenon steeped not only in forms of material exclusion but also a lack of power to represent oneself or define one's poverty.

Dominant understandings of poverty, or what Lawson (2012) refers to as authoritative poverty knowledge, conceptualize poverty in economic terms, most commonly reflected through the use of income lines. The World Bank frequently measures poverty as those households living below \$1, with later modifications that focus on households living below \$2 a day. Despite acknowledgement, even on the part of leading World Bank economists, that such measures fail to consider the multifaceted nature of poverty, they still predominant in both development and social work circles. Yet, income-based poverty measures provide little insight into how poverty is produced and sustained (Hulme, 2010) and fail to consider the role of coercive political and ideological processes in (re)producing poverty (Mohan, 2011). In contrast, in this research, I incorporate a relational approach to poverty: "one that first views persistent poverty as the consequence of historically developed economic and political relations, and second, that emphasizes poverty and inequality as an effect of social categorization and identity" (Mosse, 2010, 1157). Such an approach is in direct contrast to the individualism of neoliberal rational choice models.

The creation of knowledge about poverty, or 'development' as it is often referred to in the international context, cannot be disentangled from the political motivations of those commissioning poverty studies. The way poverty is defined is intimately related to structures of power and overt and covert processes of political contestation (Hulme, 2010, 55). Roy (2010) refers to the power to produce authoritative knowledge about poverty and its alleviation as 'poverty capital'. Such forms of knowledge are understood as "certain, legitimate and undeniably correct" (Roy, 2010, 31). As the dominant producers of data on poverty, organizations such as the World Bank and UNICEF play a big role in our understandings of poverty, development and childhood. St. Clair (2006) argues that the framing of

poverty is an act of imagination. Poverty definitions are partial pictures drawn with the tools of various disciplines. In the case of global poverty, the tools from economics dominate. In short this matters because how one defines poverty influences the solutions to that poverty.

One of the problems with new emphases on poverty reduction is that they serve to reinforce problematic understandings of poverty and its causes. Since 2000, the World Bank's revitalized leadership in promoting poverty reduction has included establishing robust and systematic ways of representing, analyzing and theorizing about poverty (Green 2006). This has resulted in a tendency of international institutions to define the content of the agenda and the methodology for studying poverty as well as the issues which are identified as priorities for the poor, a tendency reinforced by the Bank's new poverty reduction agenda. While the World Bank does formally acknowledge the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, economic growth in and of itself is still posited as the main way to achieve poverty reduction. World Bank reports rarely (if at all) consider histories and geographies of power, exclusion, or redistribution as either causes of, or solutions to, poverty, and never as produced through international interconnections of political and socioeconomic processes. In viewing poverty as a national problem, the World Bank fails to consider the role of international inequalities in poverty (re)production. While it positions itself as the defender of the poor, its hesitancy to promote substantial structural reform of international systems not only limits effective poverty reduction but actively works to sustain inequalities. I look at similar arguments when it comes to issues related to child labor and poverty, suggesting that organizations will speak out against child labor but are not willing to address the international inequalities that contribute to exploitation or children's need to work in the first place.

Development knowledge, then, is instrumental in that it is made to work towards certain policies (Green, 2006), and is often constructed in such a way as to actually complement the neoliberal policies simultaneously being promoted by the same organizations producing poverty data (St. Clair, 2006). For example, the success of neoliberal globalization is 'proven' with data showing that poverty has been reduced in countries that have embraced neoliberal models (Kabeer, 2003). In a 2006 evaluation of World Bank research, Deaton, Vinayak, Lustig, and Rogoff (2006) found that the Bank used untested research that supported its pro-globalization stance to "proselytize on behalf of Bank policy without taking a balanced view of the evidence, and without expressing appropriate skepticism. Internal research that was favorable to Bank positions was given great prominence, and unfavorable research ignored" (Deaton, et al, 2006, 6, cited in Hulme, 2010, 149). In this sense, certain forms of knowledge are favored at the expense of others. In particular, 'scientific knowledge' has been seen as key to solving the poverty problem (O'Connor, 2001), most often through numerical constructions of poverty, which

are thought to be more objective. However, what and who is included in such measures is actually a highly political process (St. Clair, 2006).

By examining poverty knowledge, by which I specifically refer to the political process of producing 'data' on poverty, through the lens of childhood, I expose how assumptions inherent in mainstream interpretations of children's rights reinforce problematic conceptions of what child poverty looks like and how to best address that poverty. In doing so, such discourses ironically end up reaffirming individual and country responsibility for poverty and overlook the role of structural inequalities. Orthodox development planning presents poverty and a lack of economic growth as technical problems to be solved with the aid of experts (Booth, 2011). Claims to universal technical expert knowledge construct analyses as objective and non-political (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994). Yet, supposedly impartial academic analyses, together with international institutions and development experts legitimate particular development 'truths' while obscuring other processes that contribute to inequality and social exclusion (Escobar, 1995; T. Mitchell, 2002). In the case of Egypt, for example, Timothy Mitchell (1995) argues that World Bank and USAID reports depict poverty as a result of the tangible limits of nature, in this case a lack of farmable land, and overpopulation.⁴ Once poverty is defined as natural, issues of powerlessness, politics and social inequality fade into the background (Mitchell, 1995). Even more worrisome, Mitchell argues that the World Bank and USAID present themselves as experts external to the problem, obscuring their own role in Egyptian politics, unequal terms of trade, and the greater consumption of meat that is fueling food shortages. By reframing Egyptian poverty, Mitchell makes a clear connection between the power to define a problem, determining the boundaries of what is included, and the solutions to that problem.

I extend such arguments to debates about child labor. I argue that framing child labor as a technical problem to be eliminated silences debates about the conditions in which children are working and whether eliminating child labor is even a desirable goal in and of itself. Yet, as I outline in the following chapter, World Bank-supported policies directly contributed to the removal of price subsidies, increased unemployment and poverty, and exacerbated inequalities. Such connections challenge the idea that the Bank is an expert 'external' to the problem. Additionally, such a framing facilitates interventions or campaigns focused on reforming behaviors of individual families, rather than addressing the relationships and structural inequalities that allow children to be exploited in the first

⁴ In the case of overpopulation, an explanation many Peruvians gave for child poverty, Mitchell (1995) similarly asks what 'over' is referring to. He points out that while many rural families have more children than wealthier families, they still consume fewer resources than European and US countries. As I argue in Chapter Two, in the case of Peru, overpopulation is a claim that specifically targets indigenous women, and in doing so, overlooks centuries of exploitation and moral discourses about superiority.

place. In doing so, the causes of poverty frequently get confused with correlates of that poverty (Green & Hulme, 2005). For example, I contend that in the case of child poverty, a focus on child labor or removing children from the street, characteristics that are both *correlated* with poverty, do not get at the root causes of that poverty, such as centuries of dispossession, adverse incorporation into global markets, or the exploitative conditions under which children work and live, as I outline in Chapter Two. In mistakenly attacking something like child labor, instead of poverty and exploitation, Cammack's (2003) concern that in attacking 'global poverty', we are actually attacking the poor themselves seems apt. Links between children's poverty and the poverty of their parents is also sometimes equated with beliefs that parents are to blame for child poverty, or at the very least, in need of paternalistic interventions aimed at reforming parental behavior. Such efforts ultimately justify neoliberal governance and increased regulation while obscuring how policies and discourses differently assign economic and moral value to people.

A reliance on 'scientific knowledge' to address poverty has led to decontextualized and technical responses to poverty, and reduced the problem of poverty to the characteristics of individuals or households, abstracted from class and other power relations (Green & Hulme, 2005; Harriss, 2007). Harriss argues that poverty becomes a tangible entity, a state that is external to the people affected by it; individuals or households fall into it, instead of being seen as the consequence of social relations or of the categories through which people classify and act upon the social world. Such ways of conceptualizing poverty separates it from the social processes of the accumulation and distribution of wealth, which depoliticizes it, making poverty a social aberration rather than an aspect of the ways in which the modern state and market society act (Harriss, 2007, 3). Alternatively, rather than seeing poverty as an abnormality that must be eliminated, I argue that it is a direct outgrowth of uneven capitalist development and historical and social relations (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001; Green, 2006).

Of mainstream approaches to poverty, social capital approaches make some effort to consider the role of social relations in shaping people's ability to leave poverty, and are now part of post-Washington consensus approaches to poverty reduction efforts. Social capital is defined as the connections and social support networks that people can access in their day-to-day lives (Moser, 2009). The World Bank (2001) writes, "Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society-it is the glue that holds it together" (as cited by Rankin, 2002, 4). On one level, such an inclusion represents an important shift from conceptualization of poverty as simply economic. However, social capital approaches as advocated by the World Bank tend to place an

emphasis on specifically ‘empowering’ people to participate in the market and consumer economies (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011), reinforcing understandings of development as ultimately about economic growth. Social capital theories have been challenged for diverting attention away from inequalities and power differentials in access to resources (Harriss, 2002; Fine, 2001) and shift an emphasis on the role of the state in the provision of social goods to that of poor communities themselves (Radcliffe, 2004). Molyneux (2002) argues that a concern for social capital partly represents a ‘sticking plaster’ approach to development which masks structural issues, including the uneven distribution of income and assets and cannot substitute for effective economic policy and redistributive measures. While recognizing the deeply problematic ways in which ideas of social capital have been invoked, I nonetheless suggest that the insights of some social capital theorists about the importance of social networks are essential to understanding children’s experiences of poverty. I adapt these insights to a relational approach to poverty, specifically seeking to highlight, rather than minimize, the relationships that impede or reduce poverty. In this sense, I recognize a lack of social relations as a *correlate* of poverty, rather than a direct *cause* of that poverty. I ask the question: how can we increase and support caring relationships in poor children’s lives without shifting the responsibility for that poverty to the children/social networks themselves? I suggest that part of the answer may lie in taking a more critical approach to social relations to more specifically ask what social relations, practices, and uneven power dynamics on *multiple* inter-constituted scales produce poverty. In thinking about relations beyond those of a bounded community, analyses could reveal how adverse terms of incorporation into global economic systems, discrimination and exclusion of Perú’s indigenous population (both outlined in Chapter Two), the role of the repressive governance of public space in order to attract investors and appeal to wealthy residents, a focus on economic growth over reducing inequality, a lack of political representation, and multiple other factors, account for children’s poverty. Least of all, perhaps, this broader approach would reveal factors that shape people’s ability to acquire social capital as well as the uneven power dynamics that shape what counts as capital and how much such capital is valued.

Rather than looking at poverty as simply a lack of economic or social capital, this dissertation comes from the premise that poverty is inherently a political problem (Hulme, 2010). The way in which poverty and poor people are represented contributes to the (re)production of that poverty (Hickey & Bracking, 2005). There is an important body of work within critical poverty studies that exposes the ways in which representations of poverty are intricately connected with the maintenance of that poverty. “The range of possible political responses to poverty, and to different categories of poor people, is closely shaped by the ways in which political discourse frames issues of poverty and

responsibility for poverty reduction” (Hickey & Bracking, 2005, 854). Such discourses are influenced by the ways in which poverty is defined, and ideas related to ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving poor’. By situating poverty discourse in the context of geographically specific political economies of power and social relations, Jarosz and Lawson (2002) reveal how exploitative material practices are justified by naming others and blaming the persistence of poverty upon the poor themselves. Space itself is central to their analysis. They show how constructing rural spaces as poor and underdeveloped facilitates viewing people in those spaces as lazy and obsolescent. Other critical poverty scholars similarly examine the role of geographical imaginaries in maintaining poverty (Wilson & Grammenos, 2005; Green, 2006). In the case of Perú, poverty representations serve to render certain groups of people as inherently out of place in urban spaces. In particular, Perú’s indigenous population’s historical exclusion is deeply implicated in governance of urban spaces. Within the Andean countries, indigenous bodies are coded as belonging in rural spaces (Weismantel, 2001; Swanson, 2010). When they then come to work in city streets, they are viewed as threats to order and safety, intentionally trying to market their poverty to evoke greater responses from Lima’s wealthier residents, as I explore in Chapters Three and Four. Indigenous children are viewed as doubly out of place, both because of their age and ethnicity. In addition to being problematic in and of themselves, such depictions fail to look at the relationship between poverty, geography and historical processes of differential and adverse incorporation, as argued in Chapter Two.

Expanding critical poverty studies to include children’s experiences and perceptions of poverty is important on both a theoretical and empirical level. First, children are much more likely to live in poverty than are their adult counterparts (Villaran, 2010), necessitating greater attention paid to what poverty specifically means for young people. Most authoritative ways of measuring poverty do not accurately reflect children’s experiences of poverty. For example, measures based on per capita income or consumption fail to consider household inequalities based on age and gender (Hulme, 2010). A focus on street children in particular is especially important for poverty studies because such children are often excluded from national poverty measures if they do not reside in a typical household. Especially in Lima, where street children now sleep in much less visible locations, they are even more likely to fall under the radar. Second, young people are legally disenfranchised because of their age, without the power to formally represent themselves. Third, they are much more likely to fall into the category of ‘deserving,’ raising the possibility of exposing some of the contradictions in assuming that the poor are responsible for their own circumstances. And as mentioned, because of the near universal moral

support for childhood, projects carried out in their name are subject to much less critique, increasing their ability to reinforce problematic assumptions about poverty.

There is less work that has specifically focused on the representations of poor children (for an exception, see Swanson, 2007a, 2010; Sinervo & Hill, 2011; Ruddick, 1996). Yet, in presenting children as victims or in need, interventions in their name are justified. Ruddick (2003) critiques the way in which images of wide-eyed suffering children are utilized to generate donations to child-saving charities. Such campaigns depend on de-contextualized images, which serves to mask socio-structural relationships contributing to (or mediating) poverty. In particular, she argues that such images, often found in UNICEF publications or advertisements, allow people to see 'modernization' as a gift, and the appropriate solution to child poverty. Such representations distract from asking questions about why child poverty exists in the first place, or whether development as defined by aid organizations is really the best response. Certain representations of childhood similarly facilitate a discourse of blame directed at their parents. Aptekar (1991) argues that labeling children as 'abandoned' facilitates intervention. In his study of street children in Colombia, he suggests that while children have been in the streets since the 1800s, it was not until *la Violencia* (starting around 1948) that street children were considered abandoned. In the face of disruption to previous class boundaries, labeling children as abandoned allowed elites to criticize working-class families and maintain some form of privilege (Aptekar, 1991). In what ways are street children's parents similar 'blamed' and criticized for children's presence in the street in Perú? Have children's rights organizations furthered this tendency? I begin to explore some of these questions through an examination of shifts within welfare provision for poor children, looking at who takes responsibility for child well-being, and with what consequences.

1.5 Social Reproduction and Shifting Responsibility for Kids

This dissertation adds to studies which critically analyze how responsibilities for social reproduction are assigned to particular groups of people and institutions and how these assignments and workloads are shifting. Feminists view social reproduction as the work of maintaining existing life and reproducing the next generation (Bakker and Gill, 2003). Katz (2001) refers to it as the fleshy, messy, and indeterminate stuff of everyday life. Most literature on social reproduction highlights how under structural adjustment policies, women have to take up burdens of social reproduction, such as raising children, providing food, and running the household (Katz, 2001; Hays-Mitchell, 2002, Bakker and Silvey, 2008). Yet, in many parts of the world, children themselves play an active role in taking care of themselves and contributing to their own maintenance, and in some cases, the maintenance of their

family. In my focus on children as active contributors to social reproduction, I address an important omission in much literature that simply debates shifts between the state, civil society, and the family.

I consider not only who actually provides for, but also shifting beliefs about who *should* take care of poor kids. I suggest that such beliefs are important in explaining how certain poverty discourses are naturalized or challenged. In particular, I consider how the marginalization of care work, and beliefs that such work is part of parents' responsibility get translated into discourses of bad parenting (Kittay, 1998; Swanson, 2007a) and how such shifts may ironically be furthered by certain interpretations of children's rights (Nieuwenhuys, 2008). The balance of the state, international organization, private firms, community groups and a wealth of other actors have shifted under neoliberal approaches to governance. However, I challenge notions that the state and civil society and the local and global are entirely separate, suggesting that new forms of governance especially blur the boundaries. The increased role of transnational organizations is changing the relationship between the nation-state and social policy (Ferguson, 2010). Referred to as philanthro-capitalists, private charities and organizations such as the Gates Foundation provide funding for much needed social services while also using business methods to select investments, monitor performance, and ensure efficiency (Hulme, 2010). Gates (2008, 23) himself argues for creative capitalism, "an attempt to stretch the reach of market forces so that more companies can benefit from doing work that makes people better off" (as cited in Roy, 2010, 26). Critics suggest that such organizations serve to weaken local civil society, with potential negative repercussions for future poverty reduction. I consider the way in which private charities may reinforce what I refer to as the neoliberalization of social services, and some of the authoritative understandings of poverty mentioned earlier. By neoliberalization of social services, I refer not only to a decrease in state provision for the poor but also examine the extension of market-based values into social services themselves.

Literature on the neoliberalization of social services within the global north is rarely considered in conjunction with work on aid and charity in the context of the 'developing' world. However, because of a big emphasis in development strategies on reducing the state, and a recent focus on poverty reduction that is part of the post-Washington consensus, an expansion of the literature to the global south is essential. Extending an analysis to the case of Perú is interesting for two reasons. First, Perú never had a strong welfare state, raising the question of what distinguishes current phases of social service provision from previous ones. Second, the role of transnational organizations and meta-narratives of development plays an important role in shaping the governance of poor children in Perú, something that is not addressed in a US/European context. In particular, I consider to what extent aid is

a way to impose morality, and justify increased regulation. I build on claims that aid is about more than giving (or lending) money but also about spreading and reinforcing certain ideologies. Green (2006, 1121) highlights how inequalities in power between aid donors and recipients “mean that the benefactor claims the power not only to judge the moral claims of the poor to assistance and to police them but also to set the terms of the assessment.” In this sense, charity is one apparatus mobilized in the management of the population (Atia, 2008).

While the state may not be meeting all of children’s needs, I emphasize that neoliberal development does not just ignore poverty and leave it to the market, as some critics suggest but rather is concerned with specific ways of regulating and responding to that poverty (Ferguson, 2010; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Peck and Tickell’s (2002) distinction between the roll-out state and the roll-back state is a useful one. They argue that the actual role of the state has not decreased quantitatively, but rather changed qualitatively. Roll-back neoliberalism refers to the dismantling of the state and roll-out neoliberalism refers to “the purposeful *construction and consolidation* of neoliberalized state forms, modes of governance, and regulatory relations.” I suggest that their distinction maps nicely onto shifts between what Williamson (1990) refers to as the Washington Consensus and the post-Washington Consensus, in which an emphasis on leaving everything to the market was slowly replaced with a focus on public-private partnerships, a greater role for civil society, and recognition of the need for ‘good governance’ or what I would refer to as appropriate regulation. However, rather than seeing ‘roll-back’ and ‘roll-out’ neoliberalism as occurring one after the other, I argue that both can exist simultaneously. Places that are considered marginal to Perú’s overall development strategies are for the most part neglected. In contrast, places that are more visible, or assigned more economic value, are subject to increased regulation. “A poverty management perspective therefore implies that the precise balance between a more obviously punitive and more obviously accommodative response to homelessness will vary significantly over space (and time), depending upon the presence of these kinds of organizations, the motivations of the different agencies responsible for formulating a response to homelessness, and the balance of power between these agencies in any one place” (deVerteuil, May & von Mahs, 2009, 654).

By looking at the uneven geography of welfare services, I respond to Peck and Tickell’s (2002) critique of studies that naturalize neoliberalism. They suggest that neoliberalism is a contradictory project and does not always take the same forms everywhere (also see Ferguson, 2010; Jessop, 2002). Even though neoliberalism may be playing a big role in social service provision, the regulation of children cannot be reduced to a single logic. In this sense, I suggest that Peck and Tickell’s (2002) own

observation that a deeply 'interventionist' agenda is emerging around social issues, such as crime and welfare, is only partly true in the case of Perú. While more aspects of children's lives are subject to formal regulation, in practice, responses to street children are highly uneven.

Scholars have drawn attention to how techniques and practices of governance have changed under neoliberalism (Rose, 1996; Lerner, 2000). The idea of neoliberalism as governmentality looks at how both the economy and the state are involved in the construction of autonomous responsabilized neoliberal subjects, aimed at transforming recipients of welfare into entrepreneurial subjects, who may be motivated to become responsible for themselves (England & Ward, 2007). In this sense, neoliberal projects are intricately connected with authoritarian understandings of poverty; emphasizing personal responsibility and self-sufficiency serves to blame poverty on the poor themselves. Neoliberal forms of governance thus highlight individual causes and individual decentralized remedies (Kingfisher, 2007). Self-government, or certain emphases on community networks/social capital can replace the state as the main provider of social welfare (Mitchell, Marston, & Katz, 2004). Peck and Tickell (2002) argue that new forms of neoliberalism are "concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s." In this sense, welfare is never simply administrative but rather is 'saturated with ideological presuppositions' about family responsibility, the moral economy of the poor, understandings of independence and work, and appropriate gender roles (and I would add age-based roles) (Peck, 2001, 52).

The title of this dissertation, 'Managing Poverty: Care and Control in Peruvian Street Children's Everyday Lives' gets at the heart of this contradiction. On one hand, social services are about helping people survive, 'make do' within the conditions of their daily lives. However, on the other hand, responses to poverty are also about control. The line between care and control is not always easy to determine (Piven & Cloward, 1993), especially when those in question are children. Rather than looking at service provision, Kingfisher (2007) consciously uses the word 'manage' in her study of homelessness in Canada to specifically highlight how shelters and other programs are more about control than about serving the homeless population. Part of my decision to entitle this dissertation 'managing poverty' relates directly to Kingfisher's concerns. De Verteuil et al (2009, 652) define 'poverty management' as "the creation of spatial and temporal structures designed to regulate and manage the spillover costs associated with so-called disruptive populations." However, this dissertation does not just explore the regulation of children but also specifically examines what children themselves are doing to work through, survive and even create opportunities for themselves in the face of their poverty. I suggest

that in order to understand poverty, it is essential to consider not only how poor children are regulated but also how they themselves respond.

If social services are about the institutionalization of middle-class norms, as has been claimed in the context of the United States and Europe, in what ways does the spread of social policy to the global south similarly entail the spread of Western middle-class ideals of capitalist modernity? In what way is social service provision about disciplining working children and their parents? Disciplining the neoliberal subject “may be based either on a social work model of helping, training, and empowering, or on a police model of governing every aspect of life” (England & Ward, 2007, 13). Because children are represented by the dual appeals to vulnerability and delinquency, I suggest that they are particularly useful lens through which to examine the way the poor are subjectified.

Mitchell, Marston and Katz (2004) challenge the idea of the autonomous subject for failing to consider what exactly autonomy means. I suggest that in the case of children, autonomy is equated with future autonomy. In fact, a supposed desire to open up greater possibilities for children when they reach adulthood exacerbates understandings of their current vulnerability and need for protection. While self-sufficiency and individual responsibility are considered key elements of the neoliberal subject (Fraser, 2003), children themselves are in many ways denied self-responsibility, as reflected in anti-labor laws and dominant discourses presenting childhood as a time of dependency. At the same time, most people accept on some level that children need care and support in their lives. It is specifically for this reason that I argue that a focus on children reveals the impossibility of the self-sufficient individual subject and necessitates new ways of thinking about political subjectivity. In particular, I embrace Ruddick’s (2007) notion of inter-subjectivity, which incorporates feminist critiques of the notion of independence. Feminist care ethicists challenge false ideas about dependency. Instead, they focus on connections, emphasizing social relationships of mutuality and trust (Tronto, 1993; Lawson, 2007). Care ethicists argue that everybody gives and needs care, in direct contrast to neoliberal attitudes of independence and self-sufficiency (Lawson, 2007a; Kittay, 1998; Tronto, 1993). Yet, the work of caring itself is marginalized. Not recognizing such work, which is often done by women and lower-income people, and in this case, even children themselves, serves to reinforce myths about the self-sufficient subject. Examining social reproduction through the lens of care ethics also specifically draws attention to the ways in which unequal power relationships facilitate the privatization of care to focus on individuals and communities, rather than historical and current systems that shape our need for care and who is responsible for that care. Admitting our inter-dependency and the important role of care in everyone’s lives would undermine the legitimacy of the inequitable distribution of power, resources and

privilege (Tronto, 1993, 111). Because children's need for care is more apparent and accepted than that of adults, they are a particularly useful lens through which to challenge such ideas.

I expand social reproduction to look not simply at the act of producing the next generation but also to consider cultural production, and the way dominant ideologies are reworked, reproduced and in some cases resisted. A key aspect of the spread of neoliberal ideas that is often neglected centers on the actual processes by which people come to internalize (or resist) hegemonic ideologies. I argue that children's rights provide a more subtle (and less obviously controversial) way in which certain assumptions of modern capitalist society, such as a belief that children should be in school and the home, rather than in the streets or other public spaces, are naturalized. In the specific case of Perú, I suggest that anti-child labor and begging campaigns, modeled after children's rights to be free from exploitative labor, specifically provide the moral justification for the rounding up of hundreds of working and street children, and serve as an active way for the Peruvian government both to establish international legitimacy by demonstrating its commitment to children's rights, and to clean up prime urban areas in an effort to attract global capital.

1.6 Children's Rights in a Neoliberal Context

This work offers new ways of theorizing the relationship between children's rights and neoliberal development. There are very few existing studies that examine both discourses together. When they are considered in tandem, it is most often to emphasize the role of neoliberal economic policies in limiting the fulfillment of the CRC. In particular, neoliberalism is mentioned in reference to the ways in which cuts to social spending and a reduced role of the state have made it more difficult for countries to fulfill promises of the CRC. Marxist and feminist scholars have highlighted the trend towards increased privatization of social reproduction, and Silvey and Bakker (2008) argue that poor children are the ones bearing the brunt of this shift. Throughout Central and South America, research found that promises from children's rights agendas had been 'swept aside' in a rush to reduce state spending (Green, 1998; Maclure & Sotelo, 2004). Inversely, children's rights are often seen as an antidote to the negative repercussions of capitalism. In fact, Eglantyne Jebb, the founder of Save the Children and one of the original advocates for children's rights, emphasized that such rights were necessary because children bear the brunt of economic restructuring, war and political mistakes but have no power to defend themselves (Hammarberg, 1990). UNICEF played a leading role protesting the negative repercussions of structural adjustment policies, culminating in its 1987 report, *Adjustment with a Human Face*, and near universal ratification of the CRC has arguably done much to put children's rights on international and national agendas.

However, children's rights themselves are subject to competing interpretations. The CRC emphasizes three main types of rights, referred to as the three 'Ps': protection, provision and participation (Skelton, 2008). Which of those rights are prioritized varies significantly depending on the context. McCrudden (2008) critiques the tendency of human rights advocates to forge an interpretation based on their own biases and preferences and Cantwell (2011) points out that many groups and organizations that are theoretically promoting children's rights demonstrate great distance from the actual legal instrument (the CRC). They suggest that social interpretations of children's rights (through administrative guidance, target-setting, regulation, inspection of services by non-legal experts) are given predominance over legal interpretations. While this potentially allows proactive decision making in contrast to what is essentially a reactive role of courts, it has also meant that rights are susceptible to being reinterpreted and even subverted to service pre-existing, supervening objectives. In this sense, while children's rights may not be inherently 'neoliberal,' the way in which they are invoked and utilized can be seen as working hand in hand with neoliberal projects.

Human rights as they play out tend to focus on individual rights, and in doing so, can further reinforce neoliberal values. In fact, Robinson suggests that human rights are considered the 'moral wing' of neoliberalism, "valorizing individualism, autonomy, and liberty, and comfortably occupying the global moral high ground" (1998, 58). Children's rights have been critiqued for reinforcing understandings of universal individual subjects who act with 'free will'. Kjørholt (2008) challenges this emphasis on 'choice' for its failure to reflect the constraints on children's ability to act. Aitken, Lund, and Kjørholt (2008, 10) also critique universal rights based on "a progressive neoliberal individualism that assumes identities are always already constituted and fixed." In line with other geographers who argue that identity is dependent on social interactions, they critique human rights' focus on the sovereign individual. This echoes concerns from care ethics, mentioned in the previous section. Additionally, a focus on individuals with equal rights masks actual inequalities in people's abilities to access those rights (Drybread, 2009) and "inevitable dependencies and asymmetries that form part of the human condition" (Kittay, 1998, 14). Similarly, Nieuwenhuys (2008, 150) writes that current children's rights agendas are 'prescribed by global neoliberal economics' and focus on allowing each individual "to become a full participant in the new market-approach to development," arguments echoed by Lund (2008) and Punch (2008). Nieuwenhuys argues that rights-based approaches, when disembodied from notions of social justice, ironically help justify states' disengagement from social and cultural reproduction. Such arguments raise the possibility that human rights agendas may not be as different from neoliberal agendas as they may seem at first glance.

In theory, children's rights represent an important shift from past responses to children's needs and well-being. Instead of having to be dependent on charity, children's rights are supposed to provide children with entitlements and the ability to make demands on the state. However, in practice, in Perú as in elsewhere, I suggest that the fulfillment of children's rights in large part still depends on notions of charity. In this sense, the break with the past is not as drastic as some scholars claim. Freeman (2011, 22) argues that giving children rights without the right to representation is of symbolic importance, nothing more. While his point about the predominance of rhetoric over actual concrete investment in child well-being is well taken, I suggest that it is nonetheless important to embrace a wider understanding of what 'impact' might look like. It is here where I borrow from important work done in socio-legal studies. McCann (1994) suggests that it is necessary to look beyond the actual results of litigation. I extend McCann's argument to suggest that while children's rights may not lead to concrete changes in on-the-ground policies, they have had significant impact on spreading beliefs about what constitutes a proper childhood, and have worked to reinforce the relationship between modernity and the disappearance of child labor. Childhood is increasingly understood as a time of innocence, vulnerability and dependence, when children should play and be in school, not be working or spending a lot of time in the streets (Valentine, 2004; Boyden, 1991). Yet, clearly such representations are not how many young people experience childhood. I examine both how such images have affected the regulation of poor children, and how children themselves negotiate and reshape their own childhoods. In particular, and feeding back into earlier arguments, I argue that Western conceptions of childhood as reflected in the CRC have become linked with development and modernity.

I argue that supporting children's rights themselves has become an indicator of development, and is an important part of gaining international legitimacy. Yet, the same organizations and policy makers that claim the moral force of protecting and furthering children's rights implement practices and circulate discourses that contain, regulate and impoverish the very same children. By examining children's rights in tandem with neoliberal governance and policy, I reveal the contradictions (and effectiveness as a tool of gaining power) of invoking the moral high ground as a way of gaining more support for formal children's rights legislation, and the way in which this very same legislation specifically provides a tool for the further punishment and dispossession of those already poor.

Human rights (and I would argue by extension, children's rights) have a monopoly on dominant approaches to social justice (Robinson, 1999; Merry, 2006). Pupavac (2002) argues that those who critique human rights risk being branded as heretics outside the contemporary moral order. In such regards, NGO workers and government officials need to embrace 'rights' as part of any agenda

concerned with improved well-being, poverty reduction, or inequality. While children's rights have arguably done much to put children on national and international agendas, and have the potential to shift development concerns towards social well-being rather than economic growth, children's rights themselves have been criticized for re-colonizing ideas, in which Western-based understandings of childhood become dominant, and in doing so, discredit other views of childhood (Leibel, 2006). Officially, the preamble to the CRC recognizes the need to pay due deference to traditions and cultural values of each people, and in this sense, indicates that one-size-fits all global approaches will not be appropriate (Tobin, 2011). However, such a statement both fails to reflect the conditional lending and pressure that comes from international organizations, as well as the ways in which certain understandings of childhood become associated with development.

International children's rights regimes themselves assume that there is a model of childhood development that is universally applicable: "the convention institutionalizes and universalizes the predominant Western social risk-management model of childhood development which emphasizes individual causations and professional intervention and de-emphasizes the influence of the wider social, economic, political and cultural circumstances" (Pupavac, 2001, 101). Childhood is conceptualized as a period in which children should develop, play and learn, while being safeguarded from adult responsibilities. Yet, by setting such standards, other childhoods are not only erased but "the Western model of childhood becomes the standard by which to judge southern societies" (Lewis, 1998, 95). In particular, critics suggest children's rights regimes contain elements of "colonial paternalism where the adult-Northerner offers help and knowledge to the infantilized South" (Burman, 1994, 241). Failure to realize Western models of childhood then becomes ground for intervention.

Rights as a form of regulation

The language of children's rights provides legal support for some of the mainstream conceptions of poverty and development explained above. In particular, indicators chosen to measure progress made towards implementing the CRC actually serve to reinforce conceptions of poverty as a self-contained problem in need of management and intervention. Such measures offer supposedly objective snapshots of how a nation is doing, as measured through the experience of their children. While children's rights legislation officially emphasizes the need for international financial (and technical support) to help countries fulfill their obligations, support continues to be based on a voluntary basis. In this sense, children's rights, similar to the MDGs⁵, reinforce understandings that poverty is the primary

⁵ Officially, the MDGs are supposed to be a joint effort by countries from both the global north and the global south to make progress in poverty reduction, education, health and the other themes represented in the goals. Yet, only one of the eight

responsibility of countries in the global south, who are labeled as failing when they do not make adequate progress towards such goals. Such an attitude positions “adults in the south...as the abusers because their children’s experiences violate the image of childhood held in the West” (Pupavac, 2001, 102). In such regards, the indicators chosen not only fail to account for very different experiences of childhood but serve to further depoliticize poverty (Du Toit, 2009) and enable ‘experts’ to act on those defined as ‘lacking’ using one-size-fits-all policies (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011).

While structural adjustment policies and conditional lending may have been challenged at a theoretical level, I suggest that donations for specific projects related to poverty nonetheless involve very specific conditionalities. I argue that donations for projects relating to children’s rights and well-being are arguably a new more politically appealing form of conditionality. In doing so, I contribute to debates about the role of aid in promoting particular forms of development practice (Willis, 2005, Atia, 2008). In order to access social service benefits, children and their families are subject to surveillance by Northern donors (Nieuwenhuys, 2008). NGOs themselves play an important role in sorting out the deserving and undeserving poor through requirements for program participation. Bebbington (2003) found that close relationships between NGOs and donors and government officials leads them to adopt economic and individualist conceptions of poverty. He argues that this limits interventions towards the most productive poor. This finding has important repercussions for theories that emphasize a central role of civil society in empowering previously excluded people and representing their needs to the state. In Chapters Three and Five, I examine street children’s relationships with NGOs, considering both how NGOs frame and conceptualize child poverty, and how children themselves rework such images to create (or limit) their own opportunities.

Incorporating Foucault’s understanding of governance, I consider in what ways certain discourses, including children’s rights, may be reinforcing and naturalizing the neoliberalization of social services. Foucault (1977, 1991) extended understandings of governance beyond top-down formal state apparatuses to also consider the ways in which regulation takes place on multiple small-scales, such as through schools, state welfare agencies, private households, in formal associations of civil society and informal daily interaction (Fraser, 2003), all of which contribute the ways in which people accept certain regimes of practices as natural (Dean, 2010). From a governance perspective, ideologies related to neoliberalism are generated not just from the state then, but from daily experiences in a range of social spaces and are intimately tied to the governance of the individual (Read, 2009). Such a perspective

MDGs discusses involvement of the wealthy countries in the form of financial aid. And it is the one goal that does not have a concrete time line, and provides little indication of enforcing wealthy countries to meet their obligations.

returns to earlier understandings of government, which did not just refer to formal political structures but also self-control, guidance for the family and for children, and managing the household, among other aspects (Foucault, 1991; Lemke, 2001). Governance is concerned with the legitimization of domination and the types of knowledge that are integral to such legitimization. Knowledge cannot be separated from power; rather, than being neutral, particular types of knowledge work to promote particular 'politics of truth' (Lemke, 2002). Scholars that have subsequently elaborated on, or critiqued, Foucault for not paying enough attention to the ways in which hegemony is secured, suggest that the discursive framing of issues is essential to legitimating strategies of governance (Jessop, 2004; Penna, 2005). It is here where I suggest that dominant interpretations of children's rights legislation and their accompanying discourses play a significant role in naturalizing certain aspects of neoliberal discourse and policy. Ideals promoted in the CRC legitimate intervention into a greater number of areas, such as the family and NGOs, while framing such intervention, and rationalities promoting individual responsible and discipline, as in the name of the moral good.

Normative discourses of childhood based on international rights can be used to constrain children by suggesting to them how they should be, what they should have, and how they should behave (Cheney, 2007, 67). In particular, globalized discourses from both the CRC and the ILO enframe children in an attempt to tame them (Aitken, et al, 2008). As I explore in-depth in Chapter Three, assumptions that school and work are incompatible do not accurately describe the experiences of many children, including those in this study. Yet, in presenting assumptions of childhood as a time for school and not work, the CRC "implicitly invalidates the lives of poor, working and street children who do not fit the Western stereotype, and who thereby risk being branded an aberration and in need of cure or correction" (Green, 1998, 199). Ruddick (2003) critiques international organizations for spreading idealized understandings of childhood while at the same time withdrawing resources to make those childhoods possible. While I largely agree with her premise, I nonetheless challenge her use of the word 'ideal'. I argue that the issue is not simply a lack of resources to make such childhoods come true but rather the assumption that this type of childhood is really the only or best way of conceptualizing childhood. Instead, I consider what we can learn from alternative conceptualizations of childhood, such as emphasis on children as active contributors to their own development, as well as that of their families and their societies more generally (Cussianovich, 2006). Such an argument parallels critiques of neoliberal development that emphasize that it is not simply about allowing people to participate in economic growth but rather about re-conceptualizing the way development itself is being defined.

While children's rights officially emphasize children as legal subjects, attempts to garner support for such rights ironically appeal to images of children as vulnerable and in need of protection, reinforcing problematic representations of children as deserving and needy. Cantwell (2011) specifically suggests that sentimentalism has been essential to children's rights campaigning and Ruddick (2003) argues that appeals to needy children serve as a way to justify aid and neoliberal 'modernization' as a gift. In this sense, particular images of children serve to invalidate or 'render invisible' experiences and interests that do not fit such images. Invernizzi and Williams (2011:9) argue that "the idealized position and emotionally charged image of the child is embedded in the public image of an organization's work and inevitably part of its fundraising strategies, constructed to attract donors rather than reflect actual experiences." As I argue in Chapter Three, because street children do not match such images, they are often understood as outside the category of 'child' for which international organizations and NGOs wish to advocate.

The image of the vulnerable child is often presented in contrast to the image of an empowered child. Yet, Invernizzi and Williams (2011) specifically suggest that the image of the 'disempowered' child who needs increased participation is equally problematic. They argue that children are sometimes being asked to participate in events that are not always in the best interests of the rights of other children. Kjørholt (2008) in particular picks up on this tension in her analysis of UNICEF campaigns against child labor. She highlights a particular incident in which Mary, a child from the Philippines, was invited in honor of the 10th anniversary of the CRC to an international conference on children's rights. In the middle of her prepared speech about the need to 'stop child labor,' she broke into tears, asking, "But how can I speak up in support of stopping child labor? My family needs the money I earn! They cannot afford to pay for my school!" (as cited in Kjørholt, 2008, 31). The contradiction that Mary experiences between her ability to participate in global forums and have her voice 'heard', and pressure on her to advocate against other forms of participation speaks to paradoxes within discourses of international children's rights. Kjørholt argues that children become 'symbolic participants' in a larger neoliberal agenda. The contested nature of participation has been raised by critical development scholars more generally (see Hickey & Mohan, 2005) but has not been as widely applied to the role of child participation. Debates about children's participation speak to broader conversations about what inclusion means. Brenner and Theodore (2002) draw attention to the introduction of new forms of social inclusion based on inserting individuals into the labor market, concerns highlighted in the context of children's rights by Nieuwenhuys, Lund and Skelton (2008). Token acts of participation may serve as a way for development practitioners to gain international approval or funding without actually creating a

greater role for children's involvement in political decisions (Cantwell, 2011). In this sense, 'participation' may serve a similar role as do the poverty-reduction efforts mentioned earlier.⁶ By examining the meaning street children themselves assign to rights, or whether they have even heard of them, I directly examine how the CRC may be repositioning children as political actors. Given the CRC's big emphasis on the child as a political subject, I highlight the possible contradiction with programs carried out in children's name, rather than in conjunction or partnership with them.

While law can be a powerful tool for enforcing change, it also can be used to maintain uneven power structures. In its analysis of using an international human rights framework to attack poverty, the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) warns that "legal powers have often been seen to maintain power for the rich and those who have assets to be protected, rather than defending the powerless" (2003, 5). And in fact, protection from the poor is also often framed in terms of rights, such as the right to private property. Analyses of human rights fifty years after the Universal Declaration indicate that they have had little impact on those most in need of such rights (see Evans, 1998). Evans suggests that most studies of human rights either focus on their philosophical justification or their legal implication, leaving little space for questions related to power, which groups benefit most from rights, and what exclusionary practices rights discourses sustain. Despite claims that human rights are universal, critics have pointed out that "rights are concerned with establishing and maintaining the moral claims that legitimate certain interests" (Evans, 1998, 4), and provide a moral high-ground for certain approaches. Thus, as I argue in the empirical chapters, a language of children's rights has been used to regulate and sometimes punish children and their parents for failing to self-discipline according to the logic of neoliberal subjectivity.

Rights, social control, and revanchism

I argue that children's rights are being used as a new technology of social control, providing the justification for increased regulation of poor children and their families through both social services and the control of public space. By appealing to images of lost childhoods, it is particularly easy to construct street children as a population as 'in need,' in which interventions "via techniques, rationalities, and programs of poverty reduction" are justified (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011, 4). Because the regulation of children is not only considered natural, but in most cases, positive, it has not been subject to the same critique as have other social welfare responses.

⁶ Additionally, in a move to create greater participation, debates about whether more participation is necessarily better are often overlooked (Skelton, 2008). The majority of children in my study already have to juggle work and school, making it at least worth asking in what ways more formal participation would add additional burdens and responsibilities in working children's lives.

In exploring the juxtaposition and partnerships between children's rights laws and revanchist regulatory laws, I consider to what extent law continues to work for the haves at the expense of the have-nots (Galanter, 1974). I apply insights from feminist scholars such as Kabeer (1994) to examine how unequal relationships between children⁷ and adults (rather than between men and women, which is Kabeer's focus) contribute to forms of exclusion. Children's legal exclusion from the work force in some regards serves to further their state of dependency and political marginalization. However, this project does not suggest that the problematic conditions under which many children work are acceptable. Rather, I specifically draw attention to the work that laws and the particular ways in which childhood is framed and presented have unintended and sometimes, specifically negative, effects. In addition to looking at the limitations of rights law, I consider the way in which laws have been used to criminalize the poor (Wacquant, 2003) and to reinforce understandings of legitimate uses of public space (Sylvestre, 2010). I examine to what extent children's rights are invoked to support such measures, as becomes clear through anti-child labor and anti-begging measures, and what possibilities they may offer for resistance, with their emphasis on participation and protection. In particular, I consider the possibility that the select promotion of certain children's rights may ironically lead to worse outcomes for certain groups of children.

Examining urban transformation through the lens of childhood provides new insights into shifting representations of the city. While child workers may have been a typical part of the urban Peruvian landscape, and in some cases, even an indication of responsible hard working youth, 'modern' discourses of childhood contributed to a reframing of street children as either delinquents or victims (Ruddick, 1996). Such transitions parallel other shifts in urban representations. Development ideology and children's rights have combined to impact which behaviors are considered transgressions, or out of place. The city does not just offer a backdrop in which these conflicts play out but rather is a constitutive medium, "a means by which to construct an ethos of appropriate behavior" (Ruddick, 1996, 6). Cresswell (1996) reminds us that space comes with deeply encoded classifications of appropriate behaviors. People and behaviors which challenge such understandings are subject to increased regulations.

Narratives of development and conceptions of childhood are reinforced and resisted through the regulation of public space. Scholars writing predominantly in the context of the global north highlight the spread of zero-tolerance methods of policing (Beckett & Herbert, 2009) and what Smith

⁷ As mentioned, however, I incorporate ideas of intersectionality into my analysis, looking at how the experience of being a child, combined with other identity factors, such as class, gender and ethnicity, impacts experiences.

(1996) refers to urban revanchism, or the vengeful reclaiming of prime city spaces. Don Mitchell (1997) emphasizes the role of law in such conflicts, arguing that politicians have turned to law to justify removing those left behind by economic change. He suggests that there has been an 'annihilation of space by law' in which certain groups of people cannot be because they have nowhere to be. Thus, zero-tolerance policing and anti-homelessness ordinances make up important components of neoliberal governance strategies by regulating, and in many cases, removing, those who are unable to self-regulate. Such laws are steeped in moral imperatives, and work to blame and then punish those who are unable to 'successfully' integrate themselves into the market. In this dissertation I examine to what extent Lima's government has employed similar policing methods. Yet, in order to fully understand urban recuperation in the context of Latin American cities, I suggest that it is necessary to specifically consider the ways in which particular notions of order and security get tied to understandings of what it means to be 'developed'. As Swanson (2007b) points out, urban image is significantly influenced by beliefs about modernity. In this sense, I reiterate that it is essential to consider not simply imagined geographies of the 'Third World' but also imagined understandings of cities such as New York and Miami. An emphasis on trying to present cities that are safe for investment and tourism forecloses alternative models of urban development that might focus more on redistribution or social equality.

Research on the Latin American city and displacement of street traders tends to be separate from explorations of revanchist regulation of public space (for notable exceptions, see Swanson, 2010 and Galvis, 2011). Yet, connecting the two literatures offers important insights into how narratives of development affect the regulation of public space. My study adds the dimension of what displacement feels like for children, who do not have the ability to formalize their work because of their age, and thus are automatically outside the law. I argue that street children are considered doubly out of place because they are both children and ambulatory vendors, and thus particularly detract from desired urban images. In this way, the spread of understandings of 'universal' childhoods have ironically worked to further marginalize street children, by labeling their experiences of childhood as in need of fixing.

However, I do not just provide a grounded and empirically rich description of an instance of 'actually existing neoliberalism,' (Brenner and Theodore, 2002) but also critically engage with theories suggesting that urban neoliberalism will inevitably take the form of revanchism (see Galvis, 2011). I examine Smith's (2002) observation that zero-tolerance policies have become a 'global urban strategy'. Most studies of punitive regulation of public space have centered on cities in the global north. This dissertation contributes to a growing body of literature examining urban regulation in a vastly different context (see Swanson, 2010; Samara, 2005; Wacquant, 2003; Galvis, 2011). Without denying that

'neoliberalization' of economies and welfare services may be occurring, state-welfare regimes and NGOs nonetheless influence the specific shape of responses to child poverty. Focusing on cities outside of the global north offers new insights into both development and urban studies (Robinson, 2002). In particular, a focus on Perú not only reinforces uneven politics of knowledge production, but also shows how embracing neoliberal reforms is often a contradictory project, motivated at least in part as an effort to gain international support rather than any ideological commitment to the ideas behind them. The Peruvian government's interests do not always match up with the desires and goals of international financial institutions and governments in the global north (who themselves are also not a homogenous group). Is neoliberal policy just one of many tools that the Peruvian government selectively embraces to manipulate support and interests? Perú's neoliberalism still combines with elements of populism, as politicians seek support by directly providing their constituents with material goods, an active political strategy of Alberto Fujimori, Perú's ex-president credited with reforming the government most closely along the lines of IFI-prescribed neoliberalism. Thus, neoliberalism is always a contingent and contradictory process, in conversation with other cultural formations (Wilson, 2004). Because of Peruvian's long history of distrust of both the national government and Western influence, significant numbers of people, not only outside the government, but also within, resist aspects of neoliberalism, intensified by its association with United States' imperial dominance. I suggest that the fact that more than half of Perú's population was poor until recently changes discourses regarding responsibility, and people's understandings of what the government should do. This raises interesting questions about the relationship between poverty discourses and neoliberalism, and suggests a lot more unevenness in practices of governance. However, as I have been arguing throughout this chapter, given a tendency to distrust government motivations, the role of children's rights discourse and the social workers, educators and psychologists who often promote universal ideas of childhood, may actually be better positioned to naturalize neoliberal governance of social services and public space, and the authoritative definitions of poverty and subjectivity that accompany such governance.

By examining the social control of street children, this research provides a more nuanced account of the regulation of public space. Herbert (2011) says that while police discretion is important, they need to have some legal legitimacy on which to rely. I argue that child protection laws serve as a new partner in attempts to regulate public space. Although I largely conclude that Lima's municipality has engaged in revanchist regulation of public space, I take seriously de Verteuil et al's (2009) emphasis on a need to more carefully examine *differences* in the regulation of the homeless, or in this case, of street children, only some of whom are actually homeless. First, I suggest that by unpacking the 'state'

(see Peck, 2001; Painter, 1995), looking at some of the specific actors who are involved in policy implementation and execution, policies are more ambiguous and fragile than the literature implies (de Verteuil et al, 2009). Second, my focus on street children differs from the normal subject of urban reform, 'universal homeless' man. For example, Waldron suggests that homeless people are denied autonomy and thus reduced to the status of children. However, what does that mean when the person in the street is actually a child? By implication, not having autonomy is a natural state of childhood. Paternalistic interests are considered more appropriate and acceptable when the subjects are in fact children. By focusing on children, I show the way in which children's rights have provided a surprising partner for the regulation of public space, revealing how a language of protection is one of the main tropes through which children are removed. While in many ways such an emphasis ultimately serves to displace children, there is nonetheless more room to potentially subvert such aims through alternative appeals to children's rights, a topic I explore in Chapter Three. Finally, I look at how children themselves respond and negotiate with policies of urban regulation. There is very little literature that looks at how those subject to regulation push back. Yet, through their actions, children subvert, reinforce and reshape municipal policy. For example, in Chapter Four, I suggest that children's strategies in response to regulation, strategies which are highly spatial, have actually resulted in a more dispersed street population than in the past. Children's actions necessitate new ways of thinking about resistance that move beyond looking at formal organized resistance to instead consider the various tactics that people use to carve out more spaces for themselves.

1.7 Children's Agency and Resistance

A focus on children offers important insight into the ways in which dominant discourses are maintained and resisted. Mitchell et al (2004: 3) suggest that in order to understand why life's work is changing, we need to know more about the ways that individuals understand themselves as consumers, workers, and students, and how their subject positions are constituted and entrenched spatially through discourses and material and social practices. This dissertation responds to this call. I explore the idea of hybrid and shifting subjectivities, examining how children negotiate and redefine their agency through their attempts to survive and create more opportunities for themselves. The children's lives in this study are in direct contrast to abstract images of wide-eyed suffering children promoted by international aid organizations. Even though street children lead difficult lives, I argue that the use of such images ironically works to further children's marginality by denying them any agency and by decontextualizing children's situations from the relationships and structural conditions that contribute to exploitation. The spread of modern images of childhood as universal and ideal have served to further invalidate

alternative experiences of childhood. In this sense, suffering goes beyond an access to food and basic survival but also relates to the ways in which the internalization of certain value systems have served to increase feelings of inadequacy in many children's lives.

I argue that street children are viewed as not having proper childhoods, and must constantly negotiate the dual images of street children as either dangerous or as victims (Ansell, 2005). Such attitudes feed into discourses constructing street children as not part of a 'modern' nation while overlooking the ways in which their presence is ironically produced by the very conditions of uneven development. Discursive and economic processes work together to marginalize children as workers and as political subjects, helping to explain their persistent poverty. Children are viewed as 'out of place' in the street, which is considered the adult domain. Instead, they are understood as belonging in home or in school, and with the family, beliefs that have been reinforced by the spread of the CRC, as mentioned earlier, and by international children's rights organizations influenced by idealized experiences of Western childhoods (Ennew & Swart-Kruger, 2003). In this sense, the framing of childhood is highly spatial. Street children are threatening not only because of their actual behaviors but also because of *where* those behaviors take place. Beliefs that children belong in the private-sphere are reminiscent of discourses positioning women in the home. Yet, feminist scholars have actively worked to challenge the public-private dichotomy (Valentine, 2004; England, 2003). Feminist scholars critique supposed boundaries between public and private for excluding scales of the home, family and body from the political, and for failing to recognize the fluid interdependent relationship between scales (Fraser, 1989; England, 2003; Marston, 2000). In the case of children, presenting childhood as separate from the adult world, and framing 'domestic normality' in opposition to 'street deviance,' position street children as in need of saving and justify their removal from public space (Ansell, 2005; Ennew & Swart-Kruger, 2003). However, ideas of the home as a safe haven overlook that some of the most extreme forms of abuse and exploitation take place in the home, where a "curtain of privacy cloaks all manners of evil" (Freeman, 2011). Additionally, relegating children to the private sphere also serves to naturalize their political exclusion (see England, 2003 for similar debates regarding women and the private sphere). In contrast, this dissertation draws attention to children as political subjects, expanding understandings of what counts as political. As Brown (1999) argues, because marginalization is sustained through relationships in a range of settings, we need to consider how actions in the so-called private sphere also constitute political subjects.

Recognizing children as political actors has important consequences for our understandings of poverty. By employing a child-centered approach to research, I directly challenge what counts as

legitimate knowledge and who can produce such knowledge. I engage with children's own interpretations of what poverty means, and who is responsible for that poverty, suggesting that taking seriously young people necessitates approaches to poverty as more than simply economic lack, as mentioned earlier in the chapter. Recognizing that children have insights into the conditions of their own lives challenges a need to rely (exclusively) on technical expertise, and can provide a counter to the supposedly apolitical interventions favored by the World Bank and others, as outlined above. In contrast to more authoritative poverty knowledge, children's experiences of poverty highlight the important role of supportive relationships.⁸ Thus, a focus on child poverty can reveal people's interdependency in a way that I suggest is less stigmatized than are notions of 'dependency' among poor adults (see Fraser & Gordon, 1994).⁹ Street children, both in this study and elsewhere, place a high value on freedom, and often specifically oppose attempts to institutionalize them. This not only reveals ways in which children actively resist attempts to regulate and control them (and I suggest one of the very reasons street children are viewed as particularly threatening) but also problematizes the idea of inclusion by making us question the terms of that inclusion (du Toit, 2003). Recognizing street children as political actors necessitates taking these concerns seriously while also raising serious theoretical and empirical questions about the costs of marginalization. While multiple reports document children's poverty, very few studies have actually looked into children's own understandings of what poverty means. Among the few notable exceptions, studies reported that children find inequality and social exclusion far more distressing than material lack (Crivello & Boyden, 2011). Such a finding challenges the idea of using individual indicators of progress, and instead necessitates looking at poverty in a relational context.

There have been some studies that attempt to challenge representations of street children as either victims or delinquents, and instead emphasize street children as active agents (Beazley, 2002; Abebe, 2008). Swanson (2010) argued that children's presence in the street was part of a conscious choice to create more opportunities for themselves. In a study that was novel for its time, Aptekar (1991) found that on average street children in Colombia were in better health than siblings who had chosen to remain at home. He suggests that children's ability to band together, manipulate people's sympathy and survive speaks to their resilience. While not intending to over-celebrate the lives of street children, Aptekar urges consideration that by moving to the street, children might be better off than

⁸ Children do not just want someone to meet their material needs, supporting Folbre's (2006) argument about the dangers of turning care into a commodity.

⁹ In fact, welfare policy often is designed specifically to avoid supporting long-term dependency (see Goode & Maskovsky, 2001).

other poor kids. He suggests that rather than focusing on their misery, we can look at how they demonstrate different types of childhood, such as one that values independence at an earlier age. His overall argument that moving to the street may represent a conscious strategy in the face of limited opportunities challenges the idea that street children are simply victims. I extend such an argument to consider how we can learn from children's own accounts and narratives to re-question the very indicators that we use to measure well-being, in this case, being present in the street. In the following chapters, I analyze how street children's own lives and opinions serve to directly challenge or rework neoliberal models of governance and regulation.

Children's geographies' emphasis on children's agency offers important insights that can be applied to re-theorizing children's subjectivity. However, while recognizing children's agency, I argue for a more nuanced analysis of resistance. Rather than blindly celebrating all acts of agency as resistance, I suggest that it is important to look at the consequences of young people's agency. For example, street children may both work to create more opportunities for themselves while also simultaneously increasing their own marginalization. And poor youths' focus on purchasing material items arguably ties them into "neoliberal Latin American governmental rhetoric that suggests that consumerism is synonymous with freedom" (Punch, 2008, as cited in Aitken et al, 2008, 8). This raises the possibility that both negative and positive agency can co-exist (Jeffrey, 2011).

I argue that agency must be understood as situated, varying across time and place, even in the lives of specific individuals. In direct contrast to conceptions of agency as an attribute of an individual, I consider the idea of social agency, arguing that one's ability to exercise agency and the results of that agency are dependent on social context and those acting with them. In this sense, I argue that notions of dependency and care are actually central to understanding agency. As mentioned earlier, care ethicists reclaim ideas of dependency, arguing that everyone gives and needs care. However, care ethics goes beyond acknowledging people have needs to specifically emphasize the importance of structuring relationships in ways that enhance mutuality and well-being (Staeheli & Lawson, 2005, as cited in Lawson, 2007a). While concern about the quality of relationships is nearly always absent from larger debates about international development and poverty reduction, I suggest that a focus on children's actual experiences of poverty re-center such notions. In particular, my study highlights how street children's ability to negotiate and survive structural constraints depends not just on actual material services but on their experiences of care, support and love. This idea of social agency directly challenges the idea of the independent subject, and thus presents a direct counterargument to discourses that emphasize individual blame for poverty. In fact, as I argue in chapter five, personal connections often

trump social services' increasing emphasis on efficiency and cost-effectiveness, leading to improvements in child well-being despite of, not because of, formal policy's emphasis on responsabilization and reform. Children's support for each other, both emotional and material, also contradicts an emphasis on competitiveness as essential for economic growth and development . In the conclusion, I suggest that implementing rights-based development through the lens of care ethics opens up potential spaces for more beneficial and inclusive 'development'.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter Two provides a detailed explanation of my methodology, linking the role of relational comparison, feminist methodologies and insights from childhood studies in shaping my research design. I explore the politics of knowledge production and ethics of field work, while also justifying why an analysis of poverty on multiple inter-constituted scales is necessary to a relational analysis of poverty. The second part of the chapter offers a political economic analysis of poverty in Perú, analyzing the socio-economic, historical and political processes of exclusion and adverse incorporation and setting the context for the rest of the dissertation. I explore how global neoliberal restructuring led to increasing crises and tensions within domains of social reproduction. By highlighting some of the negative effects of uneven economic growth, I challenge the idea that 'development' is always and everywhere positive. I chart poverty trends in the past 20 years, and examine new social problems such as gangs, lack of child care and growing violence which are believed to have accompanied 'development'. I also present data on street and working children, and briefly explain changes in the population (tendency to rent rooms, growing association with drug use), topics which I return to in later chapters.

Neoliberalism is contingent upon specific geographical political-economic and social settings. In Chapter Three, I examine the shifting balance of who takes responsibility for social reproduction. While privatization of social services in Perú may not have occurred on as dramatic of a scale (since there was never a large welfare state to begin with), NGOs and private charities are nonetheless the primary providers of social services for street children, the governance of which is less publically accountable than that of the state (Mitchell, et al, 2004). I map services that street children rely on by type and location to indicate the spatial variability in welfare responses and then explore the various forms of governance employed through such services. I specifically consider how various organizations and actors contest or reproduce authoritative views of poverty, development and childhood. In order to critically analyze development processes, it is essential to consider the situated agents who shape that development (Lawson, 2007b).

In this chapter, I unpack the various campaigns that are carried out in the name of children's rights, looking at the way in which rights get invoked to naturalize and resist particular understandings of poverty and childhood. Through anti-child labor campaigns, I show how children's rights serve as a new way for neoliberalism to reinvent itself, both by mitigating some of the complaints about Perú's exclusive focus on economic development and by providing a more morally acceptable space for international intervention and conditional lending. Children who are unable to experience childhoods as presented by dominant children's rights frameworks are positioned as in need of rescuing. Yet, such an emphasis fails to recognize childhood as a social construct. When this is overlooked, and certain childhoods are taken as ideal models for all children, interventions in the name of child-saving missions become justified. While not denying the *potential* benefit of rights-based approaches, I am particularly wary of assuming that any organization that uses the word 'rights' will actually serve to empower those for whom it purports to be advocating. Instead, I suggest that it is important to look at how rights are being defined and for whom. I argue that certain interpretations of rights facilitate individualized understandings of, and solutions to poverty, that mask the structural inequalities behind poverty. In this way, children's rights and neoliberal approaches to development share some surprising affinities. This comes across most clearly in campaigns around child labor and begging. I argue that child labor is framed as a problem to be reduced with the aid of technical experts. In doing so, debates about children working are depoliticized (See Ferguson, 1994; T. Mitchell, 2002). Presenting all child labor as inherently exploitative makes it seem unnecessary to question the role of current economic systems in creating systems of exploitation, thus masking structural inequalities.

While rights certainly have the potential to improve working children's lives, they will not automatically do so, especially under a neoliberal economy. In particular, the difficulty involved in acquiring financial support for children, and their rights overall, has resulted in a need to pick the most marketable child. I argue that a shift towards results and the marketing of social services has led to the exclusion of street children, rendering them the wrong type of child. Street children clearly do not meet the ideal image of childhood as presented by Western middle-class norms. Yet, they also increasingly fall outside understandings of the type of child for which international aid organization want to advocate. I suggest that this is linked to a growing tendency for both the government and civil society to withhold political and social recognition for 'unproductive and disobedient persons in order to meet the demands of the market and provide tangible evidence of social and political development' (Drybread, 2009, 334; Biehl, 2004). However, because neoliberal- and rights-based approaches to development are both uneven, there is more possibility of rupture.

In this chapter, I also offer new ways of theorizing the neoliberal subject by pushing debates to consider children, re-theorize the scale of urban governance by looking the relationship between international NGOs and local staff members, discuss how blame gets transferred from children to their mothers, and consider to what extent the child worker's movement itself has been impacted by what I refer to as the neoliberalization of rights.

In Chapter Four, I examine the other side of urban governance, looking at how children are regulated in and through space. I attempt to answer: How does street children's peripheral status in the urban sphere intersect with national development and urban restructuring? Does urban revitalization discourse naturalize and legitimize children's social and spatial exclusion? I argue that children occupying or working in public spaces are removed under a discourse of 'protection,' at least in the official rhetoric. In this case, neoliberalism and international children's rights discourse work together in surprising ways. I argue that children's rights, and in particular, understandings of children as in need of protection, provide the moral justification for their increased removal from public space. In this sense, imagined geographies of what modern cities look like combine with narratives of modern childhood to render street children out of place. The governance of children in public space relies on the dual images of children as both little devils and innocent angels (Ansell, 2005). Children are removed both by appeals to their need for protection and by invoking concerns about the delinquency and danger they present. I show how key agents employ language related to revitalization, security and protection simultaneously, depending both on the particular spaces that children are occupying, as well as a variety of other identity factors, such as gender, age, and ethnicity. In doing so, I offer a more nuanced account of the spread of revanchist policies.

In this chapter, I specifically examine police-street child interactions, pushing beyond studies discussing the regulation of public space to look at moments of encounter, something on which surprisingly little has been written (see Herbert). Such encounters are often street children's only interaction with the 'state', with important repercussions for their self-identity and marginalization. In the final part of the chapter, I examine the spatial strategies that children use to evade police and social workers' efforts to regulate their behavior. I suggest that the idea of contradictory resistance posited by Willis is a particularly relevant lens through which to consider children's actions, a topic I also return to in the following chapter. I raise the question of what consequences may exist from street child populations' move to less visible urban areas, in either the outskirts of the city or in hidden rented rooms, suggesting that such a concern also challenges assumptions that indicators of progress will everywhere look the same.

Chapter Five looks at some of the consequences of neoliberal and children's rights policies from the perspective of street children themselves. It seeks to answer the questions, how do children reconcile the differences between the images of childhood to which they are exposed and their actual lived experiences? What have been the effects of a formal focus on getting children out of the work force and into school? What types of futures do children see for themselves? It speaks to overall themes related to the construction of childhood, exploring how street children negotiate between structural constraints while also demonstrating agency.

I argue that an examination of street children's lives and the way they shift identities in different spaces speaks to a need to consider the social and contingent nature of agency. In attempting to create spaces for survival and opportunity, street children ironically reiterate the importance of certain aspects of neoliberal development. I suggest that through work, poor children actively create spaces for themselves to participate in consumer society, a main characteristic associated with 'modern' childhoods and neoliberalism. Yet, ironically, in order to do so, they are working, a characteristic that is both associated with backwardness and contradicts dominant conceptions of childhood as a time of play, school, and innocence.

Children's identities are inherently spatial; they need to be positioned in relation to the experiences of those around them and the discourses of childhood to which they are exposed. If symbolic boundaries are solidified by group performances of identity (Bourdieu, 1984), then it is important to examine how street children contest and reaffirm such boundaries, a focus of Chapter Five. I examine how street children negotiate their identities as they move through multiple spaces. In doing so, I incorporate arguments that identity is socially produced, shifting depending on the context and space in which young people find themselves (Hopkins, 2004; Swanson, 2010). Self-identity has important repercussions for children's ability to access various social services and support networks and has been impacted by shifting discourses of childhood and development. In particular, I argue that the spread of neoliberalism combined with normative assumptions about childhood has furthered the marginalization of children who do not meet this image.

I suggest that street children, because they often do not attend school, and sometimes do not live with their families, necessitate new ways of theorizing about the social reproduction of values and culture. In particular, I consider to what extent street children might offer the possibility to disrupt dominant narratives of neoliberal development and childhood. I examine children's own perceptions of poverty as well as their actual survival strategies to challenge authoritative poverty knowledge. I also reveal the contested nature of school and the family, and in doing so, challenge metanarratives of

childhood and development. Finally, in this chapter, I specifically address how a focus on street children necessitates new ways of theorizing the political that moves beyond formal politics to instead consider alternative political spaces. Especially when they act collectively, street children also challenge the idea that poor people's (and I would add children's) political subjectivity is only local (see Goode and Maskovsky, 2001).

In the conclusion, I argue that a focus on street children's everyday lives serves to challenge dominant narratives of international development and poverty. Interventions in the name of child well-being are not politically neutral acts but rather need to be subject to the same critiques as are other development interventions. The experiences of street children clearly indicate that neoliberal development is not benefiting everyone. They offer new ways of conceptualizing poverty and challenge assumptions about where children belong and what childhood should look like. While children's rights have been utilized to provide the moral justification for increased regulation of poor children and their families, they ultimately serve as a contradictory resource. Thus, rather than giving up on children's rights, I suggest that by reworking children's rights through the lens of care ethics, they may ultimately lead to more progressive approaches to development and poverty reduction.

Chapter 2: The Politics of Knowledge Production: For a Relational Analysis of Poverty

2.1 Introduction

Understanding poverty as a product of social relations significantly shaped my own methodology and approach to research. A relational analysis of poverty first views poverty as the consequence of historically developed economic and political relations, and second, emphasizes poverty and inequality as an effect of social categorization and identity (Mosse, 2010). Thus, in order to understand child poverty, we need to understand the social mechanisms through which poverty persists. My research methodology applies feminist research methods about the politics of knowledge, and insights from childhood studies' emphasis on child-centered research to a relational analysis of poverty. One of the main aims of this research is to critically analyze the role of discourses of poverty in maintaining that poverty. Thus, in the first half of this chapter, I highlight the importance of epistemological debates about power, meaning and subjectivity to my research approach (Nelson, 2000). Such questions are especially important when conducting work with street children, who because of their age and dependence on social services, are often subject to scrutiny by adults with significant power over their lives. The second half of this chapter provides a detailed historical outline of Perú's political economy necessary to conducting a relational analysis of poverty.

I begin this chapter by examining debates about the situated nature of knowledge in relation to my own research before exploring the power dynamics of field work and research in section 2.4. I am particularly concerned with the transnational politics of knowledge production, and the ways in which such politics have previously influenced research on the global south. Postcolonial and feminist development scholars argue that particular ways of defining development and collecting 'knowledge' about poverty and the global south have in turn made possible and legitimated international interventions and exploitation (Escobar, 1995, T. Michell, 2002; Lawson, 2007b; Crush, 1995; Power, 2003, Ferguson, 1994). Such 'knowledge' is then spread, and sometimes even internalized through discourses of development and the aid of purportedly neutral technical assistance. Because one of the main aims of this dissertation is to unpack supposedly 'universal' beliefs about childhood, a discussion about the politics of my own methodology, and how I produce knowledge about children, is essential.

To do so, I embrace the idea of partial or situated knowledge. Such a concept is in direct contrast to supposedly neutral and universal portrayals of knowledge, and instead examines knowledge as partial and constructed within particular relations of power (Haraway, 1991). Researchers themselves are thus subjects with particular positions and interests, which shapes both the data they

collect and their 'scientific' interpretation of that data. In section 2.5, I discuss how hierarchies of power and my own positionality influence my research questions and data analysis, responding to calls for geographies in which intersubjectivity and reflexivity play key roles (England, 1994). In doing so, I directly challenge the idea of objective research purporting to uncover universal truths.

Within geography and critical development studies, there has been important work done on the link between knowledge, narratives of development and poverty (T. Mitchell, 1995; Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994) and the importance of place in poverty discourses (Lawson, Jarosz & Bonds 2010; Nagar, Lawson, McDowell & Hanson, 2002). Scholars have also highlighted how neoliberal economic policy has led to greater material poverty, hindering the ability to protect children's rights (Green, 1998), and how children (and women) bear the brunt of structural adjustment (Jolly, 1991; Emeagwali, 1995). However, less attention has been paid to the ways in which children's rights discourses and appeals to 'universal' childhoods may actually provide the moral legitimacy for the neoliberal governance of the poor (notable exceptions include Aitken, Kjørholt & Lund, 2008). In this dissertation, I specifically focus on the relationship between historical, socio-economic and political processes of material exclusion and the governance and discursive practices used to regulate the poor.

I am particularly concerned with the ways in which different understandings of development, childhood and rights reinforce or offer alternatives to authoritative poverty knowledge. In turn, how do street children themselves negotiate, resist, and rework the context of their everyday lives, and in doing so, challenge or reinforce dominant ways of conceptualizing poverty and development? I examine the ways in which children's rights and neoliberalism shape the regulation of poor children through a number of spaces, including social services, urban space, and street children's everyday lives. In section 2.6, I outline my analytical approach to my research design. I conducted an ethnographic, qualitative investigation over a 14-month period, which included 1) discourse analysis of laws, policies and media sources regarding child poverty and labor 2) interviews with government officials, social workers, police officers and policy makers 3) participant observation of social services, public spaces, schools and NGOs to complement and inform my interview 'data', and 4) informal and semi-formal interviews with street children themselves. I connect data from these sources to examine how political-economic, social and discursive shifts translate into different practices on a daily basis. Feminist scholars in particular place a big emphasis on struggles of daily life as a legitimate source of knowledge production (Nelson, 2000). By focusing on children's everyday lives I embrace children themselves as legitimate sources of knowledge, highlighting children's agency and the value of their knowledge about their daily lives and identities.

In this particular project, I examine how processes on a range of scales contribute to child poverty in Lima, Perú's capital, using the situation of street children in Cusco to illuminate some of the relational aspects of child poverty and to show the way historical and social context shape neoliberal and children's right policy on the ground. Perú is divided into three climatic zones: the coast, which includes Lima, the sierra, or highlands, which is where Cusco is located, and the jungle (see Figure 2.1). Even within the same country, different historical trajectories, uneven development, and place-based processes work to produce privilege and marginalization. The variation between the two sites, and the ways they are differently positioned in relation to international NGOs, Perú's national government and the global economy illuminate the importance of space in the discursive production of social difference (Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2010), and also challenge the idea of the country as the most appropriate site for studies of international poverty (see World Development Reports). Cusco also has much higher poverty rates (58.4 percent compared with 17.9 percent in Lima (INEI, 2009)), a much larger indigenous population, and closer connections to rural communities, all of which are important factors in examining marginalization and the presence of street children, as I elaborate on in the second half of this chapter. By utilizing Cusco as a point of relational comparison, I provide insight into the ways in which ethnicity, poverty and geography interplay and influence youth identity and approaches to livelihood, while further demonstrating the unevenness of both neoliberal and children's rights policies and discourses. In the second half of this chapter, I provide an outline of Perú's political economic history necessary to my relational analysis. In sections 2.9 and 2.10, I analyze the root causes, historically and spatially, of poverty in Perú. Rather than viewing poverty as the result of exclusion from a global market, I highlight how inequality in Perú can better be explained by examining the idea of adverse incorporation, or integration on adverse terms (Bracking 2003). I then look at the social and discursive projects that work to produce and maintain inequalities, before more specifically examining how such processes contribute to children's presence in the streets.



Figure 2.1 Regional Map of Perú

My methodology was designed to address the reworking of neoliberalism and children’s rights on a number of scales, looking at how such interconnections shape child poverty and governance through social services, urban space, and children’s everyday lives. I think of these scales as relational and co-constitutive, with practices and discourses at one scale implicated in and overlapping with others (England & Ward, 2007; Marston, 2000; Massey, 2005). While international organizations do play a big role in shaping child welfare policy (Liebel, 2006), I suggest that it would nonetheless be a mistake to dismiss the role of the state in shaping development policies. Perú’s national government as well as Lima’s municipality mediate, contextualize or ignore conditions and policies being imposed by other actors. In this sense, what neoliberalism, children’s rights, and poverty look like and mean on a concrete level need to be locally situated. By focusing on such processes on various scales, I highlight connections that are often missed in more narrow analyses. In Chapter Three I focus on local, national and international policies and discourses, and how they have shaped and been shaped by actual practices of

international aid and the execution of social services, before examining how some of these material and discursive shifts play out in the shifting regulation and uses of public space (Chapter Four). In Chapter Five, I more specifically examine how children individually and collectively rework, adapt to, or resist political-economic, social and cultural transformations.

Looking at poverty across multiple scales directly addresses limitations in current authoritative studies of poverty. Such knowledge commonly focuses on poverty as a characteristic or problem of individuals or bounded nations (O'Connor, 2001; Lawson, 2012). Instead, I argue that poverty is a highly spatial process that needs to be situated within specific social, political and economic contexts. In doing so, I embrace the idea of space as socially produced (Massey, 1994), showing how scales intersect in concrete ways. In order to conduct a relational analysis of poverty, it is necessary to examine both the political economic factors that contribute to poverty as well as poverty's governance and representational strategies. In particular, viewing poverty "not as a static 'moral' condition but as a dynamic historically and geographically contingent process" (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001, 16) necessitates an examination of how poor children themselves have responded to exploitation, domination and inequality. Thus, snapshot indicators of poverty, even when they recognize poverty as multi-dimensional, "have only limited explanatory power and may conceal the processes that are central to the persistence of poverty" (Addison, Hulme & Kanbur, 2009, 3). Alternatively, employing ethnographic methods allows one to get a deeper understanding of the processes and context of the data (Kanbur, 2003). By analyzing the changing experiences and regulations of child poverty on the ground, I denaturalize 'neoliberalism' and reveal it as a contradictory and contingent process (England & Ward, 2007).

Most current research on poverty in Perú provides a statistical portrait of overall poverty within the country (see World Development Reports). Place is utilized as a bounded container, rather than a theoretical concept. While critical poverty scholars have made important gains in drawing attention to the ways in which discourses on poverty work to (re)produce that poverty by positioning the poor as dependent, vulnerable and/or complicit in their own poverty (Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2010; Wilson & Grammenos, 2005), such analyses have not been extended to children, who in many ways are the most 'naturally' depicted as dependent and vulnerable. Research that focuses on street children is often highly descriptive in nature, failing to analyze or connect to any of the complex processes contributing to poverty. Such studies further pathologize the poor, denying them political agency (see Goode & Maskovsky, 2001, 14 for discussion of US poverty). While postdevelopment scholars have actively challenged the production of development knowledge, such critiques often remain at a macro scale. In

contrast, I link the subjectivity of the poor with political-economy and identity projects. By focusing on street children's everyday lives, I show how 'development' and 'poverty' are negotiated and experienced through social services and the regulation of public space. In doing so, I combine work on the governance of poverty, most of which has remained focused on the global north (see de Verteuil, et al, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Mitchell, 1997), with insights from critical development scholars regarding the politics of knowledge production, to actively politicize the ways in which Peruvian street children negotiate control, care and survival. Poor children are rarely researched as agents and instead are perceived to be victims of economic, political and social processes. Of the limited research that examines how children have negotiated or responded to neoliberal economic change focuses on rural areas, looking at the destructive way in which modernization disrupts idyllic village life, and reinforcing romanticized images of the happy poor (Bolin, 2006). But how have neoliberal policies impacted childhoods of those already in urban spaces? I suggest that by focusing on Lima, an area that was already was 'urban' prior to neoliberal policy shifts, my study offers an important contrast to other detailed studies of children's everyday lives (Katz, 2004; Swanson, 2010). This is especially important now that more than half of the world's population lives in urban spaces.

However, my research is more than just a place-based analysis of poverty. Instead, I engage in relational comparison, a method focusing on systemic processes and connections between spaces while also recognizing the historical and political contingency of specific places. Relational research allows researchers to tell a story about systemic effects of global economic and social restructuring (Katz, 1994) and "illuminates power-laden processes of constitution, connection and disconnection" (Hart, 2006, 977). In particular, by focusing on such connections, we are able to move beyond seeing poverty as a 'cultural' problem, restricted within country boundaries, as has especially been the case in common explanations for high rates of exploitative child labor. In the second half of the chapter, I specifically outline the historical, social, and political economic processes that work to produce poverty and inequality within Perú, as well as the role of social categorization and discourse in maintaining such poverty.

2.2. Situated Knowledge

Before delving into a more detailed explanation of my methodology, I step back and situate my personal trajectory towards this research. In direct contrast to positivist research beliefs that 'good research' can only be produced by unbiased experts, I embrace the idea that all research is influenced by ideology and politics (England, 2006). Our research is produced in a world already interpreted by people, including ourselves, views which we cannot simply lay aside for the sake of doing research.

Reflexivity, or the self-conscious, analytical scrutiny of one's self as researcher (England, 1994) is necessary as we work to question assumptions about our research and ourselves. Rather than seeking out one truth, situated knowledges is a way of illustrating the complex, shifting and multiple realities encountered in the field or other research spaces. Situated knowledges appreciates the partial knowledge and context of both researcher and subject and recognizes that each are located within time and space and in relation to power (Haraway, 1991; Nelson 2000).

For the past 14 years, I have been working with marginalized children and youth. When I was sixteen, I worked in a summer program for homeless children from New York City. Through such work, and subsequent work in the juvenile prisons of Rhode Island, the Providence public school system, and state-run children and youth homes,¹⁰ it became very apparent to me that poverty was much more than an economic phenomenon. Having grown up as one of the poorer families in an upper-middle class suburb of Boston, I had never felt particularly wealthy. But the opportunities that I had, the quality of my public school, and my ability to acquire educational and cultural capital that were accepted and valued by the elite placed me in a much better position than many of the children with whom I was working, even if we had controlled for actual income. Over the course of my undergraduate education, I continued to think about child poverty, examining historical shifts in responses to child poverty in 19th century New York City and comparing them to my direct work with children. During my junior year at Brown University, I spent a semester studying in Quito, Ecuador. During this time period, I volunteered at a children's home, staffed by women with drug problems or who had worked in prostitution, women who would not be deemed 'fit' to take care of other people's children in the context of the United States. Over the course of my volunteer work, and then during follow-up research for my undergraduate thesis, most of the people with whom I spoke attributed poverty to a lack of government support, rather than individual fault or blame. Why was this? Was it because more than half the population lived below the poverty line? I started questioning in what ways inequality affected not only experiences of poverty but also people's explanations for and responses to, that poverty. In many ways, then, I came to my research 'backwards'. I did not have a burning theoretical question to address but instead looked for the theories that allowed me to make sense of what I had observed and experienced from working with poor children for nearly 15 years.

¹⁰ That I could even get paid for such work was directly linked to my qualification as a work-study student at Brown University, which had a program in which the university would pay half the salary of students who wanted to do work in social service programs off-campus. If I had not been a student on financial aid at an elite university, I might not have even been eligible to obtain these paid internships and jobs.

My objectives as a doctoral student often conflicted with previous ways in which I had engaged with children in the past. Having worked with children and youth in a variety of settings for nearly 15 years, I was used to prioritizing care work over the search for knowledge. Observations about poverty and social welfare came about naturally, as I compared my work with poor children in Ecuador and the following summer, in Perú, to poor children in New York City, exploring how the meaning of poverty and the responses to that poverty differed in each context. When I returned to Perú, however, my main objective, at least in the short-term, was to get to information from the children or organizations with whom I was working, rather than further an organization's goals. In some ways, this desire to search for information made it more difficult to naturally form my own opinions. Armed with years of graduate school, rather than being fascinated by how different Peruvian welfare was compared with the welfare systems in the US, I found myself almost unwittingly looking for evidence of neoliberal discourse. It took active effort to back up and move away from the literature and theory I had been reading, and try to more openly learn about Peruvian's understandings of, and responses to, poverty (and as I discuss in section 2.5, researchers never can be simply neutral observers).

I realized that neoliberal hegemony was not as universal as some literatures would lead one to believe (Proudfoot & McCann, 2008). Various actors that made up the Peruvian 'state' actually interpreted and reworked aspects of formal policy through their own personal lens, leaving space for resistance or reinterpretation. Thus, talking to government officials in multiple ministries and both in Lima and in Cusco allowed me to unpack the 'state', and reiterated the problematic ways in which official policies are sometimes used as a stand in for on-the-ground changes. As I elaborate on in Chapter Three, rather than seeing the state as a monolithic uniform entity, I incorporate a definition of the state as made up of social relations (Poulantzas, 1978; Painter, 2006), thus speaking to the geographic unevenness of state power (Painter, 2006).

2.3 'Choosing' my Field Site

In order to investigate the geographic unevenness of international development, I conducted research in two different sites within Perú: Lima, Perú's capital and Cusco, the former capital of the Inca empire. The comparison reveals important variations *within* the field, and show how supposedly national policies play out in very different ways given Perú's geographical, ethnic and political diversity and historical discrimination and conflict between Lima and the highlands. Katz (1994) suggests that relational comparison allows researchers to pry apart some of the differences both between sites and within sites, and to locate crucial conjunctures in the social relations of production and reproduction. I rely on my experiences in Cusco as a tool to illuminate some of the relational aspects of child poverty

and to show the way historical and social context shape neoliberal and children's right policy on the ground. Cusco offers a valuable contrast to Lima for three main reasons: 1) it suffers from much higher poverty rates than Lima. The overall poverty rate in Cusco is 58.4 percent compared with 17.9 percent in Lima (INEI, 2009). 2) it has much larger indigenous populations and closer connections to rural communities than does Lima. Among Cusco's population ages 3 to 17, 45 percent are indigenous, compared with 1 percent in Lima (UNICEF, 2008). 3) because of its proximity to Machu Picchu, it serves as a center point for Peruvian tourism, a main component of Perú's national development strategy. The comparison helped answer questions such as: how does international pressure, which is much more concentrated in Lima, shape state approaches to child labor? In what ways do factors such as greater overall poverty levels and more cultural acceptance of children working (both found in Cusco) change the stigma that street children experience? How do tourism and an influx of foreign visitors change the regulation of public space and in turn, children working in those spaces? How does the presence of tourists change the benefits and risks that accrue from child labor, and in doing so, further reveal the dangers of clumping all child labor under the label of either good or bad? By engaging in relational comparison, I could better speak to the uneven processes of development and governance.

My choice of Lima and Cusco, Perú as field sites was based on a combination of intellectual criteria, practical considerations, and personal interest. That I can even discuss 'choice' and 'personal interest' speaks to the arrogance of research (Katz, 1994), and a luxury of mobility that the majority of children with whom I ended up working did not have. In section 2.4 I expand on ways in which such advances may come with increased obligations or responsibilities. From an intellectual perspective, because the Peruvian government was quick to embrace both neoliberal economic reforms and the ratification of children's rights legislation starting the same year (1990), Peru provided a particularly interesting site to investigate the contradictory and complimentary relationship between the two. Perú also has the oldest child workers' movement in Latin America, offering insight into alternative interpretations of rights, and revealing how various groups may adopt the language of neoliberalism towards very different gains, a topic I elaborate on in the following chapter (see Ferguson, 2010). Additionally, while the Peruvian government has experienced rapid economic growth in the past few years, inequality remains high. This contradiction challenges ideas linking poverty reduction to overall economic growth, and necessitates the more multidimensional definition of poverty that this study embraces. Other studies indicate that exclusion, rather than material poverty itself is a much greater concern to children (Crivello & Boyden, 2011), making a combination of rapid economic growth and persistent poverty particularly relevant for an analysis of children's perceptions of poverty.

However, I also went to Perú for a combination of practical and personal reasons. Because I knew that informal conversations and participant observation were central to my research approach and to my ability to form connections with children, my research was limited to areas that spoke a language with which I was comfortable (either English or Spanish). Even more importantly, I wanted to go somewhere that I already knew people and had connections, which I believed would facilitate an easier transition into my fieldwork. Bebbington's (2004) observation that NGOs tend to set up in areas where other NGOs also operate applies to researchers too; it was easier to go to Lima and Cusco because of their size, the availability of resources and other services, and the number of friends I already had there. Yet, in going to these sites, I continued to neglect parts of Perú that have historically been neglected, as I will outline in the second part of this chapter. At a national meeting of the child workers' movement, an adult collaborator expressed frustration that I had not come to visit her program and site in the rural highlands. More generally, she pointed out researchers' tendency to focus on Lima and Cusco. Taking her concerns seriously, I plan to conduct future research in Perú's rural provinces, not simply to 'please everyone' but because an analysis of systemic processes of impoverishment and marginalization necessitates looking at the role a lack of opportunity and historical exclusion more broadly play in poverty, and the connections between unevenly situated sites.

2.4 Representing Street Children: Power, Positionality, Speaking for the Subaltern

Especially in the case of poverty research, even well-intentioned researchers actively contribute to the demonization of the poor (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001). The way in which knowledge is produced is both political and partial, as outlined in the introduction. Children's voices in particular are frequently excluded from mainstream studies of poverty and international development. When studies do address issues of child poverty, children enter as objects of research, rather than subjects and actors in their own right. Yet, as I have emphasized, providing a space for children's voices in conversations about international development and poverty, albeit as presented through my own voice and analysis, is central to exposing the way in which a lack of representation can reproduce poverty (Mosse, 2010). But in what ways can I provide a space for children's voices, and what are the limitations of this? England (1994) asks how we can incorporate the voices of others without colonizing them in a manner that reinforces patterns of domination. Feminist critiques draw attention to the way in which politics of difference shape knowledge production (Mohanty, 1984) and post-colonial scholars have criticized white Westerners who speak on behalf of the subaltern other, concerns that are important to voice. While in many ways I am part of the 'dominant' group, I incorporate Swanson's (2005) point that sympathetic researchers can still contribute in important ways. In fact, Wolf (1996) suggests that there

may even be certain advantages to having outsider status and Staeheli and Lawson (1994, 99) argue that recognition that we cannot fully understand others' subjectivities or speak with authority for them "does not imply relativism and certainly must not lead us to abandon our research topics. Rather, we should recognize that the space of betweenness is a site in which we can uncover the experiences and politics of marginalized groups." This dissertation may not speak for the street children of Lima, but the conversations that we had during my research provided valuable opportunities to begin to construct new communities and ways of framing childhood and child poverty. Many children asked me to tell their stories, and through this dissertation, I hope to begin to.

Despite the power advantages I had by being from the United States, I often did not *feel* very powerful. Unlike research with some of the younger working children, I interacted with homeless street children in their spaces, not in institutions such as NGOs, schools or children's homes. If the young people had not wanted me in their spaces, I would not have been allowed there. Because I relied significantly on participatory observation as a main part of my methodology, I frequently spent time with children and youth in one of the run-down buildings where they rented rooms, talking and teaching them English, sitting under a bridge where some of the boys had mattresses, practicing math problems or conversing about our lives, or on the street corner where teenage girls prostituted. Such research was only possible because of their permission. I was also dependent on them to help me safely navigate through their neighborhoods, helping me catch my bus, or protecting me from other street youth and adults. The areas that I was in were not areas that tourists went, especially at night, and in fact, many middle- and upper-class Peruvians similarly avoided such areas. The ways in which the 'fear' or 'danger' associated with street children's spaces can actually provide the children themselves with a level of control or safety is one I explore in Chapter Four. However, for my purposes here, that I 'needed' the children in a way they did not feel they needed me, clearly changed the power dynamic. I felt constantly aware that if they chose not to talk to me, I would be unable to complete my dissertation.

While I may have treated children as knowledgeable subjects, and in many ways was dependent on them, such factors did not mean that we were equals. Power is complex and contradictory, depending on the situation (Hecht, 1998). I maintained certain distinct power advantages, related to my privilege as a lighter-skinned woman from the United States. Most importantly, I could leave.¹¹ When the stench of sniffing glue was overwhelming me, I felt too stressed from being unable to offer concrete solutions to young people's problems, or a desire to find a clean bathroom got to me, I would hop in one

¹¹ Additionally, in line with Rose's (1997) concerns about the impossibility of being fully transparent, there are multiple power dynamics that shaped my research of which I was not consciously aware.

of the many collective taxis and for a dollar be whisked back to Barranco, a more middle-class district on the other side of Lima. I often felt like I was watching a live soap opera. However, with my ability to be mobile, it was also important to question what added responsibilities I might have, a topic I explore in the following section.

While the actual process of telling their stories, conversing or playing may have been enjoyable or even therapeutic for some children, multiple street youth informed me that my project would not make a difference, explaining that many *gringos* had interviewed them before and nothing ever happened. They also expressed disillusionment with researchers who had promised to come back or help them in certain ways and then disappeared. While I was careful to never promise them anything when I was explaining my project, my own limitations were often hard to deal with, especially as personal bonds between me and the children grew stronger. Finding out that a 12-year old girl had been arrested for prostitution just hours after we had been sitting in the street playing 'school' with her little sisters or visiting a teenager dying of tuberculosis in the hospital, and not knowing how to help, constantly made me question the role of research in quests for social justice to wonder if there was something better I could be doing.

I tried to focus on small accomplishments, giving back in little ways throughout my field work. Reciprocity is an important component of feminist methodology (see Katz, 1994; Stacey, 1991; Wolf, 1996; Nelson, 2000), and also helps hold researchers more accountable. Holding myself accountable to the people who facilitated my research, both as supports and as research subjects, is a necessary part of the politics of knowledge production. Throughout my time in Perú, I volunteered for various organizations, taught English and creative expression classes, conducted analyses of datasets for a coalition of organizations that worked to defend child workers, and helped staff events with street children. Such methods helped me further situate myself politically. However, such activities benefited some more than others, especially organizations and staff, rather than children themselves.

One of the main ways that I felt that I could contribute to the children was simply with my presence. As I became more familiar with the children and street life, I frequently tried to use my positionality to the advantage of the children. I accompanied youth to the police station on multiple occasions to learn information about their friends who had been apprehended. While police would usually ignore them, because I was a foreign woman, I could usually circumvent all the bureaucratic tape and gain information more quickly. I also visited youth in the police station to bring them food, even when it was outside visiting hours, using my positionality to gain access to spaces that other Peruvians could not. My first few months in the streets, police often did semi-illegal identity checks late at night on the streets,

rounding up anyone who was not carrying their identity cards to take them to the station for an identity check. These checks supposedly allowed police to verify that individuals were not wanted for any other crimes. However, wealthy well-dressed Peruvians and foreigners were never subject to such checks; street youth frequently were. While most police officers genuinely believed the checks were legal, because children under age 18 are not required by law to carry IDs, minors technically cannot be apprehended for failure to do so. Additionally, the identity checks were only supposed to occur after suspects had already engaged in some type of crime. Yet, for simply looking a certain way or being in particular places, youth would be apprehended. Normally, when I was with the youth, the police would ignore them. Sometimes they would approach us, and I would explain that they were with me and we would be left alone.

However, one night in February, I was walking with Jose,¹² one of the former street youth who was working as an educator, when Daniel came running up to me. He said that there was a police raid, and he stood close to me. A policeman approached us, and asked for his identity card. He didn't have one, and I said he was with me, and started to walk away. At first, there did not seem to be a problem, but soon a few more policemen approached us. One asked for his identity card again, and he said he did not have one. Daniel took my hand and about 20 policemen surrounded us. "He needs to come with us," one of the policemen demanded. Daniel moved closer against me. I asked why, and the policeman said because he did not have his ID. I tried to object, explaining that I thought children could not be detained for not having an identity card. He responded by reiterating that the check was legal, since Daniel would be released if he had no criminal record. He spoke with such certainty that I did not fight it more. At this point, one of the other circling policemen moved closer, and physically pried Daniel from my grip. I did not say anything, unsure of what to do. I was scared, and did not physically fight as the policemen grabbed Daniel. I moved across the street to where the religious group was handing out Friday night milk and singing songs, and burst into tears. The other street youth started to comfort me, ensuring me that Daniel would be okay. One of the Europeans working with the religious group similarly told me that she had been hit by a policeman during a raid once when she tried to stop the police from hitting the youth, and there was nothing I could have done. Luckily, the physical force they had used had been jarring more than painful. But mostly, I felt guilty. I knew that Daniel would be okay. As the other youth had assured me, he had been rounded up multiple times. But I felt like I had let him down. He always protected me at night, walking me a few blocks to catch my car, and even threatening another kid once who he thought had disrespected me by not saying hello. Yet, when he had needed me, I had been

¹² All names of children and youth have been changed.

unable to help him. I had gotten scared, and had not known what to do. And then, rather than insisting on riding with him in the police car, or even following to the station, I had cried, let the other youth comfort me, and then gone home. I felt that my one main way to contribute was by offering children knowledge and some form of protection. But in the end, I had had little impact. While I ultimately do not think Daniel saw it as such a betrayal of trust, it felt symbolic of my inability to use positional power when it really mattered. The experience also speaks to the way in which authority figures and street children interact, as I elaborate on in Chapter Four.

Over the course of my research, my aim was to do no harm. I was not under the false illusion that through my dissertation, I would 'save' the children in my study. Nor did I believe that my writing would even affect them in any tangible way. However, I tried to help in little ways, creating positive memories, improving someone's self-esteem, or contributing to a moment of fun. I also did my best to connect them to other institutions, bought them occasional meals, lent them my phone, and listened to their problems. It was especially important to me not to be one of those researchers who simply swoops in, takes the material she needs and never returns. When I left at the end of 2010, I promised the children that I would come back and visit at some point in 2011. In December 2011, I returned for a month, and was surprised by the tangibly positive difference in people's attitudes toward me. I was welcomed with open arms, and had multiple children and even educators tell me that they thought I would not return, since most foreigners¹³ say they come back but never do. Some youth who had not even been that friendly or open with me during the year of my research were a lot warmer during my return-visit. In this way, by returning and maintaining relationships both with children and with adult collaborators, I facilitate greater levels of accountability. While I most likely will not see some children again, the internet has helped me communicate with some of the older youth, who have hotmail messenger accounts, and even a few who are on facebook. Yet, it is worth asking whether friendship, although important, is enough of an end result of my research. Dissertation-writing is a selfish activity, at least in the short term. It was, and remains, a constant battle to question how I can make my research actually lead to potentially positive changes. This idea of actually giving back is one that is constantly debated by critical geographers and anthropologists who do ethnographic work, and one that is central to my whole research process. A few middle-class Peruvian friends of mine thanked me for the 'important work' I was doing for their country by researching and spending time with parts of the Peruvian population that most tourists, and even elite Peruvians, do not know about. I was going to get this 'important story' out there. But am I the right person to tell this story, or might I be perpetuating uneven politics of

¹³ Many children do not distinguish between researchers and volunteers.

knowledge production? Somehow, in being thanked, the research seemed more about me and my identity than about the poverty, politics and inequality I was trying to capture. It is by making myself accountable to the people who I researched and worked that I can hope to address some of these issues.

2.5 The Politics of the Knowledge Production

The manner in which researchers conceptualize the field is an important ontological step that affects every aspect of a methodology (Katz, 1994; Nelson, 2000). Working in a 'developing country' complicates questions of the field and raises issues regarding positionality and power in the production of knowledge. Thus, according to Staeheli and Lawson (1994, 97), "the field is constructed through power relations that define academics and the people and places that we study." Power relations stem from different positionalities, in terms of race, gender, class, nationality, and I would add, age. How we conceptualize the field is tied to an epistemology of knowledge that includes the very categories of analysis that we use (Nelson, 2000). Who I included in my study was based on pre-defined understandings of who counted as a child and what counted as work. While I attempted to approach my interviews with an open mind and flexibility to change, the types of organizations I approached in the first place clearly shaped the results that I got. My decision to include street children, who almost entirely generate income through informal activities, such as filling cars with passengers, selling candy, playing music, and cleaning car windshields, contradicted many organizations' beliefs about what counted as work, as I elaborate on in the following chapter. Such categorizations did not always mesh with the children's own self identities either. While I continue to argue that street children who engage in any type of informal work are child workers, such a decision is highly political, a concept I further explore throughout the dissertation.

Qualitative research involves frequent shifting of roles and unclear boundaries, as relationships are created and reworked in light of different identities and social relationships between the researcher and those being researched. It is not always clear when fieldwork ends and when everyday life begins (Katz, 1994). Defining the field itself involves marking off a site in time and place, and drawing boundaries, with each space important not only for what it includes but also what it excludes. While it is often necessary to establish some official field for the purposes of conducting research, in reality, the lines are blurry and less clear than implied by some research proposals. Feminist researchers have argued that research is constituted in spaces of betweenness, in which we recognize that we are neither fully insiders nor outsiders, and never fully 'leave' the field (Katz, 1994). While one of my primary roles in Perú was that of researcher, I was also a volunteer, a friend, a foreigner, and a potential customer,

among other identities. “By operating within these multiple contexts all the time, we may begin to learn not to displace or separate so as to see and speak, but to see, be seen, speak, listen and be heard in the multiply determined fields that we are everywhere, always in” (Katz, 1994, 72).

While researchers have the power to define the field, once they are in the field, they are not outside power dynamics (Katz, 1994). As a researcher who is also living within the community in which I was working, it was often difficult to disentangle research relationships from personal ones. Because research is about social relations, there was no ‘off’ switch. While in many ways I was a researcher 24 hours a day, I was also a person, who got emotional, tired or frustrated. In embracing the idea of poverty as a relational construct, I had recognized my role in maintaining poverty. Yet, I got frustrated with individually being expected to address that poverty. I did not have any easy guidelines to decide when and how I should help, and in what way to use limited funds. I clearly could always be doing more, but from a pedagogic perspective, or as a careworker, what were the limitations of giving? Such internal debates were draining and it was hard to know how to balance frustration with individual children, who like anyone, have their own personalities and needs, with a desire to speak out against structural inequality and the way in which social relations maintain inequality. While a year of field work did not provide me with the answers to these questions, the constant negotiation speaks to the way in which we are part of the social relations in which we do our research, and provides insights into how understandings of poverty, blame and responsibility get reproduced but may also be reworked.

Torn loyalties: The difficulties of interviewing and shadowing the police.

Research is not just based on observing but *what* you observe, how you see it and your access to it, all of which are shaped by power and politics of field. As I just established, I approach this research from the premise that knowledge is partial and situated. Thus, I did not simply observe all the interactions occurring in public spaces in Lima from an objective perspective. Rather, because I spent a lot of time with street children themselves, I became an active part of some of their lives. For many of these children, policemen, especially the municipal police (serenazgo), are enemies. Nearly all street children reported having experienced harassment from policemen, and some have had to pay bribes, both financial and sexual, or have been physically beaten, as I analyze in Chapter Four. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, tensions occasionally emerged over my desire to interview police officers. One day, I was chatting with some street youth who slept under a bridge in a central transport hub on the outskirts of Lima when a municipal police officer stopped me. He mentioned that he had seen me talking to the kids on multiple occasions, and was wondering what I was doing. The neighborhood I was in was an area that did not have any NGOs that worked with the youth on a regular basis, and because it

is further from tourist areas, foreigners stand out more. I explained that I was doing research for my dissertation, and after chatting for a few minutes, I asked the police officer if I could interview him. He said that I could, and invited me into his police booth. The youth seemed very suspicious, and asked me where I was going. I explained I wanted to talk to the police officer for my project. About five minutes into my interview, two of the boys came to the municipal police booth, and said they needed me. Torn, I decided to go with the youth, rather than finish my interview with the police officer. He gave me his number, and said I could come back. While I wanted to finish the interview, I felt it was more important that I maintain confidence and good relationships with the youth, if being forced to choose. They explained that the officers were bad, and that it wasn't safe for me to talk to them alone. In part, they may genuinely have been concerned for me. Policemen have a reputation for corruption, and they may have been worried about me going off alone with the officer. However, they may have also felt threatened by what my intentions were or what I might have told the officer. While I assured them that I was fine, they had made it clear that they did not want me to get too close to the officers.

In general, shadowing police officers in the same areas where I worked with the children would have been too much of a conflict of interest for me. I would not have been able to sit quietly when they did identity checks of children that I knew, and would have felt too much like a 'traitor'. In fact, as I mentioned, in situations in which identity checks occurred when I was around, I actively tried to use my positionality to protect or benefit the children. But because of such a decision, my ability to gain in-depth understanding of policemen's perspectives was limited. Police themselves were not usually eager to talk to me, and as soon as I mentioned that I was interested in street children, they would refer me to the special police station for women and children. However, as I argue in Chapter Four, while some police officers insisted they had no interactions with those under 18, participant observation and conversations with street children indicated otherwise. While I ultimately did conduct interviews with multiple police officers, my connection to children limited my opportunity to spend more time shadowing police and occasionally colored the answers that officers gave me.

Politics of knowledge production: Shifting Positionalities.

Just as the identities of the children in this study are shifting and relational (as I elaborate on in Chapter Five), difference and various axes of power and oppression similarly shape my own position as researcher (Nelson, 2000). While I entered the research field without any research affiliations, within a month, I became an affiliate researcher at Lima's Catholic University and was also closely associated with Generación, one of the main NGOs working for street children's rights. However, my ability to access certain spaces as well as the ways in which I could access those spaces depended on who

presented me, or on which affiliation I focused. This became apparent towards the beginning of my fieldwork. I did not realize the impact that who introduced me had for shaping people's opinions about what was doing and why I was there. During my second week in Perú, an NGO working on community development invited me to attend a community meeting, a meeting that the NGO's international funders were also attending. A police officer during the event asked me if I would be interested in coming along on one of their community watches, in which police officers and active citizens walked around the neighborhood, trying to prevent violence and delinquency. I eagerly agreed, and was picked up by one of the municipal police cars the following evening at 2 am. I had been nervous that I would not be able to interview the head of police, but they almost immediately brought me into his office. Within a few minutes of talking, however, it became clear that they thought I was one of the international funders visiting, and were hoping I would fund their community watch program. When I repeated that I was just a doctoral student, with few resources, I could see their disappointment. Although I had told the first policeman that I was student, I nonetheless felt guilty. This miscommunication speaks to the importance of positionality, not simply in terms of how I identify but also how others identify me (England, 2006). It also reveals insights into the way social services are currently funded within Perú. While I had anticipated private organizations and individuals asking me for money, I had not expected municipal ones to seek private funds. But, as I elaborate on in the following chapter, 'state' funding is often based on a mix of resources, with the government only providing minimal support for various social services. Further, multiple social workers and educators complained about the rise in 'money-making NGOs' or groups that simply formed in order to access money from international funders, rather than to work towards social justice, a factor that similarly emerged in conversations with NGO directors who shifted program focuses depending on available money.

How I chose to represent myself, and the particular power dynamics between myself and my research subjects shifted constantly throughout the course of my interviews. First, because of the ways in which children's issues are often considered outside the boundaries of national economic and political decisions, when I first sought out interviews with government officials, explaining that my research was about child poverty and rights, I was usually referred to the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES). Yet, because street children's well-being was so clearly linked to policies regarding public space and urban revitalization, economic growth and poverty, and understandings of development, I wanted to talk to government officials beyond the narrow confines of MIMDES. Thus, over time, I presented myself and my research in different ways, depending on with whom I was talking,

emphasizing more general research topics, such as interest in how Lima had changed in the past 20 years, or a desire to understand the country's progress towards poverty-reduction. As the interview then progressed, I would explain that I was focusing on children in particular. While such representations were certainly true, it was clear that if I had presented myself in a different way, emphasizing that I wanted to challenge current understandings of child poverty, I may have gotten different answers to my research questions. Such politics mirrored the marginalization of children's issues within my own academic discipline. On multiple occasions, the instant I mention the word children, I am slotted into the category of 'children's geographies', regardless of the particular theoretical points that I am making. To assert that childhood is a lens through which to speak to other debates has been an uphill battle. Overall, the way I presented myself and my research speaks to the way in which encounters in the fields are a series of performances, in which I along with my research subjects partially reveal information about ourselves.

2.6 Introduction to Research Design

My research design was specifically concerned with both recognizing children as active producers of knowledge and with connecting their experiences and opinions with broader system changes. To do so, I relied on a mix of 1) secondary sources, 2) interviews with government officials, educators, social workers, lawyers, activists and policy makers, and 3) participant observation, informal conversation and semi-formal interviews with street children themselves. As mentioned, one of my goals with this dissertation is to challenge the very indicators that are used to measure 'development'. Thus, qualitative and participatory methods were essential to begin to understand ways of re-conceptualizing poverty and progress. Such methods can "capture the fluidity and multiplicity of experience, emotion and culture, valuing particularly those knowledge claims that were ignored within objectivist approaches" (Nelson, 2000, 76). Additionally, because, I focus on a population that is largely missed by more general surveys, especially in the case of homeless street youth, who sleep in sites that are excluded by national censuses, their needs, opinions, and even basic demographic information are sorely lacking, necessitating more ethnographic approaches to research.

In order to contextualize my research with children, and gain insight into the formal discourses and policies regarding childhood, development, and poverty, I analyzed Perú's National Plan for Children and Adolescents and the National Plan for the Elimination of Child Labor, and compared stated plans and recent legal codes with laws and governmental policies from before the ratification of the CRC. I also examined program literature and research material produced by NGOs and international organizations working with children in Perú. Secondary sources were useful for revealing changes in

official policies regarding street children and child labor, as well as for providing insights into more formal discourses about child, poverty and work. However, while formal laws and policies are important indicators of a government's official positions on childhood, within Perú, it is a common saying that laws are meant to be broken. Because of the significant gap between formal policy and actual interventions, I examine the ways in which those in charge of implementing policies interacted with street children, what actual services were available, and how such experiences reinforced and/or contradicted understandings of poverty and childhood expressed in formal stated policies and in earlier interviews.

In order to understand the ways in which international children's rights frameworks, modeled after the UN CRC, and neoliberal policies and forms of governance, with an emphasis on individual responsibility and self-regulation, shape social services for, and policy responses to, street children in Perú, I conducted over 100 interviews with government officials, policy makers, educators, and program directors. In particular, I investigated their assumptions about childhood, how children should use their time, poverty and development. I interviewed government officials from the national Ministries of Education, Labor, Justice, Planning, and Women and Social Development, among others (See Table 2.1 at the end of this chapter for complete list). I gained insights at a local level through conversations with municipal employees, police officers, and state-employed social workers. Conversations with employees at large international organizations including UNICEF, Save the Children, and Plan-Perú further facilitated understandings of the role of international donors in shaping regulation of and responses to street children. Others interviewed included professors, children's rights activists, NGO staff, and a congress woman heavily involved in protesting the Begging Bill. Interviewing people responsible for aspects of the governance of children at various scales provided insights into the ways in which laws, policies and discourses were enacted and resisted on the ground, and revealed how scales are fluid and inter-constituted. Such an approach is necessary when looking at neoliberalism as a process rather than a monolithic homogenous force (England & Ward, 2007).

Shadowing social workers and educators working with the state and for NGOs, and observing and participating in their interactions with street children throughout Lima, provided important insights into the shifting relationships between care and control in a way that formal interviews cannot. Such gatekeepers were necessary, both to assess the way in which children were framed and addressed, and in some cases, to gain access to the children in the first place. When I approached organizations, after explaining my project, I would often ask if there was a way that I could help the organization. As an observer, I frequently felt useless. Writing, observing and taking notes were not considered 'real' work, and it often was not clear what I was, or should be, doing when I sat in on meetings or accompanied

social workers. It did make me understand children's desire to contribute to the family. When educators or children themselves would give me a task to do, I felt more legitimate, and like I had a place in the community or group that I was accompanying. However, this often placed me in an ambiguous role. Many children's NGOs receive volunteers from the United States and elsewhere to help out with projects. While I wanted to make sure that I gave back to the organizations, communities and individuals that were helping me, I was not in Perú to volunteer but rather to conduct research. This was sometimes confusing for both staff and for children. I did not have as much time available as did other 'volunteers' and I also had my own agenda. What often ended up buying me credibility with both social workers and the children themselves is when I would talk about work I had done with children and youth in the United States. I would tell them about working in Rhode Island's juvenile correctional facility, or with undocumented teenagers who had crossed the border from Mexico. I suggest that such conversations reinforced the idea of research as a dialogic process, and made me seem more like a colleague who shared the same career objectives, rather than an outsider who wanted to observe them as if they were in a zoo, or who believed she knew more than trained professionals, both complaints that I heard about other foreigners. And children and youth were genuinely interested in learning about their counterparts in the United States. Opening oneself up as an active participant in knowledge production is an important part of beginning to address the politics of knowledge production. My experiences also played an important role in shaping the way I interpreted my interactions with children, NGOs, and other actors, and in fact influenced the very questions that I asked (see hooks, 1984; Haraway, 1991).

The advantages and disadvantages of close personal relationships

In fact, it is the personal aspect that even allowed me to conduct most of my research in the first place. I relied on connections and trust to gain access to sources and spaces that were otherwise closed to me. My initial point of entry into street life was through Generación, an NGO that has been working with street children in Lima since the early 1990s. Before going to Perú, I had attended a conference on ending human trafficking and met the Peruvian woman who founded and directed Generación. She immediately invited me to attend a series of capacity-building workshops that they were organizing in anticipation of the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. At these workshops, I got to know both current and former street children, became associated with Generación in their minds, and became familiar with Generación's approach to political change.

The first time I went to the streets with Ana and Jose, former street youth who worked as educators for Generación, I was in awe of the sheer scope of their connections. We met in front of the

Ministry of Justice, at 8 pm. It had just gotten dark and most people who worked in the center were hurrying home. As we walked through the streets of the center of Lima, where most of Perú's elite would never go, teenagers, youth, and even young adults would call hello, or approach them. By being linked to Generación, I felt like I had a golden ticket to the street world, and could come to no harm. One time, a man came up to me, demanding money. He was immediately cut off by another woman who I had never spoken with, who explained, "She is a friend of Generación's."

However, this ended up being a very political choice in ways that I was initially unaware. As Katz argues (1994), while researchers may have the power to define the field, they do not remain immune from existing power dynamics. First, the directors of Generación did not get along with some of the key staff members who were affiliated with other child workers groups. While I discuss in more depth what I see as an exclusion of the homeless street child population from the child workers movement, my assumed affiliation with the group made other interviews occasionally difficult. When I first went to a meeting, I introduced myself as a researcher affiliated with the Catholic University, explaining I was doing dissertation research. Everyone was very friendly, until one of the administrative assistants came in and said, "You're with Generación, aren't you? I saw you with Generación." I tried to explain that I shadowed multiple organizations, and was trying to learn about a topic, but various groups continued to assume that I was 'part of Generación' and excluded me to varying degrees. Such exclusion highlights the way in which personal affiliations and conflicts shape social services and political action in important ways. In some ways, my naiveté and surprise about the amount of fighting between NGOs that were all supposedly working in favor of promoting children's rights is symbolic of something this dissertation is specifically trying to address: that debates regarding childhood are highly political.

While in theory, and to large extent practice, children are outside of formal politics, getting 'credit' for their successes and obtaining their loyalty becomes crucial for program's success and in this sense is very political. The director of Generación herself often expressed fear that I would 'betray' them by joining another organization, and acted hostile or demanded information from me whenever I talked to other organizations. Her strong emotions speak not only to a need for funding and the intense emotional investment careworkers have in their populations but also allude to the paranoia and fear that resulted from work with street children in the 1990s, and the current state of social movements now. I suggest that government efforts to infiltrate civil society as a way to root out potential insurgency during the civil war years had a lasting effect on NGO directors' openness and trust. That some former staff now work with the government, instead of against it, reinforces concerns that the child right's agenda is being coopted by the government. I elaborate on the way in which formal

recognition for children's rights may ironically make rights movements less radical in the following chapter.

While my decision to interview anti-child labor organizations may have been seen as a betrayal of sorts, I felt that it was important to get to know other organizations in order to provide a more detailed look into the dynamics of 'managing' street poverty, even if I disagreed with their political philosophies. In most NGOs, regardless of official stance on child labor, I met dedicated social workers and educators who genuinely seemed concerned with children's well-being. However, when they would ask me for details about what I was writing, or if they found out I also spent time with child workers' groups, they occasionally got upset. This speaks to the politics of NGO work with children, and the way that they serve to evoke powerful emotions, as I argue in the next chapter. It also raises ethical issues about transparency, and how much I had to state my political opinions up front. Was it okay that I strove for full transparency with the children, but was less open with certain adults? Finally, in such organizations, it was harder to get children to open up to me and tell me about their experiences working for fear that I might report them. Figure 2.9 at the end of the chapter outlines the different organizations that I shadowed and the populations they serve, and highlights the way in which criteria to participate or receive assistance shape children's identities and access to social supports, as I elaborate on in Chapters Three and Five.

Research is a dialogical process in which research is structured by both the researcher and those being researched (England, 1994), and may be transformed both by the input of the researched and by our own positionality (Hastrup, 1992). While I went into Perú with a research plan, my actual field work and research questions changed based on the conversations and experiences I had. Certain pivotal conversations and connections shaped my research over the course of 14 months. During one of my first weeks in Lima, an NGO focused on community development invited me to visit one of their programs in an informal community on the outskirts of Lima. As I walked up the steep dusty hill, the 8-year old daughter of one of the program participants matched my stride. We started chatting, and she asked me if I worked with the NGO. I told her that I did not and instead was there to learn about the lives of Peruvian children. She looked at me thoughtfully and said, "There are lots of poor children here." I said, "Oh. What does it mean to be poor?" and she responded, "It means that you have no mother and no father and you walk around dirty." I responded, "Well, what should we do for poor children?" and she said, "Show them a little bit of *cariño*," a word which translates as care or affection. Her comments speak to the heart of my motivations in undertaking this research: with just a few phrases, she eloquently emphasized the important role that care and social connectivity play in

children's experiences of poverty, elements that are rarely captured in formal surveys regarding child poverty. She also directly challenged the way in which aid is given as a way to induce shame and thus discourage all but the truly needy from accepting it (see Goode & Maskowsky, 2001), and prompted me to specifically ask how children themselves define poverty throughout my other interviews. Such conversations and interviews were necessary in order to capture the dynamics of poverty. While surveys may also have provided some data of poverty as a multidimensional concept, there is no specific data on the poverty of street and other working children. Even more importantly, certain components, such as the link between poverty and dirtiness, would not have been captured.

While much programming and research is done in the name of children, children's own experiences and opinions are often ignored. In order to gain a better understanding of the multidimensional nature of poverty, and the specific ways in which children experienced or interpreted disadvantage, I utilized a child-centered approach to research, engaging in participatory observation and informal conversations to understand the ways in which children were experiencing, responding to, and negotiating social, economic and legal changes within Perú. While I did not fully participate in all activities, and never slept on the street, sniffed glue, or robbed in a group, all important activities to establish camaraderie, I accompanied children through their daily routines, played, ate and sometimes worked with them, in order to get a better sense of their lives. However, because of my age, nationality and socioeconomic class, it was clear in some circumstances that I was not a full participant.

In total, excluding focus groups and informal conversations, I conducted 42 semi-structured interviews with children in Lima and 27 in Cusco. In Lima, I conducted interviews with more teenagers than I had originally anticipated. Ages ranged from seven to eighteen, with 14 interviews conducted of children ages 7-12, 11 interviews with those ages 13-14, and 17 interviews of 15-17 year olds. I also had conversations with some youth in their late teens and early 20s to give me a sense of what street life might have been like in the 1990s, and how things may have changed. Twenty-seven were boys and fifteen were girls. While I did not ask the children whether they identified as indigenous or not, the majority spoke Spanish as their first language. A few children did speak Quechua, but were often embarrassed to admit it. In Cusco, the presence of Quechua-speaking children in the street was unsurprisingly higher. Of the 27 children and youth who I interviewed in more depth, 13 were girls and 14 were boys. Eleven were ages 7 to 12, 6 were ages 13 to 14, and 8 were between the ages of 15 and 17. While I saw a core group of children and youth regularly, other children featured in my research more sporadically (for my main field sites, see Figure 2.2). Interviews ranged from as short as 15 minutes to 1.5 hours, and varied significantly depending on the child's age, personality and whether we were

interrupted. In fact, 'formal' interviews were often continued informally. While interviews varied as time progressed and with different children, I tried to cover the same set of basic topics, as listed in Table 2.2.

I saved as many formal interviews as possible for the end of my field work. Informal spaces and participant observation allowed me to learn what questions to ask, and helped me understand some of the events or experiences that were important to children's everyday lives that I might not have otherwise thought to ask about. For example, it was only by observing children hide from police that I learned that crossing district lines is an active strategy used to avoid detention, or that forced identity checks even take place in the first place. Additionally, although I did not live in the exact same neighborhood as many of the children, I ran into them on buses, in market places, and while conducting interviews with various social service agencies, allowing me to participate in aspects of their daily lives and establish closer relationships in ways that would not otherwise be possible without employing ethnographic methods. Building rapport and establishing relationships with children was essential in order to gain access to more intimate parts of their lives and help children feel comfortable enough to talk to me. However, gaining such trust also comes with ethical issues and responsibilities, as I mentioned. While I may have felt that I was on the 'side' of the children whom I was interviewing, I could not assume a level of trust (Nelson, 2000). Because it takes time to establish trust, ethnographic methods are especially relevant for this research. I attempted to engage in open-ended conversations rather than narrowly defined interviews. As I elaborate on shortly, in the case of younger children, especially those who did not sleep in the streets, I spent time walking around market places, playing, drawing, helping them with their work, window shopping, exploring Lima, teaching them and talking. We also spent time together at NGO events, in state-run academic support centers and through my various voluntary roles.

In the case of homeless street youth, I initially depended heavily on two research assistants to show me around at night and introduce me to other children. Both had spent significant amounts of time on the streets. They helped me form connections with children currently living in the streets, initially served as guides, and provided valuable insights into how street life had changed since their time there. Additionally, because they no longer consumed drugs, they were often able to give more in-depth responses than some of the street children currently immersed in street life.

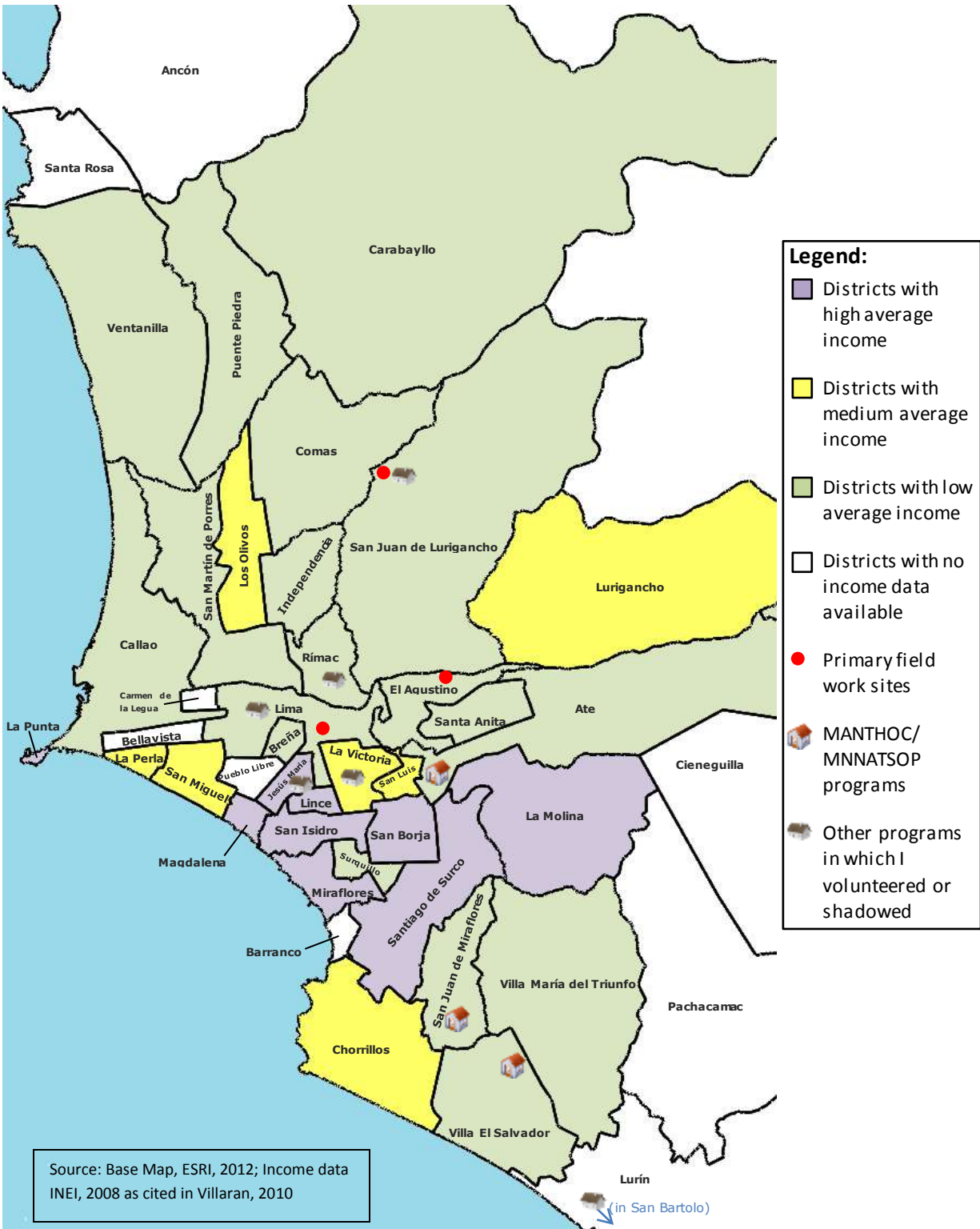


Figure 2.2 Map of Municipality of Lima with main field work sites

Because of the assistance from the former street youth, I had access to spaces that would otherwise have remained fairly invisible to the public. I spent time in rooms in dilapidated buildings that youth rented out for minimal fees on a nightly basis, accompanied children to the nightly 'leche', where they received free milk and sandwiches, sang religious songs, and listened to a brief 'sermon', visited some youth in jail, or accompanied them as they made their rounds in the city streets to vend or shine shoes.

One of my research assistants, 26-year old Ana¹⁴, also helped me conduct some of my interviews, and provided me with constant feedback and insights as I adapted and reworked my interview process. She was born in a small pueblo five hours north of Lima. The youngest of five children, she spent most of her early childhood with her father and her stepmother. Her father drank heavily, and often hit her. One night, when she was eight, he severely burned her. She decided to flee the house, and hitchhiked to Lima. Not sure where to go, she found some other children in the streets, and soon adapted to street life, robbing, using, and then eventually, selling drugs in order to survive. The center of Lima was more neglected by government officials in those days, and she slept with a group of other street children in various abandoned buildings in downtown Lima. She continued to live in the street for over ten years, occasionally cycling into the juvenile correctional facility for girls, or sleeping in an open-doors home run by a local NGO. But everything changed in her early 20s, when she learned that she was both HIV positive and pregnant. The father of her child was a policeman, who she would sleep with in exchange for cocaine. But she did not want to bring her son up in such an environment. In order to gain admittance to a program for HIV-positive mothers, she stopped using drugs, and eventually started working as an educator for the same NGO that had often helped her when she was on the streets. Ana served as a role model for the other children on the street. They remembered how involved in drugs and street life she had been, and saw that she had changed her life.

Ana immensely facilitated my research, helping me develop rapport much more quickly with multiple children. However, she did sometimes supply leading answers when I was conducting some of the more formal interviews. For example, if a child did not understand my question or did not seem to know how to answer, she would give them suggestions. And like everyone, Ana's interpretations of conversations were based on her own positionality. Because I talked to Ana so frequently her experiences and insight shaped the way I conducted my own research. When I met kids, I tried to be as transparent as possible about what my research goals were. Interestingly, however, on a few occasions, when I specifically mentioned that I wanted to find contradictions in what the government said it did, and what the children's own perceptions were, older youth would warn me to be careful, stressing that

¹⁴ As is the case with all the children, pseudonyms are used to protect the children's identity.

it was dangerous to conduct such research and that I could get into trouble. While I myself did not feel unsafe, such fear may be left over from the 1990s, when Fujimori's government used the threat of terrorism to wipe out any governmental opposition, as explained above. I did as many of my formal interviews with children towards the end of my field work, hoping that I would have established a rapport. However, when I interviewed children through institutions, I was sometimes encouraged to interview them before we really knew each other. I would insist that the children did not need to talk to me but sometimes well-intentioned social workers or educators would say otherwise. I would try to draw with them or share information about myself as we talked to make them more comfortable, but such set-up interviews were often more stressful. I also learned that when I interviewed children in institutions, the ones I did not interview sometimes felt bad. Because of that, I would occasionally interview children who did not work, simply because they had asked if I would interview them. I did not count those interviews in my totals. Our conversations nonetheless provided interesting insight into the lives of non-working poor children.

I sought to conduct my interviews in conversational mode, sharing my own experiences as well as asking questions. At the end of each interview, I also told children that they could ask me anything they wanted, trying to make the conversation feel more balanced. However, whenever we were 'formally' doing interviews, perhaps because of my age and the set-up, some children became much less talkative. I suggest that this has to do with their tendency to associate such situations with times of failure or getting in trouble, such as school, police or social service settings. My questions were open-ended, trying to touch on certain themes. However, I soon learned that many children did not see the interviews as conversations but rather were afraid of getting it 'wrong.' In an effort to change that, I would first ask more general questions, just to get them to talk, hoping that they would bring up topics of interest. For example, I would ask children to tell me about a time they felt happy, or what they liked most about their work. Then, I would ask them questions about street children more generally, allowing them to express their knowledge as an 'expert' on the topic rather than a victim. Such a method tended to work well, and provided a space for children to tell me about their own lives without making themselves as vulnerable as asking direct questions might have. Finally, I always interspersed questions with information about my own life and work with children in the United States. By telling them how children and youth were treated in the US, I provided them with a comparison point to tell me how their own situations were similar or different.

While my ability to engage in meaningful formal interviews improved, informal conversations, observation, and most of all, activities, often led to the most insightful comments or conversations. In

particular, when I was able to establish my credibility or commitment through another activity, like accompanying children to the hospital, police station, or to walk and find their friends, they tended to open up to me more. It was while we were walking and talking, where ‘extracting’ information did not seem to be the exclusive goal, that ironically, I was able to get the most information. Having mostly worked with children in a counselor or educator position, having a need to ‘get information’ in the back of my mind made our interactions more stressful for me internally, as mentioned earlier. It sometimes made it difficult to fully embrace the idea of open-ended research methods, in which research subjects can shape questions and the research process, when I felt pressure to get ‘good answers’.

It was when I engaged in activities with children that I might have done anyway as a careworker that I felt most at ease. I used multiple participatory methods with the children themselves, including games, group discussions, participant observation, and teaching. Children and I frequently spent a lot of time drawing together, both to build rapport (Atkinson, 2006) and as part of the formal interview process. Drawing is a particularly useful research method with children because it “enables them to express complex ideas, emotions, or hard-to-talk-about issues that they might not want or be able to put into words” (Hunleth, 2011, 86). According to Punch (2002), “drawing also gives children time to think over a question or topic rather than demanding a quick verbal response” (as cited in Hunleth, 2011, 86). It provided us with a common activity in which to engage that made our conversations feel more natural, while also providing an alternative outlet for the children to express their opinions and emotions. For example, children drew pictures of their environments, police brutality, and themselves and their families, attempting to capture how they saw their worlds and sometimes combining elements of fantasy, or how they wished the world were, both of which triggered fruitful conversations about children’s aspirations and perceptions.

As part of the interview, children were specifically asked to draw maps of the important places in their lives. Such maps provide an important glimpse into children’s understandings of space, where they spend their time, and where they feel comfortable. The results both build on, and in some cases, directly contradict, adult-centric understandings of space. They offer important insights into the ways in which children resist, reshape and reaffirm adult framings of their lives and provide detailed information about children’s livelihood strategies, the role of work and education in their lives, and their own understandings of poverty and rights.

The answers to questions I got were shaped by my own positionality not just in what I chose to ask but in how people chose to answer. For example, children would often tell me what they thought I wanted to hear. Because of my position as an adult, asking them questions, I usually held more power

during our formal interviews than I wanted. Children would tell me that they had stopped using drugs and wanted to change, even when I could smell residues of sniffing glue. Yet, rather than trying to expose children for 'lying', Hecht (1998) writes that narratives need not be pinned down as either fact or fiction, but rather always contain elements of reality. Anthropologists point out the ways in which street children will actively try to present stereotypical images of street life to researchers. Scheper-Hughes and Hoffman (1998, 365) explain, "street kids are, almost by definition, street smart and know how to manipulate and adapt themselves to particular situations, including anthropologists." The dynamics of our conversations in and of themselves, and what answers children thought were acceptable offer import insight into the ways in which normative values are internalized or at least partially reproduced.

In addition to formal and informal conversations, I also conducted a few focus groups and group interviews at NGOs. Group conversations with children who attended an NGO in the hills of Lima (but did not target street or working children) provided an informal control group to the interviews I conducted among street children, since many of the kids came from the same towns. Group conversations also allow participants to rework and respond to each other's ideas, often yielding more dynamic conversations than occur one-on-one. They can also decenter power away from the interviewer. However, as is the case with other participatory methods, group spaces themselves may reproduce uneven power dynamics within the particular community or program. Especially when a program director was present, children may not have always talked as openly as they might have otherwise.

In many regards I conducted the same research design in both Lima and Cusco. However, some differences emerged on the basis of variations in the populations and field sites. First, Cusco no longer has the same number of homeless street youth as in the past, and has a much smaller number proportionally than does Lima. While there are definitely some youth who rent rooms or sleep in Qosqo Maki, the municipal dorm of working street children and adolescents where I volunteered, the majority live with extended family members in the hills of Cusco, working in the center plaza during the day. Thus, the majority of those interviewed maintain some contact, and often still lived, with family members. Because of such connections, I spent more time with extended families in Cusco than I did in Lima. Additionally, Cusco does not have any programs that rely on former street youth to serve as educators (nor do they have educators that go to the streets at night). Thus, I spent significantly less time in Cusco's streets late at night, and often established contacts with street children without the initial support of 'gatekeeper' organizations.

Simply by going to the main plaza frequently, and occasionally volunteering with at an after-school program for kids who worked in the main plaza, I began to recognize the majority of children that had worked there. Like Lima, many of the children in Cusco were familiar with researchers. And the abundance of tourists meant they were used to interacting with foreigners. Sometimes I felt like this worked to my disadvantage in that children wanted me to buy them things, and when I could not consistently do that, they would find wealthier tourists that could. However, over time, I realized the children would consistently come find me to draw, play cards, or simply 'dar la vuelta' with them in the plaza. I also often organized giant games of tag and red light-green light, helping them reclaim public space in my own little way. Cusco's smaller size, and much smaller street population, made it easier to see the same children on a regular basis. Coincidentally, I also rented a room just a block from one of the main areas where the older street youth frequently played soccer and most of the children soon learned where I lived. They would often show up unannounced at my house, asking if they could use the internet, watch TV, or shower. Some of the girls liked to come over and cook together, and then all watch TV or play games. Additionally, two families that shared a home invited me over to their own house twice to cook and visit. Such casual interactions were not as possible in Lima due both to its much bigger size, and the fact that I was staying in a room that was part of another family's house, which would have led to tension if I had invited in 'elements from the street.'

In Cusco, in addition to working with children in the main plaza, I accompanied two social workers who ran the program Educators of the Street¹⁵ to work with children in market places outside the city center (see Map 2.3). Finally, because of Cusco's small size and greater accessibility to space such as the juvenile correctional facility, it was easier to follow children over the course of months as they moved through various spaces and social services. Even when I would stop by the Family Police Station, which was much more open than in Lima, mostly because of personal connections, I would know some of the kids who were being temporarily detained from my work directly in the streets or volunteering. Finally, in Cusco, I also interviewed four mothers who frequently worked in the plaza with their daughters. These interviews provided an important glimpse into parental understandings of work

¹⁵ My attempts to successfully work with MNNATSOP in Cusco were more limited. The Cusco office was in transition during my field work. It had just formed, and consisted of two organizations-MANTHOC, the original child workers' movement, and Inti Runakunaq Wasi, an organization that provided homework help for children from poor families, only a few of whom worked. MANTHOC had just relocated its base, meaning it no longer had a strong group of constituents. However, the two collaborators had other commitments and were not able to devote much time to rebuilding it. While I volunteered once a week with Inti Runakunaq Wasi, and occasionally attended a meeting of MANTHOC if they happened, there was not a lot going on.

and the expectations and hopes they put onto their children that both overlap and differ from those objectives expressed by government employees.



Figure 2.3 Map of district of Cusco with field sites

As I outline in the following graphs, the children in this study engaged in a number of occupations (see Figure 2.4). Although no municipal-wide data of street child occupations are available, because of my choice of sites, I suggest that there are actually a much greater number of children engaging in shoe shining, the majority of whom are migrants, than is reflected in my study. Children would also occasionally obtain temporary jobs in construction, in market places, or in restaurants. However, because this study focuses on street work, I did not list such occupations here. Although not nationally representative, the experiences of the children in this study provide important insights into the ways in which children negotiate and rework the contexts of their daily lives. In addition to the jobs listed in the aforementioned chart, children also robbed, sold drugs, and prostituted in order to

supplement their incomes. Although no children with whom I worked reported directly begging for money, other studies report begging as an additional way for street children to obtain money (Strehl, 2010).

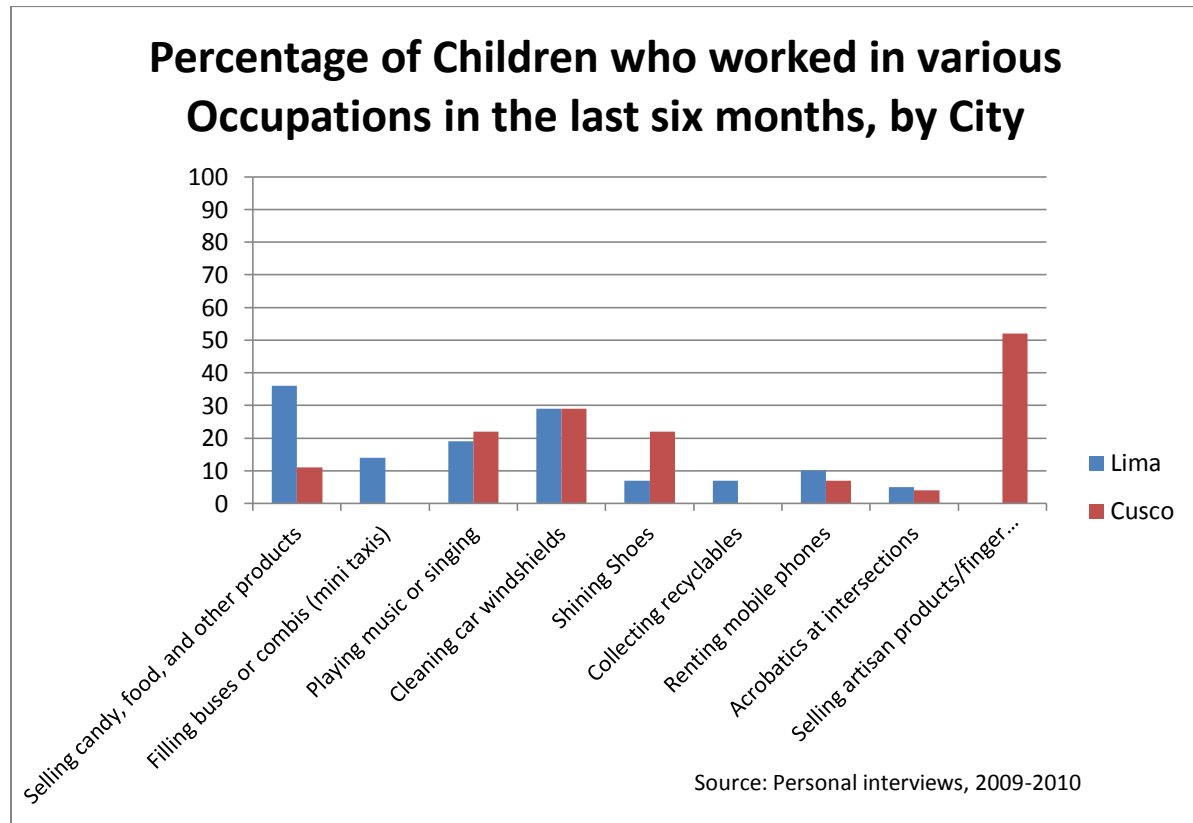


Figure 2.4 Children's Occupations

My decision to engage in open-ended qualitative research, while certainly messier than analyzing secondary sources or existing data sets, was explicitly an effort to challenge the ways in which much academic knowledge is produced. While in many regards I still had an unfair power advantage, and ultimately was the one who decided how my dissertation would be written, by viewing street children as actors in their own right, I aim to challenge ideas of how knowledge can be produced while also contributing to new ways of framing child poverty. While individually, children's stories have to be understood as partial and neither whole nor transparent, collectively they speak to broader systemic issues. Children's presence in the street can only be understood in relationship to the historical socioeconomic and political processes that produce and maintain poverty. This approach is in direct contrast to other studies (see de Soto, 2002; Hall & Patrinos, 2006) that continue to exceptionalize the poor as those being left out, rather than potentially harmed by, neoliberal globalization. Thus, in order

to conduct a relational analysis of child poverty, it is necessary to also examine Perú's political economic history.

2.7 A Political Economy of Poverty in Perú

A relational analysis of child poverty necessitates an analysis of the social and political-economic relations of which children are a part, rather than simply the characteristics of poor children themselves. In the remainder of this chapter, I highlight how inequality in Perú can better be explained by examining the idea of adverse incorporation, or integration on adverse terms (Bracking 2003), in direct contrast to the assumption that the poor remain poor because they are excluded from the market. I first discuss adverse incorporation on a macro-level, highlighting unfair terms of trade and debt between Perú and European powers, examining how adverse incorporation also works with processes of dispossession. I then turn to examine how particular population groups were also subject to differential incorporation, as they faced highly discriminatory and exploitative labor opportunities. Bracking (2003, 6) suggests that the concept of "differential incorporation allows for movements toward greater relative social remuneration to exist contemporaneously with processes of decline in social remuneration for like, or similar groups." Such an approach leaves room for recognition that while overall poverty rates in Perú may have begun declining in recent years, certain groups of people may still be increasingly worse off.

In the chapter's final section, I argue that such shifts combine with social boundary making and discourses about poverty to (re)produce that poverty. "Persisting poverty has to be analyzed as an effect of political systems, their discourses, and the terms of inclusion or exclusion" (Mosse, 2010, 1157). To do so, I theorize poverty not only as a result of exploitative capital processes of accumulation but also as linked to related processes of unequal socio-spatial categorization and political and discursive systems that limit or exclude those named as poor (Lawson, 2012, 2). I combine insights from Marxist and feminist scholars about the exploitative effects of capitalism (see Harvey, 2005; Massey, 1984; Katz, 2004) with a post-colonial concern with discourse and representation (see Escobar, 1995; Radcliffe, 2005; Gibson-Graham, 2005; Lawson, Jarosz and Bonds, 2008).

While there is a growing body of literature drawing attention to the ways in which material exclusion is intricately linked to discursive understandings of poverty, there is a dearth of work combining the political economy of poverty with discourse in the context of Latin America. Caroline Moser (2009), in her most recent writing on Ecuador, does highlight a need to consider social capital from a relational perspective. However, while she provides an important starting point, her work pays little attention to how material poverty is specifically intertwined with social categories and ways of speaking about the poor. By focusing on Perú, I specifically address this lack. Within Perú, discourses of

'othering' and beliefs about who belongs are highly linked with indigeneity and migrant status. Discrimination, oppression and hierarchal legal codes from colonial times continue to serve as powerful guidelines for group and personal relationships (Hudson, 1992). In this sense, aspects of persistent poverty arise from systems of exclusion based on social identities, separate from, but linked to, class (Mosse, 2010).

Charting centuries of International Exploitation

In order to understand why child poverty persists today, it is necessary to analyze the root causes, historically and spatially, of poverty in Perú. By tracing historical processes of exploitation and discrimination, I make clear that privilege and poverty must be understood in relation to each other. Perú's poverty is interconnected with a long history of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation. During the colonial period, Spanish colonizers forced Peruvian peasants to mine for gold and silver, funding much of Spain's capital expansion. To do so, they adopted the Inca system of mita, or labor parties, in which communities would provide the ruling party with a monthly quota of labor. But unlike the Inca, who often used labor to build roads or invest in communal projects, the Spanish worked many of their indigenous laborers to death in the mines, destroying any semblance of reciprocity on which the system was founded. In addition to exploiting Perú for its resources and labor, by effectively removing able-bodied men for long periods of time, they also severely limited indigenous communities' ability to productively work their own land and negatively affected family structure. Forty years after the arrival of the Spanish, the indigenous population had been reduced to roughly 80 percent of its previous size (Hudson, 1992).

The declining labor force was particularly concerning to the Spanish, who saw Perú's mines as one of the main reasons to maintain a colonial presence. To achieve cheap labor, Spain forced resettlement of scattered indigenous populations into villages with associated collective land holding. Resettlement was highly disruptive to large segments of the population. For example, 21,000 people in Cusco were brought from 309 villages and resettled into 40. The Spanish then appointed a presiding indigenous authority to be responsible for enforcing tribute (payment in cash or kind) and labor quotas (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). In this sense, local leaders played a key role in indirectly facilitating colonial exploitation. The colonizers also introduced a system called reparto, in which indigenous people bought goods on credit and repaid them with labor at inflated prices. While the system allowed the native population to access new goods, it also provided the legal justification for extremely abusive practices and continued indebtedness (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

Institutions of discrimination and the role of the indigenous highland population as a cheap source of labor were (and still are) intricately related and complementary (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Even beyond dispossession and exploitation, colonial actions were also important for establishing firm hierarchies about worth and value, in which the indigenous population was clearly placed at the bottom. Indigenous people were considered perpetual minors in front of the law, unable to independently represent themselves (Premo, 2005), and subject to higher labor taxes and tribute than were mestizos and whites.¹⁶

Independence and the New Republic: What really changed?

Legally, with independence, the indigenous population became Peruvian citizens, formally entitled to equal rights in front of the law. However, in practice, ideas about the inherent inferiority of Perú's indigenous population did not drastically shift with independence. Some scholars suggest that the criollo elite simply replaced Spanish colonizers as the new exploiters of the indigenous population (Hollett, 2008; Thorp & Paredes, 2010; Portocarrero, 1992). In fact, despite independence, there was effectively no change in rules governing ownership of resources, including land and mines (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).¹⁷ Labor relations continued to be shaped by feudal power structures, with debt bondage, or *enganche* (hooking) the main means of securing labor. The *enganche* system worked by artificially creating debts in order to hold indigenous workers in virtual serfdom (Hollett, 2008). New power brokers emerged to fill the space left by the colonial elite. Opportunities for indigenous peasants to access land, education or other resources were then intermediated by these power brokers in various forms of political patronage and clientelism, vacillating between protection and exploitation (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Since most indigenous leadership had been decimated by hundreds of years of colonial oppression, the ability to organize protests was also significantly limited (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

What did change, however, was where economic power was centered. Post-independence, economic power gradually shifted from the highlands to the coast. In 1839, Lima became Perú's new capital, not Cusco. Up until that point, the country's strength had been tied to the highlands, which had controlled indigenous labor and had supplied food and textiles. The coinciding growth of Lima's political dominance "operated to cause an embedding of inequality between the coast and the highlands" (Thorp & Paredes, 2010, 10). Initially, Lima had only a very small indigenous population. Instead, residents were mostly white and mestizo (mixed). This exacerbated tensions between the two regions. Lima's

¹⁶ Child rearing during the colonial era was central to the reproduction of class and the transmission of culture and important in the maintenance of political stability (Premo, 2005). Beliefs about race also played a role in Latin America's high rates of child abandonment.

¹⁷ There was some relaxation of tax collecting. However, this meant the newly formed state had minimal revenue.

elite tended to distrust regional leaders, and even reported despising the highlands. The domination of criollo elite of Lima would mark the ethnic relations of the new republic, as I elaborate on throughout this chapter. Indigenous communities were thus doubly exploited, subject first to the dominance of the coast over the highlands, and second to local mestizo-power brokers (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

Economic exclusion was compounded by political exclusion. While under the new republic, ethnic differences supposedly disappeared before the law, Perú's Electoral Law of 1895 restricted the vote to the literate population, the majority of whom lived on the coast. In this way, the indigenous highlands population was largely disenfranchised. This lack of political representation is key to explaining the perpetuation of chronic poverty (Mosse, 2010), and why centrally-made decisions in Lima often made the indigenous population worse off. The political voice among the Sierra (the highlands) was thus concentrated among only a small elite.

The links between the Peruvian government's decisions, international pressures and trends, and material hardship reveal limitations of looking at poverty as a bounded problem of nation-states. While Spain itself became less influential over time, especially following independence, Perú's economy continued to be linked with Europe, and later the United States, in an extractive relationship in which European and American companies acquired Perú's natural resources for minimal prices, with high economic and environmental costs for large segments of the Peruvian population, especially poor indigenous Peruvians. This differential incorporation into the foreign market reinforces the idea that poverty needs to be analyzed in relation to different social classes (Murray, 2001; Bracking, 2003). It is necessary to "move beyond any simple opposition between "inclusion" or "exclusion"" (Du Toit, 2003, 32) and instead look more specifically at the terms of 'inclusion'.

The Peruvian government began its independence with a high external debt built up during years of fighting against Spain (Hollett, 2008). One of the main ways in which Perú attempted to address this debt and raise money for its initial projects was through the sale of guano. From the start, however, foreign companies dominated the trade (Mathew, 1972). The Peruvian government gave foreign merchants exclusive rights to guano in exchange for large governmental loans so that it could run its new republic. In addition, initial contracts placed no restrictions on the amount of guano that could be extracted nor on the particular markets in which the British merchants could sell it. One historian argues that an 1842 contract given to a British merchant "sanctioned almost complete British dominance in Peruvian commercial and financial affairs" (Mathew, 1972, 599). The money received for the monopoly, which was to last nine years, was quite low, even by historical standards. During the first year of guano sales, the British netted roughly 100,000 pounds in profit, while the Peruvian government

was paid only 300 pounds. While contract terms would eventually improve, by the end of the Guano era, over 12 million tons of guano had been exported, helping to stimulate the commercial agricultural revolution in Europe while simultaneously depleting Perú of nearly all of its natural guano supply (Hudson, 1992).

Revenues from guano sales went into the central government in Lima, helping it consolidate its power throughout the rest of the country by financing police and administrative outposts, thus furthering a shift of economic importance away from the highlands to the coast. As was the case during colonial times, most of the actual guano was extracted by relying on forced labor. Indigenous peasants and Peruvian convicts were initially forced to provide cheap labor to mine the deposits (Hollett, 2008). In addition to receiving little compensation for their work and to being separated from their families and communities, ammonia fumes from the guano would cause multiple skin problems and even blind some workers. As time passed, it grew more and more difficult to recruit indigenous labor, and exporters began relying almost entirely on Chinese immigrants, who were treated even worse than their indigenous counterparts.¹⁸ The central government itself, without a need to respond accountably to large segments of the population, had invested revenue from guano unevenly, squandering much of it. While head taxes on indigenous populations had been abolished in the early part of the century, in 1866, in anticipation of the collapse of guano trade, the government reintroduced the head tax, forcing impoverished indigenous populations to bear the brunt of dispossession. When in some places, such as Puno, indigenous communities revolted, the government responded with the 'Law of Terror', leading to mass killings and arrests (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

In direct contrast to arguments promoted by advocates of neoliberal market policies, poverty does not just result from exclusion from the market but rather because of adverse terms of inclusion. During the last decade of the 19th century, foreign investors continued to acquire more and more of Perú's natural resources and industries. As it attempted to establish control of the new republic and then defend its access to the Guano trade, the Peruvian government borrowed extensive amounts of money, heightened by the War of the Pacific with Chile. In 1890, in order to settle their other massive debts, the government agreed to turn over the Peruvian railroads to Michael Grace for 66 years (later to be extended indefinitely), as well as granting the right to 2 million tons of guano and the franchise to run steamships on Lake Titicaca (Hollett, 2008). According to Mariategui, "In delivering the railways to the British bankers, the Peruvian government managed slowly to stimulate the investment of foreign capital

¹⁸ While most other trades specifically relied on the forced labor of indigenous populations, the guano trade differed in that Chinese migrants were specifically brought to Peru to carry out much of the guano extraction (Hollett, 2008).

in other sectors of the economy, reemphasizing its colonial condition” (as cited in Hollett, 2008, 240). While investment in railroads could have in theory benefited the highlands population, oppressive land tenure practices and a lack of capital held many back (Hollett, 2008). The railroads were also specifically designed for the purpose of facilitating mining, of which William Grace, who had at this point migrated to the United States, now controlled.

During the first half of the 20th century, Perú continued to be an export economy, developing the cotton, wool and sugar industries. However, the majority of exports were controlled by foreign capital (Hollett, 2008). The United States, in particular, emerged as a key player in Peruvian exports, controlling 80 percent of Perú’s oil industry and 95 percent of Perú’s copper (Hollett, 2008). Grace, who had brokered the earlier deal to gain control of the railways, also controlled 24 percent of Perú’s sugar. Opening to trade led to differential incorporation, leading to growth on the coast but hindering development in the highlands (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). With the exception of metal mining, major exports such as oil, cotton, sugar and fishmeal were centered on the coast. While mining did take place in the highlands, as it became more capital intensive and larger scale, it became dominated by foreigners, with opportunities for local populations to prosper increasingly limited.

Policies and economic growth strategies developed in international capitals in the global north continued to contribute to inequality and vulnerability of large segments of Perú’s population throughout the rest of the century (W. Mitchell, 2006). In the 1970s, the Peruvian government, encouraged by international financial capital and the circulation of petrodollars, began to heavily borrow money from foreign-owned banks. The government then used some of that money to purchase military technology, which it first used to suppress land invasions (W. Mitchell, 2006), and then later to torture and kill entire indigenous villages during the conflict with Shining Path, an insurgent terrorist group. In such regards, political decisions made at various scales need to be viewed as inter-dependent and fluid. Policies were not always forced upon the country but rather were willingly adopted by various politicians and elite, a factor that is often overlooked in critical accounts of development geographies (Power, 2003). Political and economic decisions differentially affected various regions of Perú, and populations within those regions. In particular, indigenous rural areas often bore the brunt of economic restructuring and political decisions based in Lima.

2.8 Towards a relational understanding of poverty

Discourses of nation-building: Excluding the rural indigenous

Lima’s poverty and growth are directly linked to hardships and discrimination in the rest of the country. The presence of street children in city streets can only be understood by looking at a political-

economy of rural and urban areas as dialectically connected. When practitioners and scholars fail to highlight these connections, they reinforce a tendency to view poverty as a condition of a certain group of people, strengthening racial discriminations and narrow explanations for poverty. Yet, as Wallerstein (1999) argues, power and privilege are the handmaidens of poverty. Thus, in contrast to studies which focus on the deficiencies of the poor, this study emphasizes that the elite play a central role in maintaining inequality (Wale & Foster, 2007). Poverty needs to be understood through discursive and social projects that are themselves about producing social boundaries, and keeping groups of people at the bottom of society (Jarosz & Lawson, 2002; De Venanzi, 2004). In the case of Perú, entire groups, strongly linked with specific places, are coded as outsiders to national (i.e. urban) middle class projects of modernity. Although ethnicity and geographical region within Perú do not neatly map onto each other, Quechua-speaking indigenous populations continue to be strongly linked with the Peruvian highlands, a region suffering from greater material poverty and fewer opportunities for social mobility. The southern highlands, including Cusco, Apurimac, Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Puno, also contain the highest indigenous populations. In the first part of this section, I examine the discourses that are utilized to justify discrimination against indigenous populations, before examining the adverse ways in which rural areas were incorporated into Perú's national economy, both of which actively work to (re)produce poverty and inequality.

Discourses of nation-building are key to understanding historical and current processes of discrimination that perpetuate chronic poverty in Perú. Hegemonic narratives make particular representations of the world seem natural, with those in power defining what is considered deviant (De Venanzi, 2004). Peruvian nationhood was built around the idea of *mestizaje*, or mixing. In the discourse, racial differences would disappear and be replaced with a *mestizo* group. However, mixing was almost exclusively defined in terms of 'westernization', with indigenous populations abandoning their traditions, culture and language in favor of Western notions of modernity (Portocarrero, 1988; Radcliffe, 1990).¹⁹ Everything European was constructed as good and valued while at the same time devaluing everything indigenous. In order to advance, indigenous populations needed to take on European cultural values.

The idea that when indigenous people enter into contact with civilization they are no longer indigenous is at the heart of discrimination (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). In this sense, discourses around

¹⁹ Parts of the indigenous population themselves have also felt a need to deny their indigenous identity in order to progress. For example, some indigenous would bribe officials to be redefined as *mestizos*, in which they only had to pay half the Indian head tax and were no longer subject to the *mita* (Thorp and Paredes, 2010).

development are also highly spatial. Participating in urban life became central to national identity (Spitta, 2007), especially as proximity to the city center also became linked to proximity to financial and administrative power. The upper- and middle-classes in urban areas continued to define the terms of 'homogenization', with whiter populations yielding greater political and economic power. The relationship between urban lifestyles and ideas of what progress meant reinforced the idea that certain spaces, particularly rural areas in the highlands, were backward (Thorp & Paredes, 2010), and increased the desire to migrate for those looking to get ahead. Migration from the Sierra to Lima was both a consequence and cause of decreases in importance of the region (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). The more educated and entrepreneurial tended to migrate to the coast, reinforcing the domination of the coast and hindering development of leadership in the sierra (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

Everyday discourses of poverty and development play an important role in influencing relations of power between the wealthy, 'developed' and poor, 'underdeveloped' (Wale & Foster, 2007). Just as today some people see the indigenous population as holding back Perú's growth, in the late 1800s, Peruvian elite blamed indigenous lack of loyalty and inherent laziness for the loss of the War of the Pacific to Chile (Larson, 2004). Ricardo Palma, a leading political figure of the 19th century, wrote, "The principal cause of the great defeat is that the majority of Perú is composed of a wretched and degraded race that we once attempted to dignify and ennoble. The Indian lacks a patriotic sense; he is a born enemy of the white and of the man on the coast" (as cited in Thorp & Paredes, 2010, 102) Such attitudes reinforce moral discourses which blame 'Indian' populations for their situations of poverty, and in this case, slowing down the progress of the whole country. Palma's comments are also interesting in that he firmly roots indigenous populations in the highlands by presenting them in opposition to the 'coast.'

The loss of the War of the Pacific forced Lima's government to think about the 'indian problem' (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Leading Peruvian intellectuals and politicians of the time put a big emphasis on nation-building and the creation of Peruvian citizens through the expansion of the formal education system. They reasoned that through education, indigenous people would shed their backward ways and learn to be Peruvian, thus allowing the nation to progress.²⁰ Yet, because progress was defined as acceptance of the Western world (Portocarrero, 1992), I suggest that schools also played a key role in the marginalization of the indigenous population by reinforcing discourses which presented indigenous

²⁰ Not everyone embraced expanding education to the Indian population. In fact, some specifically feared that with education and knowledge of their rights, Indians would 'lose their traditional gentleness.' Other intellectuals promoted educating the indigenous up to a certain point. One 20th century Peruvian intellectual argued that education can serve "to introduce into their (indigenous) customs the habits of hygiene which they lack. But one must not go further...the Indian is not and must not stop being a machine" (1937, 68, as cited in Portocarrero, 1992, 74). As long as Indians remained submissive workers, education was acceptable but if it led to actual demand for equal treatment or interfered with the labor force, it was viewed as much more problematic.

culture in opposition to progress and civilization. School curriculum and educational practices sent a clear message that indigenous populations were 'backward' or inferior. In the 19th century, school textbooks portrayed Perú's indigenous "as beings with dejected, miserable lives" (Portocarrero, 1992, 69). For the indigenous population, school was supposed to be a ladder to 'civilization.' Yet, such ideas clearly reinforced the assumption that indigenous lifestyles were inherently inferior, condemned to disappear. In many schools, children were not allowed to speak their native languages, and were encouraged to abandon Andean customs in favor of 'Western' lifestyles. Schools promoted a clear understanding of how they were defining the mestizo nation by using Spanish as the medium of instruction and official communication (Radcliffe, 1990), teaching children that Perú was a Western and Christian country, and that Criollo modernity represented the future (Portocarrero, 1992). Additionally, and directly linked to discourses about poverty, schools emphasized individual responsibility for well-being, rather than discrimination or centuries of adverse incorporation and dispossession. They carried the message that all Peruvians were equal under the law, with differences in wealth being the result of merit, education and the will to progress (Portocarrero, 1992). Perhaps unsurprisingly, indigenous children often experienced school as a place of discrimination and humiliation. Such feelings have continued to the present-day and are linked to poor school performance and higher dropout rates, a topic I elaborate on later. Despite some increases in social spending on schools in the middle of the 20th century, illiteracy rates remained high, and school attendance even fell in some rural areas. In this way, schools widened inequalities by serving as a legitimate tool to justify paying less to those without formal education (Bourdieu, 1984).

Hegemonic narratives about certain categories of people justify the development of exclusionary social practices (De Venanzi, 2004). I suggest that beliefs that indigenous populations need to learn and progress serve to rationalize exploitative working conditions. For example, the vast majority of domestic workers in Lima are young women from Perú's highland region. Radcliffe (1990) argues that they are incorporated into the 'family' of their employers in a way that makes their work seem natural rather than like wage labor. By suggesting that employers are helping their domestic workers by 'teaching them to live properly' and learn mestizo culture, they justify low-wages, long working hours and other exploitative conditions. In fact, some employers said they were doing the girls a favor, reinforced when practices were combined with obligations under godparenthood.²¹ Radcliffe

²¹ Such practices were enforced by traditional relationships of godparenthood, whereby poorer less well-positioned families cemented ties to more powerful families by choosing them as godparents for their children.

(1990) suggests that domestic workers played an important role in reproducing notions of nationhood and belonging based on middle- and upper-class terms. The continued devaluation and dismissal of indigenous traditions, clothing and languages and constant humiliation they faced caused many to adopt Western clothing and styles. While many families referred to them as 'daughters,' they were not treated the same way as families' actual children. Instead, their movements were often limited, and they remained isolated from possible communities by stories of how dangerous it was to venture into the city on their own. A sizeable number of young women working in such conditions experienced sexual and physical abuse from their employers. In fact, until recently, it was a common practice for young men to have their first sexual experience with domestic servants. If pregnancy resulted from such interactions, women were thrown out, facing a severe disadvantage in their ability to care for themselves and their unrecognized children, and leading to the further perpetuation of poverty. In other situations, girls would escape from abuse by moving to the streets, as I discuss in the final section of this chapter.

Even today, dominant racialized geographies divide a more 'advanced' whiter coast from a backwards 'indigenous' highlands (Garcia, 2005). During the most recent presidential campaigns, Ollanta Humala criticized a tendency to define culture as that of the elites rather than the popular people. Humala said, "Ethnic groups that live in Andean zones are converted into postcards for tourists while actual Indians are despised. The elites look first to Europe and then the United States for style and culture." Peruvian anthropologist Portocarrero similarly highlights that beauty is associated with lighter skin (as cited in Alcalde, 2010). Indigenous populations continue to be linked with discourses that firmly place them in rural areas. When they work in public spaces in Lima's center, they are considered out of place, with their removal justified in terms echoing earlier discourses. In particular, indigenous populations continue to be associated with 'dirtiness' and poor hygiene (Thorp & Paredes, 2010), attitudes that are used to justify their exclusion from certain places on the basis of public health concerns. This historical portrayal of indigenous communities as in need of better hygiene may in part be linked with street children's consistent tendency to emphasize dirtiness as part of their understanding of poverty, a concept I return to in Chapter Five. Likewise, discourses of deservingness are often connected to discrimination against indigenous women, as I elaborate on in Section 2.11.

It is these discourses that reinforce beliefs that whole groups of people are naturally poor, and ultimately serve to justify processes of exploitation. The spatial dimensions of such discourses ultimately

However, such relationships often involved sending girls for some period of time to live with their godparents, often working as domestic servants.

present poverty as an inevitable *feature* of certain places (Mosse, 2010). While not denying the material poverty of many parts of highland Perú or of indigenous populations, such constructions fail to account for the specific economic, political and social processes that have contributed to high poverty rates. In the second part of this section, I argue that national policies combined with historic discrimination and beliefs about the inherent inferiority of indigenous populations to increase rural poverty and inequalities.

Adverse incorporation: Denaturalizing Rural Poverty

In the past 50 years, rural economies have come under increasing attack as a result of both national and international policies and shifts. Half a century ago, the majority of Perú was rural, with food grown for consumption rather than sale. Many peasants continued to toil under centuries-old peonage systems. Political and economic decisions that benefited Lima's elite were directly linked to further impoverishment of large segments of the rural population, necessitating an understanding of poverty in relation to privilege (Duncan, 1999; Wallerstein, 1999). With a virtual lack of political representation, rural peasant communities had little say in decisions made in Lima. For example, the government of General Odria (1948-1950) implemented trade policies making it easier for foreign capital to export goods to Perú but did not require any form of taxes on much of that which was imported. Such policies devastated large segments of the rural economy, especially wheat and dairy industries.²² Ayacucho, whose economy depended largely on wheat, was brought to a virtual standstill (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). During this time period, there was a fairly big disconnect between what was happening in the highlands and Lima's knowledge of such processes. In 1956, when simultaneous spontaneous land invasions occurred throughout the country, Lima was stunned (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Land reform became an important issue for presidential campaigns throughout the 50s and 60s, also influenced by social movements happening in other parts of the world.

The military coup of 1968 focused on redistributing power by nationalizing banking, petroleum, mining, electricity, railroads and other sectors they saw as key to industrialization. As part of such reforms, President Juan Velasco introduced his Agrarian Land Reform, abolishing the hacienda system and breaking up large landholdings. While his reforms were supposed to be beneficial to peasants, in practice, land redistribution proceeded slowly. By 1974, only 9 percent of land had been redistributed to indigenous peasant communities. Instead, Velasco had created Agrarian Societies of Social Interest, grouping ex-hacienda workers together and excluding most of the surrounding communities. While

²² For example, Nestle set up a processing plant in southern Peru, emphasizing that local dairy producers would benefit from the sale of their milk. However, Nestle increasingly mixed imported powdered milk with national milk, ultimately hurting the local dairy industry.

Velasco tried to promote the rights of workers and peasants to organize (Segura-Ubiergo, 2007), such groups were considered the new ‘hacienda-owners’ and ultimately replaced traditional forms of indigenous governance.²³ In fact, to participate in the cooperatives’ leadership councils, members were required to read, write and speak Spanish. In this way, inequalities were sometimes actually exacerbated. Outside technicians often took power of the cooperatives, using clientelistic practices to influence indigenous leadership (Thorp & Paredes, 2010), and reproducing former exploitative social relations. While some individual indigenous were able to benefit from land reforms (although others argue they themselves reproduced conditions of exploitation), in 1974, the military staged a coup, gaining control of the government and putting a stop to any significant redistribution.

In the 1980s, when interest rates rose sharply, linked to monetary policy in the US, debt became a critical burden. Other countries in South America experienced similar crises, leading scholars to characterize the 1980s as ‘the lost decade of development.’ Yet, labeling the economic crisis as such neglects the fact that conditions did not just fail to improve but also worsened specifically as a result of political-economic shifts. When Manuel Ulloa, a technocrat with strong links to Perú’s agro-export oligarchy, became Minister of Finance, Perú entered a program of debt rescheduling with the IMF in exchange for a commitment to economic reform. As part of this commitment, the government implemented new initiatives to attract foreign investment in mining and agriculture, privatized firms that had been nationalized by Juan Velasco (president from 1968 to 1975), and removed trade barriers (Segura-Ubiergo, 2007). The results were disastrous, with per capita GDP falling 14.1 percent in 1983, and 400,000 jobs lost (Green, 1995). By the mid-1980s, 75 percent of Peru’s export income went towards debt repayment, limiting the government’s ability to put social safety nets in place for those negatively affected by reforms. What limited spending did occur was unevenly concentrated in Lima, even though the provinces were the most negatively affected by such shifts.

A series of government policies made things even worse for rural communities. For example, the Peruvian government underwrote food imports in order to lower food costs of city dwellers. However, while this may have lessened some urban discontent, it came at a significant cost to Perú’s indigenous rural communities. Further opening the market heightened economic hardship, forcing peasants to struggle against unfair competition from United States and European wheat importers, where farm exports are heavily subsidized by the government, and thus artificially cheapened. In this

²³ Cooperatives’ new structure proved unable to resolve most community problems, such as the distribution of land, water, and pastures, exacerbated by the fact that the new organization responded to members of the cooperative, rather than members of the community.

sense, it is not simply that some people are left out of economic growth (Bhagwati, 2004) but rather that they are specifically made worse off by it (Stiglitz, 2006; Mosse, 2010). Commercialization exposed large segments of Perú's rural population to increased risks. The rural population increasingly had to look for seasonal cash work in the mines and on the coast to be able to buy consumer goods available from Lima. However, pay was low, hindering the ability of most seasonal migrants to more than break even. The growth of commerce also caused a decline in the artisan textile industry in the Sierra, eliminating an important source of supplementary income for many families (Thorp & Paredes, 2010).

In 1985, when Alan Garcia took office for the first time, he drastically changed tactics, defying the IMF by declaring that Perú would impose a ceiling on debt repayments of 10 percent of export income. The IMF responded by promoting a virtual financial boycott of Perú, turning it into an "international pariah" (Green, 1995, 237). In this sense, when the Peruvian government tried to distance themselves from the Washington institutions, it was 'punished'. By the end of the 1980s, Perú's economy was in free fall, 75 percent of the population was either unemployed or underemployed, and per capita income had fallen by 72 percent from what it had been in 1975. As incomes deteriorated, so did health, with child malnutrition increasing. Inflation rates rose so rapidly that the price of food would rise over the course of one day, with inflation rates at 2775 percent in 1989.

It was under these conditions that Shining Path gained substantial power. While Shining Path was not officially an ethnic movement, it fed on deep-seeded ethnic inequalities and injustices (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). In fact, Abimael Guzman, Shining Path's leader, initially recruited young indigenous who had migrated to urban areas, tapping into their resentment of historical inequalities and their desire for a better life than their parents'. Guzman's initial approach was pedagogic; he used his position at the National University of Huamanga to teach his students about Marxism, and employed large numbers of students from the Faculty of Education to teach in rural communities and gain their trust. While Guzman's group was initially seen as a revolutionary movement fighting in the name of the poor (Garcia, 2005, 38), Shining Path's violence and coercion, and eventual use of terror, devastated rural populations. Retaliation and violence from the military doubled the hardship. Efforts to 'route out' Shining Path served to justify indiscriminate killing in the highlands. Discourses of the indigenous population's inherent inferiority provided the justification for more extreme forms of violence, and one leader admitted to using the indigenous population as 'cannon fodder' (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). By the end of the conflict, nearly 70,000 had died, 85 percent of whom were native-Quechua speakers.²⁴ The

²⁴ Many children witnessed the rape and murder of various family members with long-term consequences for their health and well-being.

violence heightened migration trends that were already well under-way in response to historical and regional inequalities. An estimated 600,000 to a million fled their home town, and institutions, families, and livelihoods were destroyed. The influx of migrants into Lima only added to growing feelings of security and fear, reinforced by beliefs that indigenous populations belonged in rural areas. Such historical discrimination and ongoing exploitation and exclusion of Perú's indigenous and rural populations are necessary in order to understand Lima's poverty, and Perú's economic policies more generally. At the same time as conflict with Shining Path intensified, the Peruvian government embraced a series of policies that favored the elite and international interests at the expense of the general population.

2.9 Fujishock: Embracing Neoliberal Policy

It was under conditions of political turmoil, discrimination, and heightened poverty that Alberto Fujimori, viewed as a political outsider, was able to win the presidential bid in 1990. Fujimori specifically drew attention to the inequality and neglect of the poor by Perú's older political parties, who he suggested all represented the elite. Alternatively, he campaigned on the platform of Change, promising not to placate international organizations or powerful foreign governments, such as the United States. Upon his election, however, Fujimori reversed his campaign promises, and embarked on an extreme neoliberal economic course, embracing the Washington consensus. Fujimori eliminated food and other subsidies, privatized government enterprises, reduced public expenditures, raised taxes, and increased tax compliance. Referred to as 'Fujishock,' his changes had detrimental effects on large segments of the population. In the first few months of his presidency, protein intake in Lima fell by 30 percent and gas prices went up 3000 percent overnight (Green, 1995). A series of decrees gave incentives for foreign investment and provided the framework for large-scale investments in natural resources (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). US-owned Southern Perú Copper Corporation (SPCC), which was responsible for 2/3 of the country's copper output, reported that before the adjustment, half of their profits from sales went into paying taxes to Perú. However, after Fujimori's reforms, their taxes were almost entirely eliminated. Taking advantage of the situation, and Fujimori's desire for greater privatization, SPCC bought other companies, increasing its influence in the country in a clear example of dispossession.²⁵

The 'opening' of the economy flooded particular sections of the market with cheaper imported goods, leading to wide-scale unemployment and growth of the informal economy. By reducing average

²⁵ SPCC continues to be powerful in Peru today. In 2002, eight Peruvians sued SPCC for environmental damage and health risks in the US Second District Court of Appeals but lost. Throughout 2011 and 2012, there were periodic protests against the activities of foreign mining companies, who are viewed destroying Perú's natural resources, hindering their water supply, and expropriating their wealth.

tariffs from nearly 100 percent to 26 percent, many companies in import-competing sectors found themselves unable to compete. Alternatively, they either faced unemployment or turned to the informal economy, where they were not entitled to any benefits or social security. Between 1990 and 2000 alone, living expenses increased 400% (Fernandez-Maldonado, 2006) and bread became 12 times more costly (W. Mitchell, 2006). At the same time, by 1994, wages were less than half of what they had been in 1982 (Green, 1995).

While Perú never had as strong a welfare state as some Western European countries, and even the United States, social spending on education and health care nonetheless decreased at the same time as political-economic policies were heightening the need for such services among the majority of Perú's population. Food subsidies were withdrawn and per capita expenditure on education was less than a third of its 1980 figure, falling from \$62.50 to \$19.80 per student (Hays-Mitchell, 2002; Green, 1998). As a direct consequence, poverty rates rose from 42 percent in 1985 to 54 percent following Fujishock (Boesten, 2010) and real wages had declined to 40 percent of their 1980 levels by 1990 (Seligmann, 1998). Thirty percent of students eventually dropped out of school to supplement their families' incomes (Green, 1998), with clear consequences both for the presence of street children as well as future earning opportunities. At various points during his presidency, Fujimori did implement some social services, laying the basis for programs that still exist today. However, access to social services did not show a pro-poor bias, hindering their ability to improve well-being of Perú's poorest (Sanchez, 2008). In fact, Fujimori strategically developed health, education and welfare programs, not in the provinces that most needed them given their social indicators but rather in those provinces of the country where social surveys indicated that his chances of electoral success were most difficult (Segura-Ubierno, 2007).

While Perú experienced overall economic growth during Fujimori's first years in office, the growth came at the clear expense of workers' wages and people's overall well-being. When the economy did eventually stabilize, the benefits of stabilization were concentrated in Lima, further exacerbating regional inequalities (Segura-Ubierno, 2007). At the same time, the ability to effectively organize, or get poor people represented in politics, as Mosse (2010) emphasizes, was also heavily curtailed. The potential threat of terrorists organizing served as an excuse to limit the ability to protest. Unions were crippled, minimum wage and right to secure employment were eliminated and many workers were dismissed from their jobs. By 1995, employers did not need to provide justification to fire workers. The economic crisis led to widespread factory layoffs, unemployment, and informalization of

the workplace, all of which fragmented the labor movement (Arce, 2005).²⁶ At the same time, the number of temporary contracts increased from 38.6 percent of all contracts in 1990 to 57.7 percent in 1995 (Segura-Ubiergo, 2007). Such changes resulted in a large increase in the supply of labor, which exerted downward pressure on real wages and forced workers to accept employment with lower-quality working conditions and worse social benefits. Hourly wages in urban areas were lower as of 2002 than they were in 1985, with people reporting longer working hours just to make ends meet (Yamada, 2005). As they faced growing poverty, families had to diversify sources of income, with both parents (if present) and older children working. This has clear consequences both for parents' absence from the household and children's presence in the street, something I elaborate on in the next section. The execution of key labor leaders furthered workers' fear (Roberts, 1998), and effectively destroyed what little power unions had left. This gave Fujimori the flexibility to implement trade liberalization and nationalization of natural resources with little effective protest, in part explaining why the government paid little attention to 'growth with equity' (Segura-Ubiergo, 2007). In this sense, the maintenance of poverty needs to be understood as linked not only to direct economic exploitation but also to an inability to set the political-agenda or "the terms in which poverty becomes (or fails to become) politicized" (Mosse, 2010, 1157).

In 1992, Fujimori suspended the constitution, increasing his power through a military-backed coup. He justified such strict measures as necessary for the security of the country, a claim that many believed was substantiated when Shining Path leader Abimael Guzman was arrested the same year. Fujimori also dissolved regional governments (Segura Ubiergo, 2007), hindering the ability of the provinces to voice their concerns. In contrast, he employed close advisers who had been educated in the United Kingdom and the United States, supporting arguments made about how dominant ideas get promoted and reproduced (see Dezalay & Garth, 2002). However, while many of Perú's poor were worse off because of these changes, they initially supported Fujimori because they credited him with reestablishing order in the region (Seligmann, 1998).

Although those already in Lima did not suffer as much as in the provinces, by the 1990s, frequent blackouts, strikes, and car bombs created an atmosphere of insecurity. Peruvians described Lima as a city under siege, with constant car bombs and the intimidation of community and labor organizations (Kruijt & Degregori, 2007). Rumors that the Shining Path mostly recruited in Lima's *pueblos juvenes* (informal communities on the outskirts of Lima) served to justify increased repression

²⁶ Interestingly, while adult labor unions weakened during this time period, MANTHOC, the child and adolescent's workers movement did not come under as much pressure from the government to limit their activities, most likely because children were not taken seriously as political actors.

and distrust of recent migrants, especially those from the highlands. Starting in the late 1980s, the government also declared a state of emergency, placing restrictions on free association. Shining Path itself also targeted leaders in Lima's marginal shanty towns, killing them to teach examples to the rest of the community for refusing to join their cause. Women who played a big role in implementing collective solutions to poverty, such as in the public dining hall movement, were particularly targeted, with women making up 24 of the 100 assassinated leaders (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). In this sense, the ability of the country's poor to organize politically for greater rights was severely curtailed. This growing fear, heightened even more by significant demographic shifts, has been key to Perú's changing policies regarding the regulation of urban space and the social control of children, as I argue in Chapter Four.

Peruvian poverty today needs to be understood in the context of such global interconnections. Despite a long-time belief that foreigners exploit Perú (W. Mitchell, 2006), as part of the post-Washington Consensus, foreigners, and the international organizations for which they work, are playing a leading role in 'poverty-reduction.' Poverty-reduction strategies, although occasionally accompanied by international aid, come with specific conditions attached and understandings of what development looks like, a topic I discuss in greater depth in the next chapter. These strategies and recommendations continue to view poverty as a problem *of* Perú, rather than historical economic and political relations. In doing so, they overlook centuries of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation. While some specific policy details have changed along with a shift to the post-Washington Consensus, what has not is an unfavorable economic order that continues to siphon wealth upward to the already wealthy and outward into rich countries located mostly in the northern hemisphere.

Today, the government continues to focus on strengthening exports, such as sugar, metals, and fish as part of its national development strategy while almost entirely neglecting the specific concerns of most of Perú's poor. National and global policies discourage peasants from expanding food cultivation (W. Mitchell, 2006), and a lack of adequate roads limit their ability to take foods to market.²⁷ Children in rural areas continue to suffer from much higher rates of malnutrition and stunting, both indicators of extended periods of deprivation (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003). With normal social institutions in ruins from years of civil war, and state-backed neoliberal policy attacking their remaining forms of livelihood, many felt they had no choice but to migrate in search of greater opportunities. A large portion of these migrants headed to Lima to work in informal commerce.

²⁷ By the beginning of the 21st century, Peru, once an almost self-sufficient agricultural country, was importing 38 percent of its food.

2.10 Migration to Lima: Opportunity and Discrimination

Migration has significantly changed the shape of Lima, and is tied into prejudices about Andean culture, belonging and modernity. While Lima was originally home to mostly white and mestizo populations, by 1991, almost half of Lima's population came from somewhere else (Kokotovic, 2007, as cited by Alcalde, 2010). For many Peruvians, Lima, and cities more generally, represent hope, a better life (Crivello & Boyden, 2011) and an opportunity to 'superarse', a word going beyond survival that roughly translates as 'to overcome'. With the country's highest concentration of educational, economic, political and social resources, Lima attracts thousands of migrants every year, who come in search of better jobs for themselves, and education and futures for their children (Alcalde, 2010). Yet, migrants often face hardships and discrimination that they did not anticipate, not only limiting their chances for social mobility, but also for basic survival (Alcalde, 2010).

Some rural migrants to Lima have succeeded. However, most found ill-paid work, high unemployment and increased poverty. The grand majority of migrants find work in the informal economy. This reflects overall trends in the country (and internationally) as part of a race to the bottom and a growing tendency to offer predominantly temporary or piecemeal work. In the last 15 years, four out of every five new jobs have been created in the informal sector. Among the informal sector, incomes from street vending, a primary occupation of many street children and their families, are among the lowest. Migration also adds increased competition to an already overly saturated market.

Today, the presence of indigenous migrants is frequently viewed as part of a continued explanation for urban poverty. For example, Lima's head of urban planning said that Lima's main problem was its large migrant population. "Migrants come to look for opportunities here. They think it is the center of the world. But then there is no work. They bring large families and work in the streets, where they become a problem for safety and order. They are a floating population.... They don't raise their kids well so the kids start spending time in the streets. But if we want to be a modern orderly city, we can't have that" (personal interview, 2010). In addition to citing poor parenting as the key explanation for street children, he makes no mention of *why* migrants might come to Lima in search of work or what alternatives they might have. Such notions also fail to consider how this surplus labor has driven much of Perú's economic growth. Migrants are among the most exploited and discriminated of Lima's urban poor. They are paid well below minimum wages, working long irregular hours in construction, sewing piece-meal, or hauling goods in the market, among myriad other positions. Most do not receive any official health care or benefits. Sometimes, employees even pay late or withhold pay, knowing that it is unlikely that indigenous migrants will take them to court. A lack of financial

means to do so coincides with lack of faith in Perú's legal system, making it rare that people will protest. While positions are exploitative, many people nonetheless fear losing their jobs and being entirely unemployed. In this sense, economic exploitation combines with unequal access to power and representation to reproduce poverty. Adolescents are paid even less, despite their legal right to equal compensation as guaranteed in Perú's Code for Children and Adolescents (children are also paid less but since they are officially not allowed to work, they are not guaranteed equal pay). For example, teenagers who haul boxes around the market only receive .50 per box, compared with 1 sol that adults make, and even reported that some adults refused to pay them (personal interviews, 2010). In this way, different bodies are assigned different values, despite often doing the same exact work, a feature of the capitalist system that impoverishes (Harriss-White, 2005).

Economic exploitation is heightened by what Tilly (2001) refers to as 'opportunity hoarding,' which involves 'confining the use of a value-producing resource to members of an in-group.' Job availability continues to be shaped by connections and discrimination. First, density of services, defined by the UN as the availability of services in health, education and sanitation; access to electricity and having an identity card, is perhaps unsurprisingly much higher on the coast than it is in the highlands or the jungle (Cueto, Escobal, Penny & Ames, 2011). Despite formal legal efforts towards equal opportunity, wage gaps and inequalities of access persist. In fact, with economic growth, the urban-rural gap has widened in recent years. Certain groups of people, and the jobs they tend to do, are valued less. Domestic labor, an occupation almost entirely carried out by indigenous and peasant migrant women (89 percent), is one of the lowest paid, compared to office jobs, which almost always require formal education and connections. A recent report indicates that domestic laborers make an average of 300 soles per month, well below Perú's official minimum wage of 750 soles, and work between 10 and 16 hours a day (Terra, 2012). More generally, men continue to earn over 500 soles more per month than do women (Manuela Ramos & INEI, 2010).

While Lima as a whole might have lower poverty rates than the rest of the country, spatial inequalities within Lima are extreme. The majority of migrants and children of migrants continue to live in informal communities in Lima's desert hills, referred to as the cones of Lima. As of 2005, 62 percent of Lima's residents lived in the cones (Kruijt & Degregori, 2007), up from only 32 percent in 1981. Residents in the cones suffer from much higher poverty rates: Lima's southern cones reports poverty rates more than 12 times as high as Lima's residential district Lima's residential district (Villaran, 2010).²⁸ (See

²⁸ Perhaps unsurprisingly, among those street children born in Lima, the majority are from the southern, eastern and northern cones. While a few grew up in Lima's center, none are from the wealthy residential districts.

Figure 2.5 below). Such areas also have significantly less access to services (42 percent of homes in Lima still do not have access to drinking water) and are considered to be poor, disorderly and dangerous by middle- and upper-class Peruvians. People who live in the cones report significant discrimination, not simply because of class but because middle and upper class Limeños often view them as culturally and racially inferior (Alcalde, 2010), reinforcing arguments that “exclusion results from a variety of discursive and social practices aimed at keeping certain groups relegated to the bottom of society” (De Venanzi, 2004). The people themselves become the problem, rather than economic and political restructuring. In the end, migrants are only welcome in core residential areas of Lima when they are working as domestics or in low-end service jobs. During these time periods, uniforms or other markers clearly delineate their role and what they should be doing. At other hours, or if they are not working, migrants are frequently shunned.

While the word *cholo* technically describes indigenous Peruvians who have a foot in the urban world, mestizo populations said they associated it with violence, abuse and drunkenness (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Multiple parents emphasized that they would not want their children to marry a *cholo*. Middle and upperclass women often have negative stereotypes of women in *pueblos jóvenes*, as dirty and promiscuous, “unnatural mothers who do not hesitate to throw their young children to the streets to beg or work, instead of sending them to school and feeding them a balanced diet” (Barrig, 1982, 15, as cited in Alcalde, 2010, 50). Such attitudes are often reflected in the way in which social workers and educators try to reform the behavior of poorer mothers, viewing them as culturally ignorant, as I discuss in Chapter Three. In this way, social categorization and material need combine to sustain poverty. Mosse’s (2010) claim that in India migration is a defensive survival strategy that reduces status and erodes social capital is applicable to the situation of many migrants in Lima. While many people specifically come to Lima to provide their children with more opportunities, children too face discrimination. As I argue in Chapter Five, children themselves frequently mention the neighborhoods in which they live, the material out of which their house is built, or their limited access to water as key components of poverty and great sources of shame (personal interviews, 2010). There is growing evidence that in the context of poverty, youth commonly find inequality and related social exclusion far more distressing than material deficiency (Attree 2006; Crivello & Boyden, 2010; Ridge 2002). This has important implications for understanding children’s motivations to seek work or solace in the streets, as I explain in the final section of this chapter.

The Peruvian government’s emphasis on developing infrastructure over human development reinforces the coding of certain bodies as not belonging, thus limiting their ability to work and live. In

Chapter Four, I elaborate on the interplay of understandings of modernity and indigeneity by looking at the direct implications this has for those working in the informal economy. I show how informal workers, specifically associated with the highlands, are considered an indicator of backwardness, arguably detracting from attempts to attract investment and tourism, and portray Perú as a modern nation. In this way, ideas about belonging continue to shape discrimination, access to space and livelihood in important ways.

Political-economic shifts are intricately woven with identity to make particular groups and their forms of knowledge less valuable. While those born three generations ago could get by through trading or farming with little Spanish, today, their grandchildren need to go to school (W. Mitchell, 2006). Markers of 'status' such as formal education and speaking Spanish are used to determine the types of jobs available, and one's 'worth' within the system. In such regards, schools actively promote certain types of knowledge as more valuable and legitimate the sorting and categorizing of young people (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Even when formally excluded groups are able to learn Spanish and complete school, the ability to obtain a better job is increasingly limited to those with even higher education and social connections. Many Peruvians are becoming educated for work that is hard to find, especially as government work, a main source of employment for the newly educated classes, was drastically curtailed with the 1990 neoliberal reforms.

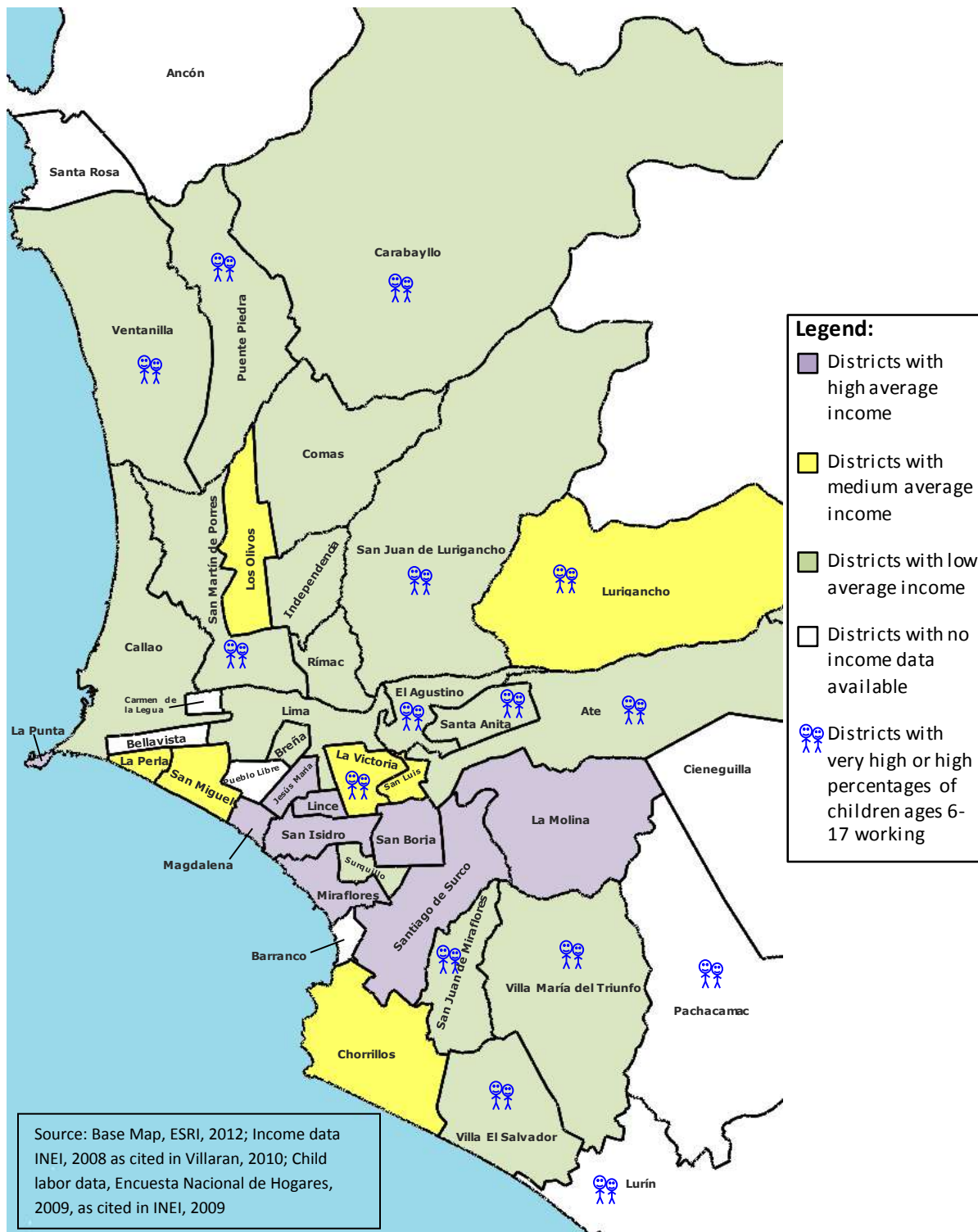


Figure 2.5 Map of the municipality of Lima with income and percentage of children working.

Unsurprisingly, the districts with the highest numbers of working children are also the districts with the lowest average per capita incomes.

In recent years, there has been some growth and improved standards of living of small segments of the population living in Lima's urban fringes. Some of the original *pueblos jóvenes* are now centers of economic growth. Villa Salvador, the core of the southern cone, and one of the first informal communities, now has commercial plazas with cinemas, restaurants and 15 banks. A MegaPlaza- a mall with 125 commercial establishments-recently opened in the Northern cones, attracting more than 1.5 million visitors per month. Such centers are playing an important role in decentralizing commercial activity in Lima. While still poorer than Lima's wealthier residential areas, a small middle class is emerging in the *pueblos jóvenes*- estimated at about 10 percent of the population (Matos Mar, 2004). These economic and population shifts have had similarly important impacts on the areas in which children work and sleep, as I argue in Chapter Four. Yet, to some extent, more established residents just reproduce the same systems of exploitation and exclusion. More recently arrived migrants often cannot afford plots of land in the more established *pueblos jóvenes*, and are forced to move into ever more marginalized areas higher on the desert hills. That those who successfully achieve some level of social mobility often seek to disassociate with their indigenous status only further reinforces a link between indigeneity and poverty.

2.11 Welfare Restructuring and Discourses of Poverty

With the 2001 election of Alejandro Toledo, the first *cholo* to win the election, some believed the lives of Perú's indigenous population would significantly improve. In fact, Toledo specifically chose to hold his inauguration at Machu Picchu, near Cusco, instead of Lima, and in that way valorized Perú's Inca past. During his presidency, which he held until 2006, the economy did begin to improve and inflation rates remained low. However, inequalities between indigenous and mestizo populations did not significantly change. Toledo and his predecessor, Alan Garcia, continued Fujimori's emphasis on trade and an open-economy. Trade now accounts for 38 per cent of GDP, up from 20 per cent just two decades ago (Cueto et al, 2011). Despite the pro-poor emphasis of the post-Washington consensus, and frequent speeches by Garcia about the need for more pro-poor growth, Garcia's government actually invested less in social services such as education than had Fujimori's, raising concerns about how 'pro-poor' the government really is. While recent estimates suggest that poverty rates have declined substantially in the past decade, when expanding poverty beyond income levels, 'progress' is much less substantial. Incorporating ideas of poverty as multi-dimensional, or related to capability deprivations as argued by Sen (1999) and Shepherd and Hulme (2003), large segments of Perú's population, especially indigenous rural communities, remain poor. For example, access to, and quality of, health and

education services has not changed significantly (Castro et al, 2010). And in the past few years, inequalities in health indicators between the poorest and richest children have grown (Sanchez, 2008).

While economic growth can indeed reduce poverty, the logic of capitalism also reinforces concentration and exclusion (Harvey, 2003). This becomes apparent when more closely examining who has benefited from Perú's most recent economic growth, the effects of which have been highly uneven. In fact, the negative effects of political-economic restructuring were more strongly experienced by communities with already weakened economies (see Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2008), highly correlated with indigeneity and geographical region within Perú.

It is not just informal categorizations and discrimination that reproduce exclusion but also state institutions and programs. For example, state welfare programs continue to structure program participation based on problematic categories. In 2004 most government aid went to Lima, not to provinces, where need is arguably greater. While Juntos, Perú's new cash transfer program, has attempted to address this inequality on a minimal level, opportunities and resources remain concentrated in Lima. Inequalities are exacerbated by regional governments who do not always apply for the maximum amount of funding for which they are eligible, due to bureaucracy and confusion in the system (personal interviews, 2010). In that sense, poorer residents outside of Lima continue to receive less support than the little the national government officially allocates.

Perú's other main welfare program, Construyendo Perú, officially provides parents with work so that they do not need to depend on the labor of their children. However, the program itself reinforces ideas that the only ones deserving of help are those that are willing to work, while the types of work offered are in menial positions for low wages. That said, because of a lack of jobs, many parents still want to participate. Yet, on a national scale, the program has had little impact. The government reported that 10,040 parents participated in Lima and 8,000 in Cusco (CPETI, 2011). Despite the small scale of the program, a few government officials cited its existence as a reason that parents should be held accountable when their children work. If a work-program for them exists, they must be lazy or 'choosing' to send their children to work.

The language used to describe poor people, and the way specific welfare programs are framed, are intricately intertwined with the reproduction of that poverty. Within the context of the global north, critical poverty scholars (Lawson, Jarosz & Bond, 2008; O'Connell, 2001), highlight how processes of capitalist restructuring and representations of poor subjects are dialectically intertwined. The neoliberal rationalities driving capitalist restructuring, especially in regards to reduced social spending and cutbacks to social safety nets, provide the political cover for cuts. For example, an emphasis on

individual responsibility and self-regulation facilitate the framing of poverty as the result of individual fault or poor lifestyle choices, thus justifying reduced spending on those people. Such discourses, however, are arguably not neutral, but rely on political forms of knowledge and ways of representing the world (Foucault, 1991). Wale and Foster (2007) argue that the wealthy mobilize a moral economy discourse that presents the wealthy as moral and deserving in contrast to the poor, who are immoral and undeserving. Such attitudes reinforce the idea that poverty is the result of individual characteristics and behaviors.

Within Perú, explanations for poverty differ widely, and are deeply implicated in the (re)production of that poverty. In this section, I highlight some of the prevalent explanations for Perú's poverty. While I elaborate on all of these themes throughout the dissertation, I bring up a few of the main tropes here because of the ways in which they have structured forms of exclusion and responses to poverty in important ways. The idea of poverty itself as a lifestyle choice did not emerge as much in this study as has been documented in studies in the United States (see Lawson, Jarosz & Bonds, 2008; Schram, 2000; Goode & Maskovsky, 2001). Until recently, more than half of the population was considered poor, and many people still believe the government is corrupt and fails to fulfill its responsibilities to the people, factors that most likely explain the tendency to look to structural explanations for poverty, rather than highlighting individual responsibility. Multiple respondents in this study continue to emphasize an unfair global order, bad distribution, and corrupt government as key to explaining poverty in Perú. However, the idea of choice does enter when talking about *specific* groups of poor people, especially indigenous women.

Poverty reduction through population control

One of the most consistent explanations for poverty from government officials, police officers, middle- and upper-class Peruvians, and even some street children, focused on the idea of over-population. Jose, a municipal police officer in Lima, explained that child poverty continued to exist because "parents don't plan well. They don't think about their limited capacities and instead breed like cuy (guinea pigs). They don't think about whether their money will be sufficient if they keep having kids... The serrenos come to Lima and think life will be easy but then they can't take care of all of the kids" (personal interview, 2010). His comments, which are linked to stereotypes of Peruvian highlanders, are revealing in their tendency to blame poverty on the actions of 'overbreeding' parents, who do not *think* through their actions. Such comments fail to take into account actual resource use. They also naturalize the current distribution of resources, implying that poor parents should work within the constraints of their personal economies when deciding to have children, rather than questioning the

way goods are distributed in the first place. Such beliefs are influenced by growing interest of international organizations with population control (Rojas, 2004; T. Mitchell, 1995). But a focus on regulating the fertility of poor people masks centuries of exploitation (Rojas, 2004). The government itself, through programs such as Fujimori's Family Planning Program, relied on the forced sterilization of women in poor urban and rural areas. In fact, the government reported the number of sterilizations as an indicator of successful poverty alleviation (Ewig, 2006), arguably reinforcing a link between population control and poverty reduction. While forced sterilization no longer occurs, some women continue to avoid reproductive health service because of discrimination, disrespect and misunderstanding (Boesten, 2010). Some estimates suggest that over 60 percent of pregnancies are unwanted (Boesten, 2010), with important consequences for understanding today's street child population. Yet, such factors and inequalities are overlooked in the tendency to blame women for having too many children and thus perpetuating their own poverty.

Sometimes, such women are portrayed as so conniving, that they specifically have children to manipulate welfare systems, such as *Juntos*, which provides mothers with cash assistance for each child they have. Such arguments echo discourses about African-American welfare mothers in the United States. In the case of Perú, such attitudes are also highly racialized. More generally, indigenous mothers are depicted as 'working the system.' Throughout the month of December, local politicians host *chocolotadas*, Christmas events in which they give toys and hot chocolate to children in the area while also attempting to gain electoral votes from Perú's poorer population. Yet, many government staff, along with wealthier mestizo populations, expressed concern about the number of indigenous mothers who would travel hours around the city to receive multiple gifts and snacks from various municipalities. Such an image, even if some women do in fact engage in such behavior, assumes that they are behaving immorally, rather than considering both the history of governmental exploitation, and how such behavior may actually be a sign of pro-active positive parenting. Such representations of poverty and particular groups "interrelate with political-economic change to reinscribe poverty and inequality" (Lawson, Jarosz & Bonds, 2008, 745).

Juvenile delinquency: Blaming the parents for Lima's gang problem

Parents are also specifically blamed for youth delinquency. Many government officials, upper-class Peruvians and media sources attribute Lima's growing gang problem to neglectful parents, who fail to properly communicate with their children or set firm boundaries (personal interview, 2010). Even UNICEF includes parenting classes as a primary component of their anti-gang program (UNICEF, 2010). While recognizing that some parents do engage in violent abusive behavior, I nonetheless suggest that a

tendency to attribute child delinquency to 'bad parenting' fails to account for the economic and political shifts that have hindered the ability to supervise and care for kids in the same way as in the past or the subtle way whole areas, especially those in which migrants historically settled, become coded as dangerous.²⁹ The rise of the gang problem dates back to the early 1990s, when Fujimori introduced his shock program and Lima was still in the midst of a civil war. (I suggest that it is also no coincidence that the other main city with a gang problem is Ayacucho, where the heart of the Shining Path conflict took place). In contrast to no mention of gang problems prior to 1990, today, Lima reportedly has over 400 gangs (Villaran, 2010) and 5,000 gang members (Villegas Alarcon, 2004), although less than 5 percent of Lima's youth population participates in a gang. While most gang members do not carry arms, predominantly fighting with each other, drinking, and engaging in petty robbery, they represent a big threat to most Limeños, and are equated with delinquency (Villegas Alarcon, 2004). I suggest that fears of migrant populations add to this tendency, especially because, with the exception of Victoria and the center of Lima, all the gangs are found in Lima's cones. Yet, while actual crime rates have not increased since Fujimori's time in office, 74 percent of Limeños believe that delinquency has increased, and 96 percent report that Lima is an insecure city (Villaran, 2010). Such attitudes are a result both of the fear that was generated as a result of terrorism in the 1990s and also a tendency to associate migrant youth as 'out of place' and thus dangerous.³⁰ Street life itself is also frequently represented as a life style choice, especially when those in the streets are teenage boys. Educators and government officials emphasized strong contempt for NGOs that they saw as *enabling* young people to live in the streets, without requiring them to change, a concept I elaborate on in the following chapter. They were particularly concerned that NGOs were subsuming responsibilities that wayward irresponsible parents had neglected.

Teenagers themselves cite a lack of communication with parents as a key reason for gangs. However, in the face of increased economic insecurity, many women began to work further from their homes than in the past, with significant consequences for children (Cueto, et al, 2011). The majority of Perú's poor live in the cones surrounding the city, and spend over an hour each way bussing to work in wealthier residential areas. Additionally, as I elaborate more in the following chapter, ideas of what even constitutes 'good' parenting, are often based on mestizo or Western concepts. In Andean society, mitigating risks associated with poverty is a collective rather than individual responsibility (Crivello and

²⁹ Many upper-class Peruvians gasped in horror when I told them the areas in which I did my research. "You go there alone?" they would ask.

³⁰ This fear of youth congregating resulted in a law that criminalized teenagers who committed petty thievery in a group, allowing up to 6 years of prison for stealing a cell phone.

Boyden, 2011).³¹ Older siblings often care for younger siblings as active parts of the family unit. In smaller villages, extended communities collectively keep an eye on young people. However, as newcomers, some families do not have the same networks and increasingly have to leave their children alone as they go to seek work. That a significant source of income for migrant women is through work as domestic laborers, part of the care chain (see Katz, 2001), is also often overlooked in a tendency to link delinquency with bad parenting. Simply criminalizing youth and their parents in an attempt to address Lima's gang problems fails to consider these connections between gang presence and global economic and social shifts. It is these tropes, representing poverty as a personal characteristic, as the result of irresponsible parenting, and as naturalized and equated with whole areas and whole groups, that play an important role in shaping poverty reduction.

2.12 Children's Rights, Changing Livelihoods, and the Presence of Street Children

International organizations themselves play an important role in legitimating various discourses about poverty and childhood. In particular, I argue that children's rights legislation and the organizations promoting such legislation have reshaped attitudes and beliefs about children and their rights, the focus of chapters three and four. Here, I outline significant legislative changes regarding children and their rights and child labor, as well as the role that the structural adjustment policies have had on child poverty and well-being. Such considerations provide the necessary context and background information to understand children's presence in the streets.

The Peruvian government often leads Latin American in ratifying formal human rights treaties. In 1990, the government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In addition to promising to provide children with free accessible education, adequate food, shelter and health care, and a range of other provisions and to protect them from exploitation, abuse and neglect, the CRC was significant in that it legally recognized children as subjects with their own rights. Previous to 1990, children and adolescents were subject to the doctrine of irregular situations, a legal code that was supposed to protect those in irregular situations, such as those who were "supposedly abandoned or presumably delinquent" (Garcia Mendez, 1998, 1). The law endorsed state power to deal with such children and youth as it saw fit, which usually meant institutionalization. This tendency to institutionalize children in homes was a euphemism for indefinite deprivation of liberty. Abandoned children were treated very similarly to those who had supposedly broken the law (Garcia Mendez, 1998), with an emphasis on containment and social control. With the ratification of the CRC, the legal

³¹ In this sense, individual roles and expectations are strongly shaped by collective aspirations—yet, such an outlook contradicts Western conceptions of individual rights.

premise of the 'irregular situation.' was abolished. Although international conventions automatically become law upon ratification in Perú, the government has also adapted its legal codes in accordance with the CRC. In 1992, Perú implemented a national Code for Children and Adolescents, and has since come up with various National Plans for Children and Adolescents.

Despite formal commitment to new ideas regarding children as active rights bearing subjects, representations of children as vulnerable and potential victims promoted by the Doctrine of Irregular Situations remain and continue to inform social services. Various children's rights advocates consider the Peruvian government's formal support of the CRC and other internationally promoted ideas about rights as political posturing and an attempt to gain international credibility, rather than any real commitment to the issues. As I explore in much greater detail in the following chapter, the state potentially 're-colonized' more radical attempts for greater rights and opportunities by adopting legal rights discourse (Mosse, 2010).

This comes across most clearly in debates regarding child labor. In 2002, the Peruvian government also ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182. Convention 138 commits states to design and apply national policies to ensure the effective abolition of all forms of child labor and to set the minimum age of employment at 14. Convention 182 focuses on the worst forms of child labor, defining two categories: the Unconditional Worst Forms (including slave labor, prostitution and pornography, participants in armed conflicts and illicit traders) and the Hazardous Worst Forms, which are all sorts of work that expose children to danger and jeopardize their physical and moral health. Under strong pressure from the ILO, the Peruvian government also organized a special Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor (CPETI, 2011). However, the lack of any real political motivation to address such issues may explain why child labor has not actually decreased.³² As I argue in Chapter Three, many educators and social workers feel that such laws do not adequately reflect Perú's values or reality. Instead, as has been happening since colonial times, they see such laws as a prioritization of Western values as supposedly universal while disregarding Andean ones.

While many Peruvians, including government officials, nonetheless describe laws as 'good intentions', the lack of implementation for many legal codes and human rights bodies clearly affects certain groups more than others. In this sense, it is important to draw attention to differences between formal institutional power and actual power relations as they play out in Perú (for a similar approach in sub-Saharan Africa, see Bracking, 2003). The actual shape of shifts in children's rights discourse depends

³² While adolescents are officially required to register if they want to work, with the Ministry of Labor officially providing free registration, in 2010, only 541 adolescents were registered in Lima. In Cusco, the situation was even more extreme, with only three adolescents have been registered between June 2009 and July 2010 (CPETI, 2011; personal interviews).

on a range of international, national and local actors, as well as children's own negotiation with these actors. Because children do not vote, most politicians pay very little attention to how their policies and decisions will affect young people, furthering their marginalization. In Chapter Five, I more specifically examine the way in which a lack of political representation serves to exacerbate street children's marginalization. Perhaps because of their lack of political representation and their inability to obtain work with equal pay, children are more likely to live in poverty than their adult counterparts. Over half of all Peruvian children still live in poverty (UNICEF, 2008). Of the 3.8 million people living in extreme poverty, 2.1 million are children (one out of every five children) (Young Lives, 2009).

However, children are not universal, as portrayed by the law, but rather face significantly different opportunities and treatment. Unsurprisingly, ethnic and regional discrimination as outlined above similarly lead to different outcomes among young people. For example, indigenous-language speaking children are nearly twice as likely to live in poor households as are Spanish-speaking children, with 78 percent of indigenous children living in poor homes, compared with 40 percent of Spanish speaking children (Benavides, Mena & Ponce, 2010).³³ Similarly, child poverty rates in Cusco, which has a much larger indigenous population, are significantly higher than in Lima. According to INEI and UNICEF, 61 percent of the children and adolescents in the department of Cusco live in poverty and 29 percent live in extreme poverty (Benavides et al, 2010). Additionally, various forms of cultural capital, such as knowing how to negotiate or move through bureaucracy, continue to place some children at an advantage. For example, in order to access most social services, children are increasingly required to have an identity card, similar to social security cards in the United States. However, negotiating the system has proven especially difficult for indigenous and rural families, especially when children are not born in hospitals. While 16 percent of children nationally do not have ID cards, among poorer populations, percentages well exceed 50 percent (Cueto, et al, 2011).

These inequalities are important to consider when analyzing the presence of children working and living in Lima's streets. As can be seen from the following graphs, while there has been some improvement in certain areas of child well-being, such improvement is highly uneven and tied into the historical discrimination and inequality outlined throughout this chapter.

³³ Most national surveys use language spoken as a proxy measure for indigeneity. Quechua is the most common indigenous language in Peru, most concentrated in the highland region. Within Peru, overall, there are 43 languages spoken from 19 different linguistic families (Benavides et al, 2010). However, the percentage of children whose first language is Quechua, Aymara, or another indigenous Peruvian language has been decreasing, perhaps an indication of how the population believes that societal power is associated with speaking Spanish (Cueto, et al, 2011).

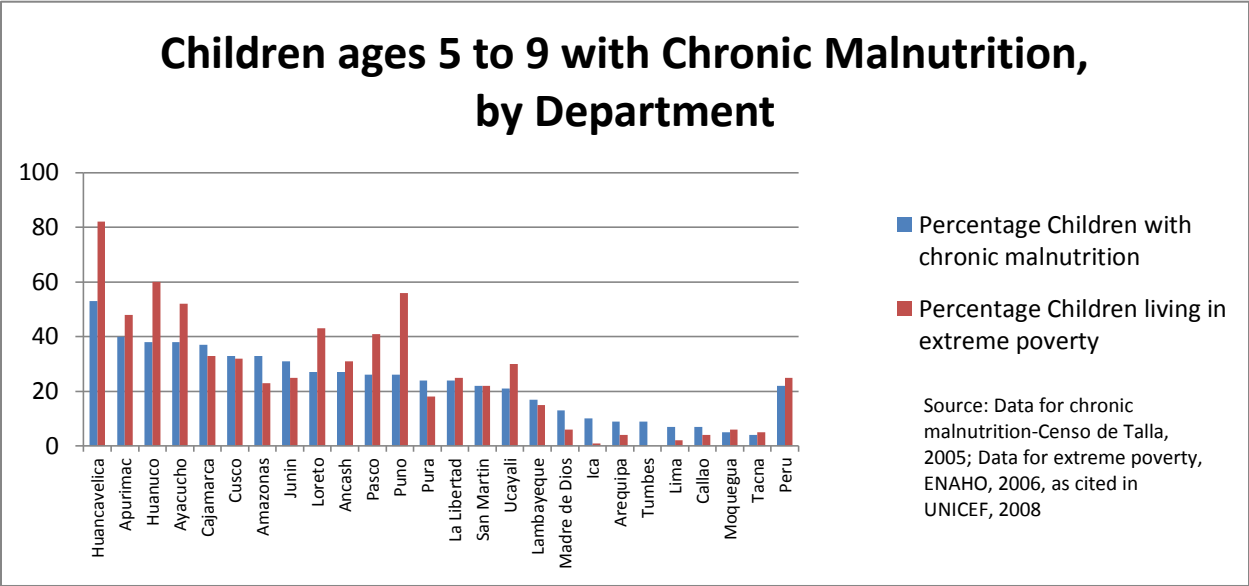


Figure 2.6 Child malnutrition by department.

Worse health indicators of children in rural areas take on added importance when considering the high percentage of street children who are migrants. For example, a significant number of children in this study came from Huancavelica.

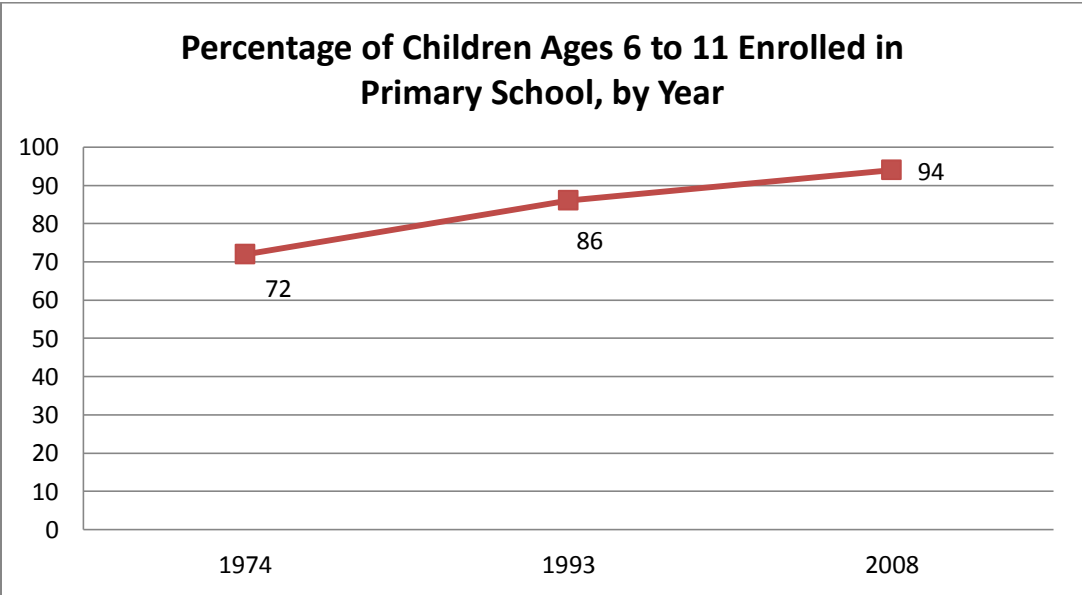


Figure 2.7 Primary school enrollment.

As a whole, school enrollment rates have increased significantly within Perú. However, enrollment rates vary significantly by region, ethnicity and other characteristics. Source: INEI, 2010.

Table 2.3 Percent of 12 to 16-year-olds enrolled in Secondary School

Area of Residence	
Urban	84
Rural	56
Condition of Poverty	
Extreme Poverty	49
Poverty	70
Not poor	84
Maternal tongue	
Spanish	76
Quechua	57
Gender	
Women	72
Men	73
Total	73

Source: ENAHO, 2006, as cited in UNICEF, 2008

Despite formal commitment to eradicating child labor, over 2 million children still work, and more than half are under the legal age to do so (CPETI, 2011). At the same time as children were officially promised the right to be protected from economic exploitation, the state withdrew its already limited support of social services, wages fell, and poverty rates rose. Accordingly, the actual number of children working increased, almost tripling between 1993 and 2001 (Strehl, 2010). While there is very little consistent data, most governmental surveys indicate that the absolute number of children working has stayed fairly level in the past decade (meaning that the percentage of children working may have declined slightly).³⁴ This cannot only be explained by economic necessity but also needs to be looked at in its cultural context. Even reports from the government's National Institute of Statistics, the only detailed annual data available, suggest that economic growth and a reduction in poverty did not lead to significant changes in the percentage of children working between 2001 and 2008, with the percentage

³⁴ It is hard to get reliable numbers on child labor, both because parents underreport it since it is against the law for those under age 14, and also because both children and parents often use the word help rather than work.

ranging from 26.5 to 31.3 percent.

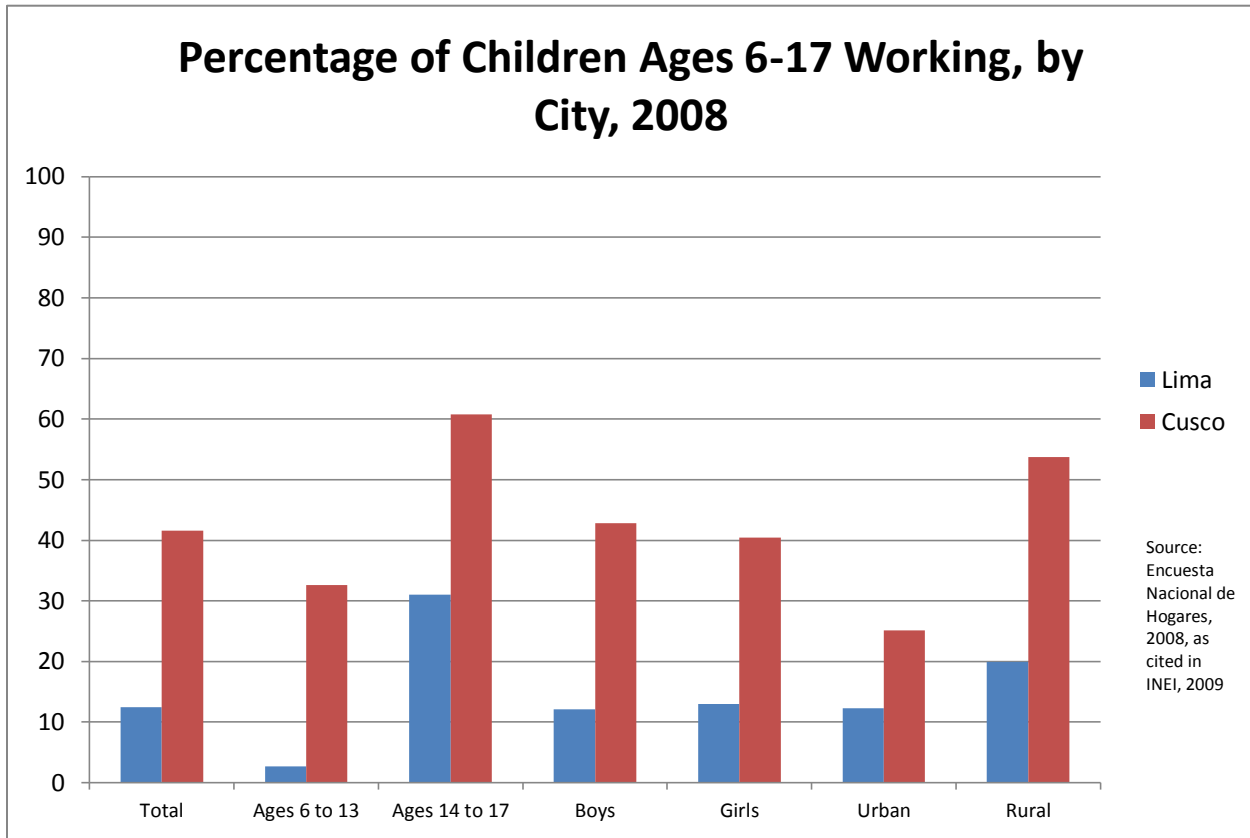


Figure 2.8 Percentage of children working in Lima and Cusco

While Lima has the biggest absolute number of children that work, the percentage of children working is much higher in the highlands than it is on the coast (INEI, 2009). It is also important to note that Cusco’s numbers are based on the entire state of Cusco, rather than the city of Cusco. As indicated by the chart, the percentage of working in the city of Cusco is much lower than in the surrounding countryside.

Child workers play an active role in supporting themselves and their families. Perú’s National Institute of Statistics and Information (INEI) reports that child labor contributes 21.7 percent of household income. Like most of their adult counterparts, most child workers in cities work in the informal economy. A recent INEI survey shows that 32,129 of children work in the informal sector, of which approximately 6,550 work on Lima’s streets as ambulatory vendors, acrobats, musicians, guides, shoe shiners and other street jobs (INEI, 2008). The most recent estimates of children working in the streets of Cusco are from 1996, when Qosqo Maki estimated that there were 3,130 street-working children between 6 and 17 years old in Cusco (Baufumé & Astete 1998). Many opt for the street as their main working environment because it is easy work to enter. They most often work as vendors, shoe shiners, porters, car windshield washers, or filling minivans and buses, as is the case of the children in

this study. Some street children will also get on buses and sing, or perform acrobatics at traffic lights, an occupation they learned from watching hippies backpacking through South America.

Within Lima, the majority of working children live in the informal communities surrounding the city, with San Juan de Lurigancho reporting the highest number of children working. Given the link between poverty, discrimination and migration, perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of street children in Lima are either themselves migrants (29 percent), or more commonly children of migrants (59 percent), mostly from highland provinces of Huanuco, Huancavelica and Junin, some of Perú's poorest provinces. This represents a slight shift from studies in the early 1990s, when the large majority were themselves from the highlands (Alarcon, 1991). All of those who spent some time living in Lima before moving to the streets were from Lima's cones or center, with none reporting having lived in Lima's wealthier residential districts (personal interviews, 2009-2010). Such information is particularly important to understand the links between historical discrimination, geography, and the presence of street children.

There are no reliable estimates of the size of Lima's homeless street child population, in part because of variations in how the term 'street children' is being defined, and because of competing political motivations of those conducting the studies. Most of the studies on street children in Lima focus on the 1980s and early 1990s. Estimates of the population of children sleeping in the streets at the time varied between 500 and 1,500 while others believed that the whole of Perú counted 1,500 street children (Strehl, 2010). Despite some political claims that Lima's street child population is decreasing, most educators who actually work with street children estimate that the homeless street population has not decreased but rather is just less visible. While street children previously occupied the city center, sleeping in abandoned buildings, on the banks of the river Rimac, and under bridges, efforts to clean up Lima have resulted in children seeking out alternatives. The majority of homeless street children in Lima today mix sleeping outside with renting cheap rooms around the city. Their increasing physical marginalization has consequences for their long-term marginalization, a topic I elaborate on in Chapter Four.

In contrast to Lima, many people believe that the number of children sleeping in the streets in Cusco has decreased somewhat (personal interviews, 2010). In part, this may be due to concerted efforts by the municipality to remove people sleeping in the main plaza, the presence of whom arguably hinders tourists' experience. However, the end of the violence between Shining Path and Perú's armed forces, along with a somewhat improved economy, are also important factors. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Cusco's street child population skyrocketed. Because of its closer proximity to areas affected by fighting, children and young people's whose families and livelihoods were disrupted

responded by fleeing to Cusco. Land reform, the economic recession in the 1980s and 1990s, and continued lack of opportunities and resources in rural communities further contributed to migration (see Sinervo, 2011). Yet, while migration continues today, less political violence and some semblance of stability have arguably decreased the number of children who come to Cusco alone (personal interviews, 2010). Additionally, because earlier migrants have also begun to establish themselves on the outskirts of the city, albeit often in poor conditions, they frequently take in extended family members, especially as economic opportunities increase. In Cusco, about 2/3 of street children in this study were born in the province of Cusco itself. Of those who have migrated, either alone or with their family, most came from the department of Cusco, many of whom maintain connections to their rural communities. Even more significantly, very few girls actually sleep in the streets in Cusco, which reduces the percentage of second and third generation street children found in Lima. As I elaborate on in the following chapters, the experience of street children in Cusco provides important insight into the unevenness of social, spatial and discursive processes of marginalization.

Explaining street children's presence

Economic restructuring, accompanied by dominant discourses and ideas about poverty outlined above, are essential for understanding street children's presence. As mentioned, in the face of extreme economic crisis and increased unemployment, families responded in a range of creative ways, diversifying income sources or working longer hours, further from their homes. Because of this, children become familiar with street and market work at a young age when they accompany parents or older siblings to work. Because there are very few openings in government-run child care centers, children are left alone if they do not accompany another family member to work. Primary school children are in a similar situation, as Peruvian children study only half of the day, in either the morning or the afternoon shift. Yet, rather than addressing socioeconomic shifts linked to chronic poverty, dominant discourses instead focus on parental irresponsibility, based on understandings of the street as a place of danger, to blame individual families for their own poverty, as I elaborate on in the following chapters. As mentioned, a lack of investment in social services for children, rising costs of living, and a downward trend in stable employment opportunities all contributed to a need to diversify income, and arguably are linked with children's presence on the street.

Although there are multiple reasons that children sleep in the streets, on a basic level, most people attribute street children's presence either to abuse, poverty or a combination of the two, echoing most literature regarding street children. While poverty itself is a key factor, many educators point out that most poor children do not end up in the streets. Instead, they emphasize parental neglect

or out-right abuse as the primary explanation for children's presence in the street, echoing discourses of personal responsibility and blame. Children themselves also acknowledged that they escaped to the streets to avoid abuse, as will be elaborated on in Chapter Five. However, abuse itself needs to be understood in the context of structural violence and increased marginalization, rather than simply or even predominantly, as the result of individual characteristics. Adelman (2004) argues for a need to consider family violence in the context of state policies, economic conditions, and dominant familial ideologies. The director of MANTHOC's school for working children in Lima elaborated on the link. She explained that high unemployment combined with a culture of machismo contribute to men feeling inadequate, ashamed and angry, ultimately hitting their wives or children (personal interview, 2010). Discourses that represent unemployment as a personal failure arguably contribute to such feelings of inadequacy (Adelman, 2004). Other studies have suggested that domestic violence increased as a result of economic crisis (Green, 1998). Gil (1986, 124, as cited in Di Bartolo, 2001, 322-323) writes "Violence in its domestic version is rooted in socially evolved and institutionalized inequalities of status, rights and power among individuals." "He suggests that the social violation of people in the public sphere carries over to the private sphere of the family and finds its expression in violent behavior" (Di Bartolo, 2001, 323). In such regards, the exclusion and marginalization outlined throughout this chapter arguably contribute to child abuse in the household, factors that are increasingly overlooked in discourses emphasizing individual parental blame and responsibility.

Structural violence is also specifically gendered. Multiple children repeated a common saying to me: 'the more he hits you, the more he loves you.' Such belief systems work to excuse certain types of violence as natural. Although most homeless street youth in Lima are male, there is a growing female street population.³⁵ Gender inequality and domestic violence in Perú are central to understanding such shifts. In Lima, 51 percent of women report having experienced physical or sexual violence (Guezmes, Palomino & Ramos, 2002). Although separate abuse rates among children and adolescent females are not available, 88 percent of all reported sexual violence occurs to girls under age 18 (ENDES, 2005, as cited in Boesten, 2010). Such sexual violence, the majority of which is committed by a father, step father or other relative (Boesten, 2010), is highly linked with girls' decision to move to the streets. Yet, as it the case with physical abuse, sexual abuse needs to be considered in the context of systemic violence perpetuated by neoliberal shifts, historical exclusion, a culture of machismo, and discourses of personal

³⁵ The situation in Lima is considered much more extreme than in Cusco, with street children facing greater marginalization. The great majority of street children in Cusco works and spends time in the street but still lives with parents or relatives. Those who do sleep in hostels or in Qosqo Maki, the municipal dorm, also frequently return home if they have any relatives within Cusco. Street prostitution is not an extensive problem, and there are only a few homeless street girls.

blame. While both physical and sexual abuse needs to be addressed, I argue that interventions need to move away from simply criminalizing the perpetrators to instead also address the systemic links.

2.13 Conclusion

Thus, various processes of historical economic and sociopolitical change are essential to understanding child poverty and children's presence in the street. In this chapter, I specifically moved away from an extended focus on the characteristics of street children themselves. While some description is necessary in order to set the context for the rest of my dissertation, individual portrayals of poor children work to reinforce authoritative approaches to poverty as a trait (and often consequence of) individuals. Similar attitudes are extended to whole countries, in which poverty is represented as a bounded problem of nation-states. Alternatively, by providing a history of Perú's exploitative relationships with Europe and the United States, I show how poverty must be understood relationally, as the product of historical economic and political processes on a variety of scales. Further, as I have argued, such exclusion is both sustained by and works to reproduce discourses that themselves marginalize. Recognition of the power of discourse, and more broadly, of knowledge production were also key to my research methodology and design. Applying feminist research methods and a child centered-approach to research facilitate a more dynamic study of child poverty. In the following chapters, I frequently refer back to such processes to illuminate the ways in which they work to both reinforce and offer opposition to various aspects of neoliberal discourses on personal responsibility and blame, allowing a contextualized and grounded analysis of development and child poverty.

Table 2.1: List of Organizations Interviewed

Various representatives, lawyers and social workers from the following governmental offices:

Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES)
Department of Justice
General Attorney's Office (fiscalia)
Ministry of Labor
Ministry of Education (Cusco)
Educators of the Street-INABIF (National Program for Family Well-Being) (Lima and Cusco)
INABIF children's home director (Cusco)
DEMUNA-Municipal Defense for Children and Adolescents (various branches in Lima and Cusco)
Defense of the People (Defensoria del pueblo)
Congress woman
Municipal Office of Urban Planning (Lima and Cusco)
Adviser to the mayor-Lima
Municipal Office of Social Development (Lima, Miraflores)
Regional Ministry of Social Development (Cusco)
Director of Chiko's Ecologico's
Serenazgo (municipal police-Lima, Miraflores, Cusco)
National Police Officers
Police running Colibri, program for working children (Lima and Cusco)
Children and Family Police Station (Lima and Cusco)
Head of women's branch of police
Center for Youth Marcavalle (Juvenile Prison in Cusco)

International NGOs:

UNICEF
Save the Children
PlanPerú (part of Plan International)
EveryChild

NGOs, Academics/Activists and other individuals:

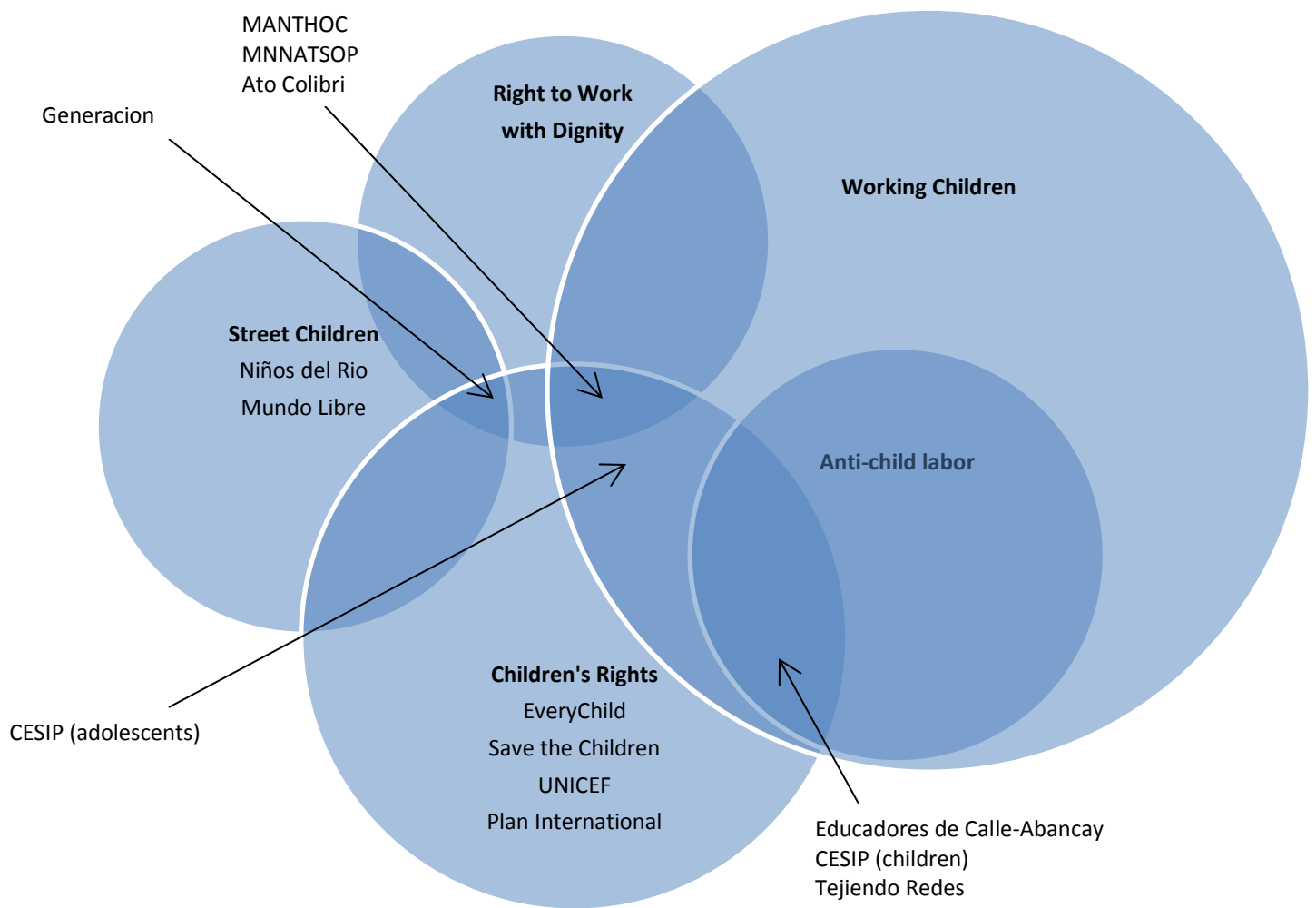
Multiple local NGOs, some of which receive international funding
MANTHOC, MNNATSOP, and Generación Coordinators, teachers and educators
Children's Rights Professor at the University of Lima
Social Demographer at University of the Pacific
Children's Rights Professor at the National University San Marcos
Activist against human trafficking
Educator and Founder of MANTHOC
Educator at INFANT
Parent representative of School's Association of Parents (APAFA)
Priest

Teacher at night school
Principal at night school
Former delegates of MANTHOC

Table 2.2 Contents of Interviews with Street Children

<i>General Topics</i>	<i>Specifics</i>
Basic	-Age -Birthplace
Work	-Occupation(s) -Personal history of work -Organization of work -Feelings about work -Reasons for choosing work -Skills/knowledge acquired
Education	-Experiences in school -Beliefs about education -Skills/knowledge acquired
Social Services	-Availability -Use -Who they go to if they have a problem
Living Conditions	-Sleeping Location -Who they live with -Reasons for choosing zone/group (if not with family)
Opinions	-Understandings and causes of poverty -Beliefs about child labor -Problems of childhood and youth -Knowledge of children's rights -Knowledge/opinion of Begging Bill
City interactions	-Feelings of comfort in the city -Favorite/least favorite places -Interactions with police officers
Time Use	-Typical 24 hours -Likes/dislikes
Identity/aspirations	-What they want to be doing in 10 years -How they identify (topic only covered with some children)

Figure 2.9 Map of main NGOs that I interviewed, by view point



Chapter 3: Regulating Street Children in the Name of their Own Rights

“My position as an expert is that the principal occupation of kids is to play. Kids learn through games. They are born to play. The school system was created by society to teach the law of society. Work is a *crime against development*...kids should not work because very easily, practically *automatically*, they will be violated, converted into slaves”-Maria, Attorney General’s Office, Personal Interview, 2010, emphasis mine

“The law is ‘in tune’ with international legislation but not in tune with our complex reality. It does not intend to modify anything except to please the conscience of national and international politicians who can at last say, ‘Finally Perú is in compliance with the ILO...Not only will it not improve the realities in which we, as child workers, and our families, live, but will aggravate them...by legally making invisible child workers under age 15. The State not only denies the existence of said children but also evades responsibility to protect us against exploitation, bad conditions and exclusion from health and education benefits....It represents a backtracking, placing more children not only in a situation of exclusion but also in one of illegality”- Collective of Child Workers’ Movement Delegates, Perú, 2002

3.1 Introduction

On November 20, 2009, Perú celebrated the 20th anniversary of the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Two events were organized for the same day and the same time. The first, to be held at the Congress building, was sponsored by Perú’s Movement for Child and Adolescent Workers and a handful of NGOs working with street children and child workers. The second was organized by UNICEF, Plan International and Save the Children. At the first event, children and adolescents drew attention to the lack of progress made in the CRC’s implementation, and presented a set of modifications they believed were necessary for Perú’s Code for Children and Adolescents. At the second event, a series of adult speakers praised the CRC and Perú’s adoption of it, before presenting a series of skits and distributing balloons to the children in attendance. The presence of the two very different events, held at the same time and both organized around the CRC’s anniversary, speaks to the contested role of children’s rights discourse in the regulation of children in Perú. Why did UNICEF and other international organizations, who purportedly emphasize children’s participation and the importance of including their voices, not coordinate with the Child Workers

Movement? Why was one event more celebratory while the other used as a time to demand more concrete changes? The answers, I suggest, are tied to competing interpretations of children's rights and the role rights play both in naturalizing and resisting particular understandings of childhood, poverty, and children's relationship to the state.

In this chapter, I explore social service provision for, and regulation of, street children,³⁶ through the lens of children's rights and neoliberalism.³⁷ In this context, I consider regulation as part of socially-embedded processes of governance (Jessop, 1995).³⁸ Foucault (1977, 1991) argued that people were regulated, or disciplined, not just through top-down official forms of government, but also through schools, state welfare agencies, private households, in formal associations of civil society and informal daily interaction (Fraser, 2003). In such regards, regulation extends to all aspects of life and contributes to the ways in which people accept certain regimes of practices as natural (Dean, 2010). According to Foucault, rules, codes and procedures of regulation and control are then experienced as regular features of institutional and everyday life (O'Brien & Penna, 1998), and are essential to the maintenance of power. What those rules are, however, are directly linked to particular forms of knowledge. In addition to more overt forms of discipline, indirect technologies are important in promoting self-regulation and discipline (Fraser, 2003; Lemke, 2001). In encouraging self-regulation, however, individuals can be held responsible for what is interpreted as their own failure. Poverty is then re-conceptualized as a problem of moral weakness and an inability for self-care, as I elaborate on throughout this chapter.

In examining how neoliberal discourse and international children's rights both complement and contradict each other, I answer the questions: How has the balance of who takes responsibility for poor children shifted under neoliberal development and children's rights legislation? What does regulation and the making of neoliberal subjectivities look like in the case of children? In what ways do discourses and practices of children's rights provide the justification for increased regulation of poor children and how do they open up alternative spaces? And finally, tying into the broader themes of the dissertation, how does an analysis of the regulation of children expand understandings of development and poverty?

³⁶ As was explained in Chapter 1, when I discuss 'street children,' I am including both homeless street youth as well as children who work in the streets and other public spaces. However, government officials and educators increasingly use the term to focus on homeless or drug using children, with important consequences for those working in ambulatory commerce in Lima's streets.

³⁷ As was explained in Chapter One, neoliberalism can mean many different things. Here, I specifically use the term neoliberal to refer both to economic policies and to forms of governance. By considering both aspects in tandem, the ways in which they reinforce each other become clearer

³⁸ Although regulation and governance are related, Jessop argues that those scholars working from a regulationist perspective have a slightly different approach than governmentality studies. For a more detailed discussion see Jessop (1995).

I argue that children’s rights may actually serve to naturalize neoliberal agendas by providing moral legitimacy for increasing intervention in the lives of street children. In particular, a language of rights provides the justification for the child-saving projects that focus on reforming individual behaviors, and in this way, works hand in hand with what Peck and Tickell (2002) refer to as a “deeply interventionist” neoliberalism. Focusing on individual intervention serves to mask systems of impoverishment and inequality. By considering neoliberalism and children’s rights in tandem, I hope to show the ways in which they ironically reinforce each other and authoritative understandings of poverty.

The CRC itself sets up a framework in which parents, civil society and the state are responsible for ensuring children’s rights. While international organizations are encouraged to offer technical assistance, they are not held formally responsible for the situation of children (see UNICEF web site). Reports from the Committee on the CRC highlight all the ways in which the Peruvian government is not doing enough to promote children’s rights, expressing many concerns with which I share. However, in doing so, they continue to reinforce the idea of poverty as a bounded problem of nation-states. International aid organizations are perhaps even more problematic. UNICEF publications, for example, depict ‘wide-eyed suffering’ children, out of context, and in need of saving (see Figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1 Cover of UNICEF’s annual report for Perú, 2011

This tendency to rely on powerful images of children to invoke ‘moral’ actions dates back to Jacob Riis’ classic ‘How the Other Half Lives.’ His series of photo journalism, published in 1890, portrayed street

children and child immigrants in poor parts of New York City and inspired a generation of reformers, who believed that by simply removing children from the urban environments in which they were growing, and putting them in institutions, they could be saved. The relationship between space and delinquency is still strong, as I argue in Chapter Four. For my purposes, here, however, I suggest that such representations of children reinforce an emphasis on changing the characteristics of those who are poor, rather than addressing systemic issues, an attitude that children's rights frameworks have been used to support.

Children's rights discourses and legislation facilitate aspects of neoliberal governance, both by mitigating some of the complaints about Perú's exclusive focus on economic development and by providing a more morally acceptable space for international intervention and conditional lending. In the first of the quotes introducing this chapter, Maria, who works for the *fiscalia*, Perú's equivalent of the General Attorney's Office, appeals to understandings of childhood as a time to play and study, which she naturalizes by saying children are *born* to have. Children who are unable to experience such childhoods can then be positioned as in need of rescuing. Yet, such an emphasis fails to recognize childhood as a social construct. As I explained in Chapter One, international children's rights have been central in presenting Western understandings of childhood as universal. When this is overlooked, and certain childhoods are taken as ideal models for all children, interventions in the name of child-saving missions become justified. In particular, scholars have drawn attention to the ways in which children's rights ironically serve as a new form of colonization by prescribing children's futures in an attempt to tame children (Liebel, 2006; Kjørholt, 2008; Skelton, 2008).

In the case of Perú, while the government has formally embraced children's rights, it provides little actual funding for children's programs. In this sense, children's rights have mostly served an ideological role, and have done little to challenge neoliberal cuts to social spending. In fact, I suggest that rights have primarily served a regulatory function. In the first sections of this chapter, I explore the link between neoliberal regulations of the poor and rights-based regulations of childhood to show surprising ways in which the two work together. In doing so, I examine Invernizzi and William's (2011) claim that rights discourses and legislation are susceptible to being reinterpreted and even subverted to pre-existing objectives.

Most literature about the neoliberalization of social services and increased regulation of the poor focuses on adults. Yet, little is known about how stakeholders act on children. I expand this literature to consider what the regulation of the poor looks like in the case of street children. Kingfisher (2002), Jessop (1997) and others have drawn attention to the ways in which the state is involved in the

construction of autonomous responsabilized neoliberal subjects. Those who are unable to achieve 'self-sufficiency' are depicted as responsible for their own condition, and in need of discipline and reform, rather than simple assistance. But can the same be true in the case of children? In what ways do dominant understandings of childhood contradict the idea that they can be responsible neoliberal subjects, and how may rights discourses work to reinforce such conceptions? I suggest that children are different for three important reasons.

First, I argue that the regulation of children, regardless of income level, is considered not only less controversial but in some cases, also beneficial, especially in a Western context. Because of the acceptability of such regulation, discourses about development and childhood may potentially reinforce dominant understandings of poverty that focus on reforming the behaviors of the poor rather than addressing systemic inequalities. This comes through most clearly in debates regarding child labor. In the second part of her comments, Maria emphasizes an understanding of work itself as a *crime* against development. As I will explore in this chapter, identifying work as a problem in and of itself facilitates the criminalization of working children and their families and ignores the diverse reasons why children are working. More importantly, other possible explanations for why children are unable to experience idealized versions of childhood, such as poverty, inequality, or different understandings of childhood, are overlooked. By referring to the *automatic* way in which working children are converted into slaves, understandings of child labor as inevitably exploitative are strengthened. The shift between all work and exploitative work then masks the way in which particular neoliberal economic policies are actually implicated in exploitation and exclusion. If all work is understood as inherently exploitative, a crime against development, then there is no reason to question the role of current economic systems. Campaigns against child labor have coincided with an increasing assault on social services and networks of social reproduction, and as such ironically reinforce the role of the state as a predominantly regulatory one.

Second, I argue that children are much more likely than their adult counterparts to fall into the category of the deserving poor. In fact, charities addressing children's needs are particularly popular, both because of children's presumed innocence and vulnerability, and also because of children's plasticity and a belief that their behaviors actually can be reformed (Aitken, 2001). In contrast to the regulation of adults, teaching children to be self-sufficient and independent is not an immediate goal. However, while there may not be a big emphasis on an immediate need for children's to be responsible autonomous subjects, their strict regulation and control is justified by a need to foster *future* neoliberal subjects, as I elaborate on in section 3.3. Further, although children themselves are rarely blamed for

their circumstances, I suggest that the blame and critique often gets transferred to their families. Throughout this chapter, I return to the way in which families, and in particular, mothers are frequently blamed for child labor and poverty. I argue that a neoliberal economy is making life increasingly challenging for certain families while at the same time holding the project of development in their hands. Families have long been central to projects of nation-building and development. Perú's Plan for Children and Adolescents states that the family is considered the fundamental nucleus of society and the natural space for the growth and development of a child. It continues, "Strong united families that love and support their children will make the development of Perú possible" (MIMDES, 2011, 15). Such a statement, however, not only emphasizes the importance of family but also indicates that if children's rights are not met, it is because the family failed. If the family is where children are oriented, when they engage in 'delinquent' behavior, it is easy to transfer blame to that same family for not properly teaching their children. Especially in the face of neoliberal reforms, however, families are not provided with the necessary tools to facilitate the healthy development of which they are supposedly held responsible. In this way, poor parents are held responsible for their family's poverty, reinforcing individualized conceptions of, and responses to, that poverty (O'Connor, 2001; Lawson, 2012).

Third, while children themselves are usually considered 'deserving,' as I just mentioned, pressures linked to neoliberal development, such as an emphasis on disciplining the poor and turning them into self-sufficient subjects, combined with a need to reduce spending on social services and clean up and remarket public spaces, perform discursive work to exclude certain types of young people from the category of 'child'. In particular, older street children are increasingly linked with robbing and drug use, and thus positioned more as delinquents and dangers than as innocent children. In such cases, the language of regulation shares important characteristics with authoritative understandings of adult poverty, with an emphasis on personal responsibility and a fear of encouraging dependency (Feagin, 1972, as cited in Wale & Foster, 2007; Wright, 1995). Some street children begin to be understood more as criminals than as children, to be isolated in institutions.

Yet, ironically such institutionalization continues to be justified in the name of children's own rights, which were designed to apply to all children, not poor children specifically. I suggest that rights discourses and specific legislation themselves have been affected by a neoliberal agenda. In particular, the difficulty involved in acquiring financial support for children, and their rights overall, has resulted in a need to pick the most marketable child. I argue that a shift towards results and the marketing of social services has led to the exclusion of street children, rendering them the wrong type of child. Street children clearly do not meet the ideal image of childhood as presented by Western middle-class norms.

Yet, they also increasingly fall outside understandings of the type of child for which international aid organization want to advocate. While in the 1980s street children often provided a rallying point for those advocating for greater rights, by 2010, they were rarely brought up in the international agenda. I suggest that this is linked to a growing tendency for both the government and civil society to withhold political and social recognition for “unproductive and disobedient persons in order to meet the demands of the market and provide tangible evidence of social and political development” (Drybread, 2009, 334). Thus, discursive representations of street children more as young criminals, or threats to urban safety and development, as I argue in the following chapter, served to exclude them from dominant understandings of childhood. In fact, newspaper articles sometimes refer to street children simply as delinquents (*delinquentes*). Yet, what is even more surprising is the way neoliberal policy combined with increased campaigns against child labor have also served to render street children the wrong type of child worker. Because street children often work in very exploitative conditions and do not study, they hinder the ability of the child workers movement to argue for the beneficial nature of work. Such examples re-emphasize the importance of analyzing the role of representations of poverty in shaping the ways in which children are regulated, and illustrates the double exclusion of street children.

However, I argue both neoliberal and rights-based development are inherently contradictory and uneven. Critical geographers have drawn attention to the polyvalent nature of neoliberalism (Peck & Tickell, 2002; Ferguson, 2010; England & Ward, 2007; Lerner, 2003), arguing that it never exists in a pure form but rather is negotiated through geo-histories in specific places (Jessop, 2002; Hackworth, 2010). By showing the uneven nature of the ways in which children are regulated, I expose contradictions within neoliberal forms of governance. Although children’s rights may often reinforce regulatory tendencies, they will not always do so. It is necessary to look at how differently situated actors contest and implement different understandings of childhood and poverty. In the context of little confidence in law and official policy, analyses needs to move beyond formal policy to also consider practice. Neither children’s rights nor neoliberal frameworks are just plopped down, smoothly put into practice from their official legal forms. Rather, they are mediated through people and agencies. In this chapter, I focus not only on shifts in formal child welfare policy but also on the specific agents in charge of implementing those policies. In doing so, I take into account what Catherine Weaver (2008) refers to as the hypocrisy trap, or gaps between what organizations say and what they do. In this way, I can examine whether ideas have shifted less in practice than they have in public statements (see Hulme, 2010). As I elaborate in section 3.11, informal regulatory systems and discourses structure agents’ actions alongside official policies and laws (see Herbert, 1996a,b; Proudfoot & McCann, 2008). Further,

the weakness of the state limits the effectiveness of states' neoliberal *and* children's rights policies, especially when combined with a historic distrust of the state and a belief that it was not adequately providing for its citizens.

The second quote from a coalition of delegates in the Child Workers' Movement indicates this unevenness by challenging the government's motivations behind supporting the International Labor Organization (ILO). It directly speaks to the way in which a focus on eliminating child labor penalizes children themselves and allows the government to avoid responsibility for protecting them. By calling out the government, the Child Workers' Movement challenges ideas of children's rights as regulatory and instead shows how rights can be invoked in more progressive ways. The CRC does not just emphasize regulation or even protection but rather has three main focuses: protection, provision, and participation, referred to as the three 'P's (Skelton, 2008). In this sense, then, I suggest that rights are a contradictory resource. While they may serve to naturalize neoliberalism, they also provide possibilities for alternative change. In section 3.8, I explore one of these alternative interpretations, looking at the way in which the child workers' movement invokes rights to argue for greater space for child participation and involvement in shaping their own development and that of their country.

In sections 3.5 and 3.9, I argue that neoliberalism has constrained rights both through conditional lending and a need to strategically choose only the most marketable rights, and the most deserving children on which to focus. In particular, I suggest that conditional lending in the name of children's rights serves as a more subtle form of (re)colonization. By prohibiting child labor and requiring school attendance, policies prescribe futures for children in a way that excludes street children, who depend on work to survive and who have had only limited success in school. Yet, by requiring that programs maintain anti-child labor stances, educators and social workers are limited in their ability to address issues of exploitation and adverse incorporation and instead must focus on individual behavior modification. Such attitudes limit more progressive changes and reinforce representations of working children as themselves the problem. I then argue that limited funding and a need to show marketable results have further excluded street children. I attribute this to the growing discursive link between street children and drug use, a trend similarly supported by scholars in countries such as Brazil and South Africa (Scheper-Hughes & Hoffman, 1998; Samara, 2005). This has resulted in the increasing criminalization of street children, as is reflected in Perú's Begging Bill, while ignoring the way in which neoliberal policies themselves are linked with the growth of drug use and gang problems. I argue that the bill, which was implemented with the official aim of protecting children, has allowed the government to effectively remove children in the name of their own protection.

In the penultimate section of this chapter, I show how the neoliberalization of social services supports problematic assumptions of poverty and childhood based on the individual circumstances of children and their parents, as well as Western models of childhood. However, because neoliberalism's effects are always partial, there are competing frameworks, which children themselves attempt to utilize in their everyday lives—a topic I turn to in Chapter Five. I conclude by arguing that although the criminalization of street youth, combined with an increasing emphasis on abolishing child labor, has served to limit effective organizing around identities as child workers, a reclaiming of this identity may open up alternative understandings of development and poverty.

3.2 Regulating the Poor

The regulation of the poor is not something that arose with neoliberalism. Foucault argued that in liberal systems of government, discipline was totalizing; social services themselves became disciplinary apparatuses (Fraser, 2003; Foucault, 1977, 1991) and modes of social control that extended into governance of multiple forms of individual and family behaviors. However, as social services are increasingly marketized and familialized, they have generated a new landscape of social regulation that is much more privatized and dispersed than that discussed by Foucault (Fraser, 2003) and which places a greater emphasis on personal responsibility and extensive discipline.

Under neoliberal discourse, the state is expected to play an increasingly small role in economic growth and development. However, a number of scholars argue that the state has not quantitatively decreased. Rather, the shift has been qualitative, with the government increasingly focusing on regulation rather than provision. It is here that Peck and Tickell's (2002) distinction between the roll-out and the roll-back state is a particularly useful one. Peck and Tickell suggest that the government and its relationship with society are reorganized through state withdrawal and simultaneous increased state intervention. "No longer concerned narrowly with the mobilization and extension of markets (and market logics), neoliberalism is increasingly associated with the political foregrounding of new modes of "social" and penal policymaking, concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s" (Peck & Tickell, 2002, 389). 'Roll out' policies, then, seek to discipline, separate and manage the poor (Jessop, 1997). Social services are one of the main ways to do so.

Neoliberal forms of governance extend an emphasis on efficiency and free-market principals to welfare programs, which are expected to "use business methods to select investments, monitor performance and ensure efficiency" (Hulme, 2010, 100). A new emphasis on empowerment is narrowly defined as empowerment to participate in the market. In particular, social services are charged with

reforming individual behaviors to create rational self-sufficient disciplined subjects (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). Those who are unable to succeed are then blamed for their own poverty (Kingfisher, 2002). Today, welfare programs in places like the United States reflect a long-held anxiety that aid will be used by those not truly deserving of help. In order to avoid creating dependency (or removing a worker's incentive to sell his labor power), relief programs are designed to be temporary. Those who are unable to achieve financial independence are then held accountable, reinforced by discourses of individual responsibility (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001; Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2008; O'Connell, 2001).

On an international level, aid works hand in hand with the neoliberalization of social services by homogenizing the poor as a population in need of targeted reform (Ilcan and Lacey, 2011). Doing so has brought about systematic attempts to manage the poor and solve their problems through technologies of global governance, with programs that emphasize responsibility, empowerment and the market (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011). Poverty reduction efforts themselves are involved in disciplining the poor, both on an individual- and country-wide scale. Emphasis on 'good governance' agendas place the focus on improving government behavior rather than looking at the relationship between countries and the ways in which wealth in the global north is connected to poverty in places in the global south.

Decontextualized images of the poor, in need of material assistance and support from those in the global north, are presented in a way as to evoke sympathy from wealthy people positioned so that they can graciously help (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001). Yet such portrayals mask structural problems and inequalities which necessitate aid in the first place, and the way such attitudes position experts from the global north as those with the knowledge or skills to reform poorer countries and the people living in them.

In such regards, a focus on poverty reduction may actually serve to legitimate neoliberal development. Hulme (2010) suggests that the adoption of what International Financial Institutions claim is 'pro-poor' development helps create an account in which capitalist expansion is beneficial to everyone. In this way, he says, poverty reduction strategies are at least in-part self-interested. While they may be part of genuinely socially progressive plans, they also may be a way for rich nations and the elite in the global south to retain existing structures of power and resource distribution while also maintaining their legitimacy. They also set up a framework in which countries in the global north are positioned as possessing the necessary knowledge to address poverty, and thus depoliticize and justify intervention and monitoring of countries in the global south, as I elaborate in the following section.

Here, I extend Hulme's argument beyond poverty reduction to children's rights discourses and legislation. As was explained in Chapter One, children's rights carry moral weight. By officially

embracing the language of children's rights, countries can improve their international image. Even when rights are not actually implemented, by providing official support for both the CRC and more recently, ILO Articles 138 and 182,³⁹ the Peruvian government can gain international favor and help mitigate some of the critiques that neoliberal development is ignoring the human element. Scholars within Perú have directly challenged the government's recent support of anti-child labor campaigns on grounds similar to those laid out by Hulme (2010). In a conversation with Jorge Mendoza,⁴⁰ a children's rights professor at the University of Lima, he emphasized how ILO campaigns against child labor fit in perfectly with the Peruvian government's attempts to establish themselves as a more developed country. "The intent of the Peruvian state was to be part of that (neoliberal 'first world') order, and by supporting the ILO, they gained points" (persona I interview, 2010). His comments reveal skepticism of the government's motivations in addressing child labor, and also reinforce the impression that government officials believe that they need to take a stance against child labor in order to prove they are 'developed' and not backward. In fact, anti-child labor advocates specifically appeals to notions of morality, invoking a language of rights to gain support for their efforts. In such regards, although rights frameworks *may* provide support for more progressive change, I suggest that children's rights as they play out in the Peruvian context can also be prescriptive in nature, serving as a new form of regulation and discipline. It is to rights as a form of regulation that I now turn.

3.3 Rights as a Form of Regulation

In the context of street children's lives, I suggest that rights have principally served a regulatory function, providing the justification for increasing intervention in children's lives in the name of their own protection. Scholars suggest that a large part of the CRC and the ILO's discourses are about enframing children and attempting to tame them. The decontextualized image of the poor child masks examinations of the factors leading to children's situations, and instead justifies intervention from a wide range of international and national actors. Bosco (2008) builds from Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) to argue that decontextualized images of the universal child result in symbolic violence- they serve to naturalize certain understandings of childhood while invalidating others. Yet, because this work is not understood as violence, it is arguably much more effective. Depictions of children's lives in the global south suggest a problematic distinction between western concepts of what childhood should look like, and the actuality of children's lived experiences (Aitken, 2001). Aitken (2001, 11) argues that the

³⁹ Article 138 requires countries to establish a minimum age for labor and Article 182 commits governments to work to eradicate the most exploitative forms of labor.

⁴⁰ Names of respondents have been changed.

problem is that deviance from the western norm “is interpreted not as local particularities but as instances of backwardness and underdevelopment,” and thus serves to justify expanded efforts to export modern childhood around the world. Additionally, framing children’s lives as ‘deviant’ overlooks the way in which exploitation of the global south itself often enables the comfort of middle-class Western childhoods (Wood & Beck, 1990, as cited by Aitken, 2001).

In helping to spread such understandings, the CRC has to some extent facilitated a discursive shift in the role of the state to that of regulator. Children’s rights legislation and their accompanying discourses legitimate areas subject to intervention, such as parenting, and provide a moral justification for this intervention. The CRC is itself a particular type of knowledge that has been naturalized as common sense. Like other types of knowledge, it cannot be understood as separate from power (Foucault, 1980; Rabinow, 1982). Its function as a regulatory framework for childhood is heightened by the increased role that NGOs, many of whom are internationally funded, play in children’s rights projects. Nieuwenhuys (2008) argues that children’s rights are put in place by social and economic programs that reform the children themselves under close surveillance of northern donors. The aid regime thus shapes not only ways of thinking about and responding to poverty (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011), but also the very understandings of what constitutes childhood.

In particular, dominant interpretations of children’s rights have served to institutionalize and set apart children. Universal or ‘modern’ childhoods promote childhood as a graded phase that requires supervision in institutions, a concept that most strongly emerged in the 19th century (Ruddick, 2003). Such a system is based on the idea that school is the path both to obtaining a job and to adulthood. These understandings of childhood, Ruddick (2003, 357) suggests, are not a byproduct of capitalism but rather are located at its core. “Strategies of the social reproduction of youth and children, their education and training and their acculturation carry within them imagined paths to global competitiveness (both in the “race to the top” and the “race to the bottom”).” Thus, children’s futures, rather than being opened, are being prescribed by neoliberal economics (Aitken et al, 2008; Nieuwenhuys, 2008; Skelton, 2008).

Understandings that children belong in school and the home, and more generally speaking, that they are better off when subject to increased regulation, are beliefs that are increasingly being understood as common sense. The CRC and UN campaigns emphasizing the importance of education for international development have played important roles in the spreading of such values (Green, 1998). Shared project design formats and evaluation protocols further understandings of a uniform response for dealing with children’s issues (Nieuwenhuys, 2008). In doing so, an array of technical

experts-including international child rights advocates, psychologists and social workers, are turned to as the ultimate sources on child well-being. Even in the introductory quote above, Maria prefaces her comments by stating that she is an 'expert' on childhood. This has resulted in understandings of childhood, like poverty management, as something that can be rationally managed. Yet by understanding intervention into children's lives as technical, it is depoliticized, similar to other interventions carried out in the name of development (T. Mitchell, 1995; Ferguson, 1994). International aid furthers these tendencies by placing donors in a position of power to impose their views of the world on others, shaping not only solutions to problems but the way these very 'problems' are defined (Hulme, 2010).

Thus, the power of children's rights legislation lies not in the legal mechanisms put in place to contest rights violations, of which there are few, but in the power to structure patterns of thought and language and to reinforce taken for granted assumptions that shape our approach to problems and solutions (Freeman, 2011). Because children are considered in need of guidance and developing, some intervention may be in their best interests. Yet, there is a fine line between providing for, and educating children, and excessively regulating or controlling them. Despite some biological basis for phases of child development, the regulation of children according to middle-class Western constructs is not actually inherently natural. As I have argued, childhood is a social construct, subject to competing interpretations. In the context of Perú, as elsewhere in the world, children are not as separated from adult life as they are in Western middleclass families, or even in Lima (Bolin, 2006, xi). In Andean culture, children learn through observation. Adults are more permissive, only intervening when children get into dangerous situations. In this way, "children develop at the pace they set for themselves" (Bolin, 2006, 37).

Children's rights, in their emphasis on the universal, have ironically served to invalidate alternative interpretations of childhood, and perhaps even more importantly, those children who do not experience childhood as a time of innocence, play, and schooling (Valentine, 2004). In this sense, then, critics of international children's rights regimes suggest that rights serve as a new more subtle form of (re)colonization (Leibel, 2006), imposing beliefs about how the world should be through the cloak of morality. For the purposes of this chapter, I focus on the role that children's rights discourses and legislation have played in reinforcing the assumption that work and school are strictly dichotomous.

Many scholars attribute the reduction of child labor in the United States and Europe to the emergence of public schooling (Boyden, 1994). However, within Perú, children are more likely to *both* attend school and work at the same time than they are to just work (Ray, 2002; Ersado, 2004; Patrinos &

Psacharopoulos, 1997). In fact, many children report working specifically in order to pay for school matriculation, uniforms, or other school-related fees. In addition, many families believe that children should go out to work as part of their education, putting them at direct odds with governmental interpretations of the CRC. In Andean culture, there is a lot of value placed on 'not being lazy', or *ama qella* in Quechua (Bolin, 2006). Children begin helping in the fields, with housework, or to care for younger siblings as soon as they are able (Seligmann, 2004; Invernizzi, 2003). Through such tasks, they actively learn to become members of Andean society. Since Inca times, work has defined people, and gives them a place in the community (Bolin, 2006; Cussianovich, 1997). In this sense, then, children are arguably more empowered than they are in middle-class Western families. Because adolescents are considered indispensable to the village, they do not present a problem to the community the way youth are beginning to in Lima and in many countries in the Global North. However, by regulating children along supposedly universal understanding of childhood, the children's rights regime imposes assumptions about where and how children should spend their time that do not reflect Perú's reality and rule out alternative possibilities for development. In this sense, I suggest that rights are like neoliberal development in that they are based on an authoritative form of knowledge centered in the West. Notions of 'universality' and one-size-fits all solutions depoliticize highly political interventions (Peck & Tickell, 2002; Ilcan & Lacey, 2011). By de-centering bases of knowledge, rights can potentially be used for more progressive ends. However, without a critical analysis of children's rights, it is dangerous to assume they will automatically benefit children.

Re-framing child labor as a problem

In the introduction, I argued that framing issues as technical serves to depoliticize them. The link between having the power to frame the terms of debate and the solutions that then emerge becomes clear in the case of child labor. Swyngedouw (2001) argues that state regulation of 'children's lives' arises to smooth out the worst excesses of global capitalism (as cited by Philo & Smith, 2003). Neoliberal economic policies intensified children's need to work in the paid economy, but even more importantly, structured the underpaid exploitative nature of much of this work. At the same time, the presence of working children contradicts images of the 'universal' child, who is happy and healthy in the school and at home. Advocating against child labor thus becomes one way to mitigate critiques of such policies. In fact, anti-child labor campaigns, which present child labor as violating children's right to play, learn and be free from exploitation, ironically work to divert attention away from structural inequalities, such as exploitative terms of labor, historical dispossession, and unequal access to opportunities, as outlined in chapter two, and towards increased regulation of individual children and their families. In

particular, the invention of child labor as a problem to be eliminated has arguably channeled funds towards preventing children from working at the exclusion of other possible investments, such as investing in better working conditions and opportunities, or more social services and education. As is the case with children's rights overall, I suggest that supporting the ILO contributes to Perú's international image, as was suggested by Jorge's earlier quote, and facilitates greater access to funding from Northern NGOs. I elaborate on the important role that funding plays in shaping formal responses to child labor in section 3.5. Here, I examine discursive work that international children's rights legislation does, and the importance of being able to frame the terms of debate.

I suggest that anti-child labor advocates take the moral high ground while overlooking the way in which they, or their countries, promote the very policies that facilitate the creation of exploitative labor conditions. Anti-child labor supporters rely on appeals to morality to gain support for their plans, as comes across clearly in the road map from the 2010 conference at the Hague regarding child labor. The document refers to "the rights of children to be free from child labor," arguing that abolition of child labor is a 'moral necessity' (ILO, 2010, 1). Voicing campaigns in such terms implies that places in which child labor exists are backward, and possibly even immoral, if they do not pledge to confront such labor. The moral outrage around children working limits the ability of people to protest for fear of being perceived as immoral or against children.

Even more importantly, an emphasis on the negative role of early labor provides a mask for structural explanations of poverty, and instead allows the government and NGOs to narrowly focus on the elimination of child labor while making little change to economic policy. By framing child labor as a technical problem to be eliminated, in which experts can come and help design adequate interventions, children's presence in the street is depoliticized. Although utilizing different examples, scholars such as Ferguson (1994) and Mitchell (1995) have similarly argued that by turning 'development' into a problem to be solved, Western interventions can be presented as apolitical technical situations. I suggest the same is occurring in the case of child labor. But because childhood is itself increasingly understood as outside of politics, an idea reinforced by appeals to supposedly 'universal' rights, it offers a particularly powerful way to naturalize such assistance. Transnational organizations such as the World Bank and the International Labor Organization play a large role in shaping the debate. They present child labor in and of itself as an 'evil,' responsible for many other problems of society. For example, the ILO argues that child labor "undermines national development by keeping children out of school, preventing them from gaining the education and skills that would enable them as adults to contribute to economic growth and prosperity" (ILO, 2002: 1). To claim that child labor undermines national development overlooks the

important role of current economic systems and uneven power dynamics both within and between societies (Nieuwenhuys, 2008). As outlined in Chapter Two, centuries of dispossession and adverse incorporation have led to increased poverty, and significant inequalities in opportunities and well-being among various groups within Perú. The elimination of multiple government jobs, the removal of trade barriers and protections and direct attacks on unions arguably heightened precarious working conditions. Hourly wages in urban areas were lower as of 2002 than they were in 1985, with people reporting longer working hours just to make ends meet (Yamada, 2005). In the face of low wages and little official state support, children and their families had to actively work to create economic opportunities for themselves. Yet, rather than highlighting such factors, campaigns against child labor facilitate a discursive shift away from critiquing the *conditions* of work to instead criminalize both working children and their parents. They offer a particularly clear example of the way in which ‘universal’ ideals of childhood work to place the onus of responsibility for child exploitation on either ‘backward’ countries who do not adequately create or enforce legislation or parents who ignorantly or intentionally exploit their own children. In this way, the role neoliberal economic orders play in encouraging a race to the bottom, prioritizing incentives for foreign investment and the extraction of natural resources and demanding fiscal responsibility through the form of less investment in social services, all of which negatively affect children’s working conditions, is overlooked. Potential ulterior motives, such as eliminating competition for adult workers or their own countries (see Nieuwenhuys, 2001), are similarly masked.

By regulating children along supposedly universal understanding of childhood, the children’s rights regime imposes assumptions about where and how children should spend their time that do not reflect Perú’s reality. In this sense, international pressure works to solidify understandings of one particular path for achieving rights, as well as international development. Perú as a country is measured by indicators that naturalize understandings of progress shaped from the global north. For example, in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child’s recommendations to the Peruvian government in 2006 (13), they write “The Committee is further concerned about the fact that the minimum age for admission to employment is set at 14 years, which is below the age of the end of compulsory education that is set at 15 years.” Such concerns can result in lower ranking of human development. Yet, if many children are working to pay for school, raising the minimum age for employment will not necessarily yield all the argued benefits, and may even be detrimental. Implying that childhood can be measured on a universal yardstick is problematic both because it fails to recognize the connection between places, and the ways in which so-called ‘developed’ countries depended on exploitative relationships for their

development, but also because it assumes that everyone is moving towards the same end-goal (Aitken, et al, 2008). Such conceptions reinforce depictions of differences in space as differences in time (Massey, 2005).

Pre-determined ideas of children's futures have limited outreach to street children in problematic ways that exclude alternative possibilities of development. I suggest that there are two different tropes through which street children are being regulated. The first centers on what I refer to as the future neoliberal subject. Rather than understanding the child as an adult, there is an emphasis on cultivating his human capital so that he can assume his roles as a neoliberal subject at age 18. In the meantime, he needs to be invested in and controlled. This second aspect, a need for control, is the other main objective of the state. I first explore ideas of the future neoliberal subject before returning to that of disciplining and controlling the poor.

In direct contrast to the regulation of poor adults, who are encouraged (or in some cases, required) to work in order to receive any social support, children's active participation in the economic and social reproduction of society is often ignored (Kjorholt, 2008). I suggest this is due to understandings of children as 'not yet citizens'. Other scholars have argued that development discourse has helped spread representations of children "as vulnerable, immature and in need of education and socialization if they are to develop into fully competent citizens" (Kjorholt, 2008, 30). In this sense then, rights justify increased intervention into children's lives in order to help them become economically competitive *future* neoliberal citizens. Ironically, in doing so, rights reinforce children as objects, contradicting one of the main emphases behind the CRC, a concept I return to in the following section. As quoted earlier, the ILO argues that child labor "undermines national development by keeping children out of school, preventing them from gaining the education and skills that would enable them as adults to contribute to economic growth and prosperity" (ILO, 2002, 1). Such an explanation justifies intervention in the name of children's future, rather than current, well-being. While it is important to help children prepare for the future, a focus on the future does not necessitate a neglect of children's current needs and wants. I suggest that an exclusive emphasis on getting children into school fails to consider children's more immediate needs, such as money to pay for food or to help their family.

Just because international organizations say something, however, does not mean that other countries believe or support it. To what extent have international discourses actually translated into changes within Perú? In the following section, I examine formal discourses and plans regarding childhood, before turning to a discussion of their implementation. I suggest that in the case of Perú, the government has officially embraced understandings that children belong in school and not in work, but

without the resources, or even necessarily the intentions, to facilitate such childhoods. This has resulted in sets of guidelines that deem a segment of the child population, in this case street children, as outside the appropriate boundaries of childhood. While their lives are sometimes acted upon, it is usually reactionary and negative, with children being prohibited from certain activities and spaces, rather than provided with quality education or care, as laid out in the CRC. Thus, street children are experiencing only the regulatory end of rights, rather than the provision, empowerment and protection that are also behind the CRC.

In Perú, the significant gap between stated laws and actual practice has led to uneven and varied implementation of both neoliberal and children's rights policies, reiterating a need to look not only at formal laws and policies but also at practices (Weaver, 2008). This can be seen both in variation within different branches of the national government and between regional and municipal politicians. It is a widely held understanding within Perú that law and practice often differ. The adviser to Luis Castañeda, mayor of Lima until 2010, explained that in Perú, "laws are like good intentions" (personal interview, 2010). One of the heads of Lima's municipal government similarly commented that in Perú, "laws are meant to be broken" and others emphasized that laws served as guidelines (personal interviews, 2009-2010). This gap between law and practice is important on two levels. The first is in speaking to the contradictory nature of both neoliberal and children's rights policy, showing the way they are constantly produced and reworked. Second, however, I argue that although laws are not always respected, they still play an important regulatory role in the framing of specific programs and services for children, and in the ways various ministries and NGOs apply for money.

3.4 Implementing Neoliberalism: The State

In this section, I turn to an analysis of the role of the state in the regulation of street and working children. I argue that as a whole, the Peruvian government is more concerned with the control of poor children than it is with the provision of quality care. In this sense, children's rights have done little to challenge the neoliberalization of social services, or what I have referred to as applying market principles of efficiency, competition and an emphasis on individual responsibility to welfare programs. In fact, ironically, rights provide a framework to justify regulation and intervention into children's lives according to universalized standards, despite the particularities of the Peruvian context.

Support of children's rights is mostly limited to show. In official rhetoric, children have become key to projects of development, and serve as a way to show that Perú is both advanced and not solely concerned with economic development. It is not coincidental that children's rights emerge around election time and then disappear. Supporting children, in their assumed vulnerability and innocence, is

a popular move, and one that is hard to argue against. As I suggested at the start of this chapter, images of children provide powerful ways of gaining support because of their assumed deservingness and vulnerability. By emphasizing that they will invest in childhood, politicians can gain votes. However, once elected, children's issues immediately disappear from the agenda. During the 2011 election runoff between Ollanta Humala and Keiko Fujimori, both invoked understandings of childhood as key to poverty-reduction. Humala, for example, emphasized the important role of education for international development. He argued that investing in education is the best investment a government can make in its country (Con Nuestro Perú, 2011). In this way, as argued in Chapter One, children become implicated in narratives of development. Such rhetoric facilitates a discursive shift in which children are understood as not only essential to country's development but can be construed as impediments to development if they fail to be properly educated. While it is too soon to analyze the effects of Humala's policies, whether his nationalist politics and emphasis on social inclusion change the shape of children's rights agendas may provide important insight into the extent to which rights serve to facilitate or contradict (international) neoliberal agendas.⁴¹ Despite significantly different politics, former President Alan Garcia also emphasized the importance of education for international development. However, during his government, spending on education was actually reduced slightly from 3 percent of GDP in 2002⁴² to 2.6 percent in 2010 (UNESCO, 2011), supporting my claim that embracing children's rights is predominantly a political maneuver.

In some regards, the predominance of neoliberal policy has clearly hindered the effect of children's rights legislation, and in this sense, supports claims that the two are in opposition (Fernando, 2001). At first glance, children's rights legislation has done little to change budgetary priorities. Failing to provide adequate funding for children's programs facilitates children's invisibility, rather than the greater participation outlined in the CRC, and is perhaps more indicative of overall governmental concerns than is legal support of children's rights. Perú's Plan for Children and Adolescents, which is an attempt to operationalize a commitment to the CRC, says that because the committee which wrote the plan is multi-sectoral, they do not need a special budget in order to execute it. Rather, they say that each ministry should take responsibility for the parts of the plan that correspond to them. However, this has resulted in little implementation of actual programming. The need for money and not just decrees was most clearly articulated, not by those MIMDES officials spouting the official government lines, but surprisingly by representatives from the Ministry of Finance at a meeting of the Consortium for the Fight

⁴¹ It will be interesting to see if anti-child labor organizations maintain the same presence, proving more lasting than international economic policies.

⁴² Ironically, even Fujimori invested a greater percentage of GDP in education, reaching 3.4 percent in 1999.

against Poverty. The Consortium, created by a 2001 decree, is a space for government officials and civil society to come together and work to fight poverty. It came about as the result of the realization that effectively addressing Perú's poverty required much more coordinated efforts and partnerships between the public sector, civil society, and private organizations. There is a group of representatives within the Consortium who specifically meet to address child poverty. These meetings are especially important because representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the General Attorney's Office and others (occasionally) attend, rather than only those specifically focused on childhood. At one of these meetings, a government official working on the Ministry's Participatory Budgeting explained, "For the more plans you do, if they are not concrete in the budget, they stay on paper" (meeting, 2010). His comments were reiterated by many others in official government positions. When I asked about the effects of ratifying the CRC, they frequently invoked a lack of resources as the main explanation for slow progress in implementing the CRC.

An emphasis on growth, rather than social development, and subsequent cuts to social spending clearly do limit available resources. However, while not denying this tension, I suggest that what becomes important is the way in which a lack of resources is invoked. In some ways, this 'lack' of resources serves as an excuse for why the government cannot do anything. Yet, simply saying the resources are not there fails to question *why* they are not there. Especially in the face of Perú's rapid economic growth, decisions about resource allocation and the way in which development is defined are not superficial concerns. Multiple educators, NGO directors, and even a few in various branches of the municipal government critique the national government for defining development as "building highways" rather than focusing on social development, inequality and poverty. Yet, the majority of government officials with whom I spoke failed to acknowledge questions related to resource allocation and government spending. I suggest that simply asserting a lack of resources naturalizes poverty as inevitable. The comments of a social worker working at MIMDES are reflective of such tendencies. During our interview in the Ministry of Women and Social Development, we began talking about the effectiveness of the CRC as a tool to address child poverty. Having worked in MIMDES for four years, she explained "there are thousands of cases of children with needs but we don't have the resources....At least now a legal mark exists. We lack material resources to implement the strategies and plans. We can't support all of the poor, of course, but in very evident cases, we could devote better resources. We are not going to end poverty. Poverty is very sad but it is immense" (personal interview, 2010). While her comments reflect a degree of realism, they also facilitate excusing poverty as 'immense' and

inevitable. An emphasis on very 'evident' cases can also be tied into understandings of what poverty looks like and who is most deserving of limited aid.

In other cases, a focus on ignorance or lack of awareness, masks lack of investment. A woman working for the general attorney's office explained, "We all need to contribute to the spread of the CRC. We need to be vigilant...the main limitation is a lack of knowledge. You can't implement what you don't know. The police stations all have copies of the CRC but no one reads them" (personal interview, 2010). To say that a lack of knowledge is the main limitation, however, excuses limited funding for childhood programs and specific decisions *not* to prioritize children's rights, rather than simple ignorance. Yet, while children's rights legislation and neoliberal policy may be in opposition in terms of budgeting, where rights legislation ironically works with neoliberalism is in shared regulatory approaches and conceptualizations of poverty and childhood. While Perú's Plan for Children and Adolescents is largely not followed, I suggest that an analysis of both its stated intentions and perceived results is useful in understanding selective ways in which rights are utilized and measured.

The National Plan for Children and Adolescents

The Peruvian government has been quick to formally support most international conventions and articles regarding children's rights. As mentioned, they ratified the CRC in 1989 and ILO Articles 182 and 138 in 2002. Similarly, on a national level, the government has come up with multiple new legal codes and plans regarding childhood, largely based on the CRC. In fact, according to the new National Plan for Children and Adolescents (PNAIA), the CRC guides and inspires all national policies regarding children. The newest plan for 2011-2021 lists its guiding principles: 1) best interest of the child trumps other concerns 2) all children are equal subjects of rights, and cannot be discriminated against by gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, among other factors 3) children are subjects, with a right to participate in decisions affecting them, and have value as children and not just future adults (MIMDES, 2011). In this sense, children's rights legislation does offer possibilities for alternative approaches to development and re-conceptualizations of childhood.

However, I suggest that the concrete ways in which rights are invoked in the plan already reflect strategic decisions on which rights to prioritize, and support the increased regulation and discipline of poor children. In this sense, the Plan reinforces representations of children as in need of saving and reform. The Plan's desired result number nine focuses on eradicating the worst forms of child labor. This focus is justified by appealing to children's rights, in this case children's right to education and right to be free from economic exploitation. However, the sub goals blend exploitative child labor with child begging and with all forms of work. Subgoal 1 is "to eradicate the worst forms of child labor and

decrease the incidence of child begging” and subgoal 2 is “to reduce child labor by 50%” (MIMDES, 2010). Even in the plan then, there is slippage between exploitative work and all work, which solidifies understandings that child labor is inevitably detrimental, rather than focusing on the conditions of their labor. In this way, economic policies that lead to low pay, insecurity and a lack of benefits, among others, are naturalized. The exclusion of children from the labor force is justified by emphasizing how early entrance into the labor force limits children’s ability to acquire human capital, and leads to lower earnings over the course of a life time.⁴³ However, this emphasis on creating the future neoliberal subject not only reinforces a false dichotomy between schooling and working but also fails to look at whether school actually leads to more concrete opportunities for poor children, an argument I elaborate on in Chapter Five. Additionally, children themselves played no role in creating the plan, neglecting understandings of a right to participate in matters concerning them. Such an omission facilitates using ‘rights’ as a way to regulate children, rather than empowering them to take a more active role in shaping the legal parameters of their daily lives.

The way in which progress is measured is further reflective of control rather than empowerment. Under its accomplishments relating to the eradication of child labor, the Plan’s annual report states that the government carried out 102 police operations for the prevention and protection of children and adolescents in a state of abandonment, high risk or begging, *rescuing* 349 children (MIMDES, 2010, emphasis mine). However, the report provides no indication of what has since happened to the children supposedly rescued. As I argue in the following chapters, children picked up in police operatives are warehoused in either children’s homes or juvenile correctional facilities, and often escape back to the streets, raising questions about whether such operatives are actually most concerned with child well-being or arguably with improving the value of public space and eliminating the discomfort or insecurity that elite and tourists may feel when encountering street children. Additionally, there is little justification for why children must be ‘rescued’ from such positions. In the case of Ecuador, Swanson (2010) argues that begging is actually a rational choice made by young indigenous children to facilitate further economic opportunities and more active participation in the global economy. Similarly, in this study, work in the streets, with its low barriers to entry, allows children to earn money for school fees and food, and provides them with an alternative to sometimes abusive situations in the home. Presenting poor children as in need of rescuing invalidates such decisions, and legitimates interventions into their lives that focus on removal rather than improving working

⁴³ However, these findings do not control for poverty, making it difficult to assertively contribute work in and of itself to lack of school participation and earnings. This facilitates understandings of all work as problematic, further masking an analysis of actual working conditions.

conditions.⁴⁴ Increased rhetoric against child labor is then invalidating various forms of childhood while providing no alternative means to realize the idealized childhoods working supposedly prevents.

Moser (2009, 24) suggests that reports that focus on the characteristics of the poor unintentionally support conservative interpretations of poverty by neglecting processes of accumulation and the distribution of economic resources and political power (also see O'Connor, 2001). In this sense, reports about progress made towards implementing children's rights tend to focus on modifying behavior of poor children and families, rather than addressing larger political structures within which such behaviors are produced. The Plan does show some recognition that many children are working because of economic need. It reports that 71% of children working in 2000 came from economically-poor households (MIMDES, 2010). In order to prevent children from having to work, the government developed a program called Constructing Perú, which provided close to 150,000 parents of children under age 18 with employment opportunities. While still only reaching a small number of people, such a program shows some recognition of the reasons behind child labor. Yet, in plans for 2010, the government aimed to make participation in Constructing Perú conditional-participants must agree to regularly send their children to school. If parents wish to receive benefits, they must agree to a level of control and monitoring by the state. However, without consideration of either the quality of school or possible impediments to children's attendance, such conditionalities may serve to exclude those families that may have most benefitted from employment opportunities. This type of approach is typical of today's welfare programs in the United States, in which the poor are subject to increased surveillance, and must themselves change their behavior, in order to receive minimal assistance (Gilliom, 2001). In this way, the government can better monitor and ensure deservingness and decrease the likelihood of dependency on aid.

The lack of state-run programs is apparent to most educators and social workers, who see it as a clear indication that the CRC has not made a large impact. Eduardo, an idealistic middle-class Peruvian, who has been working as an educator with street children for three years, expressed his frustration with the government. "There has been no impact of the CRC felt qualitatively. Everything is private to them" (personal interview, 2010). This tendency to rely on private organizations is typical of neoliberal approaches to development, in which social reproduction is increasingly privatized (Mitchell, Katz, and Marston, 2004). However, it also means that the state is mostly absent in the lives of poor urban

⁴⁴ In its list of advances for the year, the report claims that the government has implemented programs of vigilance, and removed 1,991 children under age 12 from child labor and provided services for 2,495 child workers throughout the country. The report focuses on what the government *has* done. However, even according to their numbers, that means that the state is reaching less than .01% of the total 2 million children estimated to be working in 2000 (MIMDES, 2010). Nearly 100% of child workers did not receive any government support in the year 2009.

families, suggesting that while discourses of normative childhood may still have important repercussions in children's lives, formal provision (and regulation) is more minimal and uneven than might be implied, as I elaborate on shortly.

Excluding the urban poor

The lack of state support is furthered by understandings of poverty as linked with rural (indigenous) areas. Such attitudes reinforce very specific understandings of what poverty looks like, facilitating the idea of certain people and places as inherently poor while overlooking other forms of poverty, as I suggested in Chapter Two. The state has two main child welfare programs, *Juntos* (a cash transfer program modeled after Mexico's *Oportunidades*) and *Educators of the Street*, a program (supposedly) targeting both working and street children. However, *Juntos*,⁴⁵ (referred to by the government to as the National Program of Direct Support to the Most Poor) offers no services in Lima. From a national perspective, prioritizing areas in the rural highlands is a much needed step to begin to address geographical inequalities within Perú. Such areas have historically been excluded from state programming and suffer from much higher poverty rates, and worse health and education than does Lima overall. However, the geographical limitations of such programming mean that the urban poor cannot access welfare benefits, no matter what their economic situation. Inequality within Lima is extreme, and food and land cost money, necessitating more multi-faceted understandings of poverty. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Lima's southern cones report poverty rates of more than 12 times that found in Lima's wealthier residential districts (Villaran, 2010). Further, over 42 percent of households in Lima do not have access to drinkable water (Villaran, 2010).

Even more than the state, the largest international NGOs do not actually provide any services or resources for street children. I argue that this is similarly attributable to a strong tendency for poverty-reduction programs to focus on rural areas. Since Lipton's (1977) early claims of an urban bias in development, the World Bank and other development organizations have largely focused on agricultural development. This has resulted in the absence of services or attention paid to street children, who are nonetheless often invoked in international rhetoric about children's rights and poverty. In the case of UNICEF, for example, there are no programs based in Lima and no programs specifically addressing issues of street or working children. Ironically, however, rights awareness campaigns and political events

⁴⁵ Through *Juntos*, the government provides conditional aid to mothers who agree to 1) enroll and send their children to school and 2) take their children for health check-ups. Because children in this study were largely ineligible to receive benefits from *Juntos*, I did not thoroughly investigate its effects. However, it is worth noting that it is a big shift from previous state welfare programs in its attempts to more thoroughly regulate those receiving benefits. Analysis of Mexico's program have raised concerns that while school enrollment rates may be rising, little attention is paid to the quality of education and to the increased burden and demands that the program makes on mothers' time contributions to running and cleaning the school (Molyneux, 2006). Additionally, by mandating formal schooling, other ways of educating and raising children are precluded.

celebrating children's rights are mostly focused on Lima, meaning that the rhetoric regarding children's rights is misaligned with the areas on which programs are focusing.⁴⁶ Street children are then subject to increased regulation while there is an almost complete absence of any type of support or programming that might facilitate living the type of lives referred to in international children's rights campaigns.

3.5 International Aid and Conditional Giving

While privatization of social services in Perú may not have occurred on a dramatic scale (since there was never a large welfare state to begin with), NGOs and private charities are nonetheless the primary providers of social services for street children, the governance of which is less publically accountable than that of the state (Mitchell, et al, 2004). The problem with many charity and aid organizations is that they present their actions as voluntary and part of the moral good, rather than an obligation. Those being helped are positioned as 'needy', while those helping are understood as benefactors, who are doing a 'good thing' (Bornstein, 2009). Zizek (2008) even goes so far as to call charity 'the last trick of capitalism.' Although I do not fully agree with Zizek's argument,⁴⁷ it is nonetheless worth questioning the ways in which some forms of charity actually serve to reinforce problematic representations of the poor and the very systems that contribute to poverty. Civil society plays a big role in spreading evaluative disciplinary regimes (Penna, 2005). Yet, while those receiving charity are subject to scrutiny and critique, people rarely question the ethical orientation of those providing funding for such services (Dean, 2010). International aid organizations promote very specific understandings of what poverty, childhood and development look like. Shifts in the governance of poverty have resulted in what Fraser (2003, 166) calls "a multi-layered system of globalized governmentality." Such shifts mean that conceptions of childhood and development based in the global north take on added weight as state agencies and NGOs are increasingly expected to harmonize their policies with international interpretations. In this section, I examine the way in which international aid works to reshape the governance of poor children. I then elaborate on the geographical variability of such aid in section 3.10.

Because philanthropy is considered a voluntary activity, it is highly uneven (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003), and arguably unsustainable. The emerging global poverty agenda has ironically reduced aid to Latin America on the grounds that the region is not as poor as much of Africa and South Asia (Bebbington, 2004). Because the Peruvian government depends on NGOs and international assistance for the

⁴⁶ UNICEF may be very effective at bringing more health and education services to remote areas in Peru, providing much needed resources to very vulnerable children. However, because my research focuses on street children, who are largely outside of these programs, UNICEF is seen as entirely failing, when in fact, country-wide, this may not be the case.

⁴⁷ There is a wide variation in 'charitable' efforts. While they may often reinforce problematic understandings of poverty or come with strings attached, in some cases, aid may create possibilities for mutual learning experiences and provide financial assistance that may actually be beneficial.

provision of social services, international withdrawal becomes particularly consequential. Local government officials' and NGO workers expressed fear that they would lose what little social service funding they had. Perú has recently been upgraded to a more developed country, causing various international organizations to terminate their programs within the country. Ironically then, having achieved 'development' may further hinder the well-being of certain groups of children who are not supported or prioritized by the state, a tendency reinforced by the currently large role of international NGOs in funding programs to address child poverty.

The aid that does exist comes with strings attached. As I argued earlier, aid in the name of children offers a more socially acceptable form of conditional donations. While structural adjustment programs have been highly criticized, conditional lending in the name of children's rights has been subject to far less scrutiny. Yet, such lending serves to legitimate and depoliticize international interventions while limiting alternative interpretations of children's rights. With minimal state support for social services, most programs are actually funded in partnership with, or entirely by, Northern donors. In order to access money, both the government and local NGOs feel increased pressure to support narrowly defined interpretations of children's rights, as well as anti-child labor programming. Such conditional lending has resulted in plethora of NGOs that officially are anti-child labor programs. According to Daniel, a Peruvian working at one of the more well-respected international children's rights organizations, local organizations adopted anti-child labor campaigns because "it was strategically easier. More money is available to support these NGOs" (personal interview, 2010). Financial incentives thus play a big role in shifting formal attitudes regarding child labor. Further, I suggest that the involvement of international organizations, as well as the attitudes they promote about child labor, ironically provide the government with an excuse to stop providing for working children, as was suggested in the opening quote to this chapter. If the government has committed to abolishing child labor, then supporting such children can be presented as contradictory.⁴⁸

The shift within the governmental program Educators of the Street is perhaps most symbolic of the role of international aid in shaping program outcome. Educators of the Street is the only governmental program for working and street children. The program officially is supposed to send educators and social workers into the streets to provide support, activities and material aid to street and working children. However, following reductions in program funding, the Lima-based office of Educators of the Street, which was originally run exclusively by INABIF (Perú's child welfare office), has

⁴⁸ In support of such a theory, a social policy professor in Lima found a correlation between a decrease in funding for the government program, Educators of the Street, and the emergence of ILO and UNICEF campaigns against child labor (personal interview, 2010).

recently partnered with the municipality of Lima, a Peruvian NGO, and an international NGO. Such public-private partnerships are typical of policy recommendations under neo-liberal development strategies. However, the partnership has ironically resulted in exclusion of street children from one of the few programs previously available to them. While before educators recruited children by making contact with those who were actually working in the street, now program recruitment takes place in schools. This clearly excludes working children who are not actually attending school. Even more importantly, in order to attend, children must agree not work. Thus, a program that is for ‘working children,’ has started denying children an identity as such. By promoting anti-child labor arguments, the program formally advocates for the elimination of children’s ability to actively contribute to their own and their families’ livelihoods.

The program does little to address the economic reasons behind child labor, with the exception of paying school matriculation fees and for school supplies. This mismatch between working children’s realities and program objectives means that many children participating continue to work—but need to hide that they do. Coincidentally, because I mostly conducted research in the streets of Lima, and was often there later at night and on the weekends, I met a few children who participated in the program from my work in the streets. One 12-year old girl, Rebecca, who sells candy in the evenings and on the weekends, explained, “Many of us still work. We just have to be quiet about it” (personal interview, 2010). Rebecca went through and pointed to each child participating in the program, telling me whether they never worked, used to work or still work. Her familiarity with the background of her peers, and her tendency to work with, play, and band together with other girls in the same occupation, point both to the knowledge that children have and to the way in which work can be a social activity, as I argue in Chapter Five. However, because the program officially cannot acknowledge children’s labor, there is little discussion related to issues or concerns in working children’s own lives. Additionally, some children are more likely to feel shame about their work, a topic I also explore in Chapter Five.

The exclusive focus of Lima’s Educators of the Street on school matriculation has proven especially ineffective for homeless street children. As mentioned earlier, programs increasingly distinguish between different types of children, and even working children. Categorizing children excludes those children who are unable or unwilling to be disciplined according to state guidelines. Programs are designed based on ‘universal’ understandings of childhood as a time to study and be in the home. While studying may be an important goal, it does not reflect the reality of most street youth. In addition to being unable to afford the matriculation fees, uniform or school supplies, most street youth are ineligible to enroll in regular state schools because they are too old. While night schools are an

option for some teenagers who want to continue their education, drug addiction, a lack of a stable home environment and few positive role models to encourage their attendance decrease the likelihood of success. The director of *Generación*, a social movement for street children, explained that trying to force street children to study has not been successful. “We matriculated 600 kids. Two finished the year. They weren’t interested. It wasn’t their goal. It didn’t work when they were sent to school first” (personal interview, 2010). The director of a closed-door NGO that provides street children with a place to sleep and training in technical skills such as carpentry, graphic design, and candle making, reported similarly low success rates. What is important in such failures from a rights perspective is that street children are denied other potentially beneficial opportunities simply because they are unable to succeed in a formal school setting. International organizations and the state programs with which they work narrowly construct children’s rights as formal school attendance and a right not to work, and in doing so, ultimately reinforce the violation of street children’s other rights. In such regards, children’s rights legislation works to further marginalize certain children and limits the types of development paths that are acceptable for them to take.

The role of international aid in promoting such narrow interpretations of rights comes across clearly by comparing Lima’s branch of *Educators of the Street* with Cusco’s branch of the same program. Although technically both the same program, in Cusco, children do not have to stop working in order to participate. All child participants are recruited by social workers who walk around in common areas in which children work, particularly markets and brick-making areas. And encouraging children to stop working was not even a stated objective of Cusco’s program. I suggest that this variation is a result both of the absence of international pressures and partnerships, as well as different understandings of childhood and work. Because of stronger links between the city of Cusco and the surrounding region of Cusco, child work, although sometimes expressed as children helping, is much more common and accepted. Indigenous beliefs that children learn from ‘doing’, and can contribute to the household from an early age (Bolin, 2006), most likely reinforce such attitudes. And with much higher absolute poverty rates than in Lima, there is greater recognition of the important contribution of child labor. This has resulted in much more ambiguous attitudes towards children working, and programs that focus on improving working children’s lives, rather than prohibiting them from working. The different objectives between Cusco and Lima also speak to the geographical unevenness of both neoliberal and rights-based discourses and policies, as will be elaborated on in Section 3.10.

While program variation between Cusco and Lima indicates the role of international conditionalities in shaping program objectives, the process is not entirely top-down. Local NGO staff and

government officials play strong roles as mediaries (Engle Merry, 2006; Gibson-Graham, 1996), as is clear from the presence of Peruvians staffing international NGOs. As Daniel quoted above indicates, some NGOs actively embrace neoliberalized approaches to child welfare in order to obtain funding, something that caused great frustration to other social workers and educators for what they see as 'shopping around' for whatever cause is popular in the moment simply to access money (personal interviews, 2009-2010). Others support such objectives for various intellectual or moral reasons. This challenges dichotomous understandings of the 'global' and the 'local,' instead indicating they are co-constitutive (England & Ward, 2007; Marston, 2000; Katz, 2001).

3.6 'Protecting' Children from Begging? Or Punishing Poverty?

One of the clearest ways in which international understandings of childhood combine with elite priorities is in the implementation of the begging bill. The law was officially designed for children's protection, as is reflected by its formal name, Law 28190: Law that *protects* minors from begging (emphasis mine). However, it has provided a tool to morally justify the physical removal and criminalization of children working in public spaces, a focus in Chapter Four. Here, I examine how children's rights combine with neoliberal forms of regulation to reinforce authoritative attitudes about poverty that focus on individual characteristics and present poor people as in need of increased reform and discipline. As is the case with child labor, regulating begging is linked to very specific understandings of what development and childhood mean. International organizations encourage such an attitude. Although not discussing Perú specifically, Emily Delap of Anti-Slavery International (2009, 1) writes, "Forced child begging exists in the wider context of child begging, something that may in itself be regarded as an indictment that society fails to protect and nurture its children." The presence of children begging, including situations of non-forced begging according to Anti-Slavery International, can be read as a failure of not only the Peruvian government but also Peruvian society, and a reminder that Perú's economic growth has not reached everyone.

The Begging Bill shows how understandings of what development means combine with a language of children's rights to justify increased regulation of poor children and their mothers. The Bill is specifically framed as addressing the violation of children's fundamental rights. For example, Article 2 of the bill states that "in the case of children and adolescents, this practice (begging) causes irreparable damage to their identity and integrity, affects their fundamental rights, and places them in a situation of vulnerability and risk." Yet, in highlighting protection, the Begging Bill arguably prioritizes an emphasis on children's future, or what Qvortrup (1990) refers to as children's well-becoming, rather than the more immediate economic needs and wants that may be contributing to children begging. Proponents

of the Bill also emphasized that begging prevents children from attending school and thus developing their human capital. Such an argument reinforces understandings of children as future neoliberal subjects who need to be regulated so that they can become economically competitive. If they are begging or working in the streets, they will not be able to experience childhood as a time of play, school and training for adulthood, as conceptualized by Western development organizations.

The Bill is geared towards transforming poor children into subjects that better fit new societal norms (see Kingfisher, 2007). Activities and behaviors that counter such beliefs need to be reformed. Along such lines, the Begging Bill specifically re-conceptualized ambulatory street work as disguised begging, broadening the types of actions to be regulated, and increasing the stigma children working in such occupations face. Although the Bill officially defines begging as the soliciting of alms without providing labor or services of any kind, the majority of those apprehended were actually working, selling candy, cleaning car windshields or engaging in other types of informal street work. Jose, a lawyer who works for MIMDES, explained that this mixture is in part due to difficulties in determining when children are actually begging.⁴⁹ He explained that children will within the course of an hour, combine begging and working in their street activities. “Children may start out trying to sell some candy. When someone says no, they try again, pleading more, and patting their stomach, saying, ‘buy some candy,’ in a supplicating tone. When that fails, they may simply beg” (personal interview, 2010). Yet, trying to categorize children’s work in the first place allows children’s actions to be subject to greater scrutiny and moral judgment.⁵⁰ Even if children are actually selling something, if they also try to invoke pity, they are labeled as disguised beggars. In contrast to work, begging is considered a moral failing and an undignified behavior (Swanson, 2007a). This discursive shift marginalizes ambulatory workers, particularly indigenous ones, and plays a key role in the maintenance of poverty (see Mosse, 2010).

Discourses of begging get at the heart of debates about the deserving poor. Trying to determine whether beggars are acting deceitfully ultimately undermines the credibility of their poverty (Swanson, 2007a). A representative of the general attorney’s office explained, “70% of beggars are imposters. They are not in complete abandonment. The rest are *real* beggars...There is also trafficking of beggars.

⁴⁹ He was particularly enthusiastic about an outside analysis of the law, convinced that the law was not being implemented as it should. Such a reaction speaks to contradictions between formal policies and their implementation, as well as the opinions of various government agents, as I argue in section 3.10.

⁵⁰ Jose explained that if street work and begging are so closely linked, then both children are at risk. “But until what point can you really remove children?” he asked. His question reinforces the ways in which exposure to future threat can continuously be used as a means to justify greater control. Campaigns that are justified under the guise of ending exploitation, be it through begging or through work, in practice serve as an attempt to control and regulate *all* children’s work in highly problematic ways. In this way, an actual examination of working conditions and why exploitation exists is avoided, allowing neoliberal economic policies to continue without critique.

They drug the children and then rent them. They stay sleeping. There are mafias that rent the kids, and then use them to ask for alms” (personal interview, 2009). Her explanation speaks to a fear that beggars are not really in need, and are not the deserving poor. She mixes both a need to protect children from exploitation with an explanation that because they are not really completely abandoned, they also should not be begging. But “by suggesting that beggars are selling a false image of poverty, attention is drawn away from the inadequacies of market economies to instead emphasize the inadequacies and corruptibility of the poor” (Swanson, 2007a, 710).

The framing of Perú’s Begging Law reflects a focus on holding individuals responsible for their own poverty. Article 1 of the law states as its intention to protect children and adolescents that practice begging, either because of material or moral necessity, or because they are obligated by their parents, guardians or another third party. While the article does draw attention to the potential economic reasons why kids are begging, it also sets up a framework to focus on criminalizing exploitative parents. Even government officials who are somewhat sympathetic to real economic need stressed that the campaigns were designed to “verify that they are being watched by their parents, and not being used by a third person” (Juana, Department of Justice, personal interview, 2010). Although Juana recognized that begging was a social problem linked with poverty, she saw the campaigns as a way to make sure parents were properly caring for their children. Similarly, Jessica, a lawyer in charge of the DEMUNA (Ombudsman for Children and Adolescent’s Rights) in Miraflores, one of Lima’s wealthiest districts, implicated parents in the municipality’s failure to successfully address begging. She said that operations were bound to fail because children were rounded up but then were released to the same parents that had obligated them to beg in the first place (personal interview, 2010). While she was critical of the operations, her answer similarly reflects a high degree of blame of the parents.

Jessica also reiterated concerns of being tricked by the undeserving poor. She explained that DEMUNA supported Miraflores’ campaigns against giving alms. “If you want to help kids there are other ways. You can give them breakfast or adopt them. But if you give them alms, it will just go to the mafia” (personal interview, 2010). Although such campaigns may at first glance seem less repressive than police operations, they represent a direct violation of parents’ rights as parents. They reinforce problematic understandings of poor children’s families, invalidating any potentially positive role families might play. Adopting children, after all, assumes that they do not have parents (or do not have parents who can adequately care for them) rather than addressing ways to strengthen opportunities for the families.

Comments reiterate ideas of mothers as lazy, exploitative, and not deserving of help. As I argue in Chapter Four, such ideas are highly racialized and reflect a growing concern with the uncontrolled presence of Andean workers in the streets of Lima. The head of municipal police in Miraflores explained that mothers would sit while their children sold. “The mothers should be working, not making their children work for them,” he explained emotionally (personal interview, 2010). While adults who force young children to beg (or engage in any exploitative behaviors) should indeed be sanctioned, children present with their working parents is not the same situation. Additionally, while some children do sell more than their mothers, children’s greater role in street vending is often motivated not by laziness but by results. Wealthier adults consistently give more to children, thus necessitating a relational analysis of poverty that looks at the poor not in isolation but in the context of social relations.

Yet, despite some variation in opinions, the Begging Bill ultimately reinforced ideas that children were only in the streets because they were being exploited. The head of the municipal police in Miraflores explained that many children begging were actually victims of a mafia that rented children for the sole purpose of gaining more money. In order to catch the mafia, the municipality was secretly filming indigenous women with small children, trying to document if the same woman re-appeared with different children. This targeting of indigenous women was clearly a Peruvian version of racial profiling. While it was difficult to see whether the women were forcing the children to beg, something the municipality itself acknowledged, they were still convinced that the children were being exploited. While it seems plausible that mafia may have gotten involved on some level in begging in touristy areas, especially due to the high amount of money small children can acquire (Swanson, 2010), such claims fail to consider traditional Andean practices of child circulation. Sending children to live with extended family or godparents is a centuries-old tradition among indigenous Peruvians (Leinaweaver, 2006). Through the circulation of children, social connections are cemented, both with other family members but also with wealthier or more politically connected individuals who may prove beneficial to the family at later times. In exchange for help feeding and educating children, something that can be key for children from large families who may not have access to a good school nearby, the children help with chores and the care of the families with which they are staying, and may serve as a companion or source of comfort for old people without any family. Such exchanges are considered compatible with the Andean notion of reciprocity (Leinaweaver, 2006). Therefore, ‘borrowing’ children for the purpose of either care or even help with work/begging is not necessarily considered exploitation in Andean communities but rather can be understood as an active strategy to provide children with more opportunities. Unfortunately, some children sent to work for other families are exploited. However, by

assuming that they will be, the government further marginalizes indigenous communities, hindering their ability to actually intervene in situations of exploitation.

Further, while many people assume that indigenous women have their children with them to gain more sympathy, as has been explained, in Andean culture, children are not usually separated from their parents. Yet, as I argue in Chapter Four, in the urban context, bringing children to work in the streets takes on arguably negative connotations. Practices that have been carried on for centuries are suddenly construed as signs of bad parenting.⁵¹ However, leaving children to fend for themselves while parents work is not a better alternative. Mothers are equally held responsible and even blamed when children join gangs or move to the streets, with the question of ‘where were the mothers?’ Thus, mothers are expected to be both breadwinners and primary caregivers but are specifically hindered in their attempts to do so. Some government employees themselves did recognize such contradictions. A lawyer working for MIMDES suggested that rather than police operations, the state should provide a daycare (personal interview, 2010). The inability to gain broader governmental support for such suggestions raises further doubts that the begging law’s main purpose is to protect children, and instead shows how a language of rights can be manipulated to justify increased regulation.

Despite claims that begging violates children’s rights, as well as opportunities for the future, no studies were conducted beforehand that actually examined the effects of begging (personal interviews, 2010). Even when the Ministry of Women and Social Development, who was officially in charge of the begging laws, learned information about street children that contradicted the original assumptions on which the bill was based, the actual operations continued, indicating that there were more powerful politicians who wanted them to continue. A statistician working at MIMDES explained that most children were not actually being forced to beg by a third person, as media campaigns and proponents of the law claimed, but rather were working to earn money for school, food or bus fares. Additionally, the majority of children were attending school rather than spending the whole day begging (personal interview, 2010). Despite these ‘new’ understandings of the situation of children begging, formal responses have

⁵¹ The absence of anti-begging campaigns in Cusco speaks to the subjective nature of Peru’s ‘national’ law. Because Cusco receives many more tourists than does Lima, one would expect that mafia would send children to beg there. I suggest that an absence of campaigns in Cusco is related to its greater indigenous identity. Children with their mothers in Cusco are not associated with need in the same way as they are in Lima. In fact, even middle-class mothers may carry their children with them when they shop or work. While there have been campaigns against ambulatory workers in Cusco’s historic center, they have not specifically targeted mothers or children, and in practice, police often show more leniency towards young children than they do adults and teenage boys, as I discuss in the following chapter. This has to do with the history of the two cities, and greater acceptance of children working. Specifically, the presence of women with babies strapped to their back is common, as Cusco has a larger indigenous population.

not changed and 'rescuing' children from begging remains an official goal of the government, included in its new Plan for Children and Adolescents.

In contrast, there has been some debate about how to best 'rescue' children. Not all responses to begging have been violent. Even within the government, various individuals recognized that repression was not an effective way to deal with begging. The minister of social development in Miraflores was critical of attempts to criminalize children. Instead, she explained that in cases where children are begging because of poverty, they try to help the kids find a social support network, like a brother or uncle, who can help. However, if that does not work, she said they look for an orphanage or another institution that can take the kids. Yet, I suggest there is a fine line between caring for children and overly regulating and controlling them, a line which in the Western context is especially difficult to discern in the case of children, in which some regulation is seen positively. Rather than attempting to replicate Western practices of childrearing, I suggest that Andean conceptions of childhood can instead work to re-inform dominant understandings of child development. Letting children learn and explore at the pace they set for themselves, with an emphasis on freedom and care, offers an alternative approach to governance and the fostering of subjectivity. Such alternative ideas are overlooked in assumptions that begging children even need rescuing in the first place.

My analysis of the Begging Bill showed that while children themselves may be removed under a discourse of protection, an emphasis on creating self-reliant responsible subjects (Peck & Tickell, 2002; Jessop, 2002), gets transferred from the children themselves to their parents, and in particular, their mothers. Governance strategies increasingly frame mothers as clients with responsibilities to themselves and their families, and in doing so, place the onus for development squarely on their shoulders (Miller & Rose, 1990, as cited in Rankin, 2001, 29). Ironically, some dominant interpretations of children's rights actually facilitate this discursive shift of responsibility from the state to the family. Representations of the needy child, abandoned by his parents, are contrasted with supposedly universal images of childhood to justify increased regulation of both children and their parents. Such interpretations reinforce neoliberal understandings of poverty as the result of individual characteristics and allow elite in power to focus on helping parents reform their own behaviors (Nieuwenhuys, 2008), rather than adapting more relational approaches that look at the societal relationships producing poverty in the first place.

3.7 Regulating Mothers

The Begging Bill, especially with its focus on criminalization rather than reform, is not the only tool to regulate mothers. I argue that social services use children's rights discourses more generally to

justify efforts to reform poor parents, especially mothers, who are increasingly held responsible for their children's poverty. The CRC itself establishes that parents have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children (Article 18(1)),⁵² reinforced by NGOs and the media. If parents are responsible for raising their children, then they are similarly held accountable for their children's acts of delinquency. A recent news article in one of Perú's leading newspaper attributed children's presence in the street to either gangs or an obligation to work. The author then quoted the head of Perú's Ministry of Women as saying, "Parents are the ones responsible for the actions of these children and adolescents. They are the first ones that should know how to educate and form their children" (Andina, 2012). By using the word should, the quoted minister presents a morally loaded understanding of what parenting looks like that clearly does not involve being in the streets. Further, she overlooks the constraints parents may face in meeting middle-class standards of parenting as well as any role that the state may have in providing for, or educating, young people.

The paternalistic attitudes with which parents are treated are reflective of understandings of poverty as resulting from both ignorance and irresponsibility. Parents themselves are infantilized for their poverty. One day, I was walking with one of the educators from an NGO which receives funding from international donors to eradicate child labor. We ran into a mother of two of the girls who participate. The educator stopped her, explaining that she was worried about the 11-year old daughter's behavior.

Educator: Your daughter is withdrawn. She doesn't play like the other children. Maybe something happened. Maybe something happened at the dump (the daughter goes early in the mornings to look for items to recycle). She should not be working there. It is an ugly place, filled with ex-convicts and other dangerous men.

Mother (mumbling): I don't send her to work. She just goes.

Educator: You say you don't send her but then you accept the money. You need to assert your authority as a mother. My two children stay home when I am gone because I tell them to. I don't have to lock the door.

Mother (nodded): Yes.

⁵² Dominant interpretations of this article are especially problematic when they fail to take into consideration the alternative living arrangements of many working children. For example, many children in this study had spent significant portions of their lives living with siblings, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles and grandparents. This resonates with feminist challenges to expand definitions of what constitutes a family.

Educator: Your daughter has a right to be a child and to play. She will learn from you. You don't want her to stop coming home to sleep at age 15. As mothers, we want our kids to have better lives than us.

(Field notes, 2010)

The educator spoke in an instructive manner, telling the mother how mothers should feel and act. She pointed out inadequacies in the mother's parenting by comparing the mother to herself, who by implication, was a much better mother. That the child was withdrawn or working was understood as a sign of poor mothering, interpreted mostly as the result of ignorance. Impediments to, and different understandings of, motherhood, along with the actual context of the mother's life, were mostly ignored. After the mother had left, the educator explained to me that the younger daughter would wander on her own throughout the neighborhood. She clearly saw this as a sign that the mother was not appropriately caring for her children. Although there was some recognition of difficult circumstances in her life (her husband was physically abusive, and did not support the family much financially), the emphasis was on reforming the mother's behavior so that it more clearly meshed with dominant understandings of motherhood. Additionally, the conversation reflected assumptions that child labor- compared to domestic violence or any number of reasons- was responsible for the change in the daughter's behavior.

Programs that target parents, trying to *teach* them the dangers of child labor, fail to address the reasons why children might be working. Without a more comprehensive outlook, simply declaring child labor illegal not only does not offer a practical solution but might have negative psychological effects. At the opening of the end of the summer play being put on by children at the aforementioned NGO, the director began by giving a little speech about the importance of withdrawing children from work, and allowing them the space to play and to experience a 'real childhood.' The children then put on a play in which a lazy mother was sending her children to the streets to work so she could go to the beauty parlor for the whole day. She gruffly told the kids, "If you want to eat, you need to work." The message of the play was clear. The mother was lazy, exploiting the children so that she did not have to work. However, the great majority of working children I met had mothers who worked even longer hours than they did. By presenting such a play, economic need and the difficult decisions mothers face daily were trivialized.

While children are conceived of as future neoliberal subjects, I suggest that mothers need to be reformed now. In order for the children to receive homework help or participate in sports and arts classes, their mothers must also attend bi-weekly meetings, for which they receive points. At the sessions, in addition to learning about cooking nutritious meals and proper parenting, they are

encouraged to develop proposals for micro-businesses. The mother that earns the most points at the end of the program will receive \$200 to start her own business. While this clearly may be beneficial for one family, it does nothing to address a lack of job opportunities, low wages, or other conditions which contribute to the poverty of the group more generally. Even more importantly, it reproduces understandings that with hard work, you can pull yourself up. And through the use of competition and rankings (reflected in the point system), it reinforces individual responses to poverty. Such values resonate with other studies documenting the way in which social services work to create entrepreneurial self-sufficient subjects (Kingfisher, 2002). They also re-enforce attitudes that poverty is a matter of personal work ethic, rationality and individual skills, rather than systemic processes of marginalization.

Yet, I suggest that there is nothing inherently neoliberal about creating alternative opportunities through self-run businesses. Such methods have been adopted in very different ways by a smaller school for child workers⁵³ in the hills of Lima. During the holiday season, children are given the option of coming on Saturdays and making agendas, picture frames, and other crafts to be sold internationally. Other than recuperating costs from materials, all of the profits go to the children. However, money is divided not on the basis of how quickly children can work, but simply based on participation. So children who come to all the sessions receive more than those who only helped once. In this way, there is no competition between the children. The more work that is done, the more they all benefit. Instead of giving cash to the children, each child comes up with an itemized list of how they want to spend the money. While at first glance this may seem paternalistic, they do not need to justify their decisions, and some children used most of their money to buy cell phones or brand-name sneakers. Many, however, invested at least some of their earnings into buying items for the household, including new roofs, stoves or televisions, challenging representations of children as irresponsible. The teachers then go with each child to buy all the items on the list. There are definitely aspects of this project that smack of neoliberalism, such as facilitating greater participation in consumer society, and helping children produce export-quality items for an international market. However, following Ferguson's (2010) call to consider ways in which tools from 'a neoliberal bag of tricks' can be used for more progressive means, I suggest that such a program teaches children useful skills and helps build solidarity while allowing them to contribute to their and their families' sustenance in important ways.

⁵³ The majority of students at the school work in the center of Lima in the afternoons and on weekends, selling candy at intersections. Although not officially run by MANTHOC, the school was started by a former MANTHOC delegate, uses the same teaching philosophies designed by MANTHOC, and sends delegates to attend regional meetings of MNASTOP, the umbrella organization of child workers movements.

Pushing beyond this program, I suggest that some of the supposed emphases of neoliberalism could actually be used to argue against the ILO's anti-child labor campaigns. As they work to provide for themselves and their families, child workers show significant self-initiative and responsibility, values promoted by neoliberal rationalities. In this sense, revealing how anti-child labor campaigns actually promote dependency, by positioning children simply as in need of being provided for without teaching them to work, values that are actively discouraged in the case of adults, could expose some of neoliberalism's contradictions.

While current interpretations of rights focus on their regulatory nature, empowering children was one of the other main aims of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As such, I suggest that children's rights are a contradictory resource. As interpreted by the ILO, they may have limited ability to counter a lack of state support for childhood. However, the child workers' movement similarly utilizes a language of rights to demand state change and push for greater inclusion of children in economic policy and decision making.

3.8 Right to Work

Long before the formal ratification of the CRC, the Child Workers' Movement in Perú was arguing for improved working conditions for child workers. In the late 1970s, under the military dictatorship of Francisco Morales Bermudez, Perú faced a severe economic crisis. In 1976, a state of emergency was declared, many workers lost their jobs, and benefits and wages were cut. In response, Perú's branch of the International Christian Youth Workers Movement decided to organize child and adolescent workers so that they would better be able to defend their rights. The children eventually organized independently, forming the Movement for Adolescent and Child Workers, Children of Christian Workers (MANTHOC) in 1977.

Utilizing a language of rights, MANTHOC specifically argues for children's right to work in conditions of dignity. They refer to Perú's own constitution to challenge ILO Conventions 138 and 182. According to the constitution, work is "the principal source of wealth" and is "a right and a social duty." The 1977 Constitution establishes the state as responsible to promote economic and social conditions that eliminate poverty and *equally* ensure all inhabitants with opportunities for useful employment. Equal, argues the consortium, does not just refer to sex or social condition, but also age. In this sense, they argue there is constitutional recognition for child labor. MANTHOC differs from other more mainstream children's rights organizations in its strong emphasis on the importance of economic structural reform. They hold the Peruvian government, along with an unfair economic world order, directly responsible for the exploitation of child workers. Rather than seeing child labor as a negative,

they instead focus on the unfair conditions that force children into situations of exploitation. They try to revalorize work, claiming that work is inherent to the human condition. To deny children the right to work, then, is to deny them recognition as citizens. Appealing to Andean culture, they assert that work serves as one of the main sites of socialization for children, and when carried out in conditions of dignity, can be educational and beneficial. From work, children can learn useful skills while playing an active role in creating the type of society they want to live in, contributing to the development of themselves, their families, and their country.

MANTHOC does not just reaffirm the value of work but more specifically challenges the ways in which anti-child labor campaigns fill in as a band-aid to mask structural inequality. In doing so, they directly challenge neoliberal policies. Aware of the state's lack of investment in childhood, a consortium of child workers specifically called into question the government's motives in supporting ILO articles 182 and 138. However, they again used a language of rights to draw attention to their increasing criminalization. Child workers were not consulted in the creation or approval of the minimum age law, in violation of their right to have an opinion and participate in matters concerning them.

“The law is ‘in tune’ with international legislation but not in tune with our complex reality. It does not intend to modify anything except to please the conscious of national and international politicians who can at last say, ‘finally Perú is in compliance with the ILO....Not only will it not improve the realities in which we, as child workers, and our families, live, but will aggravate them...by legally making invisible child workers under age 15. The State not only denies the existence of said children but also evades responsibility to protect us against exploitation, bad conditions and exclusion from health and education benefits....It represents a backtracking, placing more children not only in a situation of exclusion but also in one of illegality.” (Consortium of Working Children's Groups, 2002)

I opened the chapter with this quote, part of a consortium of working children's groups' petition to the state, because it directly touches upon a number of important issues. First, the group calls out the government for answering more to an international community than to its own people. Second, they show the work that anti-child labor campaigns do to criminalize the children they are supposedly protecting, rather than addressing the unmet needs of said children.⁵⁴ In this way, they re-center the discussion on conditions of work, challenging the inevitability of work as exploitative. Such a refocus

⁵⁴ The inconsistencies in claims that children are too young to work in paid labor comes out even more clearly when considering recommendations from a committee charged with modifying the Code for Children and Adolescents. This multi-sector committee has proposed raising the minimum age of employment to 16 at the same time as it is arguing to lower the age at which children can be charged as adults, indicating how law is increasingly used for punitive ends, as I argue in the following chapter.

reveals contradictions in government claims that preventing child labor is primarily about child well-being. As part of the same petition, the consortium also challenges the way in which the government justifies the law by arguing that “it would require no cost to the state.” Pointing out the concern of the state with finances questions a supposed priority in implementing policies in the best-interests of the child, as guaranteed by both the CRC and Perú’s National Code for Children and Adolescents, and instead indicates ways in which children’s rights themselves have been affected by neoliberalism. Under a neoliberal framework, rather than actively working to fulfill all children’s rights, spending must be justified by appeals to cost-effectiveness, as I elaborate on in the following section. By specifically drawing attention to what they see as a violation of their rights, the actions of the Consortium represent a direct attack on the state’s ability to use rights-language to support more punitive policies. In contrast to the ways in which rights are invoked by the government and some NGOs primarily as a means of regulation, the child delegates in the Consortium reclaim their rights as a form of entitlement, specifically arguing that the government has responsibilities to fulfill such rights. In doing so, they indicate how children’s rights can work in potentially more progressive ways.

This ability of children to actively join together to challenge the state supports very different representation of children than those expressed through discourses of the *future* neoliberal subject. Simply invoking a language of children’s rights does not necessarily characterize a rights-based approach to development. Koskenniemi (2010) suggests that rights-based approaches are ultimately projects of power, with the ultimate aim to transform the relationship between the state and other actors and redistribute power within any society. In many of the situations I described at the start of this chapter, a language of children’s rights is invoked by those in power to maintain power. In contrast, I argue that the child workers’ movement is important, not in their ability to improve working conditions which, even they acknowledge, continue to be very exploitative, but in the alternative possibilities of development and childhood that the movement represents. Rights for the movement are not about simply protecting children but rather about creating spaces of empowerment and participation to create societal transformation. In direct contradiction to individually-based understandings of rights, MANTHOC promotes something they refer to as ‘organized protagonism’ or an understanding of children as protagonists or social subjects, who through organizing collectively can work to gain recognition of themselves as workers and as citizens. The working child’s movement frequently protests government actions, and actively lobbies for their perspectives to be considered in legal reforms, as is the case in the example above. They present an alternative understanding of the role of children by challenging policies carried out in their names for their failure to recognize children as active promoters

and defenders of their own rights. Yet, they frequently rely on formal legislative gains in children's rights to do so, such as a right to participate in matters concerning them (Article 12), and multiple other constitutionally guaranteed rights. Such behaviors reflect beliefs that children are not only capable of making decisions in small matters that affect their personal lives, but also can actively contribute to Peruvian society.

After successful lobbying to the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child,⁵⁵ two delegates from Perú's child workers' movement were able to travel to Geneva and present an alternative report on the state of children's right in Perú. While this represents an important gain in getting children's own views included, change has been slow. In recent years, especially as the ILO steps up campaigns against child labor, even adult collaborators from the child workers' movement are increasingly excluded from international meetings, as was the case in the recent international conference at the Hague entitled 'Towards a world without child labour.' This may offer space to question some of the clear contradictions in anti-child labor campaigns being organized in the name of children's rights, if working children who attend are frequently refused admittance. What is it that is so threatening about the argument put forth by the child workers' movement?

The child workers movement teaches active citizenship—their focus is not on creating a docile child or a future neoliberal citizen. The children who participate are more articulate, politically aware and confident than are other child workers who I interviewed, a topic I will explore more in Chapter Five. Such an active understanding of childhood challenges the Peruvian government's attempts to only embrace children's right in a token manner. Recognizing children's viewpoints, and that they may benefit not only from working, but also organizing, challenges the foundations on which much international aid is based, and would necessitate holding both the state and international children's rights organizations more accountable. In particular, recognizing the child workers movement would call into question the idea of apolitical technical advice in which the global north is positioned as knowledgeable. Additionally, it would limit the ability of international actors and governments to justify children's exclusion in the name of their own good. Outside of the workers' movement, there is little emphasis on children as protagonists. While the Ministry for Women and Social Development did form a consultative committee of children (CONADENNA) who are invited to the government for a few days of activities, the delegates have no official decision-making power, and do not even sit in on committees designed to implement Perú's National Plan for Childhood, prompting critiques of token participation.

⁵⁵ Every few years, both the Peruvian government and a group of civil society organizations submit reports on what progress the Peruvian government has made towards implementation of the CRC. The Child Workers Movement felt that neither the government nor the chosen civil society organizations had accurately reflected their experiences and opinions.

In such regards, then, taking the child workers' movement seriously would necessitate a reconceptualization of both children's rights and international aid.

International pressure and limitations to alternative rights-based approaches

While the creation of CONADENNA may have been mostly a token gesture, some decisions about which rights to prioritize are less clear cut.⁵⁶ The ability to organize programs around providing work opportunities to children and adolescents is increasingly limited by international pressure, national laws, and conditional funding. With limited support for children's rights, it may strategically make sense to focus on those rights for which it is the easiest to garner support. Rather than risk losing all support, some organizations either embrace ILO campaigns or avoid the subject altogether.⁵⁷ However, avoidance of the topic does not make it disappear and instead allows those with greater power to continue to push their view points.

My work demonstrates that formal support of children's rights may have ironically hurt street children. Groups that were previously concerned with their well-being, including the child workers' movement, increasingly work in partnerships with the government and other civil society organizations on campaigns against corporal punishment and abuse, and are part of groups working on various issues related to child well-being. One of the child workers' adult collaborators who attends such meetings said there were no conflicts between the various participants. "We just avoid controversial subjects, like child labor," she explained (personal interview, 2010). Such explanations were poorly interpreted by former delegates, who viewed MANTHOC "more like an NGO than an actual movement" (personal interview, 2010). Some even suggest that MANTHOC is for school children, rather than child workers. Their concerns resonate with more general arguments that suggest that when rights frameworks gain formal recognition, they ironically risk being co-opted or watered down by the state (Lambrou, 1997).

Moreover, I suggest that pressure to defend themselves against anti-child labor campaigns has intensified the child workers' movement's exclusion of street children. Street children, who generally work in exploitative conditions, do not study, and almost always use drugs, are not good poster-children

⁵⁶ CONADENNA is not the only other state-based children's rights program. Some state programs do attempt to provide and protect children, rather than just regulate them, challenging understandings of the state as a monolithic entity (Painter, 2006), as I will elaborate on, and indicating how a language of rights is used to support a diverse range of interventions and programs. For example, the Office for the Ombudsman of Children and Adolescents (DEMUNA) focuses almost entirely on responding to issues of domestic violence and to providing limited material assistance for mothers and their children (personal interviews and data, 2010). Although DEMUNA does not receive complaints from children and adolescents themselves, and thus does not fully embrace the idea of children as active subjects, providing mothers with assistance and protection may seem better than doing nothing.

⁵⁷ For example, Peru's Consortium for the Fight against Poverty has a special committee focusing on children's poverty. However, they do not directly address issues related to child labor. "It is too controversial. We don't take a stance either way," a representative explained (personal interview, 2010).

for the working child. By this I mean that they weaken claims from the working child's movement that work is a good learning experience, and that working children are in fact both studying and working. Street children, because they do not fit this mold, are excluded from the working child identity-and thus further marginalized.

3.9 The Wrong Kind of Child

I argue that the neoliberalization of children's rights has rendered the street child the wrong kind of child. They are not marketable and it is hard to show tangible results of progress. Jorge, a children's rights professor at the University of Lima, summed it up best. "UNICEF is for all kids-except child workers" (personal interview, 2009). In particular, he was referring to UNICEF's support of anti-child labor campaigns, which serve to invalidate the lives of child workers. However, the exclusion of street children goes beyond international campaigns against their rights to work. In particular, street children are increasingly treated more as young criminals than as children. Ironically, as overall poverty decreases, I argue that street children are increasingly being marginalized. Because there is more money circulating in Lima than in the past, and to some small extent, more economic opportunity, it is easier to see children's presence in the street as a sign of personal failure. This hypothesis is backed up by changes in what it means to be a street child. First, within Lima, the term street children now refers almost exclusively to homeless children. Such children are increasingly linked with drugs. This shift is even reflected in the change of the words used to refer to street children. In the sixties, street children were referred to as little 'pajaros frutereros,' or orchard birds, because they would flit around markets, either asking for, or stealing, fruit and other foods. However, they were not considered threats in the same way that they are now. In the 1980s, street children were called *petisos*, based on the last name of a street child who died from electrocution when he sought refuge from the rain in an electrical box in one of the main plazas in Lima. It was only in the 1990s that street children began to be called *pirañitas*, or little piranhas, because of their tendency to rob in groups. While it may still be objectifying to compare children with small birds, such an image is very different than that of a menacing gang of piranhas. In Chapter Four, I will explore the criminalization and policing of street children in much greater detail. I mention it here, however, because it plays a big role in justifying the increasing exclusion of street children as beneficiaries of various social services and has rendered them as less deserving than are other children. This discursive work resonates with critical poverty scholars' arguments that representations of poverty play an important role in (re)producing that poverty (Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2008), and links to more general re-framings of poverty as individual fault. Distinctions between "the deserving and the undeserving poor "have been reshaped in accordance with market

triumphalism (Goode & Maskovsky, 2001, 8). Neoliberal discourses focus on the characteristics of the poor, who due to laziness or individual failure, are unable to participate successfully in the market, and thus should be held accountable for their own situations.

But how have neoliberal policies and discourses worked to criminalize and exclude street children? With limited funding for social services available, NGOs and local ministries need to increasingly compete with each other to acquire funding from international donors and the national government. Despite rapid endorsement of the CRC in 1989, and sporadic lip service paid to children before elections, many Peruvian children lack access to quality education, health services, or nutrition. With a government that largely defines development in economic terms, it has been difficult to gain concrete commitments and financial support for children. Liliana, the 35-year old social worker who coordinated an NGO that provided cooking and music classes for street children, explained the dilemma as an uphill struggle. “If you (the state) don’t even consider the problem of kids, you won’t consider the problem of street kids” (personal interview, 2010). Because of the struggle to get serious political and financial support for children’s issues, rights advocates and NGOs feel pressured to make strategic decisions in which rights to push for. As I argued in chapter one, the “the idealized position and emotionally charged image of the child is embedded in the public image of an organization’s work and inevitably part of its fundraising strategies, constructed to attract donors rather than reflect actual experiences” (Invernizzi & Williams, 2011, 9). As organizations increasingly scramble for funding, they choose images of children that are going to garner the most powerful responses. Street children, who often are teenagers and are increasingly associated with drug use and delinquency, rarely meet this image.⁵⁸

Arguments to support investing in children not only tap into moral sentiments but also economic ones. Investment in children is increasingly justified in financial terms, reflective of the extension of the market into social services (see Ferguson, 2010; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Recently, the World Bank even published a report explaining that for every dollar invested in early childhood, the government will earn \$7. The number rises to \$17 if saved costs from school repetition and gang prevention programs are considered (Montero, 2011). As was explained in Chapter One, supporting children’s rights is portrayed as necessary for the development of the country. But in its focus on the

⁵⁸ Younger children in the streets are increasingly presented as abandoned children or orphans and are viewed differently. Because of their age, vulnerability and presumed innocence, they make useful poster children for campaigns. However, I suggest that in the context of Peru, the term *niños en situación de calle*, or street children, increasingly is used to describe older youth, not orphans. This is part has to do with a change in the actual population, with less younger children sleeping in Lima’s streets than in the past.

financial, the government wants to look for the best returns on its investment. Juan Pablo, a social policy professor and children's rights activist explained,

"The state is not interested in the poorest kids. They don't want to invest a mountain of money in them. They don't worry for them. If anything, they worry less now because neoliberalism is also applied to the social. They don't talk about all children having rights. Instead, they say, 'here we have 1000 soles (Perú's currency). It is most marketable to invest in small children'" (personal interview, 2010).

The Ministry of Social Development reinforced such an impression by recently declaring that the priority of the government was children under age five (El Comercio, 2012). An emphasis (at least officially) on increased transparency and monitoring progress has reinforced a focus on projects that will show more immediate, visible shifts. Beyond measurable results, however, the increased difficulty in gaining support for street children's rights, compared to those of young children, ties into definitions of childhood and understandings of the deserving poor. Infants and toddlers are largely understood to be in vulnerable situations through no fault of their own. And they fit understandings of children as innocent and in need of protection.

Street children, by contrast, are older. More than that, however, as I just argued, they have increasingly become synonymous with drug use and robbery. Ironically, the principal of Lima's school for working children was most vociferous in emphasizing street children's drug problems. When I asked her if street children studied at the school, she responded by explaining, "Street kids are not our population. They have a problem with drug consumption. It is impossible to work with them. They can't concentrate on school. They relapse into drugs" (personal interview, 2010). Her answer shows how drug use becomes the *primary* characteristic that defines street children. Because of this characteristic, they do not belong in school, are not considered child workers (a topic to which I will return), and even if they manage to stop using, there is an assumption that they will start again, that drug use is an inherent unchangeable characteristic. In this way, discourses of poverty work to pathologize children, thus further marginalizing them.

Yet, I suggest that economic shifts at least in part explain street children's growing association with drug use. It is only since the 1990s, (which happens to be the time period in which both neoliberal policy and children's rights legislation were officially introduced), that street children in Lima have become synonymous with drug use. As was explained in greater detail in Chapter Two, following Perú's civil war, many children (and Peruvians more generally) migrated from the highlands to Lima. A worsening economic situation, de-investment in the few social services that had existed, and an attack

on civil society organizations in the name of terrorism severely hindered existing support networks. Rising inequalities and a need of both parents to seek work in locations far from their homes created an even more marginalized group of children and youth.⁵⁹ Thus, neoliberal policies have both created and then marginalized this new type of street children. Additionally, as I argue in Chapter Four, rapid urbanization and uneven economic growth confound the perceived danger of youth, reflected in an increased emphasis on ‘discourses of containment’ (Ruddick, 2003).

This increased tendency to associate street children with drug use and crime is not unique to Perú. In Brazil, which is internationally known for its National Movement for Street Children, street children are also increasingly associated with drug use and danger (Scheper-Hughes & Hoffman, 1998; Drybread, 2009). In fact, following international trends, while street children initially served as a rallying point for those working in favor of children’s rights, they are now viewed as too out of control and entitled, needing more regulation. Ironically, gains in formal rights are in part held responsible for this shift as having provided children with too many benefits without giving them any responsibilities in exchange (Drybread, 2009). Especially as social services are increasingly subject to neoliberal governance, the idea of simply receiving benefits without any conditions or requirements is particularly problematic, and a topic I will return to in the following section. A heavy reliance on psychological diagnoses to determine proper treatment for street children and young ‘delinquents’ furthered understandings of minors themselves, rather than structural conditions, as responsible for their own situations (Drybread, 2009).

Unfortunately, based on self-reporting by the street children in Lima, most do consume drugs⁶⁰ (personal interviews, 2009-2010). Yet, for consuming drugs, I suggest that children lose their rights as both children and as workers. As mentioned earlier, MANTHOC’s school, designed specifically as a school for working children, does not allow street children to attend. In contrast, many of the children who attend the school are poor children from the community and are not actually working-or at least working in the paid economy. While such children are in need of a school with low matriculation fees and more committed teachers, that they are considered a more acceptable population at a school for *working* children than are street children who are actually working raises some interesting questions.

As street children become more associated with the street and delinquency, people begin to overlook that they are still also children. Instead, they are viewed as a problem, spoken about in terms of disease that needs to be contained. The principal of Lima’s school for working children explained why

⁵⁹ It was under Fujimori that gangs even became a problem in Lima.

⁶⁰ The situation in Cusco is different. Sniffing glue and smoking marijuana have only recently become a problem, and some street children in Cusco still do not consume.

street children were not allowed into the school. Reinforcing understandings of drug use as an almost unchangeable characteristic of street children, she explained. “If they come with a family, in recuperation, then normal. But one boy, half way through the year, came with terokal (sniffing glue). Mixed populations aren’t recommendable. The other children become more aggressive” (personal interview, 2010). Her response speaks of the idea of contagion, that street children’s behaviors will negatively influence the other children around them. A fear of contamination was frequently mentioned as the justification for the exclusion of street children. Even in government reports, this fear comes across strongly. Among goals for 2010, the annual review of implementation of the Plan for Children and Adolescents includes the formation of school brigades to prevent children and adolescents from interacting with drug addicts and delinquents.⁶¹ While the report does not refer specifically to street children, children who do not attend school, or who might already be among the ‘drug addicts and delinquents,’ will clearly not benefit from such a program, and may feel increasingly isolated. Additionally, the government does not have any treatment programs for children and adolescents with drug problems, and very few programs within civil society exist. Of the groups that do exist, most have not relocated to the outer hills of Lima, along with the children themselves, but instead remain narrowly focused on Lima’s city center, an area that is seen as symbolic of the whole city’s identity. This reinforces the spatial mismatch between available services and the presence of actual children (see map). It has also led to increased competition between groups to claim ‘credit’ for reaching street children. This competition for limited funds and a need for measurable results is typical of a neoliberalization of social services.

Despite increasing understandings of street children as unmarketable, surprisingly, a representative from the Ministry of Finance specifically challenged the state’s emphasis on cost and investment. She drew attention to the way in which the state was currently being organized based on the logic of private companies, which are concerned with making money (a typical characteristic of neoliberalism). But she explained that the state should be looking for different results than are private organizations. Instead, the state should rework its programming to focus on the well-being of its population, which arguably could include street children (field notes from meeting of Mesa para la lucha contra la pobreza, 2010). Such comments speak to the unevenness of the state, and raise possibilities for alternative interpretations of investment and development, especially given that the speaker is a

⁶¹ The Report does also include other goals for 2010, such as organizing more community discussions about gangs and how young people can better utilize their free time, and implementing restorative justice programs. While such programs are a clear advance over punitive responses to juvenile delinquency, in their focus on mediating conflicts between individuals, restorative justice models still do not adequately account for structural inequalities and exclusion.

representative of the Ministry of Finance. They also remind us of the multiplicity of voices that are frequently excluded from representations of the state (O'Malley, Weir, & Shearing, 1997). I briefly turn to an exploration of some the contradictions within the state, and between government officials and other Peruvians.

3.10 Enacting Neoliberalism: Situated Agents and the Geography of Social Services

As I emphasized in Chapter One, governmentalities of rule are varied and have multiple effects, rather than being a singular program or ideology (Ilcan & Lacey, 2011). Both neoliberal policy and children's rights legislation are put into practice by situated agents. These 'street level bureaucrats' play a big role in shaping on-the-ground regulation not simply on the basis of legal orders but also due to informal belief systems (Lipsky, 1980; McCann & Proudfoot, 2008). Contradictions and diversity between and within geographical locations remind us that neoliberalism is socially produced (Kingfisher, 2002; England & Ward, 2007). The diversity in programming and attitudes both within Lima and within Perú reiterates understandings of neoliberalism (and children's rights) as contingent, and perhaps more importantly, raises the possibility of alternatives.

While policies may largely be based on a desire to appeal to international donors while also appearing 'developed', because they do not always reflect widespread beliefs, their implementation is more uneven. The government may be embracing neoliberal policy formally, then, but it does not mean it has been accepted. Many people are critical of governmental programs that do not reflect Perú's situation and specifically refer to the government's desire to appease international pressure rather than help its own people. Daniel, a Peruvian who works for an international children's rights organization in Lima, explained,

"By signing ILO Convention 182, all of this about eradication, they (the government) say they have advanced but in terms of investment, nothing. This is typical of Perú. It has approved everything. The State is neoliberal. It signs everything. If Obama tells them to sign, they sign, but then they are horrible to comply. In the topic of children working, we are closer to Africa. They are not against children working because of hunger or AIDS and recognize that work helps them get fed" (personal interview, 2010).

His comments make clear that state policy does not reflect Perú's situation. Even more importantly, he directly challenges government tendencies to compare Perú to the West by instead comparing its situation to that of Africa's.

NGO workers are not the only ones who voice opposition to some of the government's formal policies. Lower-level state social workers and police officers ignore policies that they do not see as

fitting or do not have the resources to adequately enforce. They recognize that if children did not work, they may not be able to eat or pay school matriculation fees. Aware that the government cannot adequately meet those needs, many politicians and program directors turn a blind eye to most child labor, and some even provide limited support for working children. Colibri, a police-run program for poor children, operates a dining hall in Lima's city center, where children can go and eat. One of the social workers there explained, "Ideally, children should not be working. But since they are here, we try to support them. The national government does not invest in children. There needs to be more outreach to children early on, or they will get into even more difficulties later" (personal interview, 2010). While she is reluctant to actually condone children working, she tries to help children who work, rather than prevent that work. Pointing out contradictions in actions and beliefs responds to Pat O'Malley et al (1997)'s critique that "many governmentality studies focus on textual exposition which essentializes programs of government in ways that overlook the messiness of implementation and the conflictual and contradictory processes through which seemingly coherent state projects are formulated" (as cited in Rankin, 2001, 23).

Ironically, while the governance of poor children may be more dispersed than in the past (Fraser, 2003), I suggest that variation within the Peruvian government may actually facilitate inaction by allowing different ministries to avoid responsibility for lack of change or poorly designed and implemented programs. In the case of the Beggars' Law, some government officials acknowledged that the law had been poorly thought out and even more poorly implemented. However, in their responses, they acted as if the law had been imposed on them. During an interview with the vice-president of DINNA, the governmental agency in charge of children and families, she explained, "Since we are all the State, we had to support it. One ministry cannot disagree with another" (personal interview, 2010). While she admitted to me that the law was a disaster, she stressed that as a representative of the state, she could not protest the bill. Alternatively, in direct contradiction to interviews done with MIMDES officials, another woman working for the attorney general's office said that MIMDES had imposed the law on them. Without a clear center of power, it is more difficult to know where to direct complaints, facilitating inaction. Similarly, when it serves their purpose, government officials can shift the blame to international organizations for limiting their ability to act.

The ability to work with the government or the extent to which the government tolerates, oppresses or supports street and working children has a lot to do with the specific municipality, as well as the characteristics of the neighborhood. Certain municipalities have been much more cooperative in forming partnerships with child workers' groups, or accepting participatory budgeting proposals that

focus on children. This is especially true in districts on the outskirts of Lima that have a history of participatory action, mobilizing to demand resources and help from the state. In such regards, neoliberal strategies interact with pre-existing uses of space, institutional configurations and constellations of sociopolitical power (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). For example, in one poorer district in the cones, children in MANTHOC have partnered with the municipality in a program called My Clean Neighborhood. Four teenage delegates from MANTHOC receive small weekly stipends for their continued help in organizing campaigns about keeping the area clean. My Clean Neighborhood not only challenges the association of youth as detrimental to property values, but also indicates the active role that children can play in shaping the type of community in which they want to live. The partnership emerged out of work that teenagers were already doing. Seeing their initiative, the municipality actively sought them out. Such a program is very different from state programs that refuse to formally acknowledge or cooperate with child workers' movements and supports conceptualizations of children as active agents, in contrast to more token forms of participation that the national government has demonstrated. They show the ways in which different understandings of youth facilitate more participatory and progressive approaches to development and challenge the idea that working children are vulnerable victims. By pointing out such differences, I reveal contradictions in taken-for-granted assumptions of neoliberalism. The variance of policies indicates that there is nothing inevitable or natural about representations of children as in need of greater protection and regulation. Nor is governance as totalizing as Foucault (1991) and others implied.

Despite formal commitment to neoliberal policies, then, there is actually a lot more variation. As argued earlier, social services are often funded and managed on a variety of scales, mixing international funding and staff with local NGO workers and municipal agents. This leads to significant geographical variation in the availability of various forms of programming, and the forms of governance in which they employ. NGOs often choose locations not based on where there is the most need but on other factors, such as livability for their employers or more recently, given the neoliberalization of aid, in places where they believe they can achieve the most immediately demonstrable results (Bebbington, 2004). Thus, even though most NGOs justify interventions on the basis of addressing poverty or creating opportunities (Bebbington, 2004), aid may actually exacerbate inequalities rather than lead to greater 'evenness.' Services are heavily concentrated in the center of Lima, even though the majority of poor and working children live in the surrounding cones. The programs that do exist in the cones tend to target the category of 'poor child' more generally, and rarely include a component to specifically address the needs of working children. In fact, parents need to sign children up, so those children who have

other living arrangements are automatically ineligible. There are large groups of children falling through the cracks, without access to any particular program or services, simply based on their geography and the way in which they are categorized or categorize themselves. Homeless children, in particular, because they do not have parents who can enroll them, and rarely even hear about available programs, are especially neglected (see Figure 3.2). This neglect is heightened by the child workers' movement's increased exclusion of outreach to ambulatory workers, and lack of presence in the city center, where many street children work.

The majority of state-run programs that specifically target homeless street children emphasize institutionalization. Although talking about homeless adults, Kingfisher (2007) argues that an emphasis on containment works with the dual approach of soft love and tough love, both of which nevertheless entail physical removal. I suggest that institutionalization, although perhaps less initially violent than police operations, is just another side of the same coin. In line with England and Ward (2007), Kingfisher (2007), and other scholars, I suggest that the 'soft' side of social work justifies increased control of children, and problematically reinforces individualized understandings of social problems.

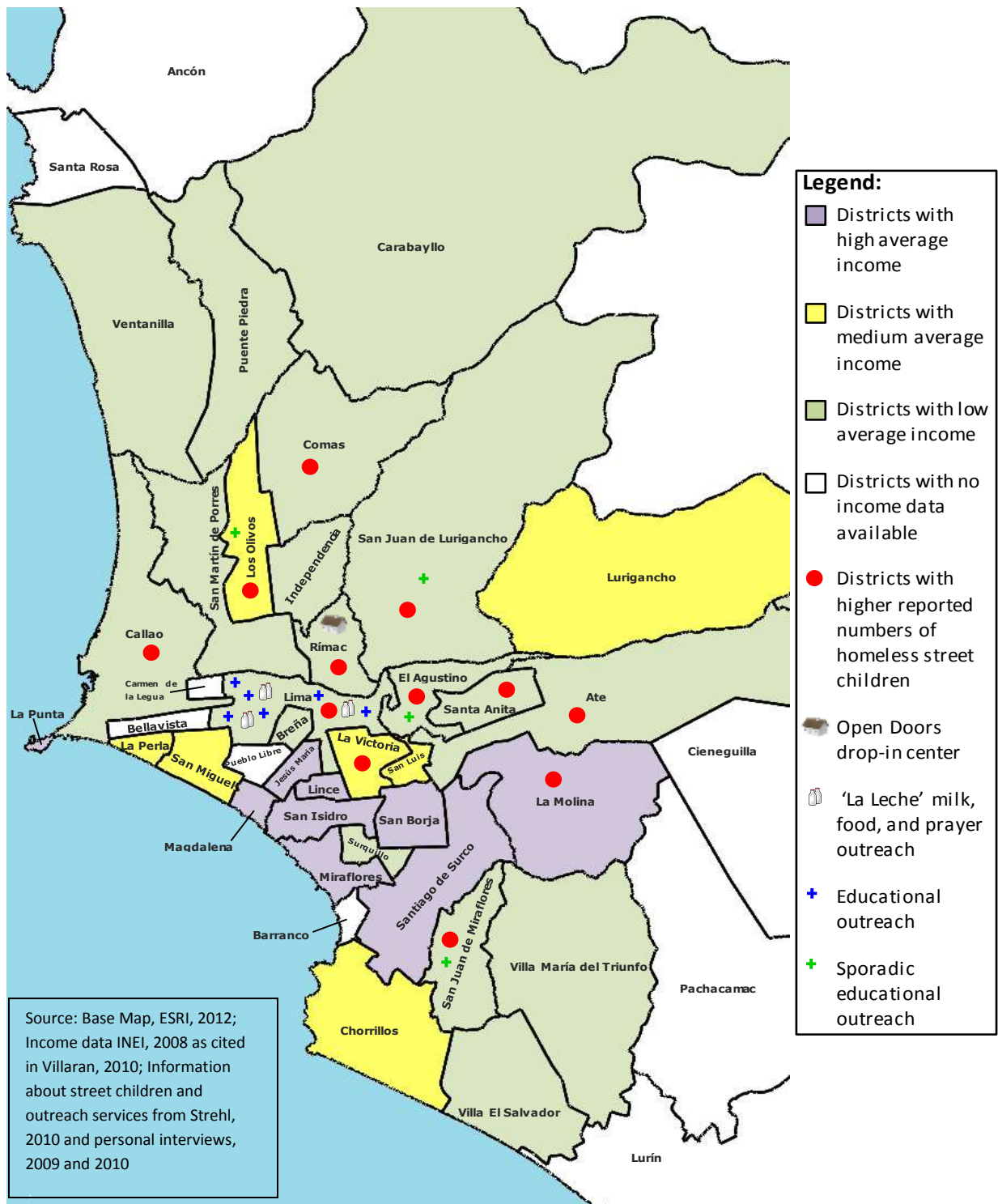


Figure 3.2 Map of street child population and street child services.

This map reveals the disparities between outreach services to street children and the areas in which street children are actually located. While one NGO has started providing sporadic outreach to some of the children in the cones, the lack of

services is still a big problem, and does not reflect the growing decentralization of the street child population. Closed-door institutions are not included here.

Taming the Poor, enabling dependency and the role of social services

While children's rights legislation is specifically supposed to address the relative powerlessness of children in decision-making, I suggest that in the case of poor children in Perú, it has ironically reinforced their exclusion. Actions continue to be carried out in the name of children, as they (and sometimes also their mothers) are subject to increased regulation and scrutiny. This paternalistic approach to addressing poverty goes hand in hand with conceptions of poverty as the result of individual behaviors and actions, rather than structural inequalities. By not actually changing the distribution of power, or giving children greater ability to represent themselves, dominant social service agencies ironically may end up reinforcing the poverty of the children they are trying to protect. As I emphasized in the introduction, poverty is tied not only to political economic processes but also an inability to represent oneself or influence the terms of debate. The regulation of poor children, and in particular street children, does little to challenge this.

In a US context, homeless services have been critiqued for their focus on the rehabilitation of the individual, shifting responsibility for poverty and one's situation to the poor person himself (Kingfisher, 2002; del Verteuil et al, 2009). In Perú, however, state-run institutions provide no rehabilitative services. Rather, they are run in very similar ways to juvenile prisons, with children confined and separated from the main population. Despite official gains in children's legal codes, which attempt to move away from penalizing abandoned or homeless youth, in practice, little has changed. Jose, a 22-year old who had been on the streets since he was eight, explained that children in homes lived trapped, unaware of what is happening in the world around them. They are then thrown out at 18, unprepared or able to survive on their own. Jose had been in two different state-run children's homes, escaping from both of them. He was fifteen when he was sent to the second home. At that time, he wore his hair long and referred to himself as Kimberly. "They made me shave my hair...One night, the staff came and got me out of bed and took me into the yard. They dug a hole in the ground and shoved me in. Then they were beating me with the shovel, throwing dirt on me" (personal interview, 2010). Jose eventually escaped from the home, returning to the streets, where he was among friends and felt safer. Unfortunately, Jose's story is not an exception. And in many parts of the world, including the United States, homosexual and transgender youth are overrepresented in homeless populations. Although what happened to Jose may have been more severe because of his sexual preferences, children who had spent time in state-run institutions frequently explained they were thrown under cold

water with their clothes on or were routinely denied food for being disobedient (personal interviews, 2010). Stories like Jose's challenge assumptions that children belong in institutions and raise important questions about the purpose of such institutions. Even when there is not abuse in the homes, children report a lack of freedom, feeling bored or like they are in prison, and frequently complain about the lack of care and affection (personal interviews, 2010). In such regards, social services arguably prioritize controlling and taming street children, or at least warehousing them out of sight, over considerations of care or their best interests.

Although spouting ideologies of protection and/or institutionalization, in actuality, the state and large international organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children and Plan-Perú (the local branch of Plan International) almost entirely ignore street children, as long as they stay out of sight of powerful or wealthy people. As mentioned, understandings of street children as primarily delinquents, rather than children, have limited their access to the few services that exist. The ability to access services differs depending on the primary way in which children are characterized. I suggest that homelessness, even more than simply being in the street, becomes one of the defining characteristic of program access. Conditionalities that are modeled after Western understandings of childhood have resulted in almost complete exclusion of homeless street youth from the few programs from which they might otherwise have been able to benefit. By focusing on these more excluded children, I trace the ways in which smaller NGOs and religious groups reproduce and challenge understandings of poverty. I argue that the regulation of street children in many ways is more similar to that of poor adults than of other poor children. However, because they are still children and because of different historical understandings of poverty and the state, I suggest that there are some surprising differences. A focus on these differences shows unlikely ways in which neoliberal discourses are reproduced but also facilitates possible contradictions and openings for change.

In the absence of both the state and large international organizations, church groups continue to serve as one of the main sources of support for street children. In the global north, scholars have drawn attention to an increased reliance on religious organizations to provide services for the poor (Hackworth, 2010). I would suggest that in Perú, because the state never played an active role, reliance on religious aid is not new. In fact, religious organizations have been one of the only key consistent players in offering some type of support for both street children and youth with drug problems. The consistency with which religious groups operate, both before and after a rise of neoliberal discourses and policies, reinforces arguments that neoliberalism is at most a partial process. Hackworth (2010) suggests that Evangelical groups share an emphasis on personal responsibility. However, in the case of

Perú, I argue that this is only partially true. I illustrate this by focusing on one particular role of the church, referred to within Perú as *la leche*, literally meaning ‘milk.’ *La leche* refers to church groups providing milk, sandwiches and fruit to street children throughout the city. In addition to food distribution, the group also gathers the children into a circle to sing songs and then listen to a short sermon. In line with Hackworth’s arguments, the sermon does often discuss personal responsibility. One night, for example, the speaker stressed that street children were all still God’s children, regardless of what *they* had done. There was still room for change-but only if they actively made the decision to change. At first glance, such sermons may serve to naturalize neoliberalism by promoting ideologies of self-responsibility. However, I argue that the case of *la leche* differs from that which Hackworth describes in the United States in important ways. While children are certainly encouraged to participate in the singing and sermon, even those who do not participate are not turned away afterwards when the group passes out sandwiches, milk and fruit. Thus, the material assistance does not come with clear strings attached, as Hackworth found in his study in the United States. And while personal responsibility is urged, claims such as Olasky’s (1992) that faith-based organizations play an important role in distinguishing between the truly needy and the ‘lazy’ do not hold true with the case of *la leche*. While an emphasis on personal responsibility may overlook structural inequalities, the organization’s leaders often emphasize how all people are god’s children, no matter what they have done, something that may prove comforting to children and young people who are otherwise very socially excluded.

Church groups are actually most criticized for providing material assistance with no strings attached and are seen as facilitating children’s lives in the street. This fear of encouraging dependency resonates with critiques of other ‘lenient’ welfare programs. The same MIMDES lawyer who explained the begging bill was especially critical of such church groups. He argued that “*La leche* is like giving food to animals. It does not help” (personal interview, 2010). As is the case with feeding animals, the more one does it, the more the animal will return. Giving food to street children then will just attract them to the area. His particular analogy is also telling: street children are compared to pesty animals, to be removed, rather than encouraged. While on one level, I agree that simple material provision does not change the situation, the benefits of the social interactions that come along with *la leche* are overlooked. It provides a safe space in which children can stand and visit without having to worry about the fear of constant police roundups or abuses, as the police generally back off when foreigners are present. Finally, having adults that consistently visit with and acknowledge them may potentially play some type of supportive role.

The MIMDES lawyer is not alone, however, in his critique of hand-out programs. The other limited programs that exist for street children are highly concerned with encouraging dependency, a typical fear of neoliberalized social services (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). *Asistencialismo*, a word which directly translates as welfarism, has become equivalent to expecting material handouts without giving anything in return, and has connotations of dependency. Juliana, the director of an NGO that provides classes and services for street children was clear in her critique, "Some groups give them everything, clothes, candy, music lessons so they just stay in the street. They can get all of their food, tamales, milk, fruit" (personal interview, 2010). Alternatively, her program is aimed at reform. One of the staff members, Ernesto, who had been providing direct street outreach for the past three years, explained, "We have made some progress with those that come a lot. They now say please or thank you, which is a step. This isn't a hotel" (personal attention, 2010). His answer is indicative of a need to teach street children manners while ensuring that they do not become too entitled or comfortable. He continued, "No to welfarism. They (the kids) can get tamales Thursday night, milk Tuesday, all free. We don't give them anything material. We give them time, conversation, help. It is much more profound. We believe in the philosophy that if you give clothes, toys, and trips, they will stay in the street. At the beginning they would ask us for things but now they know" (personal interview, 2010).

His comments indicate a clear understanding of the 'right' way to treat street children, one focused on teaching them new values and reforming their behavior. In addition to being highly critical, this educator expresses a clear goal of the program: to get children off the streets. The street is meant figuratively here, and also includes the squalid rooms that the children rent. To do so, the NGO places a big emphasis on promoting family reunification by increasing communication. Programs such as this one have been critiqued for assuming children belong with their family. In and of itself, I consider work with families a practical and potentially beneficial effort, as long as the children themselves want to work on reconciliation (which most of them do). However, the program is limited in its focus on individual treatment and reform. While conversations may help communication and to form reconciliation, they do not necessarily address any of the external stresses that have also contributed to children's presence in the street, such as a lack of stable income, and run the risk of reinforcing personal understandings of poverty. In fact, the NGO is simultaneously organizing a marketing campaign against giving alms to street children, explaining that it contributes to their presence on the street. Ending almsgiving ensures children's dependence on NGOs, facilitating a greater ability to control their actions,

and mold them into a poor child that is easier to reform and tame. Charities can regulate people's sentiments to give (Bornstein, 2009), and thus ensure that only those deserving of aid are helped.

Recognition that children do have some agency is complex. On the one hand, it is important to recognize children as subjects, and not simply as victims in need of rescuing. Ernesto explained, "We need to see them not as victim-oh, pobrecito. Some are there because they want to be. Some have passed through all the institutions but prefer the street because they are comfortable" (personal interview, 2010). However, there is also a danger in conceptualizing children's presence in the street as one of choice—if it fails to consider how limited those choices may be, and instead shifts into a language of blame. What is interesting is that in the case of Perú, the organizations that emphasize children taking responsibility are the ones most likely to attribute their presence to structural factors. Ernesto, quoted above, continued. "Children are in the streets because of the economic situation. And family is always a factor. There is a lack of communication, but we explain to the kids, you need to take responsibility" (personal interview, 2010). Despite a language of responsibility, there is no indication of blaming or criminalizing the kid. Instead, an emphasis on responsibility is seen as a way of helping a child realize that he can make changes in his life, and thus feel empowered.

It is here where a contextualized analysis becomes important. At first glance, such programs may seem very typical of social services that emphasize personal responsibility and fear of dependency. However, I suggest that opposition to material assistance may actually be a critique of state populism, arguing for a need for greater structural reform, rather than simply a way to reinforce neoliberalism. Peruvian politicians have historically provided material handouts around elections times, and then disappeared. Critiques were often expressed with the common fishing analogy of teaching a man to fish, rather than giving him the actual fish. While this can support understandings of the self-sufficient man, I think there is a danger in entirely equating such claims with neoliberalism. Instead, they have to be considered within the context of Peruvian history and can be read as a progressive desire for more lasting change. People themselves do not want to be dependent on social services, especially because of the historical unreliability of the state. This is reflected in children's tendency to escape from children's homes and in the child workers' movement demands that they are able to actively work to support themselves and their families. While against dependence, I suggest this is not the self-sufficiency of neoliberalism. It differs in two main ways: the first is that, at least in the case of the working child's movement, the end goal is structural reform with the state providing more support and opportunities for children and their families. Second, rather than focusing on individuals, and individual self-sufficiency, there is an emphasis on the community. By working together, change can happen and

everyone will benefit. In this sense then, there is almost a switch. The organizations that seem ‘neoliberal’ are the ones who provide material assistance and do not recognize children’s agency. Those most critical of such approaches, however, are the ones most likely to understand structural factors behind children’s poverty.

Reclaiming identities as workers

I argue that reclaiming an emphasis on children’s agency along socially progressive lines is essential to denaturalizing current approaches to economic development and childhood. In this last section, I briefly consider the ways in which a focus on work may facilitate this shift by examining another public-private partnership, that of Gardeners of My City, a program started in partnership with Generación (a social movement fighting for the rights of street children), the child workers’ movement and the municipality of Lima.⁶² Gardeners of My City was specifically formed both to provide working children with more stable opportunities for employment and to challenge growing understandings of street children as detrimental to public spaces. I suggest that the program’s initial success lay in understandings of street children not as criminals, but rather child workers, albeit ones in a temporary state of unemployment. Generación and the Child Workers’ movement worked to shift street children’s identity away from understandings of exclusion towards identities as child workers, and thus part of a bigger, more positive social group. Simultaneously, the municipality sought contracts with local businesses and universities to provide street and working children with jobs as gardeners and landscapers. In its focus on beautifying city space through landscaping, the program directly challenged views of youth, and in particular street and working children, as detracting from the value of public space.

Rather than emphasizing a fear of contamination, as is typical of present-day programs for working children, according to the director of Generación, the program’s strength was in its combination of homeless street children with other working children. By working alongside children from the working children’s movement, the program oriented street children and helped facilitate a conscious identity as a worker. The director, who had been working with street children since 1990, and is one of the most well-known street child advocates, explained, “The working children served as a good influence for the street children, helping them learn to take pride in their work and value punctuality and commitment. The children helped each other out. It also destroyed the image that children in Generación are thieves” (personal interview, 2010).

⁶² The importance of connections comes through in this situation. The original idea for Gardeners of My City came from the son of the founder of Generación and the son of one of Lima’s municipal officials. Both boys talked to their mothers and were able to get an agreement for the project signed.

While the program was initially considered a big success, shifting staff positions within the municipality have ultimately reshaped the program to exclude street children, another indication of their almost entire marginalization from state and city services. The program, which has been renamed as Ecological Kids, rarely employs children that are from the streets, although it still partners with MANTHOC (the Movement for Children and Adolescent Workers). In order to participate, children are required to study and have a stable living environment, which excludes many homeless street youth. As I mentioned earlier, matriculating homeless street youth in school is rarely successful. I suggest that especially in the face of limited funding for social services, a focus on street child matriculation may be a waste. However, I want to emphasize here that I am not arguing against investment in schooling. To shift the focus away from formal education to work programs may have unintended consequences, and definitely challenges any potential education serves in creating more opportunities for the working-classes. Additionally, as will be explored in Chapter Five, nearly all street children, even those who had negative experiences in school, expressed the importance of education. I raise these concerns then in the spirit of increased investigation. It is clear that the current model of requiring school attendance for street children is only serving to further marginalize them. While a shifted focus to finding stable employment may involve some trade-offs, I argue that it is necessary that programs are given the space to develop potential alternatives-especially considering the lack of current success.

A lack of programs providing adolescents with support to work has not only excluded street children but also limited the important self-esteem and identity formation aspects that can come from positive work experiences. The current program director of Chico's Ecologicos directly negates young people's identities as workers. During our conversation, he said he had initially refused an interview because my request had been to learn about municipal programs for child workers. "We are not such a program," he explained. "We offer each young person a stipend, not a salary. The program is a learning opportunity" (personal interview, 2010). By avoiding the label of child labor, the program is seen as aligned with anti-child labor campaigns. It allows them to position themselves as morally superior to work-training programs, which by implication are not 'educational,' like Chico's Ecologicos. Such understandings are in direct contrast to the centrality of work in the original Gardeners of the City, and the importance placed on work as an identity formation. The director of Generación explained "Work is 'the great organizer' in children's lives. People say school is the biggest organizer of your life but for the other side (street children) school doesn't give food or a place to sleep so school is not a great organizer of life. When you are working then you feel better and after might feel you need to or are capable of study" (personal interview, 2010). More formal employment can teach street children punctuality and

responsibility and help them get used to having a routine and regular schedule, something they often lack when sleeping in the streets. Such thinking also recognizes the practical need to have some income in order to survive, and would facilitate that income being earned in ways other than robbing. It also offers an alternative model for child development and active citizenship.

As it currently stands, it is street children's drug use, even more than delinquency, that is serving to exclude them from programs geared towards child workers. As I mentioned, homeless street children are not only being denied access to government run services but are also increasingly being excluded from the child workers' movement itself. Even though they are also working, because they consume drugs, street children lose their identity as a child worker. The current director of MANTHOC, explained that while street children do work, the difference has to do with what activity they primarily identify. "Some kids sell and use drugs but they need to figure out which is the principle activity. Are they working or are they working to use drugs?" She concluded that street children identify more with drugs or the streets than they do with working (personal interview, 2010). This newly generated divide between street children and working children seems to be largely emerging from the adults collaborating with the movement and those running the school, as opposed to the children themselves. Delegates informed me that there wasn't much difference between street children and working children: that they all worked and were therefore welcome in the group. And other research shows the fluid nature of street children's lives. More than half of children in Lima who are now living in the streets, originally got to know street life through ambulatory work, while still maintaining some level of contact with their families. Despite such understandings on the part of the children, funding to work with ambulatory populations has been cut, and because there is no outreach to street children, few know about the movement or make their way to group meetings.

Yet, it is here where the movement could actually play an essential role. I suggest that identity as a worker is something that needs to be taught. In conversations with the movement's delegates, they explained that before joining, they had felt ashamed of working. The movement had taught them to valorize their identity as a worker. Even more importantly, it provides them with a support group. As one of the delegates in Cusco explained, the movement was formed in particular for those working in the streets to give them a sense of identity and a support group. By doing so, they would have the strength and self-esteem to resist joining gangs, starting to consume drugs, or sleeping in the streets. While children in the movement may still work in exploitative positions, participation in the movement in and of itself has proven to be beneficial. Through the movement, delegates learn to become more active citizens, more aware of their rights and with the confidence and skills to organize and confront

politicians for failure to fulfill children's rights. Such a support network might prove particularly valuable for those children working in ambulatory positions, where they are most likely to meet other children that survive primarily from robbing, and where the stigma of working is often greater. While the movement may be passing through a weak phase, I suggest that it is important not to rule out the possibility of an alternative rights based approach to development.

3.11 Conclusion

I chose to end with two alternative outreach approaches for street children, both of which valorize understandings of work as central organizing component among young people. I suggest that what I have referred to as the neoliberalization of rights has currently rendered the ability to organize or do outreach based on an identity of child as worker as somewhat ineffective. However, I do not see these failed attempts as entirely pessimistic. While their current successes may be limited, they are important in that they speak to alternative understandings of development and childhood.

Conceptualizing of children as active agents in shaping the paths of their own development and that of their countries can challenge the deterministic ways in which children are currently being utilized in neoliberal development project. I began this chapter raising the question of why UNICEF and other international organizations would intentionally organize an event to conflict with one being organized by the child workers'. I suggest that it is because their opinions are particularly threatening to more convenient internationally acceptable ways of conceptualizing childhood. Having a voice and demanding to be taken seriously, after all, limits the ability to utilize children in narratives of development. That children are part of narratives of development is not the problem. Rather, it is the objectifying way that they are invoked that needs to be challenged. Currently, international pressure has worked in predominantly negative ways by reinforcing narrow moralistic understandings of ideal childhood. Yet, international organizing can also work the other way. In fact, youth and educators have been coming from Germany and Italy to Perú to learn how to more effectively organize children in their own countries.

Rather than giving up on rights, there are two important discursive shifts that should take place. The first involves a reclaiming of the 'best interests of the child,' a concept already written into international rights frameworks. Rather than assuming pre-determined solutions for childhood, which have only resulted in increased regulation, 'best interests of the child' necessitates conversations with young people to figure out how to optimize their well-being. While there are no easy answers, such an approach leaves more room for variation in individual children's experiences of work, and instead allows a focus on improving support for childhood rather than implementing assumptions about where

children belong and what that childhood should look like. The second main point, and one I will return to in the conclusion of this dissertation, is the importance of centering care in a rights-based approach. I suggest that neither rights-based nor neoliberal understandings of childhood, as they currently stand, are paying any attention to the importance of care. However, I argue that caring relationships are central both to children's own understandings of poverty and healthy development, and serve as a mitigating factor in the face of other hardships. A state social worker in Lima summed up why state interventions that focus on institutionalization are bound to fail. "It is the difference between saying *mi hijito* and *pobrecito* (my son and poor little one)" (personal interview, 2010). One is a relationship of love, and one is of pity. If many of the people involved in children's rights campaigns are doing so with good intentions, which I contend they are, then it is essential that we begin asking different questions. Looking at how to maximize children's ability to form caring supportive relationships on a micro-scale while simultaneously questioning how current understandings of childhood and development may be hindering that, is a good place to start.

Chapter 4: Urban 'Recuperation', Child Protection, and Perú's Begging Bill

"The area was filled with drug addicts and delinquents. We recuperated the space *for the public* and also gave more value to the (neighboring) houses. In doing so, we put more money in the people's pockets."-adviser to former mayor Castañeda, emphasis mine, personal interview, 2010

"We need to protect children from parents that exploit them and make them beg. There are not children in the streets in the US, are there? Here, children are selling candy and asking for money until very late at night and their mothers just sit there, doing no work. They come from the provinces or the outskirts of Lima. They are not from here."-head of the Municipal police of Miraflores, Lima, personal interview, 2010

4.1 Introduction

In the past 20 years, the Peruvian government has engaged in significant urban 'recuperation' within Lima. In fact, investing in Lima's physical infrastructure is central to the government's overall development plans. In the words of former President Alan Garcia, "through (improved) aesthetics, Lima has regained its self-esteem" and recovered its "role as a South American metropolis" (La Andina, 2011). The Peruvian government is not alone in its emphasis on urban revitalization. Cities throughout the world are engaging in urban 'recuperation' campaigns as part of efforts to attract investment and tourism and maintain a productive economy (Zukin, 1995; Harvey, 1982; D. Mitchell, 1997). Such campaigns carry promises of improvement and allude to images of modern secure cities. However, while the language of revitalization might connote positive images, there is a darker side to such changes. In order to present an adequate image of a city safe for investment, one often based on imagined understandings of cities such as New York and London, those deemed 'out of place' need to be removed (Atkinson, 2003; D. Mitchell, 1997; Swanson, 2007b; Schneider & Susser, 2003).

In this chapter, I examine changes in public space in Lima in the past twenty years under largely neoliberal economic reforms. I look at the way in which appeals to certain understandings of image and order provide the justification for campaigns to remove informal vendors, street children and other people deemed 'out of place'. In particular, I consider to what extent zero-tolerance policies have been employed as an active strategy for urban recuperation in Lima. Made famous by Mayor Giuliani's crime reduction strategies in New York, 'zero tolerance' policing is the practice of coming down hard on minor offenses with the aim of preventing more serious crime (Smith, 2001). In the past 15 years, there have been a proliferation of articles highlighting the spread of punitive policies regulating public space,

criminalizing survival activities such as begging, and vengefully removing homeless people, and others from public spaces (Beckett & Herbert, 2009; Blomley, 2007; Swanson, 2007b; Slater, 2004; Atkinson, 2003; Macleod, 2002; D. Mitchell, 1997; Smith, 1996), as I elaborate on in section 4.2. Yet, in order to fully understand urban recuperation in the context of Latin American cities, I suggest that it is necessary to specifically consider the ways in which particular notions of order and security get tied to understandings of what it means to be 'developed'. As Swanson (2007) points out, urban image is significantly influenced by beliefs about modernity.

Research on the Latin American city and displacement of street traders tends to be separate from explorations of revanchist regulation of public space (for notable exceptions, see Swanson, 2010; Galvis, 2012). Yet, connecting the two literatures offers important insights into how narratives of development affect the regulation of public space. In the past 20 years, multiple cities have engaged in a politics of displacement, based on understandings that the presence of informal street vendors is incompatible with efforts to attract tourism and investment (Bromley & Mackie, 2009; Jones & Varley, 1994). Middleton (2003, 98) writes, there is a "longstanding perception which identifies traders as part of an indigenous culture that is despised by the middle and upper classes". While street trading has long been a part of public space in Andean cities, traders themselves are increasingly associated with crime and poor hygiene, and are considered anathema to visions of modern cities attractive to the tourist gaze, reinforced by beliefs that world cities such as New York and Miami do not have "chaotic urban informal sectors" (Bromley & Mackie, 2009, 1485). Street children, because they almost entirely work in the informal economy, are arguably part of this urban blight. However, I suggest that in their status as children, they are considered an even greater hindrance to government attempts' to market themselves as developed.

Western discourses of childhood and the near-universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have done much to spread understandings of childhood as a time of innocence and play, separated from the adult world (Boyden, 1991; Ennew & Swart-Krugar, 2003; Valentine, 2004). Yet, these narratives of development and conceptions of childhood are reinforced and resisted through the regulation of public space. Just as Massey (1994) suggests that particular ways of thinking about space and place are tied up with social construction of gender relations, so too does space matter for understandings of childhood. Beliefs that children belong in their homes and the school serve to position children as 'out of place' in the streets, as I argue in Section 4.4. Such attitudes are reinforced by imagined geographies of the global north, as becomes clear from the comments of Miraflores' municipal police chief quoted above. In justifying urban policy on the assumption that street children do not exist

in the United States, he appeals to very specific understandings of what ‘development’ looks like. If ‘developing’ countries are understood as advancing towards these supposedly universal experiences of childhood, then the presence of children working in the streets (something the global north is believed to have eliminated), can be interpreted as a sign of backwardness. Samara (2005) suggests that street children are considered one of the biggest hindrances in attempts to market Cape Town, South Africa as a ‘world class’ destination for investment and tourism. In the case of Jakarta, Indonesia, Beazley (2002, 1666) similarly argues that street children are seen as “a defilement to the landscape” because “they do not conform to the image of a modern nation that the state wishes to portray to potential investors,” an argument I largely extend to the case of Lima.⁶³

In providing a detailed analysis of Lima’s urban revitalization, I critically engage with theories that suggest that urban neoliberalism will inevitably take the form of revanchism’. In many regards, Lima’s municipality has been following a similarly punitive approach, as is evidence from the destruction of street children’s encampments throughout parks in the city center and on the banks of the Rimac River, increasingly severe sanctions for minor crimes, and the creation of a municipal police force specifically in charge of maintaining order. As is demonstrated in the first quotation at the start of this chapter, ‘recuperation’ projects are justified as being for the good of the public. Street children, reframed as drug addicts and delinquents, are clearly excluded from notions of this public and are considered to detract from property values and jeopardize people’s safety.

Yet, revanchism does not adequately tell the whole story. DeVerteuil et al (2009) critique a tendency to assume that urban policies always look the same. More specifically, they say that many of the arguments about revanchist politics focus on politics and principles, rather than the ways in which such policies are articulated and contested by individuals and agencies on the ground. In line with de Verteuil et al’s (2009) call for a more nuanced examination of revanchist policies, I suggest that ‘zero tolerance’ is not the only policy being invoked in urban revitalization campaigns. I argue that the language of children’s rights has ironically been manipulated into a new tool for urban social control, as is most evident through Perú’s law to Protect Children from Begging and other actions carried out in the name of children’s own well-being. This so-called ‘begging bill’ is officially supposed to fine any adults caught exploiting children by making them beg. However, while no adults have been fined to date, the bill has been used as an excuse to round up hundreds of children working in the streets under the guise of their own protection (personal interviews, 2010; MIMDES, 2010) and in this sense, has further displaced social problems, rather than resolve them. In this sense, while people’s motivations may not

⁶³ Although, I also show that such attitudes are highly uneven.

be as punitive or uniform as some accounts suggest, laws such as the Begging Bill nonetheless ultimately result in the criminalization of street children.

After providing an overview of literature on the regulation of public space, and the spread of particular conceptions of both urban order and appropriate childhoods, I turn to an analysis of Lima's urban 'recuperation' projects in the past 20 years. I argue that urban revitalization policies in Perú serve to displace, rather than address social problems. Any image that is viewed as distracting from perceived conceptions of modernity must be removed. An emphasis on trying to present cities that are safe for investment and tourism forecloses alternative models of urban development that might focus more on redistribution or social equality. Language is essential to these campaigns. In order to gain approval for urban revitalization projects, the Peruvian government must frame those being removed as deviant or disorderly. In section 4.5, I examine the ways in which street children are reframed as 'delinquents' and 'drug addicts' so that their removal can be presented in the name of the greater public good. Yet, specifically because they are under 18, and can be picked up for abandonment if they are on the streets at night, no further legal justification is needed for their removal.

I suggest that dual images of children as 'little devils' and 'innocent angels' (Ansell, 2005) are invoked in strategically different ways to enforce urban spatial ordering. Children are removed both by appeals to their need for protection and by invoking concerns about the delinquency and danger they present. Although ideologies of protection and delinquency differ, both emphasize the danger of the street and a need for containment. In this sense, the language of children's rights can potentially be manipulated into a method of social control, or even the criminalization of poverty. In section 4.6, I highlight how competing discourses of danger and protection were both invoked to justify closing a house for street children in a rapidly gentrifying district in Lima. However, I suggest that actual debates about the house, and children's presence in the neighborhood, moved beyond issues of safety to touch on concerns with image and property values. In this sense, the Peruvian government is arguably prioritizing development of physical infrastructure over social development.

In section 4.7, I analyze anti-begging campaigns that criminalize children's presence in certain sites by appealing to a language of protection. While the regulation of begging is officially about protecting children, I argue that begging laws are first and foremost about image, reflective of a trend to displace social problems rather than address their causes. Simultaneously relabeling child workers as beggars and making such behavior illegal reiterates the ways in which social categorizations and a lack of power to represent oneself reproduce poverty (see Mosse, 2010). However, such legislation differs in important ways from anti-begging laws elsewhere in that they are justified not in terms of protecting

people from beggars, but rather protecting the children who are in situations in which they are begging. In such regards, the language of children's rights can potentially be manipulated into a method of social control, working hand in hand with neoliberal policies.

In section 4.8, I show how key agents employ language related to revitalization, security and protection simultaneously, depending both on the particular spaces that children are occupying, as well as a variety of other identity factors, such as gender, age, and ethnicity. In doing so, I offer a more nuanced account of the spread of revanchist policies. I then examine police-street child interactions, pushing beyond studies discussing the regulation of public space to look at moments of encounter, something on which surprisingly little has been written (see Herbert). Such encounters are often street children's only interaction with the 'state', with important repercussions for their self-identity and marginalization. In the final part of the chapter, I examine the spatial strategies that children use to evade police and social workers' efforts to regulate their behavior. I suggest that the idea of contradictory resistance posited by Willis (1977) is a particularly relevant lens through which to consider children's actions, a topic I also return to in the following chapter. I raise the question of what consequences may exist from street child populations' move to less visible urban areas, in either the outskirts of the city or in hidden rented rooms, suggesting that such a concern also challenges assumptions that indicators of progress will everywhere look the same.

4.2 Urban 'Recuperation': Taking Space Back in the Name of Development

Urban development, like much of national development, tends to be modeled after strategies and recommendations coming from cities in the global north. As is clear from the introductory quote of this chapter, efforts to improve urban 'aesthetics' are a direct part of national development strategies, representing a clear way to indicate that Perú is on the right track for the development. Both the national and municipal governments place great importance on marketing particular urban images. Such concern with 'image' is typical of urban development strategies in both the Global North and the Global South in the past few decades (Harvey, 1989; D. Mitchell, 1997). As capital is viewed as increasingly mobile under neoliberal economic shifts (Harvey, 1982), in order to maintain a productive economy and attract capital and investment, cities need to present themselves as secure places, either to invest in or to visit as tourists (Zukin, 1995). In fact, Brenner and Theodore (2002, 21) suggest that city spaces now serve "as an arena both for market-oriented economic growth and for elite consumption practices." Harvey (1982, 233) says that under capitalism, the environment must 'assume a commodity form'. Municipalities and states must actively compete in order to attract new investment, leading to what D. Mitchell (1997, 304) refers to as a 'frenetic place-auction.' While which specific

elements fit marketed images might vary from city to city, places that do not fit that image need to be 'revitalized.' Urban 'revitalization' campaigns occurring in Perú, as elsewhere, allude to images of modern developed cities and carry with them a promise of improvement. Yet, while the language of revitalization might connote positive images, such as increased revenue and more access to currently unused spaces, such changes tend to go hand in hand with conflicts over the meaning and use of public space.

The control of public spaces is essential to the privileging of certain stories over others (Ruddick, 1996). Urban planning has long been used as a means of social control (Graham, 2004; Beall, 2006; Scott, 1998). According to Beall (2006, 108), "urban space has been used by planners to put or keep people in their place"⁶⁴ and Robert Moses, a mid-20th century urban planner in New York City, even likened urban clearance in the Bronx to 'the wielding of a meat axe'. The language of urban planning often masks violent clearance programs as the state attempts to 'recuperate' various spaces. Neil Smith (1996) has referred to this recuperation as 'revanchist politics' or the vengeful reclaiming of prime city spaces from the poor and homeless. He argues that Giuliani specifically invoked a language of 'taking back' the city, framing the removal of homeless people as for the greater good. Mitchell (1997) extends Smith's claims, arguing that there has been an 'annihilation of space by law.' He documents how politicians have turned to law to justify removing those left behind by economic change. Governments have employed a variety of legal tools to this end, ranging from criminalizing the behaviors on which the poor and homeless depend for their survival to 'zero tolerance' policies, or the practice of coming down hard on minor offences with the aim of preventing more serious crime (Smith, 2001). Made famous by Mayor Giuliani's crime reduction strategies in New York, zero tolerance is an elaboration of Wilson's and Kelling's broken windows theory. Broken windows arguments suggest that neighborhoods that fail to fix broken windows or address other manifestations of 'disorder' display a lack of informal social control, thus inviting serious criminals into the neighborhood (Beckett & Herbert, 2009). Notions of 'disorder' are themselves highly subjective, as I argue in the next section. In practice, such theories have led to discretionary methods of regulating public space to remove those deemed 'out of place,' and thus work hand in hand with efforts to attract global capital (Beckett & Herbert, 2009). Such laws are steeped in moral imperatives, and work to blame and then punish those who are unable to 'successfully' integrate themselves into the market and are thus important components of neoliberal governance strategies. In addition to punitive legislation, revanchist trends may be physical, such as the manipulation of urban spaces to exclude those undesirable groups and activities, increased surveillance and policing of certain

⁶⁴ Beall (2006) goes on to say that urban dwellers claim, challenge and change space and its uses, a topic I will return to.

spaces, and discursive, such as portraying certain groups of people as dirty, dangerous and culpable for their own plight (Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010, 1704). Such policies violate basic human rights by criminalizing whole categories of people, such as the homeless (Mitchell, 2003) or indigenous street children (Swanson, 2010).

In the name of urban revitalization, groups that impede certain understandings of development and image are removed, rendered invisible (Schneider & Susser, 2003). In countries in both the North and the South, poor people are constantly relocated during urban 'renewal' projects, in which areas are made more habitable for the elite, transnational corporations and tourists. In fact, the word 'recuperation', which specifically means to take back or regain, is often used to describe such projects, as is the case with Lima's urban development projects. But what 'recuperation' means is rarely subject to much critique. Questions such as 'How were the spaces being revitalized used before?', and 'Who is benefiting from the supposed improvements?' often remain unasked. Notions of belonging and appropriate uses of public space are essential to such campaigns, as certain bodies get coded as 'out of place' or not fitting a city's desired image. As I outline in the following two sections, both informal vendors and children are increasingly presented as disorderly and not belonging in public space. Street children, because they occupy both categories, are doubly out of place.

4.3 Removing Informal Vendors in the Name of Order and Safety

While police everywhere are usually concerned with maintaining order, whose order, and how that order is defined, vary by social context (Bowling & Foster, 2002). In order to fully understand urban recuperation in the context of Latin American cities, I suggest that it is necessary to specifically consider the ways in which particular notions of order and security get tied to understandings of what it means to be 'developed'. As mentioned at the start of this chapter, urban aesthetics are specifically tied to the Peruvian government's attempts to market itself as developed, based on very specific ideas about what development and modernity look like.

In particular, I suggest that despite a long history of informal vendors working in the streets of Latin American cities, they are increasingly seen as a sign of 'disorder' and have been subject to removal and relocation (Swanson, 2010; Bromley & Mackie, 2009; Vega Centeno, 2006; Swanson, 2007b; Middleton, 2003; Jones & Varley, 1994). In order to create a more attractive city for international tourism and investment, governments in Latin American cities have engaged in what Bromley and Mackie (2009, 1485) refer to as "a widespread and determined policy of (street trader) displacement." Street vendors are considered anathema to visions of a modern city, linked to their association with disease and crime, and beliefs that world cities such as New York and Miami do not have "chaotic urban

informal sectors” (Bromley & Mackie, 2009; Swanson, 2007b, 712). Vega Centeno argues that public spaces of the historic center run the risk of being turned into outdoor museums, prioritizing tourists’ needs over the needs over locals. “The problem is generated when in the name of tourism daily activities of a native population are excluded from certain public spaces because they could be interpreted negatively by the politics of attracting tourists” (Vega Centeno, 2006, 57). Popular practices such as ambulatory commerce are interpreted as negative indicators of disorder that need to be relocated in order to attract tourism.

In many third world cities, the informal sector is looked down upon by the elite and often described as parasitic, unproductive, or as disguised unemployment (see Bromley, 1978).⁶⁵ As mentioned, such views are typical and have been used to garner support for relocation (or just removal) of informal street traders. Yet, street vendors were not always viewed negatively (Donavan, 2008). Ambulatory commerce formed part of daily landscape in the streets of the city, reflected in famous historic paintings of Lima (Vega Centeno, 2006). Beliefs that ambulatory commerce is a blight are arguably linked with discourses of modernity and development. The introduction of new forms of transportation coincide with understandings of the street as spaces for circulation and movement rather than diverse interactions and encounters (Bromley, 1978; Vega Centeno, 2006). Being associated with the street acquired negative connotations. This shift is mirrored in changes in slang from ‘tiene calle’ meaning that someone knows the codes of the collective to ‘estas en la calle’ or someone who is not informed (Vega Centeno, 2006). People are negatively viewed if they maintain the street as their main form of socialization, a concept I return to in the next section.

Such views are highly linked with indigeneity and space. As argued in Chapter Two, indigenous populations are firmly linked with rural areas and are thus viewed as ‘out of place’ when they disrupt geographical imaginaries by coming into the city (Swanson, 2007b). Framed as dirty and backwards, they are considered a hindrance to modern development (Swanson, 2007b; Radcliffe & Westwood, 1996;

⁶⁵ Others, such as de Soto (2002), tend to portray all those working in the informal sector as entrepreneurs who are very effectively using limited resources but are only operating in the informal sector due to stringent requirements and excessive bureaucracy that provide monetary and time costs that make it difficult if not impossible to enter the formal sector. Echoing Thomas Paine, de Soto argues that while the poor may be breaking formal law, they are not breaking the law of nature to provide for themselves and their families. De Soto, thus, emphasizes the necessity of adapting legal systems to recognize the realities of the lives of most of their poor. He divides work into three categories based on an ends/means continuum. The first is that of the formal sector, in which both the ends and the means are legal. The second is informal, in which the means might be illegal but the ends are legal. And the third is illegitimate, in which both the ends and the means are illegal. Thus activities which are illegal but still contribute positively to economic growth, or even to the wellbeing of those engaging in those activities, as long as they do not make society worse off, are beneficial. Such views have been critiqued for viewing formality and informality as too strict of a binary. Bromley (1978) interestingly points out that because goods sold in the informal sector are usually less expensive than those in the formal sector, poor people are able to purchase food and other necessities on lower incomes, thus facilitating both their own survival and the survival of those working in the informal sector.

Colloredo-Mansfeld, 1998; Orlove, 1998). The threat of indigenous populations in urban spaces is linked to historical efforts to sanitize cities to produce civil, moral spaces (Otter, 2004). In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the language of hygiene and cleanliness was used to regulate spaces and exclude indigenous, who were also coded as diseased and held to blame for the spread of typhus and smallpox (Wilson, 2004). Today, as well, indigenous highlanders are presented as ‘invading’ Lima’s white urban center (Weismantel, 2001). In order to increase order and gain control over those viewed as outside of the formal control of the state, cities have engaged in campaigns against informal street traders, as has been the case in Lima over the past decade.

While I elaborate on the specifics of urban ‘recuperation’ in Section 4.5, here I highlight comments from two city planners and municipal police officers that encapsulate attitudes about the presence (and threat) of informality. For them, Lima’s urban recuperation is a matter of improved order and better public health. The advisor to Lima’s chief of planning and municipal police station, explained, “The streets were full of ambulantes. We could not pass. If there was an emergency one block away, we couldn’t get there. If the streets are *cleaner*, it is easier to get there” (personal interview, 2010, emphasis mine). By implication then, the presence of informal vendors is polluting. A chief of the municipal police echoed such thoughts. “It was worse, much more *contaminated*, and everyone was in the middle of the street....It leads to delinquency... But then the mayor, Alberto Andrade arrived. He began to free this space, to recuperate it.” The chief continued by emphasizing a need for containment, echoing images of street vendors as an uncontrolled and spreading disease (Bayat, 2000). “We need to free space. We go with the (national) police. If we don’t put order, they will take more (space).” His comments reinforce beliefs that the presence of street vendors is not only unhygienic but also leads to delinquency. By gaining control of space then, the government can gain control of people (see Figure 4.1, for the municipality’s display of some of these changes).



Figure 4.1 Billboards of urban 'improvement'.

Part of the municipality of Lima's display of urban progress, this billboard contrasts Aviacion Avenue's informal market with a cleaner more regulated street after the reforms.

However, the increased repression of informal street traders fails to consider the ways in which neoliberal policies, uneven development, years of fighting between the armed forces and Shining Path, and historical exclusion more generally contribute to growing street trader populations in the first place.⁶⁶ As outlined in Chapter Two, increased migration to Lima was accompanied by structural adjustment policies that led to a reduction in social services offered by the state and increasing dependence on the market, leaving the poor increasingly vulnerable. A large percentage of migrants found jobs in the informal sector.⁶⁷ Despite Perú's reports of declining poverty rates, a recent study by the OECD indicates that many of those the government now labels as middle class (at 42 percent of the population) are on the constant brink of poverty, with 80 percent working in the informal economy and almost half without access to health insurance (OECD, 2010). In these regards neoliberal policies not only contribute to an increased presence of informal street workers but then increasingly punish them for their presence. By presenting migrants as maladapted to modern city life, they are viewed as responsible for their own poverty (Perlman, 2007). The discursive work that such beliefs are doing is

⁶⁶ Some city planners did connect such processes to increased informality, as was the case with the municipal police chief quoted above. He said, "It was part of the consequences of terrorism and unemployment. There was a grand migration to Lima but there was no work so they sold in the street. The police only focused on terrorism." However, he ultimately believed their removal was still in the name of the greater public good.

⁶⁷ While various definitions and categories relating to the informal sector have been proposed and implemented, the most important criterion that pertains to all of them relates to regulation. Those working in the 'informal' economy may lack legal recognition as a business, fail to pay taxes, or do not conform to various labor requirements, such as the length of the work day and the provision of various benefits. The distinction between the formal and the informal are becoming increasingly blurry, as formal sectors in the urban Global South have been deregulating under neoliberalism (Standing, 1999).

essential to understanding Lima's urban 'recuperation' policies. Blaming those being removed for crime, health risks, and disorder legitimates urban revitalization and provides a scapegoat for societal problems. In eliminating urban blight, Lima's elite can feel they are gaining some control over demographic changes while presenting a more sanitized urban image, safe for investors and tourists, and in line with the municipality's ambitions to regain prestige as "the city of the Kings" (personal interviews, 2009).

Street children, because they almost entirely work in the informal economy, are arguably part of this urban blight. However, I suggest that in their status as children, they are considered an even greater hindrance to government attempts' to market themselves as developed. Because of their age they are automatically relegated to the informal economy, and are unable to benefit from any potential opportunities to formalize their status.⁶⁸ Even more, however, Western discourses of modern childhood, promulgated by the spread of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, have only exacerbated beliefs that children in the streets are a sign of backwardness, poverty and a lack of development. Such beliefs are strongly linked with understandings about belonging, childhood and the right to certain spaces.

4.4 'Out of Place' on the Streets

Understandings of childhood and development combine to reinforce ideas of children as 'out of place' on the streets, and thus in need of removal. I suggest that street children are a particularly good lens through which to examine urban transformation because they represent a double threat to order, both in their role as informal workers and because of understandings that childhood, and particularly adolescence, is a dangerous time (Samara, 2005). As Lima's municipality strives to make spaces more orderly, children's presence in them has become increasingly associated with disorder. Cresswell (1996) discusses how ideas about spaces and ideologies combine to make beliefs about what is just and right seem natural. Certain ideas, such as children not belonging on city streets at night, are easily converted into common sense. When this occurs, children working in public space are viewed as particularly 'out of place.'

Part of the justification for children's removal comes from the idea that the street is a dangerous place. The image of the street, especially at night, is linked with notions of criminality, vagrancy, deviance, and delinquency (Ennew & Swart-Krugar, 2003). Because of the spread of understandings of

⁶⁸ In many of the 'recuperation' projects, informal vendors were offered opportunities to be relocated to formalized trading spots, although it is important to note that offers of formal relocation only applied to registered street traders and tended to exclude the most vulnerable ambulatory traders (Bromley & Mackie, 2009).

childhood as a time of innocence and vulnerability, children are considered to be especially susceptible to the negative influences of street life (Valentine, 2004; Hecht, 1998). Children are viewed as not yet fully formed adults, naturalizing their exclusion from various arenas marked off as part of the adult world (Roche, 1999). The way in which purity becomes linked with the home serves to reinforce the idea of the street as contaminated and dirty. More specifically, children are supposed to be in school or in their homes, spaces depicted as safe, in contrast to the street, represented as dangerous. While such dichotomies are problematic for their failure to acknowledge the significant amount of abuse that takes place specifically in the house, they have nonetheless served to reinforce beliefs that children do not belong in the street. Street children then are depicted as 'matter out of the place' (Douglas, 1966), an idea which justifies social hygiene projects, even portraying street children as a social disease (Nieuwenhuys, 2001).

Those in the street are seen not only as vulnerable to exploitation but themselves become threats. In such regards street children are subject to dual discourses that depict children as both naturally innocent and also prone to delinquency. According to Jenks (1996), the Apollonian view casts children as little angels, born innocent, naturally virtuous and therefore in need of protection. Alternatively, the Dionysian view perceives children as 'little devils,' in need of strict moral guidance. In order to protect children, as well as reduce the potential that they will become dangers, they need to be kept under control (Boyden, 1997). Both ideologies, although relying on different discourses, continue to inform understandings of childhood today and provide justification for removing children from the public sphere and enclosing them in institutions. Simply by being in the street, children are considered a threat to the social order, and represent a visible challenge to idealized understandings of childhood. In fact, the label street children, in "juxtaposing 'street' and 'child', implies children's presence in public space is illegitimate and thus positions them as part of the 'other' that needs to be saved (Ennew & Swart-Krugar, 2003).

Yet, the street was not always considered a place of danger. Taken-for granted value and meaning inherent in any space must be created (Cresswell, 1996). Ruddick (1996) argues that the space of the city is not simply a mask, concealing larger imperatives of social control, but rather a constitutive medium which itself helps construct appropriate behavior and justify class exploitation. In the context of the United States, she suggests that disapproval of the city is a metaphor for disapproval of lower-class practices. As economic practices shifted, children's behaviors were re-labeled. For example, what was regarded as precociousness was relabeled as delinquency (Ruddick, 1996). Similarly, in Colombia, campaigns against street children were linked to decreasing power of the elite. As the non-elite were

given greater opportunities to participate in social and political life, demeaning attacks on lower-class families increased (Aptekar, 1991). Children in the street were re-labeled as abandoned, allowing those in power to intervene against the poor families they considered responsible.

Risk itself then needs to be understood in its social context (Crivello & Boyden, 2011). What counts as hazardous is linked to subjective opinions of moral well-being (Jones, 2005). While laws such as the Begging Bill and prohibitions against child labor after 7 pm are substantiated by beliefs about the 'moral' risk that children face from being in the streets, some specifically see the street as an acceptable way of socializing children by providing them with independence and income (Invernizzi, 2008). Rather than seeing the street as a place of danger, they see the street as a place of business. Especially among more recent migrants, who are accustomed to having their children work alongside them, allowing children the freedom to explore their environments is considered central to child development (Bolin, 2006).

Yet, these variations are overlooked in appeals to narrowly defined notions of what development looks like. If 'developing' countries are understood as advancing towards supposedly universal experiences of childhood, then the presence of children working in the streets (something the global north is believed to have eliminated), can be interpreted as a sign of backwardness. Street children thus both hinder governments' attempts to market spaces as safe for investment and serve as a reminder that not everyone has benefited from international development and growth. "Children and adolescents living and working in the public space of the city have customarily been viewed as a nuisance and a threat. Not only do they resort at times to illegal or uncivil behavior, often in response to the constraints they operate under, but they also generate fear and discomfort among those who are better off, a reminder of realities many would prefer to ignore" (Satterthwaite, 2002, 214).

However, the way in which children are regulated is not homogenous but rather takes on different meanings in the Peruvian context, depending on the specific places and particular children in those places. In line with Valentine (2004), I suggest that dual understandings of children as both vulnerable and dangerous are implicated with age, race, and gender, as well as place, and lead to substantial flexibility in the implementation of policies regulating childhood, as I elaborate on in the following sections. While younger children are considered more vulnerable and in need of protection, older children and youth, especially boys, are considered dangerous. Ansell (2005) points out how in many Latin American countries, children's rights campaigns focus on preschool children and their mothers, and leave older children to the regulation of the courts.

Youth as danger: Punitive attitudes towards young people in public space

In the following section, I examine how growing fears of crime, combined with insecurities over changing demographics and socioeconomic conditions have ultimately resulted in the reframing of poor children in certain public spaces as delinquents and drug addicts. Valentine discusses how moral panics regarding youth out of control often invoke nostalgia for a golden age “where social stability and strong moral discipline were a deterrent to disorder and delinquency” (Valentine, 2004, 89-90). Although she is writing from the context of the United Kingdom, I suggest that similar fears may be occurring in Perú. Lima, particularly, has experienced new social threats that often accompany ‘modernization’ under a neoliberal framework. With the disintegration of the nuclear family and more women working outside of the home, as well as fewer families living near other extended family members, child care has become a much more prevalent concern, and children are increasingly left unattended.

Elsewhere, scholars have noted that economic restructuring and growing inequalities, linked with (perceived) increases in crime have led to calls for the police and government to ‘do something’ (Yarwood, 2007). Beckett and Godoy (2008) argue that as more countries shift towards formal democracies and previously excluded groups gain official rights, attempts have been made to regulate them in other ways, such as through more punitive policing and increased punishment. In the situation of Lima, while the municipality may be concerned with marketing and image, I suggest that projects are at least in part so readily accepted because of fear. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Lima has gone through significant demographic transition in the past few decades as a result of increased migration from the provinces. Additionally, more people are working in the informal economy, often at greater distances from their homes, meaning that more children and youth are left unsupervised. Such shifts coincide with an increased gang problem that first emerged during Fujimori’s presidency. While no gangs were mentioned prior to 1990, today, Lima has over 400 known youth gangs (Villaran, 2010).

Gangs and youth delinquency are focal points for public anxiety, and provide the motivation for more punitive attitudes regarding street children and youth that have re-emerged in recent years. According to a 2009 survey conducted by the University of Lima, 98 percent of people believe that Lima is an insecure city, and 74 percent believe that delinquency is increasing, even though actual crime statistics have been relatively stable in the past few years (Villaran, 2010). Much of that delinquency is attributed to young people, with roughly 70 percent of street crimes (at least those that make it to the judicial system) committed by those under 18 (Jaramillo, 2005). While fear of youth delinquency is not entirely unsubstantiated, responses to delinquency rarely consider the structural conditions that help

generate such behaviors and instead focus on either removal of youth or abandonment of the space in which they are.

Many people believe that youth should be interned in order to be controlled (Morsolin and Cussianovich, 2004). Perhaps because of such commonly held beliefs, the Peruvian government has also been moving towards increased penalization of poor children and youth. In 1992, for example, in the midst of civil conflict between Perú's armed forces, and Shining Path, an insurgent terrorist group, Fujimori passed anti-terrorist legislation, which lowered the age of criminal responsibility for terrorist acts to age 15, meaning that any older youth would be tried as adults. The more recent Pernicious Gangs Bill similarly increases sentences for those youth who have committed minor crimes, allowing them to be institutionalized for much greater lengths of time. Finally, the committee responsible for the next round of modifications to Perú's Code for Children and Adolescents is considering lowering the age at which youth can be tried as adults to age 16. Such increasingly harsh attitudes towards youth crime have been documented throughout cities in the United States, with minors increasingly tried in court as adults (Lucas, 1998). Lucas (1998) links the criminalization of youth with a 'moral panic,' disproportionate to the actual threat of youth violence.

Urban recuperation can be understood as an attempt to gain some level of control in response to this growing sense of insecurity and fear, while also very clearly demonstrating a great concern with public image and marketing. In many regards the various processes of displacement among older youth are similar to those punitive policies used with homeless adults (see Mitchell, 1997; Smith, 1996). New articles that refer to the homeless as blights on society who have 'take over' neighborhoods from law-abiding citizens (Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010) easily apply to the language used to describe urban 'recuperation' in Lima. Framing street children as delinquents reinforces the idea of them as a 'throw-away' population (Watkins, 1993; Scheper-Hughes & Hoffman, 1998), notions that are justified by appeals to Western views of childhood which depict young people as having few legitimate reasons to be in public spaces.

The sorting processes by which marginalization is produced do not simply take place in space but rather are achieved through space (Philo, 1986, as cited in Ruddick, 1996). Representations of space serve to make 'truths' and 'facts' about people in those spaces (Soja, 1996; Wilson, 2001). Bodies are then coded and read in certain ways, not simply because of the activities in which they are engaging, but the spaces they are occupying. For example, Jarosz and Lawson (2002) argue that in representing rural spaces as poor, undeveloped and wild, the people in them are understood as lazy, dirty and obsolete and Wilson (2001, 264) shows how inner-city spaces serve to represent black youth as "ravaged from

normative values,” coding their bodies as spatially transgressive. In the context of my research, I argue that in depicting spaces in central Lima as ‘abandoned’ and ‘decaying’ those in them were represented as dangerous, and thus removable. More specifically, I suggest that by coding street youth as delinquents and drug addicts, they can be removed in the name of the public good.

4.5 Urban Transformation in Lima

In this section, I briefly describe some incidents of private development that have directly affected street children’s livelihoods before examining the municipality of Lima’s urban ‘recuperation.’ Policies of ‘recuperation’ move far beyond those of neglect to instead focus on reclaiming particular spaces in the name of the greater public good, and are modeled after imagined geographies of modern cities in the global north. In particular, ‘recuperation’ policies are based on specific understandings of the appropriate uses of public space, such as for consumption or temporary recreation, as well as who has the right to use such spaces. Yet, while the description of a revanchist city applies in many ways to Lima, its effects are disproportionate, with certain parts of the city being ignored, and the effects on, and responses from, street and working children, highly uneven.

Urban changes are considered a source of great pride for most politicians. In fact, former mayor Castañeda justified his presidential bid in the 2011 elections on the basis of all of the urban revitalization that he claims responsibility for in Lima. And many Limeños take great pride in their city, believing it to be much safer than it was in the 1980s and 1990s. But what do these improvements look like, and how exactly is safety conceptualized? What have these changes meant for children who depend on public space for their survival? One common approach to create ‘safe sanitized spaces’ has been to build private shopping centers or gated communities that can exclude beggars, youth, street vendors and others that contribute to insecurity (Yarwood, 2007). This retreat of wealthy citizens into gated communities has been well-documented in various Latin American cities, such as Brazil (Caldiera, 2000; Low, 1996), and shares certain characteristics with Davis’ (1992) description of fortress LA. However, while some gated communities do exist in Lima, the city has not demonstrated fortified enclaves to the extreme of other cities (Fernandez Maldonado, 2006). Some elite remain in Lima’s historic center, and development is not isolated to only wealthy districts, with much new development taking place in Lima’s cones (Arellano and Burgos, 2004).

Perhaps because Lima does not show the same trend towards gated communities, secure spaces such as malls take on even greater importance. In the past decade, there has been a growth of ‘modern’ shopping malls throughout Lima (Vega Centeno, 2006), with the opening of LarcoMar in Miraflores, Jockey Plaza in La Molina, and Plaza Sur and Plaza Norte in the southern and northern cones,

respectively. In addition to a host of local stores, most malls include internationally well-known chains, such as Starbucks, Tommy Hilfiger, and Radio Shack, along with movie theaters featuring English-language films. Such malls are seen as symbols of modernization and development, and are marketed as key tourist attractions by both private citizens and the Peruvian government. While shopping malls may retain aspects of public space, they send a clear message to anyone unable to engage in consumption that he or she is not welcome, reinforced by the presence of armed security guards. This exclusion, and the improbability of encountering beggars or other threatening people, may in fact be what make malls particularly attractive. Yet, street and working children depend on interaction with clients (or people to rob or give them alms) for their survival. If they stop having access to such people, their ability to feed themselves, or obtain money and other 'needed' goods, is severely curtailed. Presently, street children are not only prohibited from entering such malls, but are often shooed away from even lurking near the premises, hoping to sell candies or gum to exiting patrons. This exclusion arguably increases their feelings of marginalization, with consequences not only for their livelihoods, but also for their self-esteem and overall well-being, as they seek out other sources of livelihood. Yet, the construction of semi-private development sites has only been a small part of Lima's urban revitalization, indicating that a range of different urban development policies can exist simultaneously (deVerteuil, et al, 2009).

Most 'loss' of public spaces have occurred not because of alternative sites of development (as in the case of the shopping mall), but rather because of the active reclaiming of spaces and forceful exclusion of certain groups of people, including street children and other working children. Active urban 'recuperation' plans began in Lima under Alberto Andrade, mayor from 1996 to 2002, and continued under Luis Castañeda Lossio, who was mayor from 2002 until 2010. When Andrade was mayor of Lima, he initiated a public campaign to 'recuperate' Lima's city center. However, rather than focusing on improving qualities of public space for all of the population, he privileged middle and high classes (Ludeña, 2002). The few analysts who have written about Lima's urban change during this time period tend to focus on the positive aspects. Fernandez Maldonado (2006, 3) writes, "Lima's main urban project during the 1990s was the 'recuperation' of the historic centre⁶⁹ in 1997, *from the hands of street sellers* after almost two decades of total abandonment and decay" (emphasis mine). However, her comments do not make it clear for whom such spaces are being 'reclaimed'. Despite the implications from this quotation, it was not 'abandoned' areas that were recuperated, but rather spaces that were actively being used by a wide variety of people, including street youth. Their exclusion from these

⁶⁹ That it is now referred to as the historic center of Lima, rather than just Lima, is symbolic in and of itself, showing how it is being marketed in a particular way.

spaces has important repercussions for their ability to access both work and social services. Descriptions such as Fernandez Maldonado's also equate the presence of street vendors with abandonment and decay, as outlined in Section 4.3. By doing so, they reinforce beliefs that ambulatory commerce does not belong in a 'modern city' and make its removal not only seem natural but also beneficial.

Urban recuperation projects were specifically justified not only in what they constructed but more importantly, in what they removed. Such projects promote very specific understandings of appropriate uses of public space, and in fact, who counts as part of this 'public'. Many of the areas that have been 'recovered' were areas primarily used by street children in the 1990s. The creation of the Park of Murals by the banks of the river Rimac, where street children used to sleep, is one clear example of this. The chief of planning and security explained, "Before, the area had kids drugging. It was filled with old cars and was an atrocity. Now it's a beautiful park with murals" (personal interview, 2010). The adviser to Castañeda similarly said, "The area was filled with drug addicts and delinquents. We recuperated the space *for the public* and also gave more value to the (neighboring) houses" (emphasis mine, personal interview, 2010). Representing 'recuperation' as a campaign on behalf of the public, from which homeless street youth are excluded, resonates with the language used in Giuliani's campaigns in New York (Smith, 1996) and suggests regaining land that had been wrongfully occupied or invaded (Kingfisher, 2007). The wrongful occupiers were framed as 'delinquents' and 'drug addicts' rather than children or Peruvian citizens, and were excluded from the 'public' for which space is being recuperated. In this way, government intervention can be interpreted in a much more positive light, as 'saving' the city, rather than oppressively violating the rights of street children. It also reinforces clear understandings of appropriate uses of public space, in this case, for recreation, rather than sleeping or living. The comments of the mayor's advisor further demonstrate economic motivations behind recuperation, strengthening links between homelessness, drug addiction and lowered property values. This concern with the value of property indicates the way in which the government is defining development in neoliberal terms, rather than social ones. In addition to showing clear priority of certain rights over the rights of others-in this particular case both street children and other homeless adults, the removal of children from the banks of the river Rimac has made it more difficult for children to access support services from an NGO based nearby. While some children still cross the bridge to go to the NGO, especially those sleeping in areas nearby, others have stopped utilizing services because they are now sleeping in areas further away. As will be elaborated on in the next chapter, proximity to certain social services, as well as strong identities with place, are key factors in influencing whether street youth will access welfare services.

Other recuperation projects specifically focused on creating tourist-friendly spaces, placing the needs of international visitors and the economic gain that comes with them over giving *all* Peruvians' access to public space. This is most clear when examining the transformation of the Park of the Reserves, a principal area in which Lima's street children used to sleep, that was turned into a water park. The park, now called the Magic Circuit of Waters, holds the world record as the largest fountain complex in the world and has contributed to longer tourist visits (personal interviews, 2010). However, the creation of the park raises a number of issues. First, the gates around the park and its entrance fees⁷⁰ limit the type of people who can access the space. Second, the creation of the water park directly addressed the fear that many people felt simply by the presence of certain youth. The mayor's assistant recalled how he used to run across the Park of Reserves as a child because he was scared by the *pirañitas*, the common slang word used to describe street children. Thus, building the Magic Circuit of Water served the dual purpose of not only increasing tourism to Lima but 'reclaiming' an area that was considered dangerous and not properly used. The sense of pride at increased tourism coupled with entrance fees that exclude more economically disadvantaged citizens send a clear message of who 'public' space is really for.

Further, in addition to eliminating an important space in street children's lives, the Park of the Reserves cost roughly 13 million dollars, money that arguably could have been used to invest in much needed social-services. In fact, social services promised by law are routinely neglected by claims that there is not enough money. A decision then to invest in urban transformation projects supports concerns that the Peruvian government prioritizes development as aesthetics over social development.⁷¹ This focus on aesthetic concerns has not gone unnoticed. A director of an NGO for street children explained that for the government, "development means building highways...The concept of social development is entirely neglected" (personal interview, 2010). A project director working on an anti-child labor program reiterated similar concerns. "The city grows and is constructed for cars to move, not people...There is no space for the grand majority of people, who live in periphery. They don't have access to the opportunities....generating a dehumanized situation" (personal interview, 2010). The exclusion of people from public spaces has repercussions on understandings of citizenship and may lead to future urban violence.

⁷⁰ While 4 soles (the equivalent of about 1.33 dollars) for entrance to the park may not seem particularly expensive, when people are struggling even to afford basic necessities such as food, entrance fees are often not commonly possible.

⁷¹ While the government as a whole has favored improvements in infrastructure over social development, some state workers were highly critical of government priorities. This diversity serves as an important reminder of the need to unpack the state (England & Ward, 2007), and raise possibilities for alternative interpretations of international development.

Yet, the government is clearly proud of its urban recuperation projects, as evident from the billboards outlining changes throughout the city. The billboards have two sides, with a photo labeled before, and by implication the 'negative', and another labeled 'now,' by implication an improvement. One of the more telling billboards features a small park in the center of Lima, near one of the main areas in which street children currently hang out (see Figure 4.2). As can be seen from the picture, the government is prioritizing gated (and mostly empty) spaces over the presence of certain youth. While by no means endorsing robbing or sniffing glue as positive activities, I suggest such a billboard sends a clear message of how little certain youth are valued in the neoliberal city while failing to acknowledge any potential relationship between growing inequalities and the emergence of drug problems; street children in Lima were not actually associated with drug use on any wide scale until the 1990s.



Figure 4.2 Billboard removing youth

This billboard sends a telling message that street children were detracting from Lima's efforts at urban recuperation.

Although not surprising, the 'revitalization' or creation of parks and other recreational areas is not occurring uniformly throughout the city but rather predominantly in areas that are already wealthy or are centrally located. Such unevenness reinforces a need to examine situated processes of neoliberal urban restructuring, and the ways in which they combine with existing institutional frameworks,

regulatory processes, and political priorities (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). In many of the poorer districts in Lima's peripheral cones, children specifically emphasize that there are no parks or areas in which they can play (personal interviews, 2009-2010). For example, at one of the busiest intersections in the eastern cones of Lima, most of the children who worked cleaning car windows, simply sat on the curb under a bridge when they wanted to take breaks. With traffic whizzing by, we would sit, chat and draw pictures. At one point, I wanted to conduct a longer interview, and asked two of the children if there was a park in which we could play and talk a little more formally. The children told me there was not a park nearby, that they were not allowed in the one a few blocks away. Hoping they were either mistaken or that my presence would make a difference, we walked there anyway. Padlocks barred the gates around the park, which included a basketball court and a rundown play area. A group of men wearing municipal uniforms were playing basketball and I asked if they could let us in. One ignored me, and another came over and said that the play area was not safe. I explained that we just wanted to sit on the bench and he conceded, letting us in to the gated area. If I had not insisted, and looked obviously white and foreign, the children most likely would not have been allowed to play. That safety was his justification fails to acknowledge a lack of appropriate alternatives that result from closing off limited play areas. Children not allowed into the park simply play in the streets, trying to avoid oncoming traffic. Lack of appropriate playing areas is a serious concern for poorer children living in cities. In ratifying the CRC, the Peruvian government recognized children's right to play. However, by failing to provide spaces in which to play, they are severely limiting that right. Ironically, children working in city spaces are perhaps in a position in which they can more easily create opportunities for play than can children who are confined in smaller indoor places. In fact, some children specifically reported that one of the aspects about working that they most liked was the freedom to walk around and play with other friends, as I discuss in Chapter Five.

The neglect of more marginal spaces reinforces the idea that Lima's urban 'recuperation' is part of widespread municipal efforts to both attract more tourism and investment while also strategically removing those people who are considered a blight or threat from more central spaces. Such 'recuperation' projects have systematically removed street children from the majority of Lima's central parks by appealing to understandings of them as criminals and drug addicts, reinforcing claims that revanchist politics are spreading to cities in the south (Swanson, 2007b). By not addressing any of reasons children are in the streets, such projects only work to displace social problems. However, in contrast to places such as Brazil, where forced removal often went hand in hand with the emergence of

gated communities (Caldeira, 2000), many of Lima's 'recuperation' projects actually served to create public spaces frequented by poor and wealthy Peruvians alike.

However, it is not just public works projects leading to the removal of street and working children. In areas where street children's presence is simply unwelcome, but no major governmental projects are planned, social cleansing is arguably more complex. I suggest that efforts to remove children simply because their presence was threatening or, in the words of another government official, because they "are aesthetically unpleasing" actually require more creative justifications, and are the projects that most often emphasize children's need for protection. While police may arrest people more on the basis of their behavior than the seriousness of their offense, they are nonetheless constrained by the availability of laws that they can reference (Herbert, 2011). In this sense, children offer an interesting perspective into the criminalization of poverty. Their age and presence in the street, regardless of behavior, serve as enough justification to apprehend them. "We pick up children for abandonment. They should not be out on the streets by themselves at night," explained the chief of police of the Women's Commission (personal interview, 2010). Control and regulation of young people is not only less suspect, but is often considered beneficial. Rounding children up off the streets, even when they have committed no formal crime, serves the dual goal of protecting the public while also 'protecting' the children themselves.⁷²

4.6 Danger and Protection: Dual Understandings Applied in the Case of Generación

The way in which the removal of street children appeals to the dual depictions of children both as in need of protection and themselves threats, while also reflecting dominant beliefs that their presence is both aesthetically unpleasing and detrimental to property values came across clearly in a conflict over a home for street children in a middle-income district in Lima. Generación is a Peruvian NGO that has been working with street children in Lima since the 1990s. With funding from Save the Children, it purchased a house in the district of Magdalena, a middle-income rapidly gentrifying district in Lima. The house had an open-doors policy, meaning that street children could sleep there at night but still leave at will during the day. While a few small semi-open houses did exist, Generación was the largest program providing shelter for Lima's street children, housing a few hundred children each night.⁷³ On May 17, 2005, with the support of the national police and with an order from the judge, the

⁷² Unless they have committed serious crimes, most children are released to parents. If parents cannot be located, they are sent to state-run children's homes. Children frequently compare those homes to prisons, complaining about a lack of freedom and even reporting substantial levels of abuse (personal interviews, 2010). Such experiences problematize ideas that children are automatically better off in closed institutions than on the streets.

⁷³ In contrast, most state-run institutions are closed, with children living, studying and playing entirely inside the institution.

municipality of Magdalena forcibly shut down the house. The house was shut down on the basis of two main claims. The first was that the children and youth living in that house were engaging in criminal behaviors, robbing houses in the neighborhood and consuming drugs. The second claim was that the director of Generación was offering places to stay to children without a specific order from the judge and therefore was operating outside her right to intervene. According to this logic, the house could be shut down under the guise of protection of the children staying in it.

The director immediately went to the courts herself to protest the actions of the municipality. She argued that the mayor wanted the house because of its property value. When she had refused to sell, he decided to close the house, hoping it would motivate her to change her mind (personal interview, 2010). While the neighborhood had been considered dangerous when Generación opened the house, with 'delinquents' using and selling drugs and even building makeshift houses on or around the nearby huaca (a historical burial ground), in recent years, as Perú had experienced rapid economic growth, the neighborhood had become increasingly popular for private investors. Its location near the ocean and bordering San Isidro, one of Lima's wealthiest districts, furthered its desirability. The municipality had already 'recuperated' the huaca, turning it into a small tourist attraction. According to the director of Generación, they considered the house itself a good investment.

The director was not alone in linking concerns over the house with economic motivations. The language of municipal figures themselves indicates beliefs that the street children were disturbing the peace of the neighborhood and bringing down property values. The head of the municipal police of Magdalena wrote in a memo that the children and adolescents who live inside the house roam around the district, "causing anxiety and disturbing the peace and tranquility of the neighborhood. Generación undermines public peace, order and public security"(cited in Jaramillo, 2005, 3). The chief of the National police in Magdalena was even more derogatory in his description, furthering stereotypes of street children as drug addicts and delinquents, less deserving than the general public. "They roam in groups of six to eight on the main streets of the district and because of their state of mind from the inhalation of terokal, ask for money from bystanders and sometimes engage in criminal conduct at the expense of neighbors and the general public, creating an atmosphere of insecurity. Because of the presence of the NGO Generación, the neighbors have seen the devaluing of their properties. Old people, women and children live in a constant state of fear of being attacked or robbed by those called 'pirañitas'." First, that he would even mention property values as an official reason to close down Generación's house indicates some level of acceptance of such a view point, and provides a clear example of prioritizing a politics of aesthetics over a politics of survival (Mitchell, 1997). He then

emphasizes the fear innocent people and children (which clearly exclude street children) feel from their presence.

His use of the word *pirañita*, a derogatory term for street children because of their tendency to rob in small groups, is particularly telling. While it is unclear if any of the children living in *Generación* ever robbed people in Magdalena, many of them have committed robberies and do sniff glue (personal interviews, 2010). However, it is unlikely that shutting down one of the few safe supervised places children can sleep will address any of these issues. A desire to get rid of the problem, rather than address its root causes, is strengthened in his final comments. The chief explains that the street children are from the center of Lima and the Parada, one of Lima's most dangerous neighborhoods and biggest market areas. In doing so, he establishes that the kids are not from Magdalena, essentially are 'out of place' there and are not the responsibility of the municipality of Magdalena.⁷⁴ Other scholars have similarly documented complaints that social services attract homeless and undesirable people to areas in which they would otherwise not be (Kingfisher, 2007). However, suggesting that street children are not the responsibility of certain districts of the city fails to consider relational aspects of poverty and uneven processes of development. Finally, he attributes street children's presence to 'lack of authority' from 'benign laws that fail to properly punish minor offenses,' although he does also mention a lack of centers truly devoted to children's reinsertion in a social context. Overall, imagery of street children as delinquents that act at the detriment of the general public and need to be dealt with more harshly is increasingly common in Lima and can be linked to a greater shift towards the penalization of poverty.

Yet, while the police were clear in their motivations to shut down the house, the Family Judge who approved the final order specifically focused on a need to protect the children themselves, rather than their delinquency or negative effects on property value. In a statement to the press the day after the house was closed, the judge said "The intervention we had yesterday was to *protect* the minors" (emphasis mine). She then goes on to say that she cannot allow NGOs to profit off of people "hungry, in need, and without parents....I owe it to these children who are in total abandonment in this institution. This woman (head of *Generación*) was picking up children without authorization." By establishing the

⁷⁴ This tendency to blame NGOs for bringing in problems to neighborhoods otherwise free of them is not unique to Magdalena but rather is also evident in an incident involving a religiously-based NGO that goes to an area in Lima's center that is highly populated by street youth and teen sex workers. Every Friday night, they sing religious songs, give a very short sermon, and then hand out milk and sandwiches to any children or youth there. While the area has long been associated with street youth, a house owner complained to the police that 'a foreign' church group was busing in street children from all over the city and setting them loose outside her house. The particular house owner rents rooms in her house to teen sex workers, making it very unlikely that she really believed the NGO was responsible for street children's presence. However, a desire to view street children's presence as 'not my problem' coinciding with distrust of foreign NGOs made her case sound more plausible.

house itself as a dangerous site, her actions in closing it can appear less controversial. The Ministry of Women and Social Development, in implicit support of the decision, removed Generación from the state registry of social service institutions.

On one level, it is arguably important for government officials to demand that NGOs get official permission before taking in children.⁷⁵ However, a desire to ‘protect’ the children needs to be called into question considering the lack of follow-up or alternative housing arrangements in place. When the children left for the day to go to work or school, the house was padlocked and guarded to prevent them from returning. Yet, no efforts were ever made to see how or what they were doing. In fact, at the time of my research, many of the children who had been sleeping in Generación were sleeping in the streets, and had not been in a program house since Generación had been forcefully closed (personal interviews, 2010). For months after the house was closed, municipal police guarded it, raising questions about what the government was prioritizing and how it chose to spend its money.

Thus, despite having ratified the CRC and therefore recognizing children as actors with the right to be consulted on matters affecting them, the closing of the house arguably appealed more to previous ideologies emphasizing social containment and protection. As explained in Chapter Two, previous to 1990, poor children were governed by the Doctrine of Irregular Situations, a code that largely treated abandoned and delinquent children the same way, as objects to not only be protected but also controlled in institutions until they were no longer a threat to social order (Garcia Mendez, 1998).

However, while a language of protection, and even rights, may be manipulated to justify more repressive policies, the existence of rights frameworks nonetheless do offer possible legal tools to social cleansing policies. Shortly after the house was closed, the Defense of the People, an independent constitutional body created by the constitution in 1993, issued a statement that the closure of Generación was insufficiently motivated, not only because it failed to consider the best interest of the child, as promised by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Peruvian Code of Children and Adolescents, but also because there is “no indication of evidence to lead to the credibility of the injunction” nor to support the particular sentence decided for the measure (as cited in Jaramillo, 2005, 9). Currently, the case remains in front of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. An ability to gain legal support and have the case heard at a human rights court indicates the potential to use international influence in positive ways, and speaks to the idea of children’s rights discourse as a contradictory resource.

⁷⁵ Although it is also important to consider the Peruvian context. Because Peru does not have a well-developed formal welfare system, charities and even individuals often intervene to help those in ‘need.’.

4.7 Criminalizing Poverty: The Politics of Working and Begging Children

While the language used to regulate street youth focuses on ‘delinquency’ and protecting others from them, as indicated above, the regulation of ‘working children’ appeals to their vulnerability, and in this way echoes discourses that were used to confine women to certain spaces, such as the home (Valentine, 1989). Geographical imaginaries of the street as threat position those children who are in the street as at risk of contamination,⁷⁶ particularly by those older youth already depicted as delinquents, as can be seen from the comments of a lawyer in the General Attorney’s Office. “The streets aren’t a good place for kids. They start distancing themselves from their families, consuming drugs. Kids may initially start working in the streets but then they meet *pirañitas* (Peruvian slang for street children) and decide they would rather rob than work” (personal interview, 2010). Her comments indicate a need to not only ‘save’ children but also about containing potential social threats. While the language may be different, I suggest that discourses of vulnerability nonetheless facilitate policies of containment and control, providing the justification for the removal of poor working children, as is reflective of Perú’s Bill to Protect Children in Situations of Begging. As is clear from the comments above, the begging bill allowed the government to ‘protect children’ not only from existing exploitation but also from the threat of other street youth. Yet, that the ‘rescued’ children often end up in the same situation as their ‘delinquent’ counterparts is overlooked.

In many regards, the Begging Bill is arguably typical of punitive responses that criminalize the actions of the poor, such as ‘zero tolerance’ policies (Smith, 2001) and civility codes that make behaviors such as sitting, sleeping or urinating in public spaces illegal (Beckett and Herbert, 2009). However, it differs notably in its appeal to children’s vulnerability, and its justification as necessary to fulfill their rights and protect them. Morsolin and Cussianovich (2004) refer to the law as simultaneously paternalistic and repressive. While they acknowledge that some of the people supporting the law are motivated by charity and mercy, they argue that the *aporophobia*, or fear and hatred of poor people, is re-cloaked under the guise of protection. In this way, children’s removal is seen as less controversial than more extreme incidents of social cleansing reported in other parts of Latin America. While ideologies of protection and delinquency are significantly different, both approaches result in removing children from the public sphere and enclosing them in institutions. In many regards, then, the Begging

⁷⁶ Unfortunately, there is some basis to these claims. Many children and youth who end up sleeping in the streets are first exposed to street life through peers that they meet over the course of their time working. However, while children did report learning to sniff glue and rob from friends, the idea of contamination is complex. The large majority of majority of street children also face poverty and abuse in the homes from which they come. Without adequate support for their families and their work, they arguably seek out other sources of support. Thus, while exposure to street life might encourage their separation, it did not cause the underlying problems or the structural violence that produce the phenomenon of street children.

Bill has more in common with pre-1990 laws regarding the Doctrine of Irregular Situations than they do the CRC. Yet, the language being used to justify the social control of poor children has changed. Although policies like the Begging Bill ultimately result in the removal of street children from public spaces, they are couched through appeals not only to the protection of children but also to a need to safeguard their rights. In Chapter Three, I argued that the Begging Bill justified increased regulation of poor children and their parents while promoting problematic understandings of poverty and deservingness. In this section, I show how the Bill also serves a tool for social cleansing, prioritizing urban aesthetics over child well-being. I suggest that children's rights discourse, along with the spread of Western understandings of childhood as universal, ironically provide a moral justification for such policies.

While minimum age laws against child labor already existed, the Begging Bill took persecution of child workers to a new level, and was considered discriminatory specifically because it targeted those who worked in the informal economy. Street vending, because it has one of the lowest barriers to entry, often attracts Lima's most recent migrants. Although estimates are considered somewhat unreliable, Perú's National Institute of Statistics reports that 6,550 children work on Lima's streets as ambulatory vendors, acrobats, musicians, guides, shoe shiners and other street jobs (INEI, 2008). Because of underreporting, numbers are most likely even higher. While street work is not always the most dangerous, because of its visibility, and the way street children simultaneously appeal to understandings of vulnerability and delinquency, they are frequent targets of intervention.⁷⁷

Rather than addressing all forms of labor exploitation, the bill specifically focuses on that which occurs in public spaces, reinforcing impressions that the bill's primary concern lies with image. Henry Pease, who was president of congress at the time, proposed the bill after an apparent interaction with a boy cleaning windshields at a traffic light in the city center. He described an incident in which a boy insisted on wiping his windshield as providing his motivation for the bill. Supporters suggest that Pease did not want the boy to be forced to work in such conditions, while critics argue that the boy inconvenienced Pease, and it was a question of social cleansing. Feelings of discomfort and inconvenience have similarly led to anti-begging laws in cities in Canada and the United States (Blomley,

⁷⁷ Although other types of child labor are also prohibited, there was (and still is) very little intervention to prevent most children from working, and many police specifically asserted that it was not part of their job to regulate child labor. The lack of attention paid to working children in arguably greater situations of exploitation calls into question how much the Begging Bill really was motivated by protection, as presented in official discourse. For example, children working as domestic laborers are subject to extreme forms of abuse and exploitation, and often have far less freedom than do children working in the streets. However, because of their 'invisibility' they remain largely outside of campaigns that are motivated more by concerns about image than about actual child well-being.

2007; Mitchell, 1998), although more under the guise of protecting the 'public' than of protecting the beggars, as is the case in Perú.

With the passing of the Begging Bill, street children became a direct target of intervention. In this sense, as working children not only forbidden to work but subject to frequent police intervention and detainment in police stations and children's homes, they are placed in a situation where they are arguably criminalized for their poverty and for trying to assist themselves and their families. Ultimately, Morsolin and Cussianovich (2004) suggest that it comes down to whether the fight to survive is sanctionable as a crime, supporting claims elsewhere that there has been an increased criminalization of the poor (Wacquant, 2003). In this sense, laws that are supposed to be for children's protection ultimately provide the justification for police harassment or social cleansing projects (Liebel, 2008).

The Begging Bill was based on very specific understandings of public space and childhood. In the bill's outline of the steps to be taken, the first priority is to remove children and adolescents from the street. Such an emphasis reinforces the idea that the street itself is a place of danger, providing some of the justification for the law in the first place. As argued in section 4.4, notions of children as 'out of place' in the streets have arguably been influenced by the spread of Western understandings of childhood as a time of play, innocence, and vulnerability (Valentine, 2004). Yet, children have long been a part of Lima's urban landscape, selling candy and working in the streets. The bill arguably served to re-conceptualize such actions, based on Western conceptions of appropriate uses of public space. Daniel, a Peruvian working for an international children's rights NGO, sees the laws as having been modeled after anti-begging policies from the North. Thirty-years old and a self-identified intellectual leftist, he saw begging campaigns as inappropriate for Perú. Daniel explained, "Begging campaigns were taken from one country and plopped here. Perú has ambulatory sellers but now they are considered mendicants. There has been no analysis of the law of mendicity. It is discrimination against poor andinos" (personal interview, 2009). He highlights how the law re-categorizes workers as beggars. While the bill officially excludes any activities in which children provide a good or service from its definition of begging, the majority of those children apprehended are in fact engaging in some type of street work, such as selling candy and gum, singing, or cleaning windshields, as was the case with the boy with whom Pease first interacted. By labeling street-level subsistence activities as begging, the Bill ultimately re-categorized street children's work as a moral failing and an undignified behavior (Swanson, 2007b), supporting arguments that social categorizations and a lack of power to represent oneself reproduce poverty (Mosse, 2010). Thus, while children's actual behaviors may not have changed, I suggest that the way they are interpreted has.

Regulating parents through the policing of public space

It is not just poor children that are criminalized by the Begging Bill but also parents, most often depicted as migrant or indigenous women. In fact, it is these supposedly exploitative adults that are the focus of most media campaigns regarding the bill. The Begging Bill promoted an image of children as in need of both better protection and better control, implying that their parents are unable to properly raise and police them. Perú is not alone in its attempts to regulate poor parents by regulating their children's access to public space. In the 1980s and 1990s, the use of juvenile curfews became increasingly popular in cities throughout the United States. Like the Begging Bill, curfew laws not only reinforced the idea that children cannot protect themselves, but also that some parents cannot or will not, making it necessary for the state to intervene (O'Neil, 2002). O'Neil (2002) specifically suggests that curfews are a way of encouraging parental supervision based on very narrow understandings of what constitutes appropriate parenting. Such laws are particularly discriminatory because certain youth, especially poor urban ones, do not have access to basements, backyards or other private spaces that offer safe alternative socializing venues. Like curfew laws in the United States, the Begging Bill specifically targets poor and indigenous children and their parents, severely limiting their ability to be in public space, and thus supporting arguments that they are one more sign of a criminalization of poverty (Jaramillo, 2005; Morsolin & Cussianovich, 2004).

I suggest the Begging Bill is highly racialized, reflecting specific ideas about appropriate parenting, and stereotypes among many upper- and middle-class Limeños regarding the 'unscrupulous behavior' of migrant mothers (personal interviews, 2010). By focusing on supposedly 'universal' practices, the Begging Bill provides a legal way for wealthier Limeños to control newer migrants' access to public spaces. While indigenous women are specifically invited to wealthy neighborhoods to work as domestic workers, if they choose to be on the streets of these same districts outside of such strictly controlled relationships, they are viewed as 'out of place' and thus a threat.

Although the bill itself did not explicitly mention race, news articles and interviews indicated a belief that indigenous and migrant women were the ones exploiting children. An article from *El Comercio* in 2008 is particularly telling. It begins, "a brown woman descends from a taxi...and gives two children of 6 and 4 years to a woman in polleras (an indigenous type of skirt) sitting on the sidewalk waiting." That the women in the example are darker and/or indigenous is not incidental.⁷⁸ In the

⁷⁸ The article also describes a situation in which children are being rented to adults and forced to beg, thus moving beyond situations in which children accompany their mothers to work because of poverty. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the majority of children in this study come to work on their own. While not denying the existence of a mafia, or the very real exploitation that may occur, assumptions that children who are not with their mothers are with a mafia fails to consider

context of the new law, the mere presence of indigenous women with children becomes grounds for removal. A long-term staff member of the Ministry for Women and Social Development explained, “Andean children have become synonymous with need. People see a woman with a baby strapped on her back and assume she is trying to manipulate emotions.” Yet, in Andean communities, women usually bring their young children to the field with them, making the sight of a woman with a child on her back not only common, but expected. However, when a woman, especially one wearing indigenous clothing, brings her child with her while she is doing street work, she is viewed as especially out of place and thus a problem. One child rights advocate explained,

“Quechuan women walk with their babies. They don’t leave their babies anymore but when they are selling, they often have their kids there, under the tables so they can help kids with homework and keep an eye on them. How does this family/culture work when passed to urban space? It is different if you leave the kids in the potatoes. Then someone comes with the concept of modernity, and says, ‘Pobrecito, the kid is in the dirty potatoes.’”

Yet, such factors are often overlooked in the targeting of indigenous women. While the actual Begging Bill may not reference race, the routines that police officers establish effectively become the policies (Lipsky, 1980). The head of municipal police in Miraflores showed me a video his office had been making to try to document exploitation. The video, which involved secretly filming women in public spaces, almost entirely focused on indigenous women. While the women in the video did not appear to be engaging in particularly exploitative behavior, simply because of their ethnicity, they were subject to increased monitoring.

The Bill itself is also based on the assumption that alternative spaces to the street are safe. Yet, in their emphasis on disciplining poor parents, the authors of the bill fail to acknowledge alternative understandings of space. As mentioned, in most Andean families, children spend a lot of time carrying out activities alongside adults. To bring children to work in urban spaces, then, it is not necessarily viewed as anything out of the ordinary and may in fact be a strategic way to teach children skills parents believe they will need later in life, and provide them with work experience and a form of income (Invernizzi, 2008). Further, by presenting the street as a place of danger, the bill implies that alternative spaces in which children would be are safe. However, some mothers reported that they felt compelled to bring their children with them to the streets because otherwise, their children would be left alone in

indigenous practices of child circulation, in which children are sent to live with wealthier families. Such practices serve to provide children with opportunities and alleviate financial burdens amongst poor families while also cementing relationships between various families (Leinaweaver, 2006).

their neighborhoods, where they faced gang risks, could not be helped with homework, and might get into trouble (personal interviews, 2010). Given that most gangs are concentrated in Lima's cones, such threats are not unfounded. In this sense, what in some regards seems like poor parenting is actually part of a protective strategy given the reality of poorer families' living situations. These alternative conceptions of space are arguably overlooked in efforts to control and regulate poor families.

Prioritizing urban aesthetics over protection

While the bill is officially supposed to protect children from adults who are exploiting them by making them beg, I argue that it is utilized primarily as a tool to remove any children working in public spaces in wealthy neighborhoods. The presence of street children and youth in public spaces in the city arguably hurts the image of a modern secure city that the government wants to portray. Some government officials themselves were upfront about what they believed the government's priorities were. The vice-director of Perú's national Department for Girls, Boys and Adolescents, DINNA (a subgroup of the Ministry for Women and Social Development (MIMDES)), said that the operatives were really about aesthetics. She said that when children came to work or beg in the wealthier districts of Lima, they were considered to make the neighborhoods 'ugly'.

Nonetheless, one could arguably justify children's exclusion from certain spheres on the basis that it is in their best interest, one of the main principles of the CRC. However, the bill's implementation casts doubt on such claims. While the Bill officially requires the government to address children's educational, emotional and health needs, and help provide parents and children with alternatives to begging, removal of the children themselves was the only step implemented. Perú's child workers movement issued a formal statement saying that rather than providing preventative programs, the law punished children for being poor, and parents for not having dignified work. One of the movement's child delegates explained, "It was not a question of our well-being. It was about getting child workers off the streets. The police operations always occurred before big events, before Lima hosted the APEC summit or around Christmas, when everyone comes to the city to shop" (personal interview, 2010). Such claims resonate with studies documenting intensified slum clearance in other countries before big world events (Newton, 2009; Dupont, 2011; Davis, 2011). The principle of a school for working children raised similar concerns that the campaigns were really about 'the figure of the city...They wanted to get the kids out of the street. They only thought of the moment, not the kids. The kids returned to work in other parts of the city because the operations did not address any of the causes of begging or poverty" (personal interview, 2010).

Second, the impetus for the law came from Lima's wealthier districts, who arguably did not want children pestering or inconveniencing them. As alluded to in the previous respondents' remarks, such municipalities showed greater concern with getting children out of their districts than with what ultimately happened to the children. Because the majority of children who work (and occasionally beg) in wealthy neighborhoods do not actually live there, they are presented as 'out of place' and not the responsibility of said municipalities. This comes across clearly in a book published by the municipality of San Isidro, one of Lima's wealthier neighborhoods, and an area considered to have successfully eliminated begging. The title of the book emphasizes eliminating ambulatory child labor in a cost-effective way, telling in and of itself for its emphasis on economic efficiency. In the prologue to the book, San Isidro's mayor at the time writes, "children arrive on our streets principally from the districts of the periphery of Lima for exercising some type of ambulatory activity or disguised begging, putting at risk their physical and moral integrity" (Municipalidad de San Isidro, 2005, 11). While his comments express concern with child well-being, he also immediately establishes that the children are not from San Isidro, and thus do not belong. The body of his text focuses on removal, rather than addressing the reasons that children beg and work, and reiterates that they are the responsibility of the districts from which they come. Yet, such comments fail to address the way in which poverty and wealth are directly connected, and the exploitation of indigenous communities that has occurred for centuries (Thorp & Paredes, 2010). Additionally, most of the districts where children live are themselves much poorer and less equipped to deal with the underlying motivating factors behind children going to beg or worker in wealthier districts.

A law professor at the University of Lima critiqued San Isidro's campaigns as 'social cleansing'. "In San Isidro they sent a letter saying ambulatory sellers couldn't be with kids, or they would lose their parental rights. It is a case of social cleansing. They think they are high class and don't want Andean workers in their streets. They pay for security guards but not social services. If children are in San Isidro, they pick them up. When they cross into Magdalena (a neighboring district), they are left alone...but kids return once the police leave. They are mobile." His response is interesting for a number of reasons. He shows a clear link between the removal of children and a desire to improve image, while also alluding to the highly racialized natures of the campaign. The professor's comments also indicate the municipalities' main priority of simply getting children out of their district, rather than looking into their actual well-being. Finally, his comments speak to children's own agency and ability to subvert governmental intentions, a topic I turn to in the final sections of this chapter.

Police operations to enforce the Begging Bill are also discriminatory, targeting those children and those areas that are most frequented by tourists and Perú's elite. The government identified 27 areas in Lima to target, all located in the wealthiest districts of Lima, with the exception of the historic center, which attracts tourists and visitors during the day (See Figure 4.3). On the one hand, this may be a matter of practicality. Presumably, children are more likely to beg in areas where they think people will give them money. And many children in this study reported traveling to wealthier districts to sell candy and gum for that very reason. However, throughout Lima, children engage in activities that fall into the category of disguised begging, and some children even reported that poorer people were more likely to empathize with them and respond positively. That the government entirely neglected poorer neighborhoods, even though more children work in the streets in such zones, casts doubts that protecting children is the government's number one objective. Instead, I suggest it is linked to wealthier districts' concern with presenting a certain image of their neighborhoods that is free from child beggars, and child workers in general. In this way, the Begging Bill, and police operations more generally, have led to widespread geographical displacement from 'prime' spaces to more 'marginal' ones.

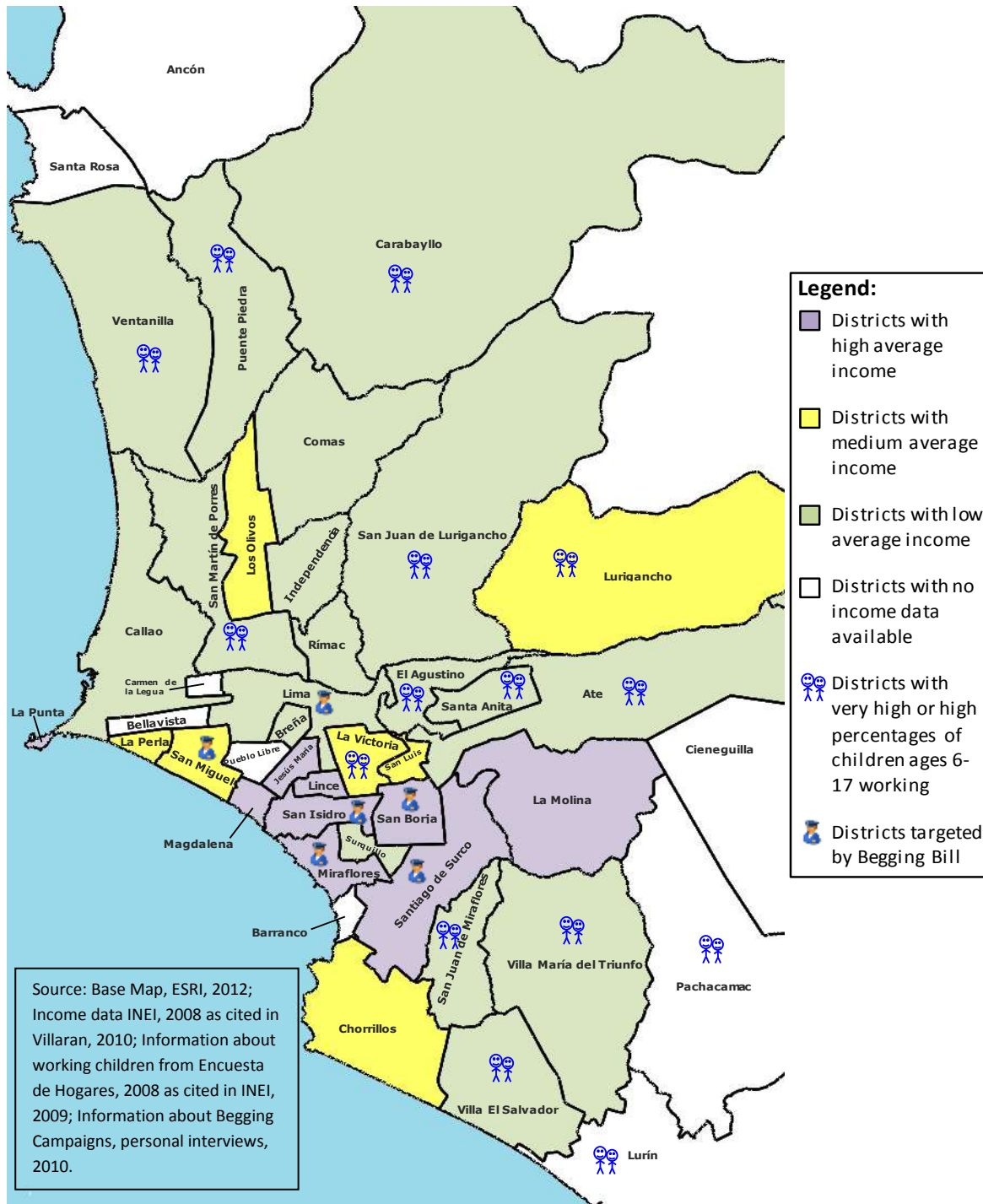


Figure 4.3 Map of Begging Bill campaigns

This map clearly shows the gap between the locations where the Begging Bill was carried out, nearly all wealthy, and the areas with the highest number of children working, calling into question concerns with actually protecting children.

Duncan (1978) defines prime spaces as those used and valued by mainstream society in contrast to those marginal spaces, which are not. He suggests that homeless people learn the values of different

spaces and find those spaces that are considered not worth patrolling. Children's ability to cross district lines and their knowledge that police will not follow them reinforces such claims, and further speaks to the highly uneven implementation of the Begging Bill.

Finally, an examination of what actually happened to children once captured makes aesthetic concerns most clear. While an ideology of children's rights may have been central to the multi-sector committee that wrote the plan, the police officers in charge of implementing it purportedly received no special training. They would frequently chase down children who tried to escape, using physical force and intimidation to apprehend them. Such 'trauma' is rarely discussed in positive reports of the bill's implementation. Because the majority of children apprehended were not actually with parents or other adults, the government needed to search for each child's parents before releasing them. This proved especially problematic during Perú's summer months. Many of the operations were carried out over Christmas, when the presence of shoppers and visitors in Lima's downtown and touristy areas reportedly increases. Because of the uneven concentration of resources in Lima, children from Perú's poorest provinces frequently migrate over the summer in order to earn money to pay their school fees. As was the case with children born in Lima, migrant children were similarly brought to the Family Police Station, and temporarily detained while the police tried to locate the children's parents. However, many of the children came from communities or households without telephones or easy means to contact their parents. When their parents could not be immediately located, they were sent to live in state-run children's homes until their parents could be found, with some children staying months and missing the start of school. Being left in children's homes for large amounts of time, unsure of what had happened to their parents or why no one had come to claim them, can have lasting effects on children's self-esteem and well-being. The director of one NGO working with street children explained the negative effects that being institutionalized can have. "They start to lose confidence that their parents care about them. While initially they may have had fairly positive relationships, they question how their parents could just let them stay in the home. Some even escape, discouraged and resentful that they have been left alone so long. Some may be too young to understand what is happening, and if the staff do not explain it clearly, or worse, speak disparagingly of the parents, it can be very damaging for the children." Ironically, then, the process of being institutionalized, in at least a few of the cases, may actually facilitate a child's transition into street life.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ A lack of follow-up data limits the ability to formally document such a trend. That the government is not concerned with collecting such data, however, casts doubt on its commitment to the well-being of children apprehended.

Yet, as is the case with laws more generally, their implementation often differs significantly from formal discourse. In practice, Peruvians' may be more sympathetic to the plight of poor working children than may seem to be the case at first glance. For example, despite formal support of the Begging Bill in San Borja, one of Lima's wealthier districts, when the police actually engaged in an operative to remove the children selling candy in their neighborhood, the screaming and running children alarmed and upset the residents in the neighborhood, who protested the polices' brutal intervention. While laws in Perú have worked to limit street children and working children's access to space, more conflicting views about childhood and child labor have served to mediate some of the most punitive effects.

Police operations, be it for specific projects of 'recuperation' or because of scheduled planned interventions, are not everyday occurrences. I suggest that the actual interactions between street children and public officials are actually far more varied. As most people within Perú are well aware, there is often significant difference between laws and practice (personal interviews, 2010). While the begging bill and anti-child labor legislation are supposed to apply throughout Lima (and even on a national level), no police operations against begging took place in poorer districts of the city. This unevenness speaks to greater complexity in the regulation of public space (DeVerteuil et al, 2009). Actual beliefs about childhood and appropriate behaviors in public space vary significantly within Perú.⁸⁰ Public authorities outside of wealthy areas generally showed more tolerance of children's presence in the street. Over 2/3 of Peruvian adults report having worked as children (ILO, 2007), and the sight of children milling around big marketplaces, either with their parents, or on their own, rarely warrants much observation. I suggest that although children in such districts are often engaging in the same types of work as children in Lima's more central areas, they are not viewed as transgressing spatial boundaries, and are thus less threatening (Cresswell, 1996). Street children in the hills surrounding Lima and even within poorer areas in the city center rarely face the same intervention or regulation that they do in wealthy areas, and adult street vendors and even police often keep an eye out on children or bring them food.

In a big transport hub in one of Lima's poorer districts, a small group of boys work cleaning car windows under a bridge. They explained that police never bother them, and that people generally are

⁸⁰ That the Begging Bill was not implemented in Cusco, although it is officially a national bill, further speaks to the uneven nature of social cleansing. Cusco has a much greater indigenous population and centers its identity on notions of indigeneity. Families maintain closer ties to rural communities, often still owning land, moving between the city and the country, or diversifying where family members live, with some siblings in the city of Cusco while others stay at home in the countryside. Cusco's history of exclusion and conflict with the capital, combined with weaker power of anti-child labor campaigns arguably lead to different regulations and understandings of childhood. In such regards, I suggest that indigenous people in Cusco's main plaza are not considered as 'out of place', nor are children who work helping their mothers.

supportive of them being there (personal interviews, 2010). When I sat with them on the curb, a police woman watched us from across the street, making no comment. Additionally, other adults frequently came by to offer them food or see how they were doing. In this neighborhood, children working is a fairly common sight, and although not always approved, many adults actively support the children and keep an eye on them. Because working children are not considered 'out of place' in such districts, they are not subject to increased regulation. This supports studies that suggest that police officers themselves develop notions about what is 'normal' behavior for different parts of the city, allowing certain behaviors in some spaces but not in others (Rubenstein, 1973).

The uneven nature of implementation speaks to a need to examine how cities are governed through 'grounded practices' within 'deeply textured social and political life' (Wilson, 2004, 773). Urban expressions of wider political economic change are always contingent and contradictory (Proudfoot & McCann, 2008, 365). Brenner and Theodore (2002) argue that neoliberal strategies interact in complex and contested ways with pre-existing uses of space, institutional configurations and constellations of sociopolitical power.

4.8 Police-Street Child Interactions, Identity Checks, and Discretion

Daily individual interactions between street children and police may differ significantly from actual policies, or even formal police operations. Police, like other 'street-level bureaucrats' affect how and where regulatory enforcement occurs (Proudfoot & McCann, 2008). Within the confines of the bureaucracies they work and the societies in which they live, they exercise significant discretion in when and how to enforce regulations (Herbert, 1996; Proudfoot & McCann, 2008). Police have different ideologies that influence their actions, ranging from maintaining order and 'sanitizing' space to protecting children to protecting people from delinquent youth. I suggest that individual police officers' decisions are shaped by their own geographical imaginations, and what activities they believe are appropriate for any given space. Proudfoot and McCann (2008, 356) point out that "geographical imaginations draw on deeply held, social (rather than individual or personal) discourses about places as desirable, dangerous, unhealthy, problematic and so forth." Building on such comments, I suggest that particular people in these spaces are differently coded, as argued in section 4.4. Such "scripted bodies help construct the sense of people's social and moral character and how society should respond to them" (Wilson & Grammenos, 2005, 308).

Individual police tend to engage in a variety of policing strategies, ranging from violence and extraction of bribes to neglect or even assistance. Responses vary with individual policemen and also relate to the age, gender and behavior of the children in question. As mentioned, when police

interventions regarding child labor do occur, they tend to be in wealthy areas or areas highly frequented by tourists. However, when it comes to day to day situations of children working, most police officers do not see work as anything out of the ordinary, and rarely intervene. In part, this relates to polices' understandings of their responsibilities. Police reported that they are not responsible for intervening when they see children working (personal interviews, 2010). They reported that they only intervene when they see criminal behaviors, thus implicitly emphasizing that child labor is not criminal. Such responses demonstrate a high degree of tolerance for everyday incidents of child labor. While many police officers ignore working children, some occasionally intervene positively, watching to make sure no one takes advantage of the children, stopping to chat with them, or occasionally purchasing food or getting their shoes shined.

Removing 'delinquents': Identity checks

In contrast, in areas where residents feel a greater sense of insecurity, there is more pressure on police officers to 'do something' about crime. Teenagers in public spaces at night are increasingly assumed to be engaging in 'delinquent' behavior (personal interviews, 2010). Simply for 'being' in certain spaces at particular times, they can now be apprehended. This comes across clearly in some of Lima's new policing strategies. Towards the beginning of my fieldwork, I was invited to accompany police on one of their early morning police rounds in a district in the Southern cones of Lima. The police had formed a partnership with a neighborhood watch group (and were looking for private funding, perhaps reflective of newer neoliberal forms of policing (see Yarwood, 2007)). As part of the watch, a group of neighbors and police officers walk around together looking for 'delinquents.' Any teenagers who are occupying particular spaces without a clear purpose fall into this category. They do not have to be engaging in any openly illegal behavior; their presence enough is grounds for discipline. Armed with flashlights, we headed from the police station to the cemetery. Around 2 am, we saw two male teenagers sitting by a tomb stone. While there was an empty beer can next to one of them, they were not currently drinking when we arrived. Despite the teens' claims they were not doing anything, the police officer photographed them, and then informed them they had to leave. We waited until they started walking away before continuing on. The photographing of those found to be 'disturbing the peace' is part of a new strategy in this particular district of Lima aimed at deterrence. Understaffed and underfunded, the police are hoping that by taking photographs of minor crimes and placing those photos on a community board, they will be able to publically shame people into better behavior. While it is too early to tell whether such methods will prove effective, I mention them here as indicative of ideas of the ways in which gender and age combine to render certain people as clearly unwelcome in

public spaces. Being photographed and removed also violates teenagers' rights to due process and can be considered discriminatory treatment. Although most other police districts do not employ photography, teenage boys congregating in public space are frequently approached by police officers and told to move. In most of these interactions, the youth in question tend to move with no particular objection, although they often return later. One police officer asking them to move explained, "They are not allowed to stand and loiter. These youth rob. We know they do. We don't want them to just stand around" (personal conversation, 2010). In his actual interaction with the youth, he was polite but firm, reminding them they were not supposed to be on the corner. Again, their age, gender, and socioeconomic position combine to limit their access to certain spaces.

While police often simply ask youth to leave, they have also been engaging in more formal police operations, using new legal methods of control to justify their actions. One of the main ways in which poor youth have been criminalized is through targeted identity checks. Such checks resonate with broken windows theory, criminalizing the many so as to deter the crimes of a few (Mitchell, 2003, 230). In theory, such checks can occur with anyone, at any time and place. Under the law, police will stop passers-by and ask to see their identity card. If he or she cannot provide one, he will be rounded up into a police truck, and brought to the station. After checking to see if the person has any record against them, they will either be released (or sent to detention if there is some type of outstanding warrant against them). The police justify such interventions by appealing to notions of safety. Police explain that if those in custody have not done anything wrong, they will be released. Through such checks, the police explained that they can better check for wanted criminals. They are an important method for the state to better 'know' and register certain populations (see Scott, 1998). In practice, however, I suggest that identity checks serve as a new way of discretionary policing that unfairly targets the urban poor.

First, identity checks are carried out in select areas, and involve significant profiling. People are not uniformly stopped and asked to show ID but rather are targeted based on their appearance and the areas in which they are congregating. Police not only focus on those who 'seem like delinquents' but target central areas where such 'delinquents' are considered more visible, although it is important to note they do not just focus on wealthy areas but also the center of Lima. It is not just because of discretionary policing, however, that poor people and migrants are unfairly targeted. Even if checks were more evenly carried out, they would unfairly discriminate against certain groups. On a national level, there is a problem with many people, especially those of indigenous ethnicity, not having identity cards. The bureaucracy involved in getting these cards is complicated, and the required birth certificates are often not available for many indigenous or poor people who have been born outside of formal

hospitals and do not have the connections, knowledge or money to wait in the right lines and get certain papers issued.

It becomes even more problematic when those being detained are under 18. Young people under age 18 are not required to carry identity cards. However, they are frequently detained for specifically that reason. On multiple occasions, when I was in the streets at night, police would engage in roundups of those not carrying IDs. Frequently, when police would see that I was walking with kids, they would leave us alone. This raises interesting issues about my positionality, and the way in which the presence of international ‘witnesses’ can work to limit police intervention. However, on occasion, police would still round up children, even if I was with them. In one particular incident, they even used physical force to remove a teenager who did not want to leave my side. As mentioned in Chapter Two, one night, I was walking with Daniel, a 17-year old who grew up on the streets, born to parents who were also street children. Other youth had started running towards us, warning us that the police were doing ID checks. As we turned to walk away, a police officer approached us. He asked Daniel for ID, at which point Daniel said that he did not have any. The policeman ignored me, neither asking me for ID nor greeting me. I asked him what the problem was, and he explained that Daniel was required to carry ID. I said, “Well, thanks for letting us know, although he is under 18.” We then turned to walk away, as had often worked in the past. A minute later, however, twenty policemen came and surrounded the two of us, Daniel clinging to my hand. A policeman approached, and physically pried him from me (although I let go easily, afraid of the number of police with guns and metal batons surrounding us). I asked why he had to go, and the policeman said because he has no ID. He did not say because he has robbed, or because he was using drugs, both of which happen to accurately describe Daniel. They took him on the police truck and immediately left to look for more kids. I, on the other hand, started crying, not used to the physical display of force, and the implicit threat of more violence, to insure compliance. While the other youth and the volunteers at the Friday night ‘leche’ all assured me that Daniel would be fine, and was used to being rounded up, the incident was deeply unsettling for me. Yet, for children like Daniel, the roundups have become routine. While an inconvenience, they only serve to reinforce such youth’s alienation and distrust of the state.

During another such incident, I was sitting with a street youth in the Plaza Martin, one of the plazas in Historic Lima that connects Giron de la Union, a main shopping street, to Lima’s main plaza of arms. It was a Friday night, a popular time to conduct identity checks. The youth I was with did not have one, and while he stated that he knew his rights, he went into the truck without too much of a fight. The police officer then asked me if I knew who I had been sitting with. I said I did, at which point he

informed me that the youth had gotten in trouble in the past for robbing and that I should be careful. He then said, “and he is homosexual.” In addition to being very unprofessional, his comments were indicative that the roundups were not random and uniformly implemented but rather carried out on the basis of certain defined characteristics and assumptions. Although those who are detained during identity checks, including children and youth who frequently rob and consume drugs, are usually released a few hours later, the municipality continues to place a big emphasis on roundups, and newspaper headlines widely report the number of ‘delinquents’ that have been apprehended in identity checks. I suggest that this is linked to a desire to appear to be ‘doing something’ about widespread fears of crime and delinquency.

Yet, the legality of the identity checks is suspect. According to a local human rights lawyer, people can only be asked for identity if they are already being detained for something else. More importantly, those under 18 are not required to carry ID. However, as is clear from such incidents, this is not the case in practice. That the police did not seem fazed by my presence further speaks to the widespread belief that such identity checks are in fact legal. Yet, to avoid engaging in ‘illegal’ roundups, some police emphasize that they are not detaining children, which would violate children’s rights, but rather are simply taking them into custody. In this regards, children’s rights to special protections are simply manipulated to provide the justification for such checks.

Despite ongoing identity checks, more often than not, individual policemen simply ignore certain behaviors, even when they are arguably problematic, or even illegal. In the case of teenage prostitution, for example, intervention by police officers is rare, unless the general attorney’s office has organized formal raids, which tend to target the hostels to which girls go, rather than the streets where they meet clients. In the main area where teenage girls work, an area in the center of Lima near a hospital and a few bus stations catering almost exclusively to Peruvians, it is not uncommon for police officers to be in the area, purchasing food from street vendors or patrolling, while girls wait on the street for clients. Clients approach, negotiate with the girls, and then leave in waiting taxi cabs, without police intervention.

When police do intervene (other than in formal operations), it is often to engage in illegal behavior, such as asking for bribes. Multiple teenage girls who prostituted explained that police often demanded sexual favors, threatening to arrest the girls if they did not comply (personal interviews, 2009), a trend documented in other studies of street child-police relationships (Thonden, Whitman & Nowrojee, 1997). Similarly, in the case of street children, many reported having to pay bribes to avoid going to jail. While most bribes were not demanded in front of me, one evening, a policeman

approached Daniel. It was early in my fieldwork, and I had accompanied one of the street educators on her nightly rounds to talk with the other children. Daniel was standing on the corner, when a policeman began prodding him with his metal baton, telling him he would take him into detention if he did not pay him a bribe. The other kids with Daniel stood around, not saying anything. However, the educator with me, a woman who herself had grown up on the streets, immediately ascertained what was occurring. She approached, telling the officer to leave Daniel alone. She then said, "If you want money, why don't you work." He started screaming at her, telling her she was worthless and should not intervene. I moved closer to her, making him very aware of my presence, but did not say anything. He eventually left, most likely knowing that if he were to react violently, my witnessing such behavior could have potentially negative consequences. We stood shaking. While in this case, Daniel did not have to pay a bribe, and no one got hit or taken into detention, most children are used to such experiences. It has become routine and they either do not know that such behavior is illegal or find that their supposed rights are meaningless. Police themselves strategically approach street children, aware of which ones rob and are thus more likely to have money, when asking for bribes (personal interviews, 2010).

The role of foreign presence in documenting police brutality has arguably had an important impact on more extreme forms of police violence. In this regard, while the state may employ new technologies of surveillance to police, the police themselves are also subject to increased public scrutiny (Yarwood, 2007), as is clear through the role of Human Rights Watch and media reports. Thus, while children's rights can be used to justify removal of street children in the name of their own protection, children's rights groups have also been active in working to reduce extreme incidents of police violence. Luckily, Lima has not had the same history of 'social cleansing' through murder that has been reported in Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala, although in the 1980s and 1990s, a few street children were murdered by police. Increased awareness of children's rights has reportedly led to some reduction in severe cases of police brutality, and speaks to the idea of rights as a contradictory resource.

Despite some progress, the idea of being protected by police officers was a very foreign concept for most street children in Lima. In fact, in direct contrast to World Bank claims, children did not see work or the street as dangers, but rather the police themselves. Children's drawings and maps frequently reflected fear of the police, and often depicted physical violence (see Figure 4.4). Children in the streets learn quickly to be wary of police, something which anti-child labor and begging campaigns arguably strengthen. However, despite overall distrust of police officers, children also recognized individual exceptions. A 15-year old who has been sleeping on the streets for four years explained, "Some of them are bad and some of them are good. Whenever I sleep in the alleyway by the hospital,

one policeman wakes me up before the serenazgo (municipal police) come. He sometimes brings me bread.” In this sense, children have learned to rely on certain police for support and help while avoiding others. This individual discretion is important in shaping children’s interactions with the police, and some of the active day-to-day survival strategies which they employ and indicates ways in which policies are reworked and implemented on the ground.

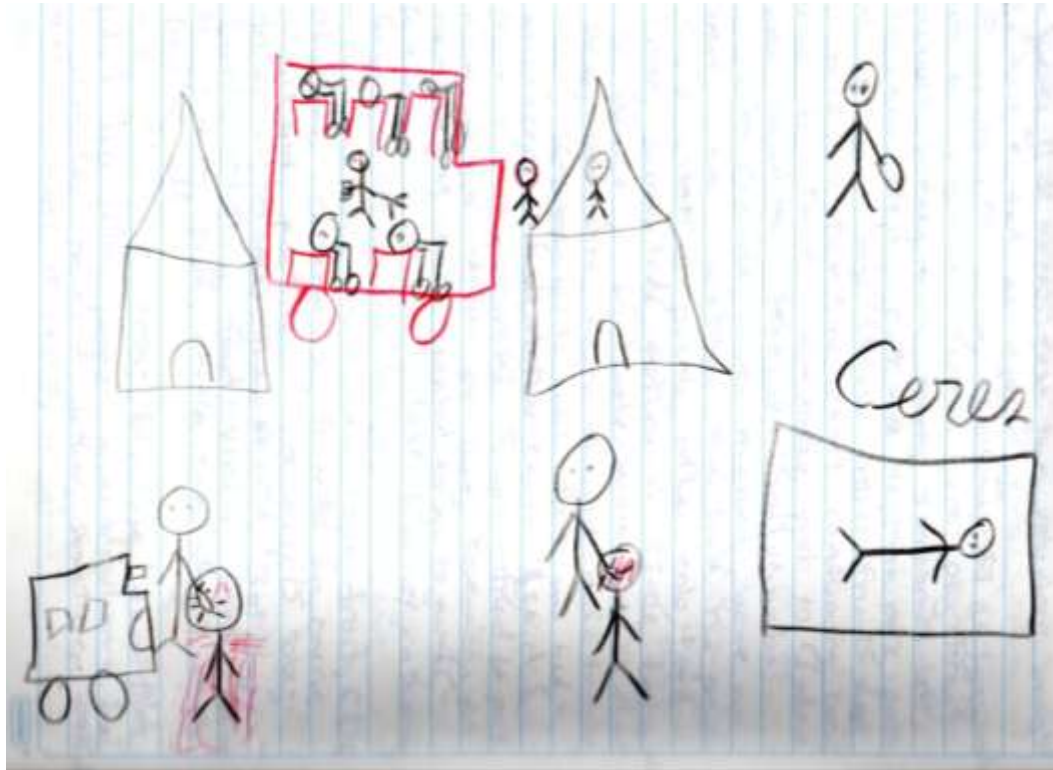


Figure 4.4 Map of important places in 14-year old street child's life

This 14-year old street child's drawing of important places in his life includes the bus he plays music on and various locations in the streets, among others. On the bottom middle, he drew a police officer beating him, and in the left, showed another street child getting run over by a bus, explaining that the driver just left him in the road. Such drawings make it clear that street life is often linked with violence in children's minds. In the top right, he drew himself with a bag of sniffing glue, something fairly common in homeless street children's drawings, and indicating the role of drugs in identity, as I will elaborate on. The bottom right shows the boy sleeping in the streets.

4.9 Resistance: Reworking Urban Policies on the Ground

While much has been written about urban planning as a means of social control, such discussions pay significantly less attention to how individuals or groups evade such attempts at discipline or re-appropriate various spaces (see Low, 1996). Yet, through their actions, children subvert, reinforce and reshape municipal policy. As the spaces that street children depend on both for livelihood and survival are increasingly closed off to them, they have responded in a variety of ways. An analysis of such strategies arguably serves to (re)locate children who are being made increasingly invisible by urban recuperation projects and exposes some of the unintended effects of urban 'recuperation'. While they

only minimally engage in formal organized resistance, as I elaborate on in the conclusion, I suggest that their actions nonetheless have important repercussions on the effects of state regulation, and necessitate new ways of thinking about resistance that move beyond looking at formal organized resistance to instead consider the various tactics that people use to carve out more spaces for themselves. Ruddick (1996) suggests that homeless youth employ tactics to make use of public spaces in ways other than those intended by dominant classes. Far from being dupes, passive in the face of their own stigmatization, such tactics work to challenge, if not confound, strategic attempts to control public space (Ruddick, 1996, 60).

Resistance can take multiple forms. Bayat's (2000) work on 'quiet encroachment' in which informal street vendors slowly take back more city space until their presence is too entrenched for city officials to do anything about it, is a useful lens through which to examine street children's actions, although I suggest his description only partially applies here. The idea of 'quiet encroachment' differs from other descriptions of resistance in that it does not require any clear or formal leadership nor is it technically a social movement. Yet, it is also different than everyday acts of survival in that struggles and gains of the agents are not at the cost of the fellow poor but of the state, the rich and the powerful (Bayat, 2000). Contenders may then engage in collective action if they feel their gains are threatened but do not necessarily perceive of such behaviors in distinctly political terms. Bayat (2000, 548) describes two principal aims of quiet encroachment: 1) to redistribute opportunities/social goods through, in this case, acquisition of public space and 2) to obtain autonomy from regulations, institutions and discipline imposed by the state and modern institutions.

Some children engage in similar processes, using public spaces for their own personal needs and subverting state attempts at regulation. For example, they may immediately return to central spaces once police are gone, and take advantage of customers visiting 'legal' businesses to offer their goods and services. Street children also actively work to avoid social workers, and being sent to state institutions, where they are subject to much more intense regulation. Finally, by remaining in the streets, they are arguably gaining freedom from such control. At night, street children to some extent have control of certain central spaces in downtown Lima. While not entirely positive, since their presence has resulted in the label of 'no-go areas', for the children occupying these spaces, this may provide them with a comfort level not found in the wealthier and supposedly 'safer' areas of the city. Yet, where the description of quiet encroachment does not adequately apply is in the results. Bayat says that by the time the state realizes, it is often too late to remove the encroachers, even with state crackdowns. However, within Lima, the municipality has successfully removed street children from

many central spaces. When they do remain, they are often vulnerable to police harassment, detainment and abuse, as just mentioned. In such regards then, street children's actions are a lot more contradictory than is implied under the framework of 'quiet encroachment'.

I suggest that the idea of partial penetration posited by Willis (1977) is a particularly relevant lens through which to consider children's actions. In his classic study of working class 'lads' in the United Kingdom, Willis argued that attempts to mock or resist school's socializing efforts were only partial. Ultimately, the boys reinforced current class systems, ending up in similar jobs to their fathers. While I will return to the idea of contradictory resistance in much greater depth in the following chapter, for my purposes here, I consider what consequences exist from children's day-to-day resistance. While in some ways street children's actions allow them to avoid detection by police (or concerned social workers), in other ways, they are arguably worse off, hidden in spaces with no access to services or support.

Children's strategies in response to regulation are highly spatial, and are shaped in important ways by the geographical unevenness mentioned above. Street children are aware that most police do not really care about 'catching' them but rather want to remove them. As mentioned, they often run across municipal lines when being chased and then return once police are gone. Street children tend to be highly mobile, and can easily relocate themselves and whatever (if any) working supplies they have in order to temporarily avoid police harassment. Yet, for some children, the constant need to flee or hide decreases their interest in retaining access to 'prime' spaces. One of the main longer-term responses has been to move to areas subject to less police surveillance. In particular, rather than occupying Lima's city center, many street children now sleep in the grass or bridges outside of the city center. In this sense, in contrast to arguments that homeless populations are increasingly contained (Davis, 1992; Zukin, 1995), street children actually occupy more space, albeit more dispersed, than in the past. This 'dispersal' necessitates a more careful look at Mitchell's claims (1997) that there has been an annihilation of space by law. While street children may increasingly be denied access to 'prime' city spaces, they arguably occupy more physical space than in the past, albeit much more marginal.

This shift coincides not only with more police surveillance but also with decentralization of Lima's businesses. The hills (or cones as they are referred to by locals) have experienced a lot of economic development, and now have super markets and shopping malls of their own. San Juan de Lurigancho, in the east of Lima, for example, has a population of around 1 million people, and is no longer a marginal center of economic activity. Street children reported that they felt more at peace in such areas but still had access to spaces of work (personal interviews, 2010). I suggest that this at least in part because they are not considered as 'out of place,' with a high presence of working children and

recent migrants. However, what limited social services exist for street children remain largely located in the center of Lima. While multiple NGOs fight over the decreased population of street children there, the needs of growing populations in the hillsides go largely unmet. One NGO has recently started sending educators to work with children in the cones. A street educator explained, “We are the only ones working in the south, the east, the north. We cannot help everyone. It makes no sense to stay in the center when the kids are not there anymore, fighting to work with five children,” (personal interview, 2010). Although a bit of an exaggeration, both NGOs and the state have been slow to address the mismatch between service location and the location of the children.

Some children, especially those still living with their families, simply ignore formal laws and continue to travel to wealthy areas and sell candy. However, I suggest that the stigma and shame associated with that work may have long-term consequences for their self-esteem. The government has simultaneously been defunding its state-run program for working children (Vasquez, 2007), limiting street children’s ability to seek support should a problem arise. Additionally, as more areas crack down, children’s ability to work in wealthy areas may be further limited. In addition to simply trying to accommodate police by bribing them, as mentioned in the previous section, children also hide until police are gone or run across district lines, knowing that municipal police do not have the jurisdiction to follow them. Children depend significantly on peer collaboration, warning each other and banding together to avoid police. Children will also strategically attach themselves to volunteers, such as religious groups passing out milk, or tourists (as well as researchers), hoping that the presence of more influential adults will limit police harassment and abuse. This speaks to the social nature of children’s agency, as I elaborate on in the following chapter, as well as concepts of reverse surveillance.

More commonly, street children increasingly try to simply stay out of sight. Ruddick (1996) suggests that invisibility is a means of access. Those who pass unnoticed in public places suffer less abuse and harassment. However, while invisibility may work to children’s advantage in the short-term, I argue that it is arguably furthers their long-term marginalization. Street children now rent rooms for the equivalent of one to five dollars a night. While the rooms range in quality, they are usually overcrowded, with four to eight boys sharing one or two mattresses. The air quality is poor, and tuberculosis and sexual abuse rates are high. Overall, Perú has the second highest TB rate in all of Latin America. Street children, because they often sleep crammed onto dirty mattresses or on the cold pavement and suffer from malnutrition, are particularly vulnerable. Because they do not have access to regular medical care or a regular place to sleep, they also often start treatment but do not follow it through, exposing them to more dangerous multi-drug resistant forms of TB.

Yet, the children that rent these rooms reported feeling more comfortable than out in the streets. “No one bothers me. I can consume (drugs) in peace. Calmly,” explained a 17-year old adolescent who had been on the streets since he was thirteen (personal interview, 2010). On the one hand, by renting rooms, street children can avoid being detained, sent to children’s homes, or beaten. However, while it is important to recognize children’s agency, I suggest there is a danger in celebrating all acts of survival as resistance. I argue that children’s actions often have contradictory or partial results. In particular, by moving to avoid police persecution, children have ironically facilitated their own removal from public spaces. Hidden inside dilapidated rooms that violate housing and safety codes, they are out of sight, and easily forgotten. The government can claim to have addressed the ‘street child’ problem, while the actual children are increasingly more marginalized and vulnerable.

As one woman working for the General Attorney’s Office explained, the Peruvian government simply tries to hide or remove poor children from public spaces. Highly critical of such efforts, she stated, “we can’t just say we’re developed and that there are no poor kids here.” On a basic level then, children’s mere presence in public space serves as a reminder that Perú’s development and more recent economic growth are not benefitting everyone. By continuing to use certain public spaces for their own needs, be it working or sleeping, they subvert dominant interests and necessitate a more careful examination of the effects of ‘revanchist’ urban policies.

Different interpretations of space

By simply refusing to comply with intended uses of public space, children arguably contest representations of space and of street children in important ways, as will be the focus of the following chapter. Vega Centeno (2006) builds on the idea of Auge’s non-spaces, explaining that these are spaces such transit hubs and airports that do not play a significant role in people’s identities. However, I nonetheless suggest that it is important to consider the way some non-places, specifically because others are not trying to identify with them, may offer more flexibility for street youth to access. One teenage boy who rented a room in the center of Lima explained that he preferred to be in the historic center at night. “It is more peaceful out here. Other people leave, and it is just us” (personal interview, 2010). In particular, many street children actively identify with the areas in which they work and spend most of their time, perhaps because of feeling marginalized or excluded from other more mainstream spaces (see Figure 4.5). For example, one day I had some pictures I had taken that I was giving out to some of the children. As they browsed through the pictures, they would point at various children, indicating, “He’s from barrio chino,” “Puente Nuevo,” “La piedra” or other areas to which kids become firmly rooted. Because space is so integrated to identity, children will not cross certain boundaries, even

to access social services. For example, children will only go and receive milk and sandwiches from church groups who come to their neighborhood, despite awareness that different church groups pass out milk in other neighborhoods on alternative nights. This desire to stay in spaces they consider safe arguably exacerbates the unevenness of the voluntary sector (Milligan & Fyfe, 2004; Wolch, 2008).

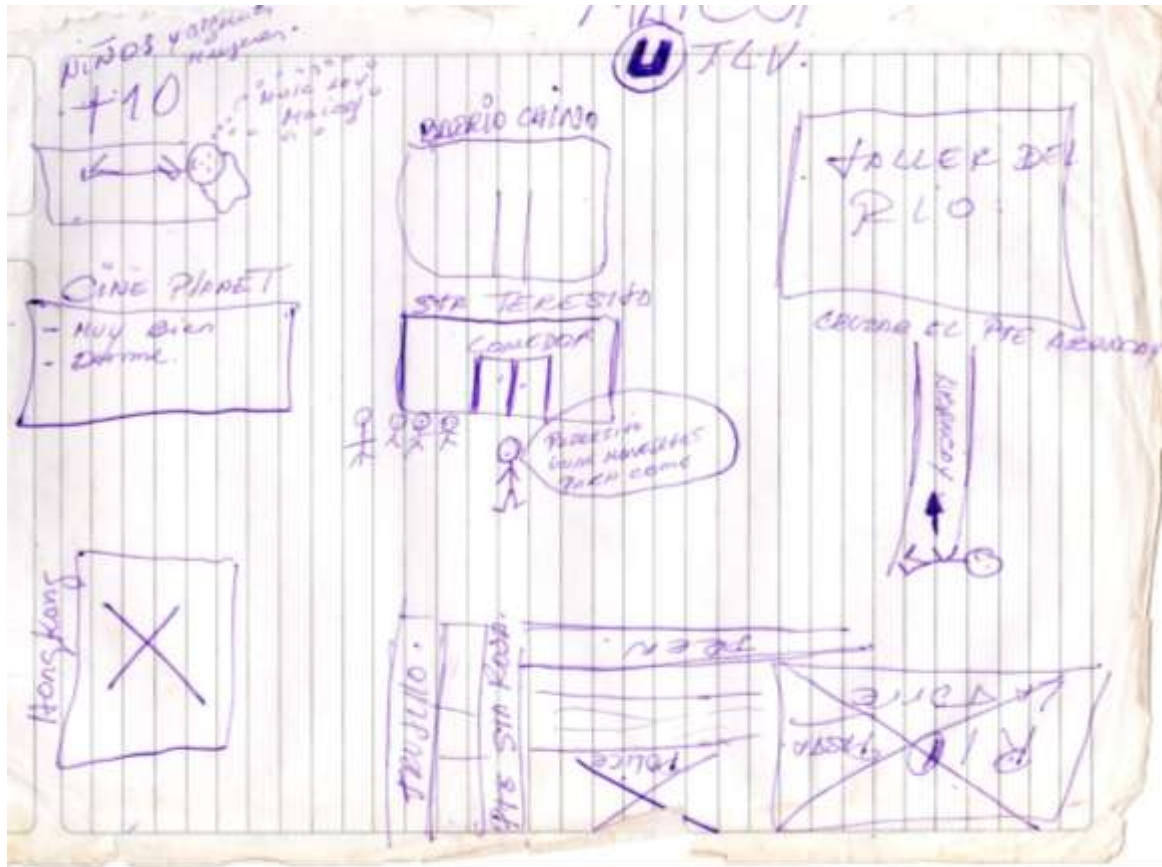


Figure 4.5 Map of important places in 16-year-old street youth's life

The neighborhood in which he currently spends time is the main component of this 16-year-old boy's map. In contrast to beliefs that street children only face danger, he reported that he felt very good by the theater, where he often slept outside, sometimes with more than ten other children, and some girls, a particular interest of his (see top left). He also included the NGO where he can bathe and practice music, and a church-run dining hall. On the bottom half of the map, he specifically drew the places that he will not go to, even though they are no further away than the NGO by the river, citing police presence, conflicts with other children, or fear of drugged homeless adults he does not know.

Denying children access to certain spaces denies them access to aspects of their self-identity (Ruddick, 1996). Van Blerk (2005) found that children's ability to establish themselves in the informal economy was linked to their spatial security. They survived by establishing 'niche spaces' in the city that served as markers of belonging and foundations for accumulation strategies. I argue that while the same is true in the case of children in Lima, their ability to do so has been significantly limited by urban 'revitalization' campaigns and forced removal. I suggest that familiarity arguably changes children's perceptions of danger, as well as the actual risks to which they are exposed. This speaks to the way in

which disorder is based on very specific understandings of space. What might appear as disorder from someone outside a neighborhood or social group is easily readable to people who are a part of this supposed 'disorder'. Children working in busy markets or sleeping in the center of Lima frequently reported feeling very comfortable in their sites of work. They easily wove in and out of spaces, taking me around the city in a calm and confident way.

Further, certain 'dangers' become less risky over time as children become accustomed to them (Invernizzi, 2008), such as navigating Lima's traffic. As children spend more time in certain areas, they begin to get to know other adults and children, who frequently watch out for them. Other scholars have similarly charted how personal familiarity and knowing people are linked with increased feelings of safety (Watt & Stenson, 1998). In contrast, areas such as those that have been revitalized and are arguably safer, were not necessarily comfortable spaces for the children in this study. In fact, the more such children stood out, the more out of place and subject to police intervention they were. They also did not know anyone, and had more trouble negotiating such public spaces on their own. While some children are formally excluded by security guards, they also frequently self-exclude, internalizing discourses that they do not belong, as will be elaborated on in the following chapter.

Children's reports of preferred spaces contrast with adult-centric notions of safety, and particularly challenge the public-private dichotomies regarding safe spaces. Multiple children said they preferred to be working or playing outdoors than indoors, alone in their houses, as became clear from both their drawings and our conversations (see Figure 4.6)

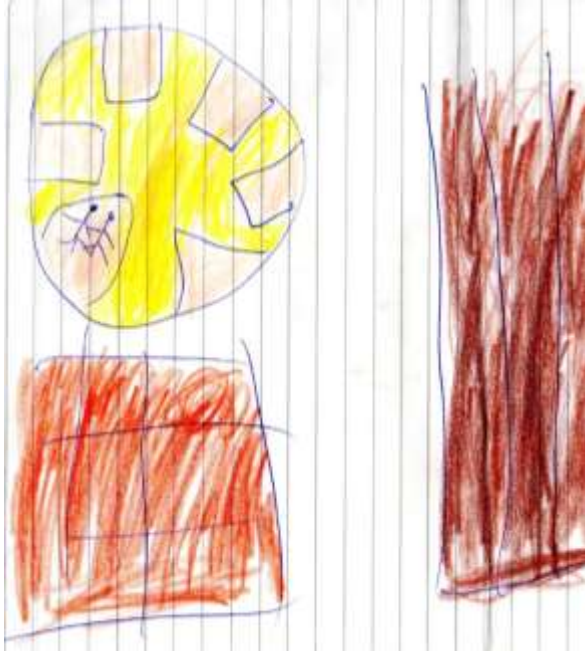


Figure 4.6 Drawing of main plaza

Nine-year old Malena drew a picture of her and her sister working in the main plaza. She explained, “I feel cold and lonely in the house if I don’t come to work. I have to wait until my mom and Sonia (her sister) come home and there is nothing to do” (personal interview, 2010). Her comments indicate the importance of considering the actual alternative ways in which children could be spending their time, rather than idealized ways. If Malena were not working, she would be alone in a cold house, in which little intellectual or social stimulation takes place. Instead, through her work, she can run around, play and help earn money for food and other goods.

Other children referred to the dangers of their own neighborhoods, also preferring the areas in which they worked. “I do not like to be alone in the house,” explained one 10-year old who lived in Lima’s eastern cones. “There is nothing to do there....the man who lives next door drinks a lot and yells at his children. You can’t walk around at night. There are dogs, well some I know, but others bark and chase you. Julissa (a neighbor) was bitten last year. And there are gangs now but they mostly don’t bother me.” Such views challenge understandings that the home (and close nearby areas) are safe, compared to the dangers of city streets. Children also specifically mentioned that they cannot access parks or other spaces ‘designated’ for them because they are filled with drunks, or closed off, as is the case described in section 4.5.

Spaces are socially constructed and are experienced and interpreted differently by differently situated people (Massey, 1994). Interestingly, children themselves had very mixed feelings about Lima’s urban changes. While multiple young people, especially teenagers with more time on the streets, themselves explained that Lima was ‘safer’ or ‘nicer’, they also expressed a sense of loss and even nostalgia for the Lima of their early street years. Older street youth charted all the spaces where they used to sleep and work that they no longer had access to, such as Kennedy Park in Miraflores, a main hang out for street youth in the late 1990s. In the city center, too, they explained that many of the abandoned houses where they used to sleep had been converted into commercial shopping centers, pointing out buildings around Lima as we would walk. Luis, a 20-year old who had been on the streets

since he was eight, explained, “This part, well, it was different. It was ours. We were the only ones here at night. We’d sometimes stay for weeks at a time in some of these old (abandoned) houses. We’d look out for each other. We had more space. The police were worse” (personal interview, 2010). Luis’ comments make clear the way in which the idea of ‘improvement’ needs to be contextualized. While shopping centers and gated parks may appear to be signs of improvement, Luis, like many other children, will not even try to enter them, as access to spaces in which he used to strongly identify are increasingly closed off. In contrast, today’s younger street children do not remember a time when Lima felt like ‘theirs’ and instead try to stay out of the way of national and municipal police. Children’s different experiences, uses and interpretations of public space reinforce understandings of space as socially produced and contested, and also necessitate a more nuanced analysis of what counts as progress and improvement.

4.10 Conclusion

In the past two decades, Lima has experienced significant urban transformation, and many people consider the city much safer than it was 20 years ago. Through active urban ‘recuperation’ campaigns, the government has arguably ‘cleaned’ up Lima. However, such projects depended on appeals to specific conceptions of development. In particular, I suggest that Western discourses of childhood reinforced notions of children as ‘out of place’ on the streets. Thus, street children’s presence could arguably be interpreted as a sign of backwardness, hindering attempts to market the city as safe for investment. While in many regards the Peruvian government responded by adopting revanchist forms of policing, this chapter has indicated that the language and rhetoric used to remove street children appealed not only to their dangerous nature but also to their need for protection. In this sense, children’s rights discourses have provided a surprising partner in efforts to ‘clean’ up city streets and have served to further displace social problems rather than address them.

Yet, children’s rights themselves can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Thus far, I have pointed out all of the negative effects of international influence. However, international children’s rights discourse provided child advocates with a strong existing group with which to protest unfair police treatment. In fact, speaking to calls for a more nuanced analysis of revanchist trends, police brutality has significantly decreased as a result of active human rights organizing. It is here where the language behind street child removal becomes important. I suggest that by justifying children’s removal through appeals to their protection, the government opened up legitimate spaces for children’s rights groups to protest.

Perú's formal rights legislation provides those objecting to the removal of street and working children with legal resources to challenge anti-labor and begging legislation. This becomes clear when looking at the way those protesting bill did so by themselves invoking a language of rights. In addition to holding events in congress and organizing marches regarding workers' rights, Perú's Movement of Children and Adolescent Workers circulated a petition against the Begging Bill, arguing that it went against their dignity and the notion that children and adolescents were subjects of rights, instead considering them 'as simple objects'. They demanded that the State fulfill its responsibility to consider the opinion of children and adolescents in decisions that affect them, to respect their rights, and to increase the budget for health and education so that all children can have a more dignified life. Although they agreed that begging was not a desirable practice, they claimed the bill did not address any of the reasons children were in the streets. Instead, it was repressive and relabeled child workers as beggars. Additionally, they invoked Article 3 of the CRC, suggesting that forcefully removing them from the street and placing them in children's homes went against the Best Interest of the Child. The Child Worker's Movement, along with their adult advocates, were able to tap into existing international networks to rally support. They drew enough international attention that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern over the begging bill, strongly urging the government to rescind it. While Perú has thus far ignored such recommendations, they still serve as an important reminder that alternative viewpoints of development and urban space do exist.

While not dismissing the importance of protecting children, the Convention also emphasizes a need to empower them as rights-bearing citizens. Remembering such a goal may serve to 'relocate' the children, who while perhaps less visible, have clearly not disappeared. Such a refocus has important implications for measures of development. I suggest there is a danger in assuming that indicators of progress will look the same in every city. As I have demonstrated, a decrease in the numbers of street children on city streets does not necessarily signify improved outcomes of child well-being. Rather than focusing on visible signs of improvement, an analysis of the well-being of Lima's more marginalized citizens would arguably be a more useful place to start. In focusing on children's own actions, I also reveal contradictions in the representations of street children and their relationship to public space, challenging the specific discourses on which urban 'recuperation' policies depend. Such representations have important consequences in the ways in which children are regulated in and through space, and indicate the ways in which social categorizations serve to (re)produce poverty.

Chapter 5: Re-theorizing Agency: Street Children's Everyday Lives

Nine year-old Silvia has been selling candy in Lima's historic center for the past year. She comes to the center of Lima with her mother and four sisters around lunch time every day. They walk over from the makeshift room they rent ten minutes away. Silvia does not like the complex where they rent rooms. The rooms are part of a small building that has been illegally sub-divided with thin pieces of wood as dividers. Silvia can always hear people fighting, and has to wait for an hour in the morning to get access to the small dirty bathroom and limited running water. After eating lunch at St. Theresa's, a church-run dining hall, she heads to Giron de la Union, one of historic Lima's main thoroughfares. She wanders up and down the main pedestrian thoroughfare, selling packs of gum for one sol each to tourists and Peruvians alike. As she walks along, she stops in the open doorways of various shop, collecting the glossy advertisements that they display in their windows. Silvia likes looking at the pictures and having the paper itself. Silvia knows most of the people who work in the area, and frequently stops to get snacks from vendors or play with her friends. After selling a pack of gum, she enters a department store and confidently takes the escalator downstairs and heads to the bathroom. She spends a long time running water over her hands, washing them repeatedly and reveling in her unimpeded access to water. She likes the chance to walk around on her own and talk to people but gets tired walking up and down the street. She sells until 11 PM, and then runs the few blocks to the bus terminal where her mother has finished selling sodas and snacks for the night. Silvia slips a sol into her pocket before turning over the remaining 11 soles to her mother. "How much did you earn?" her mother asks. Eleven soles, she says. That's all, her mother snaps, and Silvia mumbles a protest that not many people were buying. Let's go, her mother says.

Blocks from where Silvia is working, 15-year old Julio sits by the door of the cinema, asking exiting patrons for their left over popcorn. Originally from Huancavelica, one of Perú's poorest provinces, he came to Lima when he was eight with his family in search of better opportunities. Julio used to go daily to the center of Lima with his cousin, where they would play music and sing on buses, earning money to help pay food and school bills for himself and his five siblings. His cousin had been working for a while and knew the routes. He taught Julio to play an Andean flute while he himself played a small hand held drum and sang. Julio did not like the shame involved in singing but eventually he got used to it, and even began to enjoy playing music. He often arrived home late from working and would be too tired to go to classes at the night school he had enrolled in. Eventually, he stopped going all together. One day, Julio's cousin invited him to sniff glue, telling him it would make him feel euphoric and take away his hunger. He started consuming, and slowly spending more and more of his money on drugs, rather than his mom and siblings. One night when he returned high, his stepfather hit him, and kicked him out. Unsure of where to go, he returned to the streets, huddling by the door of the cinema with a small group of boys he had met through his work. It was hard sleeping in the streets, and Julio would occasionally go home and bring his mother some of the money he had managed to earn, but his visits home were less and less frequent. One of the other boys taught him to do acrobatics with him at intersections. Working in a group of three or four, the boys could earn about 30 soles a day, just enough to buy basic food and drugs for a few days, before starting to work again. Julio's clothing was raggedy, and he often felt ashamed by people's comments and disdain for him. But the other boys looked out for him, and when he sniffed glue, he would relax and worry less. Recently, he and his friends had started renting a room in Lima's China Town. Paying four soles each, with four boys huddled together on a large mattress, he felt calmer. The boys could stay in the rented room until noon before they were kicked out for the day. Julio would go to St. Theresa's to eat lunch, occasionally sitting with Silvia and her sisters. He would then work for a while before heading back to China Town to sniff glue and hang out with his friends.

Occasionally, he would worry for his mother but he was too ashamed to go home and she only rarely came to look for him in the city's center.

On the other side of the city, in the hills outside of Lima, Marisol wakes up at six in the morning to help her mother prepare breakfast. She does her morning chores and then heads one block up the dirt road to the new school for working children. Marisol enjoys school but finds it hard to focus and is constantly reprimanded by the teacher. However, her mother says that without school, Marisol will end up just like her, selling on the streets and with no prospects for the future. Marisol prefers the new school to her old one. Here, she does not have to wear a uniform, and can come in whatever clothes she has. All the children are from the same small area, and no one makes fun of her for living in Las Brisas, a more recent addition to San Juan de Lurigancho and an area that still has only limited access to water and regular electricity. At her old school, if she arrived late, she was not allowed to enter, and could not afford the gum and snacks that some of the other children bought. She also likes the late morning meal that the school just started providing for the children, with funding from a small grant from Italy. Each meal includes substantial protein and iron, in response to high levels of anemia found among the children. After school, the children congregate on the dirt road in front of the school, playing tag and kicking a ball around. At 1 pm, Marisol's new stepfather comes home and they head inside for lunch: rice, lentils and an egg. In the afternoon, she often takes her one-year old sister with her to San Borja, a wealthy district an hour away from her home, where she works all afternoon. She has mixed feelings about having to bring her sister. She is heavy, and Marisol gets tired walking up and down the street holding her. However, more people buy from her when she is with her sister. Marisol likes the fresh air and soft grass, and sometimes sits with friends to rest in the shade, admiring the houses lining the street. Most people are pretty nice to her, and the police only bother her occasionally. She stays selling until 7 or 8 and then she and her friend take the bus back to their neighborhood. Marisol keeps a sol so that she can buy some cookies and juice during recess, like her peers, and gives the rest to her mother. She has bread and tea, and then goes to sleep.

5.1 Introduction

Silvia, Julio and Marisol are just three of the many children who constantly negotiate school, work and the streets on a daily basis. As is clear from the above examples, what it means to work in Lima's informal economy differs based on family support, gender, age and a wide range of other factors. The effects of socioeconomic restructuring are extremely local as children juggle work and school while also trying to carve out time for play and friends. These snapshots provide a brief glimpse into what capitalism on the margins looks like. They challenge static images of childhood and also remind us of the diversity even among street children. Through their actions, children both create more opportunities for themselves and work to reinforce their own marginalization, with important repercussions for theorizing about poverty, childhood and development.

In this chapter, I explore the multiple identities and constraints street children negotiate as they move through work, school, social services and the streets. In doing so, I aim to expand understandings of where learning can take place to push beyond the classroom, in direct contradiction to dominant attitudes being promoted by neoliberal development *and* also children's rights organizations. Identity

itself is socially produced, shifting depending on the context and space in which young people find themselves (Hopkins, 2004; Swanson, 2010). Yet, self-identity has important repercussions for children's ability to access various social services and support networks and has been affected by dominant discourses of childhood and development.

In Chapter Three, I argued that narratives of development were intricately linked with understandings of 'modern' childhoods. Yet, little is known about how children themselves counter and reproduce these discourses (for exceptions, see Swanson, 2010; Jeffrey & Dyson, 2008; Cheney, 2007; Katz, 2004). A focus on children's everyday lives serves to disrupt narratives of international development and myths about childhood, and reveals important insights into how social differences are reproduced and resisted. Street children are not just sitting and waiting for development organizations and others to swoop in and save them but instead constantly and consciously rework the structural constraints in their lives (Ruddick, 1996; Katz, 2004; Jeffrey, 2011). While children reproduce dominant value systems, they also actively create new identities and possibilities for themselves. Such actions challenge the ability of the government and international organizations to invoke children as ventriloquists for national development projects (Ruddick, 2003) and are in stark contrast to views of children as vulnerable and in need of saving. However, recognition that children have agency says little about the effects of that agency, and the way in which children's abilities to act are constrained across time and space, and linked to other factors of identity such as gender and ethnicity, and the social context in which children are acting.

In examining children's everyday lives, I specifically answer the questions: How do street children resist and negotiate the ways they are represented in Peruvian society? How do children reconcile the differences between the images of childhood to which they are exposed and their actual lived experiences? What have been the effects of a formal focus on getting children out of the work force and into school? And how does this allow us to re-theorize poverty and political subjectivity?

In many ways, street children defy societal constructions of childhood and clearly point to contradictions or hypocrisies in government and international claims. There is a danger, however, in celebrating all acts of survival as resistance. Building off of Willis' (1977) idea of partial penetration and Katz' (2004) more nuanced conceptions of the relationship between agency and resistance, as explained in Section 5.3, I suggest that children's actions often have contradictory or partial results. While spaces of partial resistance do offer opportunities for change they need to be connected to larger collective strategies or brought into conversation with children's experiences elsewhere. This speaks to a need to consider children's agency from a political perspective, with important repercussions for re-theorizing

political subjectivity. Yet, rather than simply broadening political subjectivity to include children, I suggest children's lives challenge the very bounds of subjecthood by speaking to the interdependent nature of one's ability to act. Children are able to endure hardship and carve out spaces for more opportunities specifically with the assistance of peer groups, caring family members and supportive NGO workers and educators, necessitating an analysis of the social nature of children's agency.

In section 5.5 and 5.8, I explore the role of work and school in street children's lives. Street children must deal with competing representations of childhood as they actively strive to create more opportunities for themselves. I suggest that street children's actions may simultaneously challenge dominant representations of street children and their poverty while also reproducing certain aspects of neoliberal discourses. Through work, poor children actively create spaces for themselves to attend school and participate in consumer society, main characteristics associated with 'modern' childhoods and neoliberal discourses of development. Yet, ironically, although such participation depends on children working, it is specifically because of their labor that children also position themselves as outside the 'normal' bounds of childhood, thus placing them in a conundrum. Thus, while children clearly demonstrate agency, the results of that agency are contradictory, and depend not only on the conditions in which children are working but also on the attitudes and meaning assigned to that work.

In many regards, the spread of neoliberal discourses combined with normative assumptions about childhood have furthered the marginalization of children who do not meet particular images. The ways in which children then internalize certain negative values and self-exclude speaks to the lasting power of social representations in maintaining inequalities (Green, 2006). Yet, identity is shaped and reworked in a wide variety of contexts. If children feel ostracized or like a failure in one space, they may turn to other spaces in their lives in which they feel more comfortable. By dropping out of school and spending more time in the streets, street children challenge the state's ability to contain and control them. While such actions in many ways serve to further marginalize children, in section 5.9, I also consider to what extent such marginalization may offer children street children the space to create alternative value systems outside the increased individualism and competitiveness associated with neoliberalism. Such a focus challenges the inevitability that such values will exist.

In sections 5.6 and 5.7, I look at the ways in which children rework their identities to access greater social benefits. Section 5.6 specifically explores how children build off of imagined understandings of street children's vulnerability in order to more successfully street vend. I suggest that in doing so, they both alleviate their material poverty while also reinforcing certain discourses about the deserving poor. Section 5.7 explores children's relationships with social services and how they resist

and rework attempts to govern them. I argue that the ways in which children rework their identities to access greater material benefits from social services challenge power structures and redistribute resources, albeit on a small scale. Such actions also speak to a need to examine the ways in which policies are actually enacted on the ground, highlighting significant differences between formal programming goals and actual policy implementation (de Verteuil, et al, 2009).

Children's attempts to rework their identities and relationships with institutions of power in and of themselves serve as clear examples of the micropolitics of everyday lives (Fiske, 1989; Philo and Smith, 2003). Such actions have material consequences both in shaping individual children's lives and in speaking back to understandings of childhood, poverty, and development. Yet, many of these efforts remain disjointed, with ambiguous and contradictory results. In the final section of this chapter, I analyze the role of the child workers' movement in helping young people develop political subjectivities and the ability to speak back to larger political institutions and structures. In contrast to dominant ideologies of childhood and development, which have served to invalidate children's labor, the movement teaches children to take pride in their identity as a worker and make demands on the state to protect their rights. In doing so, it broadens understandings of where and how political formation takes place, while also reinforcing the importance of inter-subjectivity.

Through both their actions and comments, street children make it clear that poverty needs to be considered in the context of social relations, exclusion and representation. Although all the children in this study face significant economic lack, their actions are never exclusively motivated by survival. Instead, children show a need for care and acceptance, even when they are engaging in resistance, and reveal the ways in which poverty is the product of specific social relations, rather than an absolute condition (Green, 2006). Although children's explanations for poverty often reproduce discourses of blame and difference, they also offer important insights into structural inequalities and the power of representations in maintaining poverty. In the following sections I provide an overview of the literature regarding the social reproduction of inequalities and children's role as agents and political actors in reproducing and resisting such value systems, before delving into my empirics.

5.2 The Social Reproduction of Inequality

This work is an effort to understand structural conditions from the ground up, looking at how young people creatively rework the possibilities of their everyday lives. If childhood is being invoked to reproduce the status quo, as suggested by Ennew and Milne (1990), an examination of how children themselves resist and rework their own identities may expose contradictions in the reproduction of social inequalities. Feminist scholars have challenged traditional Marxist accounts of political economy

for neglecting critical practices of everyday life in their analyses. They argue that examining social reproduction, or learning “practices that maintain and reinforce class and other categories of difference,” provides insight into the ways in which social relations are “enacted, maintained, and altered” (Katz, 2004, 19). Bourdieu (1984) refers to this learning as habitus, a set of cultural forms and practices that work to reinforce and naturalize the dominant social relations of production and reproduction. It is within habitus that children receive and process political messages and discursive and symbolic expressions of social structures that shape their individual subjectivities (Cheney, 2007). Although Bourdieu’s theory of habitus has been critiqued for being too deterministic and exclusively focusing on class (Katz, 2004; Cheney, 2007), his work nonetheless provides important insights into the ways that different types of knowledge take on more value than others.

To look at how rationalities are reproduced rejects an understanding of neoliberalism as the natural and inevitable outcome of unleashed market forces, and instead gives priority to “the contingent and contested processes through which it becomes the established system of rule in a particular time and place” (Foucault, 1977b; Rankin, 2001, 22). In this chapter, I am particularly interested in the ways in which various value systems and forms of knowledge are transferred to children, reproduced, reworked and resisted. As such, I move beyond studies that analyze shifts in *who* takes responsibility for social reproduction (Bakker & Silvey, 2008) to also look specifically at *what* is being reproduced. The transfer of knowledge, and which types of knowledge are valued, is a highly political process. Bourdieu, along with Passeron, (1977) argued that schools legitimate a dominant form of culture by presenting as natural a pedagogy which belongs to the dominant classes. By validating and distributing symbolic capital, schools enable dominant groups to maintain their economic advantage. In such regards, cultural capital, or “the symbolic credit one acquires through learning to embody and enact signs of social standing”, serves as a social resource intertwined with economic capital (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 6). Yet, because valued forms of culture are made to appear universal and objective, they are naturalized, resulting in a form of symbolic violence against those children unable to succeed, and justifying inequalities (Bosco, 2008). Schools, and I would add other powerful institutions such as government ministries and internationally-funded NGOs, are thus essential in advancing and justifying social stratification (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Freire, 1970) and neoliberal rationalities. Katz (1991) argues that these forms of learning work to reproduce and re-inscribe various categories of difference.

But how do such processes work for children who fail in schools, or rarely attend them in the first place? If children escape from school, are they freer to embrace alternative subjectivities? Social reproduction does not only occur in school, or even the household, the other main site on which

scholars (in particular, Katz, 2004) have focused, but rather among peer groups and older youth, and in work places, NGOs and other alternative sites of learning. In many ways, the knowledge children learn in these sites is less valued, working to further marginalize street children. However, because dominant forms of social reproduction are (partially) disrupted, I provide insight into both the extent to which dominant values are internalized and reproduced but also consider what liberating possibilities or alternatives might exist from the margins.

Aitken (2001) argues that while focusing on childcare or childrearing may represent an important step beyond more traditional macroeconomic analyses, it says little about how children internalize, resist and mobilize ideals and rules. This study pushes beyond current literature by recognizing children as active contributors to social reproduction, rather than simply victims or burdens to be cared for. Young people provide a different window into social reproduction; they show how principles of society are mapped onto the consciousness and unconsciousness of embodied subjects and how they may be negotiated or contested (Aitken, 2001). However, children's everyday lives are structured, constrained and exploited by larger global forces. Their ability to exercise agency varies over time and space (Jeffrey, 2011) and must be understood within complex and dependent relationships (Aitken, 2001).

5.3 Children's Agency and Political Subjectivity

I suggest that while recognition of young people's agency is an important first step, it is nonetheless necessary to also consider both the constraints on, and the effects of, that agency in order to fully understand social reproduction. Katz (2004) argues that it is in exchange of knowledge that new forms of resistance might be located. However, not all agency can be considered resistance. I interpret many of street children's actions as forms of partial or contradictory resistance. While in many ways street children challenge dominant understandings of childhood and appear to flout social conventions, they also internalize and reproduce aspects of neoliberal hegemony. In labeling something resistance, then, it is important to ask 'resistance to what?' (Massey, 2005). A growing number of studies focus on children's resourcefulness in the face of structural constraints (Swanson, 2007; Abebe, 2008; Punch, 2008), while other scholars have drawn attention to how children's actions serve to reinforce dominant power structures (Jeffrey, 2011). I particularly draw on Willis's (1977) and Katz's (2004) more nuanced accounts of resistance in order to analyze the ways in which children negotiate their daily lives.

Willis's study of working class boys in the United Kingdom represented an important break with structural accounts of inequality (see Bowles & Gintis, 1976). He argued that young people were not simply dupes of a reproductive class system but rather political actors, who consciously rejected the

societal norms they were being taught in the classroom and instead embraced their own subculture. However, he suggested that their critique was only partial in that they were still using the terms set by society. Through their actions, they ultimately end up reinforcing the class system as they take factory jobs similar to those occupied by their fathers. This pushes understandings of resistance to also consider results.

Although Katz (2004) does not pay as much attention to children's own interpretations and voices as does Willis, her more nuanced analysis provides space for less consciously resistant acts than those described by Willis. Katz suggests that labeling all oppositional acts as resistance is not enough to transform the social relations of exploitation. Agency is just the beginning. Instead, she distinguishes between three main categories of actions: *resilience*-autonomous initiatives or forms of recuperation that allow people to get by on a daily basis, *reworking*-practices that attempt to rework or recalibrate oppressive and unequal circumstances, and *resistance*-methods intended to subvert or disrupt conditions of exploitation and oppression (Katz, 2004).

In my analysis of street children's everyday lives, I combine Willis' description of partial penetration, or what I will refer to as contradictory resistance, with Katz' more nuanced account of children's agency. Yet, I also emphasize an additional factor that is not explicitly stated by either. I specifically move away from concepts of individual agency to instead consider the social nature of young people's agency (Jeffrey, 2011). Children are able to endure hardship and carve out spaces for more opportunities specifically with the support and assistance of peer groups, caring family members and supportive NGO workers and educators. Similarly, the effects of such actions take on different meanings in various social contexts. Even in the case of Willis' lads, the ability to create a counterculture was dependent on a group of boys resisting together, and would clearly have been a different experience in isolation. In this sense, a focus on street children challenges understandings of agency as individual and instead shows how agency is highly social and relational. The interdependency of children (and I would suggest all of us) is in direct contrast to neoliberal interpretations of rights that place a big emphasis on the individual. In Perú, mitigating risk is a collective rather than individual responsibility; individual roles and expectations are strongly shaped by collective aspirations (Crivello & Boyden, 2011). This sets up a contradiction with dominant ideas of children's right to participation. Participation itself is also based on this individual conception of rights, which does not mesh with children's actual ability to exercise their right to participate. As I show in relation to the Child Workers' movement, it is when children organize collectively that they are most effective at getting their voices heard.

Children as political actors

While children's agency is increasingly recognized, and perhaps overly celebrated, children remain largely excluded from typical understandings of the political, public discourse, and contemporary citizenship (Aitken, 2001; Philo & Smith, 2003). Bosco (2010) points out that children's agency is rarely analyzed from a political perspective. While children may be social actors, they are not considered political subjects. Because children cannot vote and are understood as being unable to participate in any traditional spaces of politics, they are thought to have little influence on the workings of geopolitics and the nation-state (Philo & Smith, 2003). Depictions of children as unable to make rational decisions reinforce the 'naturalness' of such conceptions (Kallio & Hakli, 2010). The Western image of protected childhood is often used to dismiss political participation as inappropriate (Invernizzi & Milne, 2002). Alternatively, Valentine (2004) attributes children's exclusion to views of children as needing correction and discipline, emphasizing concerns about children's potential delinquency more than their vulnerability. In both situations, by conceiving of children as in the process of formation, their voices are easily dismissed.

On the one hand, the CRC arguably represented an important step in recognizing children as political actors, and coincided with academic recognition of children's agency (James & Prout, 1997). As mentioned, the CRC broke with past efforts to promote children's rights in that it formally shifted its focus from 'saving' children to recognizing children as active subjects (Jones, 2005). Through ratifying the CRC and implementing a national Code for Children and Adolescents, the Peruvian government also committed to recognizing children's right to participate in matters concerning them (Article 12). Yet, in practice, participation continues to be very narrowly defined; when children voice opinions that contradict Western understandings of childhood, they are dismissed as ill-informed or manipulated (Invernizzi & Milne, 2002). Liebel (2008) suggests that dominant interpretations of children's rights are highly individualistic, and are defined as individual choice, rather than addressing any type of redistribution of power or social forms of political action. In such regards, children's rights discourse arguably works to reinforce neoliberal subjectivities. Differences in social situations in life are also often neglected, increasing the likelihood that the opinions of children from privileged backgrounds will dominate over those from socially disadvantaged ones (Liebel, 2008). For example, Milne and Invernizzi (2002) suggest that children's ability to participate is often based on how articulate they are. Cussianovich (2006) is critical of many governmental efforts to promote a muted form of children's political participation. He argues that real participation is only possible when children are not seen and recognized as the object of future investment, as I argued in Chapter Three, or part of hierarchies that

discriminate and exclude them, but instead are viewed as productive economic subjects who carry out vital tasks for society and their families. This gets at the heart of the contradiction between having 'rights' but still being unable to control dominant representations of childhood.

I suggest that part of the problem is that both scholars and practitioners simply try to expand political subjectivity to include children rather than to consider in what ways children themselves may serve to reimagine the very boundaries of subjecthood (Ruddick, 2007). In contrast to Hobbes' individual subject, Ruddick (2007) proposes the idea of intersubjectivity. She argues that children's rights cannot be thought of in isolation but instead need to include caregivers and others. Such conceptions avoid a tendency to view children's rights in opposition to women's rights and instead focus on the interdependency of the two. Feminist scholars working from a care ethics perspective have similarly challenged the myth of the independent subject, instead emphasizing how everyone is dependent on other people throughout their lives (Tronto, 1993; Lawson, 2007a). Although the work of care is often ignored, we all give and receive care at various points in our lifetimes. Focusing on care necessitates a shift away from looking at *either* autonomy or dependency to instead consider interdependence (Tronto, 1993). I suggest that children serve as a particularly good lens through which to promote ideas of interdependency because their dependency is not usually as stigmatized as is that of adults (see Fraser & Gordon, 1994). Although Ruddick (2007) focuses on the interdependency of adults and children, I suggest that children's relationships with peers are equally important. In this regard, the idea of interdependent subjecthood also resonates well with understandings of agency as the cultivation of interdependencies, rather than individual action and autonomy (Jeffrey, 2011), with important repercussions for relational understandings of poverty and political change.

Recognition of children as political actors is currently limited by assumptions that children exercise political agency in the exact same forms as adults. Yet, the idea of children as political actors necessitates valuing them for what they contribute to society as *children* (Cockburn, 1998), and also challenges views that they are only *future* subjects, as argued in Chapter Three. Especially in the case of Perú, where most politics do not take place through formal means such as voting or even policy formation, an analysis of other types of 'political' actions may be especially fruitful. Despite their exclusion from formal politics, children engage in a wide variety of everyday tactics to carve out more spaces for themselves. Many of their actions, albeit fleeting, are small attempts to confront images of street children as either deviant or victims. These tactics are deeply political in the sense of being geared to resisting and escaping dominant structures of power (Jeffrey & Dyson, 2008). In reworking and trying to gain control over their identities, street children demonstrate what Fiske (1989) refers to as

micropolitics of everyday life, which he defines as a politics of identity or individual attempts to gain control over one's immediate conditions of existence (Philo & Smith, 2003). Through everyday politics, children negotiate social roles, power relations and resources (Hopkins & Pain, 2007), and may resist adult-imposed structures or rules (Elwood & Mitchell, 2012). Thus, in direct contrast to a tendency to view children's political agency as limited to narrowly labeled 'children's issues', such as having opinions about playground design (see Ruddick, 2007; Hopkins & Alexander, 2010; Philo & Smith, 2003), I consider how children's actions and attempts to rework the conditions of their daily lives, by reclaiming certain aspects of their identity, making demands on the state, or simply by showing the state is not adequately providing for them, when taken collectively, can serve to challenge broader understandings of neoliberal change. In doing so, I respond to Philo and Smith's (2003) call to examine children's politics at the intersection of micro and macropolitics, or what Painter (1995) refers to as little 'p' and big 'P' politics. In the following section, I analyze children's own understandings and interpretations of poverty. I suggest that when considered all together, such views are political in their challenge both to more authoritative measures of poverty, and to the belief that only technical experts can produce valuable knowledge about such poverty.

5.4 Towards a Re-theorization of Poverty: Street Children's Perspectives on Poverty

By examining street children's everyday lives, I provide insight into how young people internalize (or resist) certain dominant forms of knowledge regarding development, poverty and childhood. Foucault argued that our understandings of ourselves are linked to the ways in which we are governed, as well as the ways we try to govern ourselves. Children are regulated based on their poverty, as well as Western-influenced understandings of what childhood should look like, as demonstrated in Chapters Three and Four, but in what ways have they internalized such understandings? How does poverty inform their identities, their actions, and their own political subjectivities? In examining children's understandings of poverty, I set up some of the dominant identity tropes that structure the actions and decisions that I then examine in the proceeding sections. Labels society attaches to children have a profound effect on how they see themselves (Ridge, 2002). I suggest that street children are caught between dominant understandings of childhood and their own lived experiences, leading to feelings of inadequacy. Markers of inequality are symbolically constructed, represented, and circulated through discourse. Tilly (1998) argues that these discourses of difference inform and legitimate practices that support the unequal distribution of and access to wealth and prestige, power and privilege. This may lead to what Bourdieu (2001) refers to as symbolic violence, or the seemingly unconscious modes of sociocultural dominance that occur within 'everyday' power relations (as cited in

Springer, 2010, 940). Such symbolic violence has a stultifying effect upon its recipients. As they develop a sense of their own social position, they may also learn to self-censor or self-exclude (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 6). At the same time, children are not simply passive sponges. Rather, they also consciously reject or rework some of the messages to which they are exposed, and provide nuanced perspectives into the meaning and experience of poverty. Here, I examine children's own *understandings* of what poverty means and how it has shaped their identities. I suggest that children's comments touch on a number of important themes that motivate and structure their everyday lives and belief systems.

Shortly after I arrived in Perú, an NGO invited me to visit an informal community in the outskirts of Lima. As I followed NGO staff members towards the community center, the 8-year old by my side asked me what I was doing. I explained that I was trying to learn about the lives of Peruvian children for a project at the university. She looked at me thoughtfully and said, "There are a lot of poor children here." "Oh," I responded. "What does it mean to be poor?" She answered, "Being poor is when you don't have a mother or a father. You walk around dirty." "What should we do to help poor children?" I asked her. She responded quickly, as if she had already given the matter much thought. "Show them a little bit of care." Her answers, while simple, stayed with me throughout my 14 months of fieldwork, and speak to the heart of my critique about authoritative ways in which poverty is theorized not only by demonstrating children's ability to clearly articulate perceptions of their neighborhood's problems and what they want from those in power but also in this girl's emphasis on the importance of caring relationships to concepts of poverty.

International development agencies and state ministries base their programs on problematic assumptions about child poverty that do not bear out in the experiences of the children in this study. As argued in Chapter One, political exclusion and an inability to represent one's self are essential to the (re)production of poverty (Mosse, 2010; Hickey & Bracking, 2005; Ferguson, Moser & Norton, 2007). Green (2006) argues that poverty is about relative powerlessness and not being able to influence decisions, something that almost by default applies to dominant understandings of childhood. Children cannot vote and are rarely consulted regarding important decisions. Despite formal gains in children's rights, young people continue to be depicted as incapable of making rational decisions, in formation, vulnerable and in need of protection (Kallio & Hakli, 2010; Liebel, 2008). They remain dependent on the good will of adults to exercise any of their so-called rights (Cockburn, 1998). The situation is exacerbated with street children, who threaten social order by visibly appearing outside the boundaries of 'normal' childhood (Ennew & Swart-Krugar, 2003). The types of knowledge they have and their

opinions are not valued or are dismissed as coerced (Kjorholt, 2008). By focusing on how children define poverty, I directly challenge ideas about who can produce knowledge. I suggest that children's views on poverty not only offer important insights into the ways in which authoritative poverty knowledge gets internalized and thus reproduced but also reiterate the importance of bringing social relationships and care into the center of theorizing about poverty, as I elaborate on throughout this chapter.

Children's reflections make it clear that poverty is the product of specific relations, rather than an absolute condition (Green, 2006). They provide insights into the ways in which particular ideas about poverty get reproduced, reworked, and in some cases, resisted. On one level, children's immediate responses resonated with more standard measures of poverty. Nearly all the children understood poverty as 'lack'. In fact, in Quechua, the word used for poverty, *waqcha*, most directly translates as lack. For many, and in line with income-based measures of poverty, being poor meant not having enough money. Two nine-year old girls even proudly explained that there were two types of poverty: regular poverty and extreme poverty, arguably having internalized such technical definitions from the internationally-funded NGO where they received homework help. Yet, as children elaborated on their comments, the majority extended the definition to emphasize the specific material items that poor people were unable to access, focusing on what was missing in their lives and how that related to what others around them had. A 14-year old who had migrated from Cusco to Lima to work said that poverty is when "you don't have anything. There is nothing to eat in the house. You don't have money. Your clothes are worse than everyone else's" (personal interview, 2010). Comments like these demonstrate the necessity of situating academic and technical understandings of poverty in their social contexts.

Although rarely stated explicitly, for children, poverty extended beyond not having particular items to focus on feelings of exclusion. This resonates with Crivello and Boyden's (2011) assertion that children commonly find inequality and related exclusion far more distressing than material deficiency. A 16-year old living in the hills of Lima explained that poverty was "sadness, worry and shame" (personal interview, 2009), an answer that was repeated in various forms by many of the children. While her comments necessitate moving beyond income-based measures of poverty, they also indicate some level of internalization of feelings of worthlessness that are often promoted by dominant discourses and meanings about poverty. Other young people's comments specifically highlighted poverty as a lack of opportunities. In direct contrast to World Bank claims that child labor itself is an indicator of poverty, a 14-year old sleeping in the streets at the time emphasized being *unable* to find work as a key explanatory factor. "You're poor when you can't find a job, when you have to go out on the streets to beg in order to eat." Another similarly explained, "Being poor is having nothing to do. It is going crazy,"

(personal interviews, 2010). Such answers challenge stereotypes of the poor as lazy or unwilling to work, and instead indicate an awareness of inequality. The fact that children clearly articulate such awareness demonstrates my argument for a need to look at poverty as the product of social relations and offers possibilities to move beyond neoliberal attitudes that blame the poor for the conditions of their own lives.

The importance of context and social relations extends to the actual emotional support (or lack thereof) in children's lives. As mentioned in the conversation at the start of this section, for many children, especially younger ones, poverty specifically meant not having parents. Interestingly, in Quechua, the word orphan, *waqchacha*, shares the same root as the word for poverty. In a society in which social relations are essential, having no family is considered a true definition of poverty (personal interviews, 2010). That the little girl quoted above suggests addressing poverty by showing children affection, rather than giving them food or money, speaks to the heart of understandings of poverty as resulting from exclusion, and being treated with a lack of dignity. Her comments resonate with Tronto's (1993) argument that although money may provide resources to satisfy human needs, it does not solve those needs in and of itself. Cussianovich (2007) addresses the lack of care in many children's lives in what he refers to as a pedagogy of tenderness (*pedagogia de la ternura*), a pedagogy based on social justice and affection which he sees as providing a counter-discourse to the violence and exclusion of military dictatorships and current neoliberal economic systems. However, Cussianovich (2007) argues that tenderness does not mean overprotecting children but rather nurturing them so that they can become protagonists in their own lives. By (re)conceptualizing poverty as a lack of human dignity, responses then need to address social relations, not just material goods. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, feelings of inadequacy and a lack of caring supportive relationships were topics that frequently emerged in my discussions with young people, and structured the ways in which they interacted with those around them. In fact, a lack of social support trumped material hardship in the minds of many children. A few girls explained that people could be economically poor but "rich in other things. You can have a house in the cones but still have a stable family with good values" (personal interview, 2009). While such comments challenge moral superiority that is often linked with the non-poor, there is a danger that material hardships will in fact be overlooked or even romanticized (Simpson, 2004).

This reference to 'a house in the cones' as a sign of poverty itself also needs to be spatially situated in the context of Lima's history of migration and urban transformation. As people migrated from the provinces to Lima, they frequently set up houses in Lima's desert hills, upgrading as they slowly acquired resources. Yet, migrants, and the neighborhoods they live in, are strongly linked with poverty,

and are shunned by upper-class Limeños, who see newly arrived migrants as ‘backward’, ‘ignorant,’ ‘lazy’ and ‘promiscuous,’ as outlined in Chapter Two. Beliefs that specific places are poor overlook the ways in which poverty is produced through place-based social relations (Lawson, Jarosz and Bonds, 2008). Situating representations of ‘the poor’ in imagined geographies serves to hide exploitative material practices (Duncan, 1999; Lawson, Jarosz, & Bonds, 2008; Swanson, 2007; Wilson & Grammenos, 2005). The established stereotypes of places, and people in those places, “help construct the sense of people’s social and moral character and how society should respond to them” (Wilson and Grammenos, 2005, 308). Simply by living in certain spaces then, people are labeled as poor, beliefs that children themselves reiterated. One 10-year old girl from the southern cone explained, “Poverty is when you don’t have a nice house. It is when you live in the cones” (personal interviews, 2010). Her comments make clear the way in which the type of housing is equated almost automatically to certain neighborhoods (see Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1 Houses in hills of Lima’s Northern cones

Living in such neighborhoods is strongly associated with poverty in many children’s minds. Source: personal photo.

A 13-year old boy explained, “We don’t have the benefits of people who live in nice houses, like in Miraflores. Our houses are not well constructed” (personal interview, 2010). His answer speaks to an

imagined understanding of what life must be like for people in Lima's wealthier districts and shows ways in which children internalize social hierarchies. In such regards, identity and corresponding understandings of poverty are highly spatialized.

Yet, the stigma associated with poverty, like its meaning, varies depending on the social and historical context. Poverty in the global south is often depicted as a natural characteristic of a region (Massey, 2005). And on one level, being poor does not carry the same stigma as it does in places like the United States. I suggest that this is directly related to Perú's higher poverty levels. Until recently, and even today by some measures, well over fifty percent of Peruvians were living below economically-defined poverty lines. If poor people are the majority, it is not as big a source of shame, especially within those areas. Rather than seeing poverty as the result of individual fault, it instead becomes about governmental policies and state neglect. Children from the most remote neighborhoods in the hills of Lima, where gang problems and street violence are minimal, saw poverty, defined in mostly material terms, as a shared experience. One teenager who sold soup and chicken with her mother explained, "We don't discriminate against poverty. Here, we are all poor. Instead we help each other" (personal interview, 2009). In various conversations, children expressed some level of pride in being hard-working, which they associated with poverty. In fact, they linked being rich with corruption and greed to such an extent that in certain spaces, it actually is seen as a negative. At a meeting of MNNATSOP, Perú's umbrella organization for child workers' movements, one boy, Edgar, was mocked for being from Miraflores, a wealthy neighborhood of Lima. When he commented on the importance of work, another responded, "You work so you can buy your laptop" (field notes, 2010). In this way, because of where he lived, and his supposed wealth, he was actually disparaged more than if he had been from a poorer background. Such comments reinforce my earlier point of the ways in which certain spaces become associated with poverty. When spaces themselves are labeled as poor versus nonpoor, the specific political economies of power and social relations that (re)produce poverty are neglected (Jarosz & Lawson, 2002). Geographical imaginations then powerfully extend to encompass all the people within certain spaces, regardless of actual material circumstances. Miraflores, because of its overall wealth, is imagined as a place that cannot have 'real' poverty. Being from Miraflores limited other children's feelings of solidarity with Edgar, who was not imagined to share the experience of poverty with those who live in the cones.

While the general label of poverty is not stigmatized in and of itself, it is when that poverty is accompanied by other characteristics-such as dirtiness or delinquency- that it harms children's identities. I suggest that such characteristics resonate more with neoliberal conceptions of poverty that

emphasize personal blame and responsibility. The shame about being dirty and the assumption of exclusion are so great that children often self-exclude, rarely attempting to enter spaces they did not 'belong.' Such experiences speak to the power of social representations in (re)producing poverty (Green, 2006), and show the ways in which children play an active role in validating the power of social identifiers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, dirtiness itself was central to children's understandings of poverty. For example, a 10-year old girl from the hills of Lima explained, "Poverty is when you wear the same clothes every day. You don't have water and you can't wash" (personal interview, 2009).⁸¹

Although many children saw dirtiness as part of being poor, others actively tried to break that association. A 9-year old girl who comes from the hills of Lima to the city center every day to sell popcorn and juice in the streets explained, "Not all poor people are dirty. It is important to wash your clothes every day. It doesn't matter how much money you have. My mother washes one outfit and leaves it to dry while I wear the other one" (personal interview, 2010). For this girl, and others with whom I spoke, cleanliness became a factor used to distinguish between different types of poor people, and ultimately, judge them (and their mothers). At the same time as this girl's comments provide her with a way to defend herself against assumptions people make about herself and her family, they also resonated with dominant discourses of poverty that link certain characteristics with individual deficiencies, or in the case of children, improper parenting. In such regards, her comments also indicate how children can simultaneously internalize and resist dominant understandings of poverty.

Ideas about poverty are morally loaded. De Venanzi (2004) suggests that having the power to define poverty in moral terms works to "strip some groups of their social worth and leave them in a state of moral disempowerment." In reproducing certain discourses, children themselves naturalize aspects of poverty as a moral condition, as can be seen in the way in which two sisters were frequently teased by other children in University Park, an area with a bus terminal, small market and inexpensive makeshift rooms in downtown Lima. While most children play together in the street as their parents work, they also actively discriminate against each other, reinforcing various categories of difference. Jessica and Rachel are two of six sisters that constantly hang out in the area. They accompany their mother, who brings a food cart to sell snacks by the bus terminal. Although the majority, if not all, of the children, are economically disadvantaged, the other children frequently tease Jessica and Rachel, calling

⁸¹ The stigma of dirtiness needs to be understood within the context of Peruvian history. Indigenous communities are strongly linked with dirt, disease and poor hygiene (Swanson, 2007b) with some accounts even depicting Indians as those who "live like animals" (Orlove, 1998, 218). As argued in Chapter Four, such representations historically served to exclude indigenous migrants from public markets and other spaces, and still remain strong today. In fact, active efforts to gain access to water were key to many street children's survival strategies, as they rework relationships with social services beyond original intentions, as I argue in 5.7.

them *cochina*, a slang word for dirty, or referring to them as little pigs, commenting on their un-brushed hair and odor. Over the course of my research, the teasing intensified. 12-year old Rachel had begun to spend more time with the teenagers who prostituted, frequently accompanying them to receive 'leche' from the church circle and walking around with them at night while her mother worked. The children began to say she slept with older men. In this sense, space, behavior and cleanliness combined to shape identity and stigma in a way that went beyond economic poverty. Although the area in which teenagers prostitute was only blocks from the bus terminal, Rachel had crossed a significant imagined boundary by accompanying them there at night, thus positioning herself as outside of other children's understandings of morally acceptable behaviors.

Children themselves combine beliefs about parental blame with larger structural issues in their explanations for poverty, affecting their sense of their own identities and political subjectivity. One of the most common responses I got when I asked why there was child poverty was that it existed because there were poor parents. At first, such a response may seem almost too obvious. However, it is important in its simplicity because it makes the connection between adult poverty and child poverty clear, something that is often overlooked in appeals to equal rights. When adults do not have resources, their children will suffer, especially in the face of limited social services. Yet, correlates of poverty are often mistaken for causes (Green & Hulme, 2005). As is the case with more authoritative forms of poverty knowledge, children themselves sometimes blamed parents for poverty, echoing neoliberal discourses of individual responsibility and offering important insight into the ways in which dominant explanations for poverty get reproduced. However, just as children's definitions of poverty need to be situated, so too do their explanations for said poverty. Many of the children in this study, especially those sleeping in the streets, have experienced some level of parental abuse or abandonment, and connect that experience directly with their own lives in the street. A 16-year old who had been sleeping in the streets since he was 13 explained, "There is poverty because parents do not take care of their children. Children have to go to the streets to work for their daily bread while fathers drink and do not support the family" (personal interview, 2010). Children also frequently reiterated that child poverty existed because parents had too many children and could not feed or care for them all. In this way, their own experiences of not having enough money in the family for every child to eat or study ironically worked to reinforce notions that such parents are therefore to blame for their children's situation. While poverty is by no means an excuse to exploit or abuse children, it nonetheless important to acknowledge that this violence is related to marginalization and structural violence, as explained in

Chapter Two. However, by ignoring these structural causes, children reinforced notions of individual responsibility for poverty.

While dominant narratives of personal responsibility have been internalized by many children, and may reinforce feelings of shame and inadequacy, other young people were aware of the relationship between inequality and poverty. They expressed resentment at the lack of true commitment on the part of the government. “There is a lot of indifference. People with power see all that there is but they do not do anything. They do not help,” explained a 16-year old who had been driving a motor-taxi since he was 12 in order to pay for his school and help his family. Others repeatedly emphasized that the mayor did not do what he had promised. A 16-year old adolescent who sold candies in the street explained, “I think we are all poor here because in one way or another we all have necessities. Perú is a rich country but the wealth is badly distributed. There is always going to be poverty because there aren’t opportunities. The government should work more on this” (personal interview, 2009). Their comments, when taken collectively, speak to feelings of political disenfranchisement and a government that clearly does not represent them or their feelings. In such regards, children are actually much more aware of political processes and inequalities than representations of children as vulnerable, irrational beings would have us believe and therefore offer the possibility to challenge dominant power structures.

Children’s insights into the meanings of poverty and inequality necessitate recognition of children as political subjects with valid opinions and the ability to act on their own lives. Such viewpoints challenge ideas that poverty can only be measured by technical experts (O’Connor, 2001; Ilcan & Lacey, 2011). In fact, ‘one-size fits all’ measures and solutions are unable to capture many of the specific nuances of what poverty concretely means in the lives of poor children, and fail to recognize poverty as a dynamic process (Addison, Hulme & Kanbur, 2009). The way in which children’s experiences of, and opinions about, poverty are linked to their own positionalities and experiences reinforces a need to analyze poverty from a relational perspective: one that examines how socio-economic, historical and political processes, along with practices of governing and representing the poor, contribute to the (re) production of poverty (see Mosse, 2010; Lawson, 2012). It also resonates with care ethicists’ emphasis on not simply providing care (or in this case material assistance or more often, discipline) but instead listening to the people actually receiving such assistance. How needs are defined, and which needs to prioritize, will vary depending on social context. Tronto (1993) argues that one’s perception of needs can be wrong, or even if correct, how such needs are addressed can cause new problems, as I have argued is the case in abolishing child labor in order to address exploitation.

In order to address poverty from a caring approach then, we need to listen to children's own accounts of their needs. Children's views indicate both that we are measuring poverty inaccurately, and also that care and social relations are essential to re-theorizing poverty and understanding children's agency and identities, as will be elaborated on throughout this chapter. At the same time, they also reveal how children internalize, reproduce and rework dominant discourses about lack, belonging and poverty. Such beliefs have important consequences for conceptualizing children's self-governance. Their actions are influenced by understandings of poverty and difference outlined above, as they actively work to address exclusion and material poverty, create greater support networks for themselves, rework the stigma of being poor and living in the cones to instead emphasize hard work and solidarity, and sometimes internalize or reconfirm difference.

In the following sections, I examine what children do to survive and how it shapes their own identities as they move through a number of different social contexts, including streets, schools, social service sites, homes, and internet cafes. Children possess multiple fluid identities which shift depending on the spaces they occupy and their circumstances (Beazley, 2002). In this sense, identities can only be understood relationally; they take on meaning in the specific spaces of children's daily lives. Although children may have internalized some social hierarchies, they also provided more nuanced accounts of poverty, showing they have insights and are not mere sponges or victims. In such regards, while the way in which children are represented directly effects their own identity formation, children actively rework and resist these dominant images. Because children do not occupy only one space, contradictions within and between ways of classifying children allow spaces for the negotiation, contestation and reinterpretation of difference (Hall, 2002). However, the skills and identities children acquire in non-school spaces are increasingly undervalued and stigmatized, with consequences for children's self-esteem and well-being.

5.5 Work: Survival, Opportunity and Marginalization?

At the same time as children's rights discourses have gained near universal formal acceptance, the possibilities to realize those rights are increasingly being curtailed. As mentioned in Chapter Two, since the ratification of the CRC in 1990, the Peruvian government has embraced a series of structural reforms, including reduced spending on social services, privatization of natural resources and opening up the economy to free trade. Although Perú has experienced rapid economic growth in recent years, poverty reduction has been slow, and some argue that inequalities are growing (Yamada & Castro, 2007). Children encounter a series of contradictions when they attempt to realize the ideals of childhood outlined in dominant interpretations of the CRC (Cheney, 2007). Yet, street children are not

passive in the face of conflicting ideologies. Despite representations of street children, and children more generally, as victims of global transitions, children actively change their situations, working to attend school, participate in the consumer economy, and create more opportunities for themselves. I argue that ironically, work both specifically enables children to experience aspects of 'modern' childhood while at the same time marginalizing them in other ways.

While work is not a new activity for young people, and has long been a part of social reproduction, I suggest that the context in which children are working and the stigma attached to that work have significantly shifted in the past two decades. Although child labor is often represented as the result of exploitative parents, the majority of children in this study 'chose' to work, albeit always in part because of great economic need. Through their work, they not only create more opportunities for themselves because of income earned, but also often gain access to important social support groups, such as peers and other adults working in similar spaces. However, while such networks are often essential to children who frequently lack social connections and support, intense campaigns against child labor, especially in Lima, and the very marginal nature of much of children's work, have led many of them to strongly reject their identity as worker.

There are two main bodies of literature relating to child labor. The first, often produced with support from the International Labor Organization or the World Bank, focuses on the negative effects of child labor, arguing that work hinders children's immediate and future development.⁸² In contrast, other studies argue that work is a natural part of everyday life in the rural Andes (and elsewhere) and helps children learn to become active members of society (Cussianovich, 2006; Bolin, 2006). Yet, the experiences of the children in this study do not fully fit either image. Work itself plays a much more ambiguous role in their lives. I argue that work specifically facilitates children's participation in certain aspects of 'modern' society by helping children earn money to pay for school and to more actively participate in consumer society. However, child labor in and of itself is considered antithetical to understandings of childhood in a 'developed' nation, creating a conundrum.

In direct contrast to arguments that child labor deprives young people of education and skills, and thus automatically leads to poverty (Akabayashi and Psacharopoulos, 1999; Heady, 2003, as cited in Jones, 2005), many children specifically work in order to pay for school. Although the Peruvian government officially guarantees free education, children are required to pay yearly matriculation fees

⁸² The ILO argues that child labor undermines national economic development by linking the knowledge, skills and health that children can contribute as adults later in life, thus prolonging poverty and disadvantage. However, such assumptions overlook discrimination and lack of opportunities that many poor children face in the context of their daily lives even when they are not working.

to the Association of Parent and Families and need to buy uniforms and school supplies. Thus, in order to go to school, some children specifically need to work, challenging understandings of work and school as mutually exclusive. This sets up a tension in children's self-identity. By working, children are contradicting understandings that childhood is a time exclusively for school and play, as outlined in chapter three. As street children, they are considered a sign of backwardness, and a social problem to be eliminated if Perú wants to continue on its path to development. Yet, it is specifically because of their role as worker that they are able to participate in aspects of 'modern' childhood, such as formal schooling and consumer society.

In the lives of street children, work is one of the main places in which various forms of capital are acquired and shaped. Children reduce their sense of exclusion by earning money to more actively participate in consumer society. In addition to helping pay for food and shelter, through work, children also purchase clothing, shoes, small toys, cell phones, bicycles and other 'status' items in a consumer society. While many children do give some of what they earn to their mothers, most keep at least some money for themselves, and feel proud to be able to buy snacks and other small items as they see fit. In this sense, children's tastes are very similar to those of their wealthier peers, contradicting the distinction Bourdieu (1984) makes between tastes of different classes. Having spending money helps children feel more included amongst their peers (personal interviews, 2010). As one 11-year old girl who sold candy in Lima explained, "I usually keep a little money to buy hair clips. All the girls go to the corner after school, and I want to be able to buy something too."

Even more than tangible material items, however, children increasingly use their money to go to internet cafes, to play video games and chat. Interestingly, in contrast to stereotypes of street children as fighting for basic survival, many are well skilled in internet and have hotmail accounts, making them more technologically savvy than other poor and even middle class children. Children frequently cited internet use as one of the best aspects of the day. For example, 10-year old Wilber, who travels from the outskirts of Lima every day after school to wash windshields at a busy intersection in the city center, told me he worked to pay for school and was saving for a bicycle. While he emphasized that he himself had decided to work, in another conversation, he explained,

"I don't really like to work...I don't know. I get bored. Lots of times people do not want to pay me for cleaning the windshield. I might be out here all afternoon and only get five soles. But I like to go to the internet with Pedro (a friend from the same neighborhood). That is my favorite part of work. We escape in the middle. It is .5 soles an hour. My mom doesn't know." (personal interview, 2010).

Although Wilber's comments makes it clear that he does not particularly like working, making it difficult to over-idealize child labor, his work also provides him with the money and freedom to go to use the internet. It allows him access to technology that contrasts with what he finds at his own house. Work has also provided Wilber access to other adults, free food, and a space to play, mitigating some of the consequences of his dislike of work. Wilber's situation speaks to the importance of context in analyzing children's working experience. The value of work goes beyond the amount of money earned, and also connects to both the social networks children acquire and the skills they can learn. In this sense, work provides an alternative site to develop social and cultural capital, something often important for children who may be isolated otherwise. Yet, while being adept with computers may eventually prove to be a marketable skill, the amount of time and money poor children spend on internet and videogames is big source of concern to some adults. Multiple educators and social workers emphasized the role such cafes play in drawing children away from school and towards street life. In fact, some specifically refer to internet as a dangerous addiction. In this sense, children's work is actively facilitating certain aspects of Western childhoods, such as children as consumers, albeit not in the way many adults would like.

In many regards, by working in the paid economy, children defy Western representations of childhood and reformulate the very grounds of their everyday lives in order to not only survive economic restructuring, but also play a more active role in it, and as such, show clear resilience as outlined by Katz (2004). Yet, the longer term results of their work are contradictory, and are not simply dependent on individual agency. As I suggested in Section 4.3, in order to fully understand children's actions, and the results of those actions, it is necessary to expand Katz' nuanced interpretation of children's agency to specifically consider social agency.

Work and social agency

Children's ability to work in the first place and the experience they have working depend not just on economic conditions but also family and peer groups. In this sense, the idea of social agency is a useful one. Concepts of social agency emphasize that children's actions, and the effects of those actions, are deeply linked to actions and support of other young people and adults around them, and represent a direct challenge to understandings of agency as the ability to carve out spaces for individual assertion (Jeffrey, 2011). The value of work itself directly shifts when children are working with friends and family members. Children reported choosing work on the basis of what siblings and neighbors did, countering understandings of employment decisions as simply based on where one can maximize economic profits. In fact, whole groups of children would go together to work in the same districts, both because that was how they gained exposure to work in the first place, and because they liked the

solidarity from their peers. Older siblings and cousins also play a big role in teaching their younger relatives particular occupations, as was the case with Julio, discussed at the opening of this chapter. Children get to take on the dual positions of teacher and student, in direct contrast to their frequent feelings of failure in school, a topic I explore in the following section. In this sense, children's experiences challenge increasing acceptance that 'professionals' are the only ones that can teach children. By instilling meaning into their work, the work becomes less burdensome (Dyson, 2008). Some children felt great pride in contributing to their family income, reporting that they liked to work because it made them feel useful and taught them responsibility.⁸³

Yet, children have limited power to influence the ways in which such actions are depicted. Western discourses of appropriate childhood combine with child-saving ideologies to devalue children's work and contributions in their families. Children who help with child care, like those children who may watch younger siblings or bring them to work while they are selling, either have their contributions overlooked as simply 'helping out' or more often are presented as little victims who are missing out on appropriate childhoods (Aldridge and Becker, 2002). In this sense, while such children are often acting in highly responsible ways, such contributions are downplayed, as is their agency.

Work provided children with important spaces of freedom to learn and explore on their own. Many kids in this study lived in small crowded homes, with little opportunity for privacy. Working removed them from sight of parents, and actually provided them with spaces to play. This link between work and play has been well-documented in studies of rural spaces (Dyson, 2008; Katz, 2004) but has received less attention in the city (Swanson, 2010). I suggest that even children working in fairly exploitative positions managed to combine elements of play throughout their work. Because most children worked in groups, they were able to use work time to socialize. Especially in workspaces outside of Lima's center, where police were less likely to intervene, children would often run around, taking breaks from cleaning car windshields to chase each other, and even sometimes play soccer. For Silvia, described at the beginning of this chapter, because she did not attend school, work was one of the only spaces in which she was able to interact with lots of children outside of her house. Silvia also used work to play on her own, and would daydream about the pictures in the ads that she took from department stores. She would make up stories about the people, and through her imagination, was

⁸³ In direct contrast to studies that suggest that parents either directly demand that children work or put great pressure on them, the majority of the children in this study said that they worked because they themselves chose too. A 13-year old delegate of MANTHOC said "I was bored in my house. I saw that we did not have enough, and I thought, I could help and not be bored. Instead of doing bad things, I worked. It wasn't necessary that my parents sent me because I took the initiative" (personal interview, 2009). His explanation reflects a combination of factors behind what he sees as his decision to start working.

able to more actively participate in consumer culture. Play is an important space for children to experiment with cultural, political and social relations, with both the possibility to reproduce or transform such relationships (Benjamin, as cited in Bosco, 2010), and consequently is critical to an understanding of children's agency. The intermingling of activities also indicates how children can rework the constraints of their labor to accommodate their own needs and desires while also fulfilling important needs of the family. Such situations speak to what Punch (2002, 132) refers to as 'negotiated interdependence', or the ways in which young people have the ability to act within and between structural and cultural expectations and constraints, balancing individual and household needs. Such an idea is in direct contrast to an emphasis on independence and self-sufficiency promoted by neoliberal forms of governance.

As I argued in Chapter Four, risk itself needs to be considered in social context. Working with parents or other adults helps mitigate some of the dangers that can come from working in the streets (or being alone in the house), and is in stark contrast to growing concerns of the number of children and youth left unsupervised when their parents have to travel to jobs far away from their homes. Support networks extend beyond immediate family. Children were often looked out for by adults that were not their parents, and reported knowing that they could approach certain adults that worked in the same areas for help if they had a problem. This is especially true where children and adults have greater stability in work locations. For example, fifteen-year old Edgar shines shoes by Rosaspata Market in Cusco, where his grandmother, who raises him, works. When his grandmother got sick and stopped coming to the market, the other women made sure that Edgar was eating, often giving him lunch from their stalls for free. As things worsened at home, Edgar stopped going to school, and started spending more time at internet cafes. Sometimes the other women would see him, and encourage him to go to class. They also went to speak with a social worker at the program Educators of the Street, a state-run program for working children. At the time of this research, the social worker was looking for alternative living arrangements for Edgar and his grandmother, and helping pay the grandmother's medical bills. In contrast, in Lima, urban revitalization campaigns, exacerbated by cuts to programs such as Educators of the Street, limit street children's ability to benefit in the ways Edgar can, further hindered by the type of work in which children engage. In particular, a lot of street children specifically board buses to sell or play music, in which case the continuity they experience is more limited. Additionally, in some areas, frequent police crackdowns led to forced migration to other areas, disrupting social support networks in important ways, and arguably pushing children towards more vulnerable situations.

Such social connections serve as a direct contradiction to claims that work exposes children to only exploitation and abuse. In fact, some children specifically worked not simply to earn income but in order to escape from abusive environments. A 17-year old who now works on her own in the streets of Lima explained that her sister used to take her with her to sell ice cream so that when her mother was drunk, she would not be able to hit them (personal interview, 2009). This contradicts assumptions that children are always better off at home than in the street, as was elaborated on in the last chapter. Although children were not always open about abuse at home, it figured prominently in the majority of street children's transition into homeless life. One educator explained, "Children do not sleep in the streets unless they are lacking something at home" (personal interview, 2010). A little under 1/3 of the children in this study went straight to the streets because of abuse, while the majority were already working in various neighborhoods within Lima. Yet, there is a fine line between recognizing the role that family plays in either hindering or creating opportunities for their children, and blaming those same parents for their children's experiences. Abuse needs to be understood in the context of structural inequalities and exclusions (Gelles, 1983, Farmer, 1996), as parents themselves frequently lack the resources necessary to fulfill expected roles, as argued in Chapter Two.

Waters (2004, as cited in Jeffrey, 2011) suggests that children's decision to leave home is a form of a resistance, an active way to escape from parental control, and in the case of the children in this study, abuse. I suggest that spending time in the street demonstrates agency and challenges ideas that children are automatically better off in the home than they are in public spaces. However, labeling the decision to leave home as resistance does not adequately capture the contradictory results that often follow. As argued in Section 5.3, resistance cannot be understood in black and white terms. While children may escape parental abuse, their actions are better described as what Katz (2004) refers to as 'resilience.' In contrast to resistance, resilience refers to actions that simply allow children to get by in the face of oppressive circumstances (Katz, 2004). By leaving their homes, children reformulate the conditions of their everyday lives and demonstrate their agency but also ultimately expose themselves to new types of abuses and further marginalization, as I elaborate on in section 5.9. Campaigns against child labor and decreasing budgets for programs supporting working children have only hindered the ability of abused children to find alternative support networks in the streets or based on their identities as workers, reiterating the importance of situated analyses of children's agency with its multi-faceted dimensions.

Learning from work

In fact, children's ability to successfully negotiate competing identities, and use work to create more opportunities for themselves, varied significantly based on the social context in which children were working and the economic opportunities within particular places. Dyson (2008) argues that spatiality is important in mediating the process through which children negotiate their work. "Locations provide a power-laden setting for the performances of children's work, in that children's location—their spatial positions, access to resources, and their bodily comportment—shape how they seek to negotiate or make sense of their work" (Dyson, 2008, 162). Whether work leads to more opportunities, more marginalization or both depends specifically on both location and social support networks within that location.

Over the years, the value associated with learning from work has been decreasing. In Andean society, work traditionally was one of the main ways in which young people were socialized. However, economic shifts, coinciding with increased campaigns against child labor, have arguably complicated work as a space of learning. Even between Lima and Cusco, the consequences of street labor differed. Although perhaps obvious, this variety is often overlooked in social and development policy. Without dismissing the exploitation that occurs in Cusco, I suggest that working in the main plaza may actually facilitate more opportunities for social mobility than some children find in school. Some youth have been able to successfully use the English and Japanese they learned selling in the plaza and familiarity around tourists to get work in restaurants catering to tourists. In this sense, the knowledge they learned working, rather than in school, more directly opened up future opportunities. Through work, they were able to circumvent the traditional role of school in maintaining class inequalities. This is especially important considering the inability of many poor youth to access post-secondary schooling. While state universities do accept youth for only minimal fees, spots are extremely limited, and require placing among the very top on competitive entrance examinations. Other schools, even technical institutes, are too costly for most poor youth to consider. By working at an early age, street children gained skills that other students were paying to acquire in certificate programs in tourism. Their labor allowed them to rework power relations through the redistribution of resources and possibly even undermine some of the inequalities on which such relations are based (Katz, 2004).

Girls who sell finger puppets in the plaza are similarly gaining important language skills through their work. They utilize these language skills to sustain relationships with tourists beyond the simple act of selling puppets. It is the younger girls who are most adept at convincing tourists to take them to restaurants, agree to be their godparents, and buy them 'needed' gifts such as backpacks, sneakers and

clothing. Thus, in contrast to their counterparts in Lima, who I suggested demonstrate resilience, or the ability to get by each day, girls in Cusco show practices of reworking, or those actions that alter the conditions of people's existence to enable more workable lives and create more viable terrains of practice (Katz, 2004, 247) as they use the skills they learn in the plaza to create even more opportunities, challenging gender roles⁸⁴ and circumventing the traditional role of parents in finding children godparents. Such differences are reinforced by different stigmas attached to street work between Cusco and Lima. In addition to a different economic context, children in Cusco are not as strongly linked to drug use as are young people in Lima,⁸⁵ and as mentioned in Chapter Three, anti-child labor campaigns have been much weaker. Such factors arguably reduce the emotional stigma attached to working and raise the possibilities that employers will recognize skills acquired in that way. This reinforces the idea that interpreting children's agency is not just dependent on children's individual intentions but rather on the context and meaning which other people assign them.

In contrast, in Lima, street children's work has fewer tangible benefits, reaffirming the role of spatiality in children's capacity for effective agency (Jeffrey, 2011). Street children have much less access to tourists than they do in Cusco. As explored in chapter four, under urban 'revitalization' campaigns, children have been forcefully removed from wealthy and touristy parts of Lima by appealing to a need to protect children from exploitation. Most children either work in the center of Lima or in growing market and transportation hubs in the outskirts of the city. The majority of their work, selling candy, shining shoes and performing on buses, tends to target lower and middle-class Peruvians. Some children did report learning communication skills, how to make sales, and becoming quicker with basic math, all of which may potentially serve them in the future. The majority of other skills, however, were directly relevant to their current occupations, such as where to buy shoe polish or window cleaners. However, none of the children with whom I worked wanted to continue shining shoes in the future, making such specific forms of knowledge only useful for their current occupation.

While children do acquire useful knowledge for the immediate present, knowledge that helps them survive on a day to day basis, and may even learn some beneficial longer-term traits, such as

⁸⁴ Work provides children with the space to both challenge and reinforce gender constructions. Dyson (2008) found that while opportunities for work gave girls certain freedoms, it also served as a means through which young people policed each other's behavior, reinforcing performative hierarchies of femininity. Children reinforce gendered identities on the basis of the different types of work in which they engage. None of the girls in this study cleaned car windshields or shined shoes, and both boys and girls explained that girls could not do such activities (personal interviews, 2010). Young girls were much less likely to get onto buses to work, and instead, stayed at intersections or in main plazas. Boys on the other hand, had a lot more freedom and mobility, and were not as stigmatized from working on the streets.

⁸⁵ In the past few years, street children in Cusco have also started sniffing glue, with potential consequences for the way in which street children are treated by other Cusqueños.

responsibility,⁸⁶ the majority of behaviors they learn are not highly valued by the rest of society. Their association with the streets serves to further marginalize them, and in this sense can be seen as another form of contradictory agency. For example, multiple children mentioned learning how to get around the city, knowledge that proved helpful for children's working strategies. However, in the case of some girls, knowing the city too well was seen as a sign that they were engaging in risky or inappropriate behaviors. For example, one girl who rents cell phones in the street at night had to contend with both gender norms that limit her ability to be outside at night, and pressures her parents put on her to conform. "My father thinks I am bad because I work here. He says I talk to gang members. I don't. I am just working. But I don't know what else to do. I need the money" (personal interview, 2009). As a woman, her presence in the street is considered a much greater risk to both her own and her family's honor (Da Matta, 1987, as cited in Kuznesof, 2005). Gendered understandings of space are thus integral to children's own identities as well as how others perceive them.

The situation is even more apparent among homeless street youth, who reported learning how to rob and to consume drugs. Robbing plays an important role in providing boys with income to eat, pay occasional rent, and actively participate in consumer society. Yet, it reinforces their identities as 'delinquents' and in some cases, leads to being interned in a correctional facility or prison. Lima now has third-generation street children,⁸⁷ or those children who are grandchildren of street children. In this sense, there are children who grow up only learning skills that are valued or necessary for life in the streets but at the same time detrimental for other situations, showing the ways in which children's resistance can be partial.

Work is not a new activity for young people, and has arguably long been a part of social reproduction. However, despite much scholarship on work as an educational space, I suggest that the potential of work to serve as a learning opportunity is severely hindered by socioeconomic shifts that have pushed children into vulnerable working positions and the campaigns that work to further stigmatize that work. The majority of children, even those who participated in Perú's child workers' movement and were very aware of their rights, continued to work in exploitative or stressful conditions under which little beneficial learning takes place. Because many children feel that they have to work in order to survive, it becomes a burden rather than a positive experience. International organizations enforce children's feelings of inadequacy by excluding them from categories of 'normal' childhoods.

⁸⁶ In addition to actual skills, a few children did report learning ways of behaving and acting that may provide them with important forms of cultural capital. 16-year old Nancy had been working in Lima since she was six years old. She emphasized that she did not just work to earn money but also to learn to be responsible. "I like working. I started working to help my parents but then I kept working. I started selling books on buses. I liked it. It made me feel useful" (personal interview, 2010).

⁸⁷ One woman estimated that Lima actually has fifth-generation street children but I was unable to confirm her claim.

Duncan Green (1998, 48) suggests that “working children are seen as a schizophrenic barbarism: as children they are not real workers, and as workers they are not real children”. Children themselves then reject their own experiences of childhood, as came out clearly when children who had worked most of their lives emphasized that children should not work but should only study. Instead of taking pride in the initiative or responsibility they demonstrated from working, attributes that would be valued as part of *adult* neoliberal subjectivity, work is primarily a negative experience in their lives.⁸⁸ I suggest that this goes beyond the actual conditions of work and instead is linked to the fact that children are increasingly being asked to deny their identities as workers.

The negative stigma of street work

Even though campaigns against child labor have had little success in reducing the number of children working, I suggest that they nonetheless have significantly affected children’s feelings of shame over working. Thus, while the actual conditions of work may not have changed, children’s *experience* of work has ironically worsened because of anti-child labor campaigns. Technical approaches to measuring poverty that focus on supposedly objective indicators, like the percentage of children working, fail to capture these shifts in stigma. Those children who were still attending school implored me not to tell their peers that they also worked, especially when they worked selling candy or in other informal street jobs. A thirteen-year old explained, “I felt embarrassed selling candy. People would say, ‘Why does your dad send you to work?’ I never go on buses... They look at you...I don’t know. It makes me feel bad. I don’t want the other kids to know” (personal interview, 2010). The shame children like this boy felt for working in occupations that many considered disguised forms of begging led to more stress about their work than might otherwise have been the case. I suggest that this goes beyond the actual conditions of work and instead is linked to the fact that children are increasingly being asked to deny their identities as workers.

Sonya provides an example of this phenomenon. She receives homework help at a Swiss-funded NGO twice a week. In order to participate, children must agree to stop working. However, Sonya hides the fact that she continues to sell plastic bottles with her mother. She explained, “I still work but I just have to make sure that no one sees me. You won’t tell, right? Other girls work too.” While the staff were aware that many of the children were still working, they nonetheless failed to address the needs and concerns that children might have had trying to juggle both work and school. Sonya had to constantly listen to the message that her childhood was not ‘real’ and that she should not

⁸⁸ It is important to note that a few children did emphasize that learned responsibility from work, and to feel useful. Additionally, responses were significantly different from children who participated in the child workers’ movement, a topic I turn to at the end of this section.

be working. Unsurprisingly, Sonya and many other children were defensive when I would ask questions about their mothers. They would reiterate that they themselves chose to work; no one forced them to. “My mother is not bad,” Sonya insisted. “I don’t like it when people talk. They don’t know” (personal interview, 2010). Such comments indicate an awareness of discourses promoting ideas related to maternal blame, and programs’ increased efforts to regulate and reform the behaviors of poor mothers, as argued in Chapter Three. Overall, while children’s decision to work is a clear indication of their agency, and in many ways counters representations of Western childhood, the results of such actions need to be contextualized. Even when children are engaging in the same types of activities as in the past, the value associated with the learning from such work has been decreasing, indicating the ways in which narrow interpretations of children’s rights can negatively combine with neoliberal economic policy to further marginalize children.

Children’s self-identities have consequences not only for their emotional well-being but also for the services and supports that they accessed. Constant feelings of being judged bear on children and decrease the likelihood that they will seek out help in cases in which they are being abused or exploited. By not identifying as a child worker, some young people assumed they were not welcome in certain spaces, and thus did not try to access them. Moreover, working children are coded more on the basis of the spaces they occupy than simply the activities they are doing. Labeling children as street children, abandoned and in need of rescuing, or dangerous delinquents to be feared and removed, disqualifies children from full social acceptance and has consequences on children’s own identities and perceptions of well-being (Herrera, Jones & Thomas, 2009). As children become identified with certain spaces of the street, assumptions about their delinquency and behavior negatively affect relationships with family members, the community and social service providers. While they too learn behaviors, the behaviors they learn are not highly valued by the rest of society, and speak to the contradictory nature of children’s agency. The ways in which children internalize certain negative values and self-exclude speaks to the lasting power of categories in maintaining inequalities (Green, 2006). Yet, street children themselves are also aware of the images some people have them, and try to rework them to their own advantage, with mixed results. In the following two sections, I outline how children rework their identities, both in an attempt to more successfully street vend, as well as to have greater access to limited social services.

5.6 Reworking Identities: Marketing poverty

Static representations of street children as victims or wide-eyed orphans do not adequately capture children’s own experiences. Such images are decontextualized, overlooking the structural

inequalities that lead to child poverty and instead present children as in need of saving (Ruddick, 2003). However, street children are aware of these identities and often actively rework them to their advantage, most clearly seen in the ways in which they specifically appeal to certain images of childhood and deservingness in their attempts to more successfully earn money. In doing so, they both reinforce certain dominant understandings of child poverty while also actively working to change their material situation and reformulating understandings of childhood.

Informal street vending is very common throughout Lima with buses serving as one of the main sites in which to sell. In the course of an hour bus ride, it is usually possible to buy chips, candy, ice cream, soda, jello, school supplies, books, socks, herbal health remedies and a wide assortment of other goods. Busy intersections, central plazas and tourist areas offer other key locations for street vendors. While selling is an activity in which men, women, and children all participate, children utilize significantly different strategies than their adult counterparts. Children take an active role in how they present themselves, regularly acting out stereotypes of street children as vulnerable and innocent in order to obtain more money and material benefits (Swanson, 2005; Scheper-Hughes & Hoffman, 1998; Aptekar, 1991). As the same time, if they too overtly sell their poverty, they are accused of begging or trying to provoke pity (Swanson, 2007a). Often from watching siblings and friends, they learn quickly which selling strategies work, and which do not. The particular tropes and images of child poverty to which they can successfully appeal vary by age, gender and context, making it necessary for young people to switch fluidly between different selling strategies.

Many younger children specifically appeal to understandings of themselves as vulnerable in their attempts to make a sale. As mentioned, people often assume that children vending in the street are among the poorest, unable to experience real childhoods because they are in the streets (Ennew & Swart-Kruger, 2003). By presenting themselves as hard-working while also appealing to such understandings, children believe they can earn more money. Jesus' bus speech is typical. He begins,

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I am a just a poor boy trying to earn money for food and to go to school. My father has left and my mother is sick. Please find it in the kindness of your heart to help me...Do not fear, I do not come empty-handed. Instead, I offer candies. One for .25 soles, or five for a sol. Thank you and god bless you.”

He then walks back and forth down the bus aisle, trying to make eye contact with passengers to implore them to buy from him. While children's actual speeches differ, they often hit common themes. First, they emphasize their need for what most Peruvians understand to be basic necessities. Second, they appeal to the idea that they are vulnerable, without two supportive and able parents to help them,

while also emphasizing what appear to be legitimate reasons why their mothers are not working. Third, they specifically appeal to 'kindness' and charity, suggesting that it is a good thing for people to help them. And finally, they indicate that even in their vulnerable situation, they are not begging, but rather working. Although often symbolic, that they come with candy indicates that even at their young age, they recognize the danger of a free 'hand-out,' aware of the idea that the poor do not deserve to be helped unless they are also trying to help themselves (Nieuwenhuys, 2001). In contrast to working, begging is often considered a moral failing and an undignified behavior (Swanson, 2007a), something children have internalized, even while resisting other dominant representations of poor children.

An acknowledgement of the need to work is even more apparent in the speeches and actions of older youth. Instead of emphasizing abandonment by their parents, older youth stress that they themselves are trying to earn money in an honest way. More aware of a tendency to see adolescents both as potentially dangerous (Ansell, 2005) and as capable of working, they have learned that playing up their vulnerability too much will seem false (personal interviews, 2010). "People know that we are capable of working and taking care of ourselves" explained one.⁸⁹ In fact, in their speeches, a few even emphasize that in the past, they had robbed but had reformed their behavior and were actively working, trying to get a new more honorable start in life. The ideas of reform and hard starts to life were ones that many Peruvians could relate to, and older youth could also often earn a fair amount of money in their work on buses.

Overall, children's effectiveness varies significantly, depending both on the mood of the passengers and their own individual characteristics. Some particularly convincing children will receive coins from nearly everyone on the bus, with many passengers declining the token candy offered, while others only sell minimally. While such strategies do involve selective presentations of self, they are usually based on some actual relationship to children's material and personal circumstances. When such aspects are overlooked, and customers instead focus on determining how 'real' stories are, understandings of poverty based on individual characteristics are reinforced over structural inequalities. In such regards, while children do rework aspects of their identities to earn more money, and thus challenge understandings of street children as simply vulnerable victims while also alleviating some of their material poverty, the effects of their actions are partial in that they may also simultaneously reinforce narrow understandings of deservingness and poverty.

⁸⁹ Some young people reported that they felt too much shame to appeal to people's sense of charity. Instead, they preferred to simply play music, earning money because of their musical talent rather than because of charity. Most had learned to play music from other boys on the streets. With the exception of little boys who sometimes sang in an off-key voice because they "had no candy to sell," older youth only played music if they had at least some basic level of skill. "If people don't like what we do, they won't give us money," explained one (personal interview, 2010).

Children also rework their identities in order to better access social services. In the following section, I examine neoliberal development from a different angle by considering the impact of international aid and discourses of childhood from the 'bottom-up.' Children are not just simply passive recipients of policies and aid, but rather resist and rework attempts to govern them. I suggest that while some children do interact in limited ways with social services, they do so by *reworking* formal program goals and relationships to their advantage, and selectively presenting their identities in order to access forms of assistance that otherwise would have been unavailable to them. De Certeau (1984) refers to this type of tactic as 'the wig.' Children give the appearance of meeting program goals while taking care of their own needs.

5.7 Reworking Social Services

In the face of increasingly restrictive program requirements, children are reworking their identities in order to access program benefits. Katz (2004) suggests that agency involves reworking when it represents an attempt to recalibrate power relations and/or redistribute resources. While in many regards children's actions do result in shifting resources, the consequences of their actions are nonetheless much more contradictory than those described by Katz. For programs such as Educators of the Street, which are now officially anti-labor, children simply tell educators that they are no longer working, as is required in order to participate. However, while children may ultimately gain access to the program, they are forced to deny an important aspect of their own identity, with consequences for their self-esteem, as I just outlined. Children also learned when programs would be handing out milk or sandwiches, and would strategically arrive right before, often having missed the formal activity being organized by NGOs and church groups. In this way, they would be able to benefit from material assistance of programs without having to hear lectures or receive other less immediately beneficial forms of assistance.⁹⁰ This reworking of program aims provides a more nuanced look at the role of social programs in morally policing the poor, and indicates some level of flexibility in subverting attempts at social control.⁹¹

When programs inadequately or incompletely define children's needs, almost always without any actual consultation from those they are intended to serve, children often use social services in unanticipated ways. This reinforces a need to move beyond an analysis of formal policies and programs

⁹⁰Over time, some children do end up staying more for the formal program activities, indicating the way in which program success depends on building personal relationships and connections.

⁹¹ However, in direct contrast to fears that street children 'shop around', going from program to program to receive the same benefits, very few children participated in overlapping programs. This is in large part due to the absence of such programs, however, rather than any conscious decision on children's parts. When children did receive assistance from multiple programs, the actual help received rarely overlapped.

to also look at their implementation and the way they are contested and internalized (deVerteuil, et al, 2009; Lipsky, 1980). Despite very different program goals, children's initial reasons for attending programs centered on the ability to access material resources. Although no programs officially marketed themselves as providing running water, multiple children in this study specifically went to programs in order to bathe. As mentioned, for many young people, dirtiness is a large source of anxiety, and a key defining characteristic of poverty, although often overlooked in international measurements. For example, 10-year old Melissa, who works recycling bottles, almost always arrives early for activities at an NGO in her neighborhood. While the NGO officially aims to abolish child labor by providing homework help for children and informational discussions for their mothers, Melissa takes advantage of her knowledge that staff arrive early to use a shower that is also in the office. During formal program activities, she usually sits quietly, and sometimes leaves early. Melissa continues to work, therefore subverting the program's agenda. However, the emotional cost of listening to adults invalidate her livelihood and family is potentially high, and again points out the contradictory results of children's agency.

Using program space for their own needs was also apparent among homeless street children. In discussions about their routines, children frequently mentioned using a drop-in center by the River Rimac to bathe, wash their clothes, and eat (although importantly, they did not mention the classes or counseling on which the program prides itself). The physical space of the center, and the relative comfort many of the children felt with the staff gave them the freedom to use the space in unintended ways. For example, one of the boys invited me to interview him at the drop-in center, suggesting some level of ownership over the space, and other children frequently used the space to sleep rather than participate in formal activities. This may be especially important for children who do not have physical homes in which to ground their identities. However, children's ability and likelihood of using program space for their own needs was limited not only by program staffs' acceptance of such efforts, which varied, but also by their geographies. After street children's makeshift homes and mattresses were cleared off of the banks of the River Rimac, as described in Chapter Four, many of them moved to locations on the outskirts of the city. Cut off from the program house, they had little interest (and also lacked the money) to take long bus rides to arrive, and instead stopped going. In this sense, spatial mismatch between program location and children's own geographies has important repercussions.

By reworking relationships beyond original program objectives, street children may ultimately succeed in gaining access to power and resources that otherwise would not have been available, and in this sense demonstrate political agency. This is most clear through sustained relationships that a few

entrepreneurial street youth have established with foreign volunteers. For example, 17-year old Jhonny, who has been on the streets since he was eight, is often asked to show volunteers around the main areas in which street children congregate. Because of his friendliness and adeptness at the internet, he managed to circumvent the director of the NGO and directly communicate with the foreigners on his own terms long after they cease to formally volunteer. Jhonny buys woven bracelets in the local market, and sends them to two former volunteers in the U.S for a profit of nearly \$4. In order to meet the desires of his foreign clientele, he tells them that he made the bracelets, believing that their friends will be more likely to purchase them if he presents an identity as a hardworking youth trying to get ahead (personal interview, 2010). Through his own initiative, Jhonny pushed relationships beyond what was originally intended by program sponsors to work more to his own advantage, and in doing so, reshapes the way foreign aid works, albeit on a very small scale.

Yet, children's reworking of formal program goals do not always involve subversion, manipulation or even adversarial relationships with social service staff. Sometimes, children simply benefit or appreciate aspects of programming that are not formally emphasized. In particular, NGOs provide children with an important alternative space in which to develop cultural and social capital. Bourdieu (1984) suggests that certain forms of cultural capital enable people to achieve greater currency and legitimacy. It is these forms of knowledge that children reported as most beneficial. For example, in a conversation with a group of five girls and one boy between the ages of seven and ten who all participated in an anti-child labor program, they explained why they liked to participate. While getting help with homework was a common response, the children also emphasized less immediately tangible benefits. Answers included learning to be responsible, studious, punctual, to work together, to be cultured, and to make good friends, indicating elements of what Bourdieu refers to as habitus. Such skills may ultimately help children succeed in school and obtain future employment. NGOs also play an essential role in helping young people form connections with other children in similar situations. This peer support ultimately helps them withstand potentially challenging circumstances and shifts in the neoliberal economy. Especially in the case of teenagers who have migrated from the provinces, getting to know friends from NGOs provided them with necessary connections to navigate the new city and "feel less alone" (personal interview, 2010). Peers' help even extended to other forms of support, such as offering places to stay to new arrivals, and teaming up to work together. In this way, children's ability to garner social support from programs often blended into financial assistance or opportunity.

The individual connections that children develop through participation in social programs (and through work on the street) subvert traditional social relationships by placing children in a position in

which they can actively choose adults outside their family and community networks to be godparents. In indigenous Andean culture (and in Catholicism) finding godparents has been an active part of social relations for centuries (Leinaweaver, 2006). While such relationships were traditionally set up by adults involved, rather than the children themselves, these relationships have changed in the context of development aid. Some children are now more mobile and in a better position to negotiate such connections than their own parents. Within Lima,⁹² children would ask teachers and educators who they met through school, NGOs and in the street to be their godparents. While the specific meaning of 'godparent' varied, overall, godparents provide young people with necessary resources and social connections to succeed. They often pay for children's first communion celebrations, school fees and other basic necessities. Even in situations in which educators and social workers do not formally accept a role of godparent, they often connect children to other forms of support, such as potential job opportunities or scholarships. Such relationships may serve to undermine certain inequalities and change uneven power dynamics in ways more favorable than utilizing family connections. In this regard, NGOs are playing an important role historically played by families and the community. Children's actions create new spaces for social reproduction that does not only take place in schools or in the domestic sphere. This unintended consequence of NGO activity speaks to the importance of understanding relational aspects of development and poverty.

Beyond the potential material gains, children and educators' caring relationships push the role of NGOs far beyond official program aims to provide necessary emotional support in the lives of street children. Such relationships have important repercussions for theorizing about poverty reduction and agency. 14-year old Diego, who recently moved from the street to Generación's program house, emphasized, "The most important thing I have learned is that we are loved. Our voices matter. People listen to us, not like in INABIF (state welfare org), where you can't sleep or leave. Generación is more like a *normal* house." Feeling heard, and having an outlet to voice his opinions, distinguished Diego's experience in Generación from his time in state-run institutions. A desire to feel 'normal' and not stigmatized was essential to many children's experiences. Such comments indicate that street children do not simply need material assistance or even the capabilities proposed by Sen (1999) but rather care and supportive relationships that will allow them to exercise their capabilities and agency in the first place. It is supportive connections that ultimately facilitate some street youth to stop using drugs. The

⁹² In Lima, godparenthood is not as common as it is in Cusco. However, in Cusco, there have been just enough success stories, the rare occasion where a tourist has actually fully funded someone's studies and in one case, even paid for someone to come to Italy, that some children spend a significant amount of time and effort actively searching for someone to come and save them. I suggest that this has problematic long-term effects, leading both to resentment at their inability to negotiate such a lasting godparent relationship, and hinders their ability to look for other possible strategies to improve opportunities.

story of Juan, an older youth who migrated to Lima from Huancayo underscores this argument. He explained that his mother was poor so he started working.

“Then I met some other boys on the street and I started consuming cocaine. I was very young. I robbed for my food. I was being threatened so I came to Lima by myself. The boys here said go to Generación. I had cut my face in front of the Government Palace. I was 16 or 17. Claudia (an educator for Generación) said come. I didn’t want to go but eventually I went. At this time, no one was working with street kids. Claudia was the first. She watched me as if I were *normal*. It didn’t matter that I was dirty. I was there a time and then I escaped and started consuming again. Lucy (the director of Generación) came after me. She said come back. I fought her but she kept after me and eventually I did come back. Generación is my house, even now. There, I received my first care and love from non-family members. They taught me to trust. Before, everyone seemed bad to me. Now, I know there are people who fight for us. Who believe in us” (personal interview, 2009).

Juan’s comments speak to a number of key points in this chapter. First, many children do get to know the streets through work, learning negative behaviors from peers, at least superficially reinforcing ideas that the streets can be contaminating spaces. Second, children are often afraid to access social services, and exclude themselves because of that fear. Disjoints between program objectives and children’s needs and identities ultimately may serve to further stigmatize or marginalize children. Third, and related to the second, for this young man, being dirty was a source of great shame for him. That he would be treated with respect by anyone was a very meaningful experience in his life. Juan’s comments resonate with Katz’s (2004) argument that everyday acts of neighborly care are key not only to material survival but also in helping people regain dignity. Despite much initial resistance, the consistent effort and support of individuals and the sense of identity Juan gained from Generación were essential to his ultimate survival.

Overall, social services have only limited presence in the lives of street children, who often feel marginalized or do not fit the necessary profile of intended service recipients. When children do benefit from social services, it is most often because such services provide children with important connections to other peers or caring educators interested in their overall well-being. These connections go far beyond the intended role of social services or international aid, necessitating a reexamination of the role that social services can play in both hindering or promoting poverty reduction and opportunities for greater inclusion. Regardless of formal program objective, street children consistently reported that it was encouragement or support from individual staff that kept them attending, and in some cases, even

allowed them to take the initiative to stop using drugs. This reinforces the idea that agency needs to be considered in a relational context. Children's ability to act in various ways, as well as the results of such actions, are deeply integrated into social relations. Bazan (2009) argues that love is key to helping marginalized children regain dignity. Yet, this need for caring relationships is neglected in dominant concepts of development. The provision of money in and of itself will not fully address street children's need, and only serves to further undervalue the importance of care (Tronto, 1993), and reiterate some of the dangers of turning care into a commodity and neglecting the relationships involved in that care (Folbre, 2006). The children in this study do not just want someone to meet their material needs. Rather, personal face-to-face relations are crucial to the delivery of high quality care. In this regard, care ethics, or structuring relationships in ways that enhance mutuality and well-being (Staeheli and Lawson, 2005, as cited in Lawson, 2007a), could radically alter theorizations around poverty reduction. As I will elaborate on in the Conclusion, bringing care ethics to a relational approach to poverty necessitates listening to those receiving care and specifically examining whether they are better off for receiving that care, rather than assuming what their needs are and how to best meet them (Tronto, 1993).

While NGOs, and in particular caring staff members, have been important in the lives of a few children, when children fail to have positive experiences with NGOs or in program houses, they often become even more marginalized. In this way, programs that aim to protect children may ironically make them worse off. Aitken (2001) suggests that when children internalize understandings of childhood that do not reflect their own lives, it may have negative effects on their identity or self-esteem. Listening to social workers lecture them about how they should not work and hearing their parents scolded for not properly taking care of them took its toll on some of the children. Even in cases where parents were often very exploitative, children frequently responded very defensively to critiques and often preferred to avoid interacting with social workers and others. Feelings of exclusion lead to greater distrust of the state, and children begin to self-exclude, as was initially the case with the young man described above.⁹³ As children become more marginalized, their exposure to risk goes up. Because of abuse, limited programming and lack of caring individuals, some street children actively choose to escape from children's homes and return to the street, as was mentioned in Chapter Three. Children's work in the streets did not just hurt their ability to access resources from NGOs. Many working children specifically

⁹³ Street educators reported that it was the most difficult to work with children who had already been in state-run homes. Such kids were most distrustful of adults, and refused any offers of help. It was only when other friends would vouch for particular educators that they would even approach educators, who came with games or occasionally snacks, to the streets. In this sense, peers play an essential support role in the lives of street children, not only providing them with camaraderie but also connecting them to social services and help them find work opportunities.

reported feeling excluded and marginalized in school because of their identity as a worker. It is to the contested nature of school that I now turn.

5.8 School as a Contested Site

Even in the lives of street children, schools are important sites of social reproduction. In Chapter Three, I outlined the rhetorical weight placed on education. However, little is known about how that message is received and the role it plays in the production of subjects. Even though state funding for education is minimal, at less than 3 percent of the GDP, street children are still targeted by state-directed narratives of education. A desire to be educated, and feelings of failure when children are unable to attend or, succeed in, school, are essential to understanding children's lives on the streets.

Scholars working in a wide range of locations have drawn attention to the role that schools play in reproducing class (and other) inequalities (Giroux, 1983; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Levinson, Foley & Holland, 1996). However, the idea that school is a contested site is somehow missed when international development agencies embrace education as a main tool for national development. I argue that school is a contradictory resource in the lives of street children, arguments that have been made in a range of other settings, such as among youth in India (Jeffrey, Jeffrey & Jeffrey, 2008) or girls in South Africa (Unterhalter, 2003). While school may open up more opportunities for working children, it will not automatically do so, and may even lead to further exclusion and marginalization.

Schools do not just teach children basic math and literacy skills but also social knowledge. Through the means of training and sorting children, schools send clear messages about what types of behaviors and subjectivities are valued (Giroux, 1983; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). They legitimate dominant culture by presenting the pedagogy of society's dominant groups as 'natural', teaching children to become 'good citizens' and compliant workers (Willis, 1977; Aitken, 2001). In this sense, school has been challenged as reproducing, rather than challenging class difference. In denying children an identity of child worker, and in fact sometimes sponsoring events about the negativity of child labor, schools can contribute to negative self-understandings of children who nonetheless need to work.

Working children frequently expressed feeling excluded or out of place in the classroom, heightened by the lack of recognition that they were both studying and working. "Schools are designed for kids who don't work. Kids do math with speed and precision in work but then can't do it in school. It's the same with communication" (MANTHOC, 2002, 12). When children arrived late, often because of work, they were frequently not allowed to enter the classroom or forced to pay a fine for their

tardiness. 16-year old Anita recalled the added stress after switching to a school with fewer working children.

Anita: I never did the homework and the teacher thought I did not understand. She thinks I am an idiot. I did not want to tell her that I was working.

DA: Why didn't you want to tell her?

Anita: I don't know. I mean, they look at you differently. They think you're from the *comunidad* (village), that your mom is ignorant. One time a teacher spoke to my mom about Claudia (her sister). She said she was becoming a woman and should not be on the streets at night. But what could we do? My dad was still drinking then. We needed the money. I don't know... I am very timid. Here, we don't talk to the teachers like that.

Anita's brief comments touch on a number of important issues. First, her experience reaffirms how certain children, in this case those that work, are more likely to be labeled 'failures.' Working children are at a disadvantage in their attempts to compete with children from wealthier families, and are almost always ranked below them.⁹⁴ This ranking translates into assumptions of stupidity and lower ability. Anita also indicated a desire to avoid having the teacher judge her and her family, as had happened in the case of her older sister. While her particular teacher may have been more understanding, she assumed that explaining her situation would not accomplish much. Within Perú, more generally, teacher-student relationships remain very authoritarian, and students rarely confide in teachers about personal problems. Finally, as was touched upon earlier, as a female, Anita and her sister both had more restrictions on their ability to spend time at night in city streets, and Anita herself frequently explained that she felt scared, and did not like to make eye contact with men. Yet, the ability to gain support for the difficulties of working life is hindered by a need to hide working identity. The increased anti-child labor campaigns and cuts to programs for working children outlined in chapter three arguably exacerbate such tendencies.

Identity is shaped and reworked in a wide variety of contexts, however. If children feel ostracized or like a failure in one space, they may arguably turn to other spaces in their lives in which they feel more comfortable, like work or the street. Whether or not they find positive acceptance in the streets or through work depends significantly on social support networks, and the type of work in which they engage, as mentioned above. In order to avoid negative feelings associated with school, Carlos, an 18-year old street youth, said that he would escape to play video games and eventually stopped going

⁹⁴ Secondary school students in most schools in Peru are literally ranked every year, receiving a number indicating their exact place in relation to everyone else in their class.

altogether (personal interview, 2010). Once children had missed too much school, and were beyond the appropriate ages for their grades, they no longer had the option to return to regular state schools. Among the children in this study, 90 percent of those who still lived with family members were attending school. In contrast, no homeless street children in Lima⁹⁵ and about 30 percent of homeless street children in Cusco were matriculated. While some children did leave school of their own accord, I nonetheless suggest that to view dropping out of school as a choice is misleading. The idea of 'choice' undermines some of the specific factors that led to children's dropping out. By moving to the streets, some children no longer had anyone to enroll them in school. Additionally, street children's association with (and actual use of) drugs has led to them increasingly being denied access to schools, supporting claims that educational institutions reinforce structural inequalities through exclusionary practices.

By leaving school, children can escape from the control of teachers and other adults. However, the actions of street children in this study differ in important ways from those of the 'lads' described by Willis (1977). Despite their personal failure and feelings of exclusion, the children in this study did not reject schooled identity in the same way as did Willis' (1977) lads. This was true not only among children studying, but also those who had dropped out (or never matriculated in the first place). In over 50 interviews with street children, all but one emphasized the importance of schooling to become something in life, to improve one's chances for success or to be a 'professional' (personal interviews, 2010). One explained, "You study to go forward, to leave ignorance. It makes you feel better about yourself." Another emphasized, "Without studies, you will be a slave, exploited" (personal interviews, 2010). This faith in education as a means of social progress is linked to historical processes of exclusion within Perú. Especially among Perú's large indigenous population, getting a degree carries both practical and symbolic weight. Education is seen as one of the main forms of upward mobility (Post, 2001). Such persistent views challenge ideas that the oppressed slowly detach themselves from dominant ideas (Jeffrey, 2011), and instead, demonstrates how the children in this study sometimes adopted these ideas for themselves.

There were two incidents that captured street children's desire to access the identity of 'school child', and the way it became symbolic of what childhood meant. One day when I arrived at University Park, 9-year old Silvia was sitting on the curb facing her younger sister. They had found an old school note book, and decided to play school, even though none of them actually attended school. Silvia had

⁹⁵ While some homeless street children in Lima reported having been matriculated at one point, at the time of this study, none were actually attending school, and most reported having dropped out when they went to live in the streets. In contrast, some homeless children sleeping in Cusco's municipal dorm, Qosqo Maki, were enrolled in night schools. This indicates the importance of having a safe space to sleep and do homework, and the role that caring adults play in encouraging children to matriculate and attend school, and again indicates the necessity of social connections in examining children's agency.

attended school for one year when she was six, and was using what she had learned to teach the others. They were calling her ‘teacher’ and pretending to draw scribbles on the paper, since they did not have any pens or markers. When they saw me, they excitedly called me over and asked if I wanted to play with them. They told me I would be the teacher and they wanted to be the students.⁹⁶ In formal interviews with these sisters, they explained that they did not want to go to school, and got defensive of their mother’s decision not to send them. However, that they are choosing to reenact a classroom setting through play indicates the extent to which they desire to participate in what they see as a rite of childhood, and facilitates moments of inclusion, if only through imagination. This supports arguments that through play, children both imagine and reproduce social order (Katz, 2004).

Older youth, who one might imagine would be more likely to mock or critique school children, similarly demonstrated the desire to access a ‘schooled’ identity. This came through clearly when a group of homeless street children in Lima were given the opportunity to attend ‘school’ once a week at an NGO. The youth carefully carried around their notebooks, and kept saying that they were studying, even though the majority rarely attended the actual classes. By tapping into the identity of ‘student’, one that is much less stigmatized than *pirañita*, street children were able to participate in what they saw as a normal rite of childhood. Answers for what street children wanted to be doing in ten years were fairly consistent among those children attending school and those who had dropped out.⁹⁷ A 14-year old shoe shiner from Lima, for example, explained. “When I am 25 I want to be in the university. I want to finish my studies and find a wife” (personal interview, 2010). That such futures will be possible is unlikely, especially considering limited access to state universities. Both these examples have important repercussions for understanding the resilience of certain value systems, even in the face of exclusion and failure.

The faith that street children, who have either dropped out or remain marginalized in schools, still have in education challenges claims that because of poor quality, parents and children may consider other activities a better use of their time (Dreze and Sen, 2003). While the overall quality of education in Perú is quite low- with 80 percent of second graders failing basic literacy proficiency exams (NAPA, 2011)-none of the students who had dropped out of school listed poor quality as one of the reasons. Rather, external factors, such as a lack of income for food, the shift to living in the street, or addiction to

⁹⁶ More generally speaking, it was difficult to involve the 6-year old sister in any of the arts and crafts projects I would often bring with me to the street because she had not learned any of the important socialization skills that other children learn in school (and to some extent from their parents). She did not know how to share or wait her turn, would grab things out of people’s hands and would cry if she did not get her way. In this sense, because she could not ‘properly’ behave, she lost out on other potential benefits.

⁹⁷ A small handful of children did say they had no idea, perhaps an indication that they could not imagine any possible future or did not want to give the future any thought.

drugs were the primary reasons given for leaving school. An emphasis on quality in and of itself, or lecturing parents⁹⁸ about the importance of education, will not address any of these barriers, casting doubt on arguments that as the quality of schooling increases, child labor will decrease.

Children who fail to stay in school not only lose potential work opportunities but may also miss out on acquiring important forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Some young people themselves emphasized the link between being 'educated' and being 'cultured'. A 17-year old who had migrated from Huancavelica, one of Perú's poorest provinces, emphasized the importance of schooling "so you know how to behave yourself" and a 15-year old working in the hills of Lima said being educated was being 'well-mannered.' Such ideas resonate with Bourdieu's (1984) claim that school serves as an important site to acquire cultural capital, or a sign of symbolic credit that enacts signs of social standing according to terms set by the dominant class, and raise important questions about multiple forms of exclusion that are perpetuated by children's failure in school.

However, a few children were more critical in their analysis of what it meant to be educated. They emphasized that some politicians may have formal university degrees but lacked 'education' and were very corrupt. Instead of schools, they suggested that parents were the ones that taught children to be 'educated'. Their ideas provide a more nuanced account of education as culture, and represent an important critique to claims that school is the only place in which to acquire knowledge. However, although aware of some of the contradictions, these same youth were also practical, emphasizing that getting a school degree was nonetheless essential in order to obtain decently paying jobs.

Even when children are very aware of inequalities within schools, they still see it as the main way forward. Rather than completely drop out of school, some adolescents study at night. They work all day and then arrive tired at night (personal interviews, 2009). In a conversation with one of the classes at a night school in the hills of Lima, the young people, ranging in age from 12 to 25, emphasized the importance of school. One explained, "I study to go forward, to be able to matriculate the university and to leave ignorance. Studying makes me feel better about myself." Yet, they were very aware that getting a degree from a night school was less respected than education at a private school, or even state schools that met during the day. "We do study less time, so we don't perform as well" one explained. "But it is not because we are less intelligent." His comments speak to the ways in which one's schooling is linked to assumptions people make about their intellectual abilities. Supporting claims that school systems often reinforced hierarchies and inequalities, one youth summed up, "Money determines

⁹⁸ In fact, parents were often the strongest advocates of school. The head of the parents' committee (APAFA) at a school in the hills of Lima explained, "If I'm a carpenter, I don't want my child to be. I want him to be something more" (personal interview, 2009).

education. Money means more opportunities” (personal interview, 2009). “But what choice do we have? There are no jobs without a degree.”

When social reproduction fails.

Despite the faith in education, schools are failing to open up many concrete opportunities for children. Working children who were not yet living in the streets expressed great fear for the future. A school psychologist at a public school in the hills of Lima echoed such concerns, “Children here are in extreme poverty. They have no hope, no services. What will be their futures?” An adolescent girl also emphasized the lack of opportunities. “Our biggest problem is a lack of opportunity. There are no jobs for us after high school. Many girls don’t even finish. They get pregnant and stop coming” (personal interview, 2009). In this sense, the faith placed in education to create opportunities for children to get ahead directly conflicts with the realities they are experiencing. Especially given the pride the Peruvian government takes in emphasizing rising matriculation rates, the inequality and lack of future opportunities for street children (and other children more generally) are a source of great concern.

In the face of shifting economic opportunities and the disruption of traditional support networks, poor children are increasingly left on their own during the day. In fact, children and adolescents themselves list a lack of communication between themselves and their parents as one of the main difficulties and causes of problems in young people’s lives (personal interviews, 2010). In the absence of strong family and school networks, children and adolescence increasingly seek support from their peers. While they often learn negative behaviors from friends, street life also provides young people with an important space to reclaim their identity.

Street children have to constantly negotiate competing representations of childhood as they actively strive to create more opportunities for themselves. Through their actions, street children’s lives challenge narratives of development as resulting from education. They point to clear fallacies in assumptions that schooling will automatically promote greater equality and economic growth and refuse to accept representations as either victims in need of saving or dangerous delinquents. However, the results of their actions are contradictory at best. While in some cases they end up creating more opportunities for themselves, in others, children are more marginalized. By examining their own identities, I show how dominant ideologies about childhood, work and education are both reproduced and resisted. Yet, children’s experiences, and their ability to benefit from either work or school, depend not only on their own agency, but also the support of peers and individuals around them. The collective strategies they use to negotiate constraints of their everyday lives come across clearly in competing

spaces of the street and the child worker's movement, both of which offer alternative identities and supports for working children and are the focus of the rest of this chapter.

I argue that the very marginalization of homeless street children ironically offers them space to create alternative value systems. Street children work together, share food and shelter, and help each other access limited social services, in direct contrast to increased individualism and competitiveness associated with neoliberalism. By finding support in the street, children are able to survive and rework their identities. However, as children become more linked to the street, their marginalization from the rest of society increases. Alternatively, rather than turning to drugs and street life, some children have joined Perú's child workers' movement. While participation in the movement has not led to many concrete legislative changes, I suggest that it nonetheless plays an important role in working children's lives, helping children revalue their identities as workers and improving their self-esteem and communication skills. More specifically, I argue that the movement helps young people development political identities, teaching them to organize collectively and make demands on the state. This has important repercussions for theorizing about social change and resistance, and challenges the idea that schools are the main site to teach children active citizenship.

5.9 Peer groups, Street Identity, and Contradictory Resistance

When children fail to get the support and resources they need from home or school, they seek solace elsewhere. Unwilling to be tamed, warehoused away in institutions, some children escape and return to the streets. In this section, I examine the way children rework their identities amongst peers in the street, creating alternative 'families' and sources of livelihood, by combining sporadic work in the informal economy with robbery, drug selling, and prostitution. Through their actions, street children contest the dichotomy of young people as either victims or delinquents. These strategies not only reveal children's individual agency but also indicate an important mutual dependence on other young people in similar situations. They are deeply political in the sense of being geared to resisting and escaping dominant structures of power (Jeffrey and Dyson, 2008). However, while children may ultimately succeed in freeing themselves from state control, I suggest that their resistance is only partial.

Without overly celebrating the often difficult conditions of children's lives, it is nonetheless important to consider whether children are better off in the street than they are staying in abusive homes (Aptekar, 1991). The home itself can be a sight of exclusion (Valentine, 1989). By escaping into the streets, children actively avoid abuse and are able to find other supports and an alternative identity. Despite depictions of street children as victims, some children go to the streets precisely because it gives them a greater sense of freedom and control than they find in abusive homes or state institutions.

Juliana, a 17-year old girl living in the streets in Lima, emphasized, “The only right a street child has or knows is her freedom” (personal interview, 2010). “Life in the street is better than being in an abusive home or being in Maranga (the juvenile prison). In the street we have liberty from abuse, and liberty from INABIF (state-run children’s homes).”⁹⁹ This active preference to live in the streets instead of children’s homes has been documented by scholars working in a wide array of situations and has implications for understandings of childhood and assumptions about where children belong and what they value.

Highlighting the positive aspects of children’s behavior challenges representations of children as “malicious predators who are unshackled from moral and social responsibilities” (Aitkens, 2001). Young people who have already been on the streets often teach newer arrivals what they need to know to survive, passing on useful information about where they can safely sleep, which police officers are good, and sometimes even teaching them how to play music or do acrobatics that may help them earn money. In this way, peers play an essential role in the socialization of new arrivals, as children develop important social networks outside of adult control (Ennew, 1994). Once living on the streets, children frequently take on new nicknames, often based on physical characteristics or special abilities. In doing so, they can begin to create new identities for themselves on the streets. The support children found from other children also serves as a protective measure against other dangers to which they may be exposed. One 17-year old homeless boy from Lima explained, “I had problems in the house, problems with the family....(in the streets), they accepted me. We cared for each other like brothers. We all slept in an abandoned house together.” Peers become an alternative family, something that has been documented in multiple studies of street children throughout the world (Rizzini & Butler 2003; Shanahan 2003).

Being in the streets gives children the freedom to resist some of the dominant ideologies that are promoted as part of neoliberal discourse. In contradiction to understandings that everything is becoming commodified in the neoliberal economy, there was very little competition for work between street children, especially in Lima. Peers played key roles in shaping children’s decisions about where to work, as well as knowledge about how to work effectively. Street children frequently worked together, dividing wages evenly. This was especially true among musicians and acrobats, as well as for robberies. In fact, children specifically were called piranhas because of their tendency to rob in groups (just as

⁹⁹ However, Juliana acknowledged that life on the streets was not without its own risks. “This liberty has risks, especially the risk of sexual exploitation” (personal interview, 2010). In fact, when Juliana first started sleeping on the streets, she cut her hair to look more like a boy. This again shows that while living in the streets may be a ‘rational’ decision in the face of limited options, it cannot fully be understood as a form of resistance.

piranhas attack in groups). Even when children did not split up wages, homeless youth frequently pooled their money for rent, drugs and food. Such actions necessitate an analysis of social agency, rather than individual agency. “Young people are able to endure hardships, rework structures, and resist oppression precisely through forming bonds with other young people and with older adults” (Jeffrey, 2011). In these ways, children’s behavior shows a direct contradiction in the transfer of neoliberal values. This contradicts Uchua Branco (2009)’s findings that in the context of Brazil, children have become individualistic and competitive, with low levels of trust between them. I suggest that street children’s high levels of solidarity may in part be linked to their marginalization from other aspects of society. Because children have spent less time in school, one of the main places in which Uchua Branco says such attitudes have been fostered, they actually have more freedom to come up with alternative group value systems.

Rather than being ‘rule-less’ then, street children have their own codes of behavior, and demonstrate significant loyalty to each other. As Cresswell (1996) argues, behaviors that are seen as disorderly may actually just have a different type of order. For example, children will not rob each other, will stand up for each other and even occasionally risked getting in trouble with police in order to protect their friends. A 17-year old explained that when her baby had been sick and she needed the money, two of the other street boys from her neighborhood robbed someone in order to get it. While the behavior they engaged in to acquire money was problematic, they came through for their friend when she needed them. Additionally, when children themselves were sick, other friends would host barbeques to raise money for each other’s expenses.¹⁰⁰ When Gallito, a youth who fled the home of his drunk father shortly after his mother died, was beat by police and sent to the detention center, two teenage girls who worked as prostitutes in the center of Lima brought him food every day while he was awaiting sentencing. Because of their support, he was able to both eat and knew that he was not alone. Such internal codes present a direct challenge to views that street children are animals or criminals in need of reform, and instead show how they often behave in responsible, caring ways.

Interestingly, many of young people in this study who robbed did not try to make excuses for their actions. If anything, I was more likely to provide excuses myself, suggesting that they only stole in order to survive. I hypothesize that taking responsibility for one’s situation may feel more empowering than submitting to images of street children as vulnerable and in need of protection. Over the course of

¹⁰⁰ And although a very minor behavior, some street children were very polite, and when I bought them juice during our interviews, they would always say please and thank you without being prompted. Such manners challenge understandings of street youth as animals, and are in stark contrast to complaints that children in Western environments act too entitled, complicating understandings that childhood in the global north is to what each country should be striving

multiple conversations, I learned that many of the same youth who insisted they were in the streets because of their own addictions and vices had been severely abused by parents at home. In contrast to talking about such experiences, presenting their life style as choice may provide young people with a semblance of control, and in many ways indicates maturity and self-responsibility, in direct contrast to victimhood. However, it also reinforces beliefs of worthlessness and shame, and works to maintain criminalizing discourses. A thirteen-year old who had only been on the streets for a few months explained that he did not like working and preferred “the easy life,” robbing or begging. His comments indicate an expression of *choice* to be in the streets and a rejection of menial and exploitative paid work. Others expressed some awareness that what they were doing was ‘wrong’ on some level, while also admitting that they became accustomed to such behaviors. One young man, age 17, who had lived on the streets since he was eight, explained, “The first time I robbed, I cried. But then it got easier, and soon I stopped thinking about it” (personal interview, 2010). Another 18-year old who had come to Lima from Chiclayo, a city in the north, said, “I chose this lifestyle. I had everything I needed at home. I used to rob with friends in Chiclayo and then I met a girl and we came to Lima. We have a kid but her family doesn’t like me. They are from a higher class. I rob because I like having money” (personal interview, 2010).

Yet, at the same time, robbery does represent an active attempt to create opportunities for themselves that they would not otherwise have, as can be seen from the young man’s concluding comments. While he accepts responsibility for his situation, his comments also indicate feelings of exclusion and a lack of acceptance. Robbing, selling drugs and prostituting directly facilitate young people’s participation in the global economy. In this sense, while on the one hand such activities clearly position street children outside the bounds of ‘normal’ childhood, they also serve to reinforce the importance of consumption. Children and youth rob to gain access to items that they would otherwise not be able to have, and in this way are able to more actively participate in a neoliberal economy that highly values consumption. In contrast to other poor children, many street children in Lima have cell phones (although they rarely have the credit necessary to make calls). Possessing a cell phone serves as an important symbol of status. In fact, my old Motorola cell phone, which had been given to me second-hand by brother, was the butt of frequent jokes. A few children even offered to steal a nicer phone for me (an offer which I declined). Selling drugs similarly can be construed as part of an active strategy to both survive and create more opportunities for themselves. Further contradicting understandings of street youth as animal-like, unshackled from moral and social responsibilities

(Stephens, 1995), some young men were specifically selling drugs in order to provide for their families (personal interviews, 2010).

Many of children's illegal activities involve creativity, teamwork, and even entrepreneurialism, skills that would be valued in other contexts. This comes across clearly in new practices regarding the sale of sniffing glue. While children can legally purchase bottles of glue from mechanic shops for around 3 soles, some enterprising youth have started buying bottles, and then subdividing them into small plastic bags, which they sell for .5 soles. In this way, they make anywhere from 2 to 5 soles profit per bottle and have created a new steady way of earning money. If such initiative was in another context, such children would be rewarded for their entrepreneurialism, a key characteristic promoted by neoliberal forms of governance. However, because it involves drugs, it only solidifies understandings of street youth as delinquents.

Actions such as selling drugs, and more commonly using drugs, speak to the contradictory nature of children's resistance. While children's identification with street spaces may serve to fill important gaps in their social support networks, providing them with a sense of solidarity and a group identity, children also learn negative behaviors from their peers. Like many homeless street youth, Rodrigo emphasized that he started using drugs because of his friends. "My friends taught me to sniff glue. One day they offered me some. They said I would hallucinate. I wanted to try it." Drug use temporarily alleviated Roberto's hunger and allowed him to forget the shame, fear and exclusion that he often felt. "It feels nice...You don't think about your problems. You just laugh and feel good," he explained (personal interview, 2010). Yet, consuming drugs also works to further their marginalization, both through the stigma attached to drug use, and the negative behaviors that addiction can fuel. One boy explained, "When I was 12 my friends taught me to smoke. I stopped going home because I did not want my mother to see me like that." This shame challenges ideas that children are unaware or unaffected by the stigma of drug use. Thus, despite children's stated preferences for the street over their homes or state-run institutions, it is nonetheless important not to over-idealize street life. In fact, I suggest that one of the dangers in overemphasizing agency is that the real marginalization and vulnerability experienced by young people can be overlooked.

Street culture offers an alternative forum for autonomous personal dignity. However, it ultimately becomes an active agent in personal degradation (Bourgois, 1995). Street children in Perú face high exposure to physical and sexual violence, HIV and tuberculosis. And as mentioned in Chapter Four, they occupy increasingly marginalized physical spaces, making it easier for policy makers and government officials to ignore their needs. Children's association with (and actual use of) drugs has led

to them increasingly being denied access to schools. The Peruvian government provides no services for youth substance abuse problems. Even NGOs offer only limited support to address children's drug addiction. As I argued in chapter three, drug use has become the primary defining characteristic in homeless street children's lives, serving to exclude them from other categories in which they could arguably identify, such as working child or child more generally. Even Lima's school for working children will not let homeless youth attend because of their 'drug problems' (personal interview, 2010). While on the one hand using drugs is clearly a coping mechanism for young people dealing with hunger, abuse and exclusion, their decision only serves to further marginalize them from most other social spaces, forcing them to depend almost exclusively on support from other groups of homeless street youth. Importantly, children in this study did not report the same pride in street identity that other studies of street children found (see Beazley, 2003). Their feelings can be understood as ambiguous at best. While children value the freedom of street life and prefer it to being in state-run homes, they often were vociferous that they did not want younger siblings or their own children to grow up in the streets. In fact, street children often expressed shame at their living conditions, and have internalized some of the negative representations of their lifestyles.

Re-inscribing differences

Children themselves play an important role in re-inscribing categories of difference (Jeffrey, 2011), challenging ideas that all forms of agency are necessarily resistant. In Chapter Three, I argued that adults have begun to distinguish between the categories of 'street child' and 'working child', increasingly excluding street children from the definition of the 'working child'. But what meanings do these terms have for children themselves and how do they self-identify? In addressing such questions, I respond to a need to investigate what such categorizations mean for diverse individuals within diverse social contexts (Green, 2006). I suggest that street children are caught between dominant understandings of childhood and their own lived experiences, leading to feelings of inadequacy. In particular, many street children have internalized desires and interests of the 'dominant' class as their own, as is reflected in their increasing role in consumer society and their feelings of shame at leading drastically different lifestyles.

The majority of street children in Lima do not identify as workers, even though most of them do in fact work in the informal economy. Such boundary-drawing has consequences on street children's ability to access certain spaces and potential support networks. One 16-year old who had lived on the streets for two years explained, "Yes, I have heard of MANTHOC, but it's only for kids who go to school and who live with their families." Although technically not the case, as explained in chapter 3, the

movement currently includes very few children working in ambulatory situations. In a recent diagnostic on a national level, no children reported shining shoes, cleaning car windows or performing acrobatics in the street, three of the main occupations of street children (MNNATSOP, 2010). However, the delegates themselves explained that street children were welcome in the group. A 16-year old delegate explained, “We share experiences and forms of living. We’re both NATs (child and adolescent workers). Street kids just aren’t as well informed.” Yet identifying as a worker, especially in the face of strong political campaigns against that work, is not something that happens automatically, but rather needs to be taught, a topic I return to in the next section. In contrast, the majority of children who work in the informal economy feel significant shame over their work, as argued earlier.

Alternatively, within Lima, the term ‘street child’ is strongly linked with delinquency¹⁰¹. In fact, child workers who work in the streets but do not use drugs or sleep in the streets often actively disassociate with the term. Monica, a thirteen-year old girl who worked with her father selling plastics in the Parada, one of Lima’s most dangerous neighborhoods, explained that there was a difference between street children and child workers. “Street children are dirty and they don’t eat,” she said. She herself identified both as a child worker and as poor, but not as a street child. By drawing such lines, Monica plays an active role in reinforcing negative stigmas associated with street children. Yet, labels, and the discourses associated with them, are essential to processes that marginalize (Wilson & Bauder, 2001).

The discrimination and abandonment experienced by most children on the streets of Lima is extremely detrimental to their self-identities. The label ‘street child’ serves to reinforce identities of such children are dangerous, disqualifying them from full social acceptance (Herrera, Jones & Thomas, 2009). One of the most common themes in our conversations related to being treated with indifference. As one 14-year old who slept in the streets of Lima’s Chinatown explained, “We are discriminated against because we are dirty. Sometimes we can’t even go on buses” (personal interview, 2010). Being denied access to such spaces limits street children’s ability to successfully vend, and may serve to push them further towards robbing or other more deceptive means of acquiring income. A social worker for INABIF reaffirmed this discrimination. “Because of a dirty face, street children lose their rights. People treat them differently.” In addition to being directly excluded, many street children internalize feelings of inferiority or a belief that they do not belong, and begin to self-exclude, arguably exacerbating their own sense of isolation and material poverty. In contrast to children such as Monica

¹⁰¹ NGOs working with street children now prefer to use the term ‘niños en situación de calle’, or children in street situations. They suggest it maintains children’s identity as children rather than permanently linking them with the street.

above, all the children who identified with the term 'street child' (technically written as child in street situation, which is the term used in Perú now), were homeless, and reported having robbed or consumed drugs at some point in their lives. In this sense, their behaviors reinforce the more recent tendency to link the term 'street child' almost exclusively with drug use and delinquency, and serve to justify ideas of certain youth as undeserving of help and responsible for their own poverty, ideas that to varying degrees street children have begun internalizing. Such accounts reinforce neoliberal subjectivities that emphasize personal responsibility and individual blame, and neglect the ways in which poverty is the product of specific social relationships (Green, 2006) and the very way street children are categorized in the first place.

In many ways, Peruvian street children are increasingly marginalized. While their actions clearly demonstrate agency, they show little indication of acquiring active political subjectivities. Their identities as working children and/or street children further serve to disconnect them from the state and even school, one of the main spaces in which political identities, at least as defined through narrow interpretations of citizenship, are taught. Yet, the street is not the only place for working children to reclaim their identity. By organizing specifically around their identities as working and/or street children, Perú's child workers' movement serves as an important space of learning, teaching children to take pride in themselves and develop political consciousness. In fact, one of the movement delegates specifically suggested that the movement served as a protective factor as other safety nets disintegrate. She explained that the movement "gives us the confidence to resist gangs, drugs and street life, and valorize our identities as workers" (personal interview, 2010). In doing so, I suggest it provides children with a more positive alternative identity than that which they develop in the street.

However, children rarely come to meeting on their own but rather need outreach or connections, reiterating the importance of social context when considering young people's agency.¹⁰² In addition to peers and adult collaborators, family members are often active recruiters. Many delegates are children of the movement's first delegates, and grew up in households that stressed the importance of organizing and collective action to press for social change. These family connections add an interesting dimension to understandings of social reproduction and knowledge transfer, indicating the ways in which alternative value systems can be reproduced, and highlight a big gap in currently presenting street children with viable (positive) alternatives to street life.

¹⁰² It is not just identity that shapes children's access to the movement but also geography. MANTHOC is organized by location and neighborhood, which has consequences for children's ability to learn about or access meetings. In fact, MANTHOC has not base in Lima's historic center, one of the predominant areas in which street children congregate. In 2009, 162 children and adolescents participated in MANTHOC in Lima in 7 different groups. 71 participants were age 12 or under, and the rest were adolescents. About half the participants were boys and half were girls.

5.10 Learning to Identify as a Political Actor

An analysis of Perú's child workers movements provides clear evidence of the ways in which children can be political actors, while also necessitating new ways of theorizing political subjectivity. Philo and Smith (2003) argue that indirect political agency has myriad implications for the structuring of politics and policy in the adult world. While children may not be able to vote, they directly attempt to challenge the Peruvian government and hold it more accountable. When looking at traditional measures of politics, such as voting rates or successfully changing laws and policies, the movement has had few results. Yet, I argue that it is nonetheless an important space of politics because of its role in *teaching* children to be active political subjects and reclaiming what it means to be a child worker. This reinforces the importance of inter-subjectivity, and broadens understandings of where political formation can take place and how such formation takes place. As they attend meetings and discuss inequalities with their peers, children learn to connect their everyday lives to regional, national and even international political processes (Philo and Smith, 2003), and fight to rework unequal power relations (Bosco, 2010).

Ironically, because children are rarely considered political actors, children's rights groups may have had more political freedom than other groups. In the 1980s and 1990s, associations and unions came under aggressive attack as part of efforts to curtail terrorism. Anyone who organized, especially around any topic that could be interpreted as either anti-government or Marxist, was accused of being a terrorist. After a few prominent union leaders were murdered, many groups stopped operating. However, MANTHOC, because it was mostly children organizing, did not fall under the same scrutiny or attention. While the movement has been accused of becoming significantly less radical over the years, it is nonetheless one of the few organizations that survived relatively unscathed.

The movement directly works to combat the negative effects of anti-child labor campaigns on children's identities. Instead of feeling shame, it teaches children to take pride in their identity as child workers. In doing so, it actively challenges negative representations of working children. A 13-year old delegate explained, "Work gives us value. It helps us sustain ourselves and survive, but in a dignified way. Through the movement, I learned to value what I do to support myself and my family. Before, I was ashamed to say I worked. Now, I value it... Being part of the movement has helped my self-esteem. I have better relationships with my parents. We have much better communication and they respect my opinions. I have learned to defend myself with words and can accept my errors" (personal interview, 2009). Generación, one of the founders of MNNATSOP, the newer umbrella organization of child workers' groups, specifically teaches street children to identify as child workers, even when they are not working. As one 16-year old living on and off the streets explained, "We are child workers who are in a

temporary state of unemployment” (personal interview, 2010). This allows them to be part of a more positive group and larger social movement. By learning to connect and identify with others, street children do not feel as isolated, and sometimes even gain the knowledge and confidence to demand that the state respect their rights. Fernandez Fernandez (2009) suggests that it is through processes of awareness building and organization that people become effective political subjects. While many street children either did not know they had rights or found those rights to be meaningless, those children who were part of *Generación* often made specifically rights-based demands. Rodrigo, who had been on the streets since he was 8, explained, “For me, *Generación* means *lucha* (struggle). At first, I saw it as just another institution. But now, I know it’s for people who fight for each other and our rights. If you fight for your future, for your kids, for your brothers, cousins and nephews in the street, that is *Generación*” (personal interview, 2010). In this sense, otherwise marginalized children are actively (and collectively) learning to make demands on the state.¹⁰³

The experience of being a delegate provides young people with other important skills and benefits, and helps them develop awareness of themselves as political actors, able to voice their opinions and concerns to government and others with power, and demand fulfillment of their rights. Additionally, because children’s ability to participate is often based on how articulate they are (Milne & Invernizzi, 2002), delegates may be more successful than other working children in voicing their concerns. In fact, in some cases, participation in the movement changes children’s outlook on possibilities for the future, and in this regard, may address some of the inequalities and self-censoring that result from what Bourdieu (1984) describes as an internalization of elite values. A 16-year old MANTHOC delegate explained, “Now I have experience that will help me in my professional life and in school. I want to be someone in life. I want to be a scientist. It is important to both work and study. If I only work, I can’t improve. But if I only study, I don’t know what real work is. Both are important for human life. Both form you and help you on a personal level” (personal interview, 2009). Through the movement, children acquire certain symbolic capital associated with the dominant class, like the ability to articulate themselves and the confidence to speak to those in power, but also have the skills to critique certain values. In this regard, the movement promotes an idea of political subjectivity as not

¹⁰³ It was not just the Child Workers’ Movement that facilitated children’s political identities. Sonya, a 17-year old living in the cones of Lima, had participated in workshops run by EveryChild, an international NGO that worked to promote participation and children’s rights. However, when their funding cycle ended, the NGO switched to another neighborhood. Sonya and her friend decided to keep running workshops, such as art classes, after-school help, and games, for the younger children in the neighborhood. “We saw how much EveryChild had helped us and wanted other kids to have the same opportunity. People are against the idea that children and youth can change the world. Some adults are threatened by what we are doing” (personal interview, 2009).

simply being 'good citizens' or exercising one's right to vote, which children arguably cannot do, but rather as people who can potentially make significant contributions to social and political change (see Bosco, 2010).

The movement teaches children to be critical thinkers. Alejandro Cussianovich, one of the movement's founders, still plays an active role in educating children. At one meeting, he helped the child workers make a list of the differences between the Day of the Child Worker, for which they were preparing, and the Global Day for the Eradication of Child Labor, an international event organized by UNICEF and the ILO. Alejandro began by asking the children to list words that they associated with UNICEF's event. They listed eradication, criminality, discrimination and opposition. Alternatively, they associated the Day of the Worker with identity, inclusion, pride and struggle. As they talked, Alejandro emphasized the importance of language and discourse. "Behind our language, there is always something. You need to question what people are trying to say versus what they are saying, including me," he stressed. "You can't be indifferent to words. They are very important. The ILO says child workers stop being children. Street children are called piranhas. This creates a reaction. It connotes fear, distrust, attacking to survive. Tone is important also" (field notes, 2010). Alejandro's comments, articulated in a clear manner to the children participating, actively prepare children to critically interrogate discourse, revealing the role language can play in justifying political action. In doing so, it may help reveal some of the symbolic violence to which Bourdieu refers and better prepares children to play an active role in questioning the state, both as children and later on. In challenging dominant discourses, knowledges and the identity of the child worker, often considered part of 'p' politics, the child workers' movement directly speaks back to national and international policies criminalizing child labor. In doing so, their actions show the relationship between the politics of everyday life, and what Painter (1995) refers to as big 'P' politics, defined as the institutions and processes of the state, government and formal political organizations (Painter 1995; Philo & Smith, 2003).

While adults may play a big role in shaping children's interest in the movement and initially teaching them about their rights, actual meetings are led by national delegates, who take charge of leading discussion, organizing the other children attending and running capacity-building workshops. In direct contrast to claims that young people are apathetic (O'Toole, 2003), children in the movement are very aware of politics. "We meet once a week to talk about our experiences and how things are going. We talk about our rights and how to improve their fulfillment," explained a delegate (personal interview, 2009). In this sense, MANTHOC and other groups for working children fulfill an important role as support groups and serve as a way to connect children's personal political experiences with those

of their peers. In addition to combatting working children's isolation and giving them emotional support to work through various hardships, children's conversations speak to larger debates that also make up 'P' politics, such as the availability of employment, or the accessibility of welfare, health, and education services (Philo & Smith, 2003), as well as the very role of children in society.

The movement goes beyond identity politics and teaching to organize in more traditionally political ways. To be more effective politically, MANTHOC, Generación and a few other groups of child workers formed MNNATSOP. "We needed people specifically in charge of politics. International pressure was increasing. Now, there was a global march against child labor and more involvement of the ILO and IPEC. We needed to fight" (personal interview, 2010). The movement organizes children at the local level with the specific aim of influencing national and even international politics, and in this sense, teaches children to view politics across multiple related scales. In fact, child delegates have attended meetings of Latin American child workers, and spoken to United Nations' groups in Geneva, challenging the idea that poor people's (and in this case, children's) political subjectivity is only local (see Goode & Maskovsky, 2001). They also organize marches, issued alternative reports analyzing progress made towards implementing the CRC and proposed their own modifications to Perú's Code for Children and Adolescents. Although children have yet to be invited to more formal planning meetings regarding their own rights, the adult collaborators of the movement, many of whom were delegates themselves, now sit on Lima's formal commission for the Fight against Poverty. In direct contrast to more mainstream types of political subjectivity often promoted by the schools, that emphasize being good citizens (Staeheli & Hammett, 2010), children in the movement take a much more active approach to political subjectivity. They hold both the state and an unfair neoliberal world order responsible for perpetuating their poverty, and try to organize around both. As one 16-year old who had participated in the movement for the past two years explained, "The state has the main responsibility to help children but they don't worry about us. We need to make demands. There are great inequalities in Perú. Many people die working and earn nothing. Other people just sit and receive a big salary. It is the job of the state to see this" (personal interview, 2009). Such comments indicate awareness not just of inequality but of rights and obligations from the state.

Children in the movement take an active role in pushing alternative interpretations of their own rights. Although they have had only limited successes, they continue to advocate for a more equal society. As mentioned in Chapter Four, upon learning of the new Begging Bill, a group of delegates immediately organized and went to speak with Henry Pease, the congressman who had proposed it. While the delegation did not ultimately succeed in getting the bill revoked, they presented an

alternative representation of child workers than that on which the bill was based, while also challenging neoliberal interpretations of children's rights. As a result of their organizing, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child formally recommended that the Peruvian government revoke the bill, also showing how the CRC provides a contradictory resource in the lives of working children.

Those who participated in the movement as children took the skills with them into other areas of their lives. Cecilia, an 18-year old who serves as MANTHOC's national delegate, explained that the movement had played a big role in her personal formation, and had facilitated important improvements in her studies and her family relationships (personal interview, 2010). Another young woman explained that through the movement, she had learned to be political and organize. "My parents did not want me to participate but it helped me develop. It prepared me to participate in the teachers' union. If we are organized, we can change the system" (personal interview, 2010). What she learned as a delegate prepared her for a more active political role as an adult. Focusing on how children rework their collective identities has important political consequences in understandings of childhood, development, and politics. It is through community and learning that children are able to more effectively speak back to the state. This broader focus on what political activism looks like is especially important in the context of Perú, where informal political structures play a big role in shaping political outcomes.

As delegates, children also learned to better articulate some of the inequalities that maintain poverty and violate children's rights. In contrast to some of the explanations for poverty voiced at the start of this chapter, Cecilia explained, "poverty exists because there is not a good distribution of resources. The government says there are opportunities but they are not open to everyone or in good conditions. Many times we export raw goods but we don't make the main products. This generates poverty. We are also exploited by international groups. There is no investment in education and health. But more than anything, there is bad distribution of resources" (personal interview, 2010). After having been a part of MANTHOC for four years, she had learned to critique international development theory and to explain poverty as a result of structural causes, rather than personal failure. Her answer, although perhaps more detailed than other delegates, was fairly typical of children who participated in the movement. Recognizing the importance of structural and relational factors in accounting for poverty may serve to mitigate the internalization of failure and personal shame that many street children experience. It also speaks to an increased ability to connect one's own personal experiences to political and economic processes on various scales (Hopkins & Alexander, 2010).

Although only a very small percentage of Perú's child workers, very few of whom are ambulatory workers, participate in Perú's child workers movement, I suggest that it nonetheless provide

an important space for challenging representations of childhood and political subjectivity. While the workers' movement has not succeeded in reducing the actual conditions of exploitation in which children work, in teaching children to value their identities and connecting them to other children in similar situations, it creates a possibility for rupture with dominant subjectivities and discourses that emphasize competition and individualism, while also improving children's emotional well-being.

5.11 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have shown the ways in which a focus on street children's everyday lives challenges static images of children as vulnerable victims in need of saving. Although children do not blindly accept dominant representations of childhood, they nonetheless are deeply affected by the ways in which they are governed and the images of childhood to which they are exposed. I reveal the ways in which children reproduce dominant value systems, while also actively creating new identities and possibilities for themselves. In doing so, I both challenge the inevitability of neoliberal rationalities while also showing how they may be reproduced.

While the stories in this chapter may make it clear that children are social actors, simply saying children have agency is a limited claim. Instead, it is necessary to consider the specific consequences of children's agency. I showed the ways in which many of children's actions may simultaneously include aspects of resistance while also furthering children's own marginalization or reinforcing dominant value systems. For example, through work, children both specifically facilitate their participation in aspects of 'modern' neoliberal childhoods, such as consumerism, while also further stigmatizing themselves in school, social services, or other spaces that increasingly see child labor as a sign of backwardness. In such regards, street children reaffirm, rework and only in some cases, resist neoliberal discourses and authoritative understandings of poverty. Yet, I also argued that it was necessary to expand more nuanced conceptions of agency to specifically consider how children's agency was both highly spatial and dependent on social context. Thus, even when the conditions of work themselves do not change, the effects of that work may, depending on the stigma associated with work, and the different support networks that children are able to tap into.

Children's ability to act, and the results of their actions, are strongly related to the peers and adults around them, necessitating a shift beyond individual conceptions of agency to instead consider social agency. It is with the support and help of peers and adults that children are able to withstand exploitative working conditions, rework relationships with narrowly-focused NGOs to more greatly benefit, or carve out new identities for themselves in the streets. Thus, rather than simply extended existing notions of subjectivity to children, street children's lives reveal the importance of re-theorizing

subjectivity through the lens of inter-dependencies. The children in this study challenge the myth of autonomous self-sufficient individuals. In fact, it is because of people's willingness to recognize that children need help and support in a way that is often overlooked or denied in the case of adults that they may be more effective at re-centering the role of care and affection in everyone's lives (see Tronto, 1993; Staeheli & Brown, 2003). My research also necessitates new ways of theorizing political subjectivity by highlighting how the child workers' movement empowers children to reclaim their identities as workers and teaches them to protest unequal structural relationships, creating more active notions of citizenship than those taught in school and helping children learn how to make political demands on the state and critically question the discourses and norms to which they are exposed.

Further, I suggest that street children's lives indicate the necessity of considering poverty from a relational perspective. In direct contrast to authoritative views of poverty, which present that poverty as a characteristic of individuals, children's lives reveal poverty as dynamic and relational. The diversity of the lives of children in this study point out clear fallacies in homogenous depictions of child poverty, and reveal limitations in relying on technical expertise and predetermined definitions of what poverty looks like. Yet, dominant representations of childhood, and the corresponding labels assigned to children have important repercussions on their self-esteems, identities, and ways in which children govern themselves, as reflected through the spaces they choose to access and the ways in which they interact with teachers, peers and social workers. When children are able to successfully negotiate the constraints of their everyday lives, it is most often specifically because of caring and supportive individuals. Such a realization necessitates re-centering the role of care in understandings of poverty and presents a direct challenge to understandings of poverty as simply economic. In the conclusion, I elaborate on the ways in which a care ethics approach could lead to more progressive and inclusive approaches to development.

Chapter 6: Conclusion- Bringing Care Ethics into Children's Rights and a Relational Analysis of Poverty

This research has explored the complex ways in which understandings of childhood combine with particular narratives of international development and poverty to reinforce and challenge neoliberal forms of regulation and governance. While the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is often considered in direct opposition to more neoliberal forms of development, I have shown the way in which the two can work together in surprising ways. Throughout this dissertation, I argued that children's rights legislation provides a moral framework for legitimating certain aspects of neoliberal development and governance, something especially important as people worldwide become increasingly disillusioned with growing inequalities and increased poverty. In this conclusion, I briefly highlight some of my major contributions to critical development and poverty studies before arguing that a focus on care ethics may facilitate more progressive interpretations of children's rights.

This study was guided by sets of questions about three related topics: development and poverty, urban governance through social services and the regulation of public space, and childhood. Despite some efforts made by academic scholars in both childhood studies and children's geographies, childhood continues to be thought of as a predominantly apolitical time period. The studies that do recognize children as political actors tend to focus on spaces that are considered 'naturally' child-friendly, such as playgrounds or children's walks to school. Yet, in this dissertation, I show how childhood itself is not only a highly political and contested time period, but is also used in distinctly political ways to promote specific narratives of development. In fact, it is specifically because children are considered outside the realm of politics that I suggest that they offer a morally powerful way to promote particular agendas. More specifically, I argued that children's rights legislation and the international organizations promoting the CRC provide a justification for increased intervention and depoliticized technical assistance. Such an approach brings critical analyses of the ways in which the CRC serves as a new form of colonization (Liebel, 2006; Aitken, Kjørholt, & Lund, 2008; Pupavac, 2001) in conversation with key insights from postdevelopment scholars about the role of discourse and the politics of knowledge production.

Looking at places as relationally connected necessitates moving away from thinking about countries in the global south as further back in time than those in the North. My dissertation addresses the production and maintenance of child poverty on a number of interrelated scales. I argued that the complex relationship between actors on multiple connected scales speaks to shifts in governance, and

indicates a need to move beyond an analysis of the state when considering policies of poverty reduction (Ferguson, 2010). In contrast to studies which focus on either a *macro*-scale or a more *localized* analysis, I link the subjectivity of the poor both with political-economic shifts and discourses and with identity projects. By focusing on street children's everyday lives, I show how 'development' and 'poverty' are negotiated and experienced through social services and the regulation of public space. In doing so, I combine work on the governance of poverty, most of which has remained focused on the global north (see de Verteuil, et al, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Mitchell, 1997), with insights from critical development scholars regarding a need for a historical and sociopolitical account of poverty to actively politicize the ways in which Peruvian street children negotiate control, care and survival. Such a multi-scalar analysis is necessary for a relational analysis of poverty.

Street children's lives offer new ways of conceptualizing poverty and challenge assumptions about where children belong and what childhood should look like. In bringing together critical poverty scholars' emphasis on the ways in which discourses on poverty work to (re)produce that poverty with children's geographers' focus on children as active subjects in their own right, I show how projects carried out in children's name are essential to the maintenance of street children's poverty and challenge the idea that children are only victims of socio-economic and political changes. More specifically, I expand insights from those scholars promoting relational analyses of poverty both to Latin America and to include children, and in doing so, link narratives of development and childhood with the maintenance of poverty. I argued that specific ways of categorizing children are essential to understanding the (re)production of their poverty. In particular, the label street child, which is contrasted with supposed normalcy of children who spend the majority of time in school and their homes, works to stigmatize children in the streets and justify intervention and increased regulation in the name of their own good. Street children are increasingly linked with drug use and delinquency, an association that pathologizes them, and sets them apart as less deserving than other working and poor children. In the context of Latin America, these beliefs are also highly racialized and reflect historical (and ongoing) discrimination of indigenous populations, practices and value systems. The difference between indigenous practices of parenting, and supposedly universal ones, affirms beliefs that the presence of indigenous mothers and their children on city streets are indicators of backwardness, thus justifying their removal and discipline. By showing how children's rights discourses get used to reinforce such problematic distinctions, I reinforce the importance of looking at the effects of social categorization in maintaining poverty.

Children's Rights as a Form of Regulation

In this dissertation, I wanted to understand what an analysis of the regulation of poor children could tell us for retheorizing development and poverty. Foucault (1977, 1991) argued that formal state organizations were not the only ones responsible for governance but rather that regulation takes place on multiple small-scales, such as through schools, state welfare agencies, private households, in formal associations of civil society and informal daily interaction (Fraser, 2003), all of which contribute to the ways in which people accept certain regimes of practices as natural (Dean, 2010). Lemke (2002, 203) argues that neoliberalism is “a political project that endeavors to create a social reality that it suggests already exists.” To understand how it does so, it is necessary to examine the way in which certain ideas get spread and reproduced. While many scholars argue that neoliberal discourses and policies have become hegemonic (Harvey, 2007), they pay a lot less attention to the way such beliefs came to be so dominant (Read, 2009). In such regards, children’s rights legislation and their accompanying discourses play an important role legitimating the areas subject to intervention and providing a moral justification for such intervention.

In particular, dominant narratives suggest that as countries experience economic growth, child labor will decrease and experiences of childhood will begin to resemble (idealized) experiences in the global north (see Post, 2001). By presenting Western experiences of childhood as universal, those children who do not experience childhood exclusively as a time of play and school are depicted as in need of saving. In doing so, the reasons that children may not experience such childhoods, such as centuries of exploitation and dispossession and current economic policies promoting competition and a race-to-the bottom, along with questions of whether such childhoods are even as ideal as supposed, are neglected, depoliticizing technical interventions.

Even though state welfare provision is minimal, and neoliberal economic policies have arguably heightened the financial burdens and hardships faced by many families, parents are nonetheless increasingly held responsible for the social reproduction of their children. Yet, such responsibility does not mean that the state and NGOs are absent in the lives of poor children in their families. Rather, I showed the way in which various governance networks are nonetheless playing an active role regulating and disciplining those parents who fail to adequately provide children with the support and resources to experience childhoods as promoted by international rights organizations. The ‘problem’ of street children can then be interpreted as a problem of poor governance of the family and to a lesser extent the self, rather than inequalities produced by structural adjustments, a lack of well-paid work opportunities, or historical exclusion. In such regards, children’s rights discourses and legislation work

to reinforce authoritative understandings of poverty as a bounded problem of nations, as well as the individual families within those countries. In particular, parents are increasingly held responsible for failing to provide their children with the experiences outlined in dominant discourses of supposed 'universal' childhoods.

Yet, a focus on street children's lives themselves represent a direct challenge to universal narratives of development which turn space into time, simply presenting some places as further back on universal paths to progress than are others (see Massey, 2005), and show clear fallacies in the use of snap-shot indicators as measures of progress. For example, international organizations such as UNICEF and the ILO consider high percentages of children working to be signs of 'backwardness' or indications of grave problems to be addressed. However, many children and young people, especially those who work in the informal economy, specifically emphasize a desire for secure employment. Thus, from some children's perspectives, a society with a high percentage of children working might indicate greater opportunities for young people. Children's experiences speak to a need to examine the conditions under which children are working, rather than simply looking at the number of kids working more generally, an analysis that would call into question economic policies that facilitate or create conditions of exploitation.

Towards a Situated and Uneven Neoliberalism

As I have argued here, Perú's processes of national development involved very specific articulations of urban growth, childhood, and poverty. Neoliberal discourse mixes with existing sociopolitical and economic frameworks on the ground to produce contextually specific interactions, not simply mirror images of policy outcomes based on experiences in the global north. Such an argument resonates with Brenner and Theodore's (2002) focus on the contextual embeddedness of neoliberal restructuring projects. Within Perú, neoliberal governance needs to be understood in the context of colonialism and development. In Chapter Four, I argued that notions of order and security were specifically linked with imagined geographies of what cities such as Miami and New York were like. At the same time, such notions need to be socially and historically situated, and understood in response to rapid migration and demographic shifts that have occurred in Lima in the past few decades. Understandings of order have particularly racial implications in the context of Latin American cities, as indigenous populations continue to be depicted as backwards, disorderly, and a threat to development. Additionally, I argued that understandings of childhood combine with notions of development to reinforce beliefs that children are especially out of place on the streets. Children are then removed in

the name of their own protection, as reflected by the Begging Bill and anti-child labor legislation. Organizations promoting narrow interpretations of the CRC help justify this repression.

At the same time, because of a strong belief within Perú that laws only serve as guidelines, policies and legal changes vary significantly based on the situated agents who are in charge of their implementation. While overall, the municipality of Lima's emphasis on urban recuperation has resonated with moves towards more revanchist policies regarding public space, many of the projects have focused on the creation of public parks and other spaces that are fairly open. In this sense, Lima has not seen the same tendency towards gated communities that has been noted elsewhere (see Caldeira, 2000). While there are clear moments of repression, as I argued in Chapter Four, on a day-to-day basis, many police officers simply ignore the presence of street children and other informal workers. Further, in one district of Lima, the local government has even partnered with the child workers' movement in a program called My Clean City. As teenagers work to promote recycling and gardening, they directly counter representations of young people as detracting from public safety and hindering investments. In such regards, Lima's government has not fully embraced an annihilation of space by law, to borrow the words of Don Mitchell (1997). Rather, regulation is much less consistent, and simultaneously involves aspects of revanchism, neglect, containment, and even accommodation. This reaffirms the importance of a need for situated analyses of neoliberalism, rather than the assumption that policies will simply look and work the same way everywhere.

Further, I take seriously Ferguson's (2010) call to consider how policies which may appear 'neoliberal' can actually be subverted towards more progressive claims. In Chapter Three, I specifically showed how a school for working children, in helping children produce crafts to be sold internationally, actually emphasized values of solidarity and increased participation, albeit by using participation in the international market to do so. I also showed the way in which NGOs that are the most vociferously arguing against what they see as 'handouts' for street children are simultaneously the ones who are most likely to recognize children's presence in the streets as resulting from structural inequality and marginalization, rather than individual or parental fault. They are specifically against 'handouts' then, not because they see street children as inherently undeserving, or their parents in need of discipline, arguments that are often promoted by neoliberal discourses, but rather because they recognize the need for more lasting changes. Especially given Perú's history of populist governments, an emphasis on providing children and their families with tools to help mitigate poverty is not simply part of the same old neoliberal rhetoric but rather an argument for structural change and redistribution. Thus, my analysis demonstrates the need to move beyond a tendency to simply assume that people have

internalized 'neoliberal' values as their own, and instead consider the specific socio-political and geohistorical contexts in which policies are being enacted, as well as the objectives of those executing them.

In fact, the very association between various neoliberal policies and influence from the global north may also help generate more grounds towards resistance. Because of Perú's historically exploitative relationship with the United States and Europe, people frequently express anger towards, and even protest, against neoliberal policies. And the higher percentage of people living in poverty is most likely one of the factors leading to more lenient and varied responses and beliefs to poverty than that which is promoted by proponents of neoliberal forms of governance. Many Peruvians themselves consistently stress that the state needs to provide people with opportunities, showing the way in which specific geo-histories of power and inequality shape the ways in which discourses are internalized and play out. Poverty is then seen as a byproduct of poor governmental planning, exploitative relationships with countries (and increasingly, transnational corporations) in the global north, and parental irresponsibility. People do not simply accept authoritative explanations for poverty; nor do they always offer entirely counter explanations. In such regards, poverty needs to be analyzed relationally, and can only be understood in its specific context.

It is perhaps for this reason, however, that children's rights discourses and the organizations that promote them may be particularly dangerous. Even people who protest the Peruvian government's tendency to define development as economic growth often united behind efforts to implement children's rights. Throughout this dissertation, I argued that simply invoking a language of children's rights does not automatically equate with an alternative model of development. Rather, I showed the way in which the spread of 'universal' understandings of childhood, and the accompanying tendency to categorize children based on whether they have such experiences, facilitates regulation and exclusion. While some interpretations of children's rights are arguably influenced by the involvement of international children's rights NGOs and their conditional donations, the continuous decrease in aid that has resulted as a result of Perú's consistent economic growth over the past few years, provide a space for future analysis of whether discourses about what childhood should look like will prove to be more lasting than the conditionalities that came with aid.

Yet, as is the case with neoliberal policies, the implementation of children's rights legislation is highly uneven. While international children's rights legislation may facilitate increased regulation of poor children, at the same time, the CRC and international pressure may mitigate some of the most repressive tendencies highlighted by scholars writing in the context of the global north (Mitchell, 1997;

Smith, 1996). In contrast to Perú, the United States has not even ratified the CRC, and because it does not rely on the support of international NGOs or funding agencies to the extent of countries such as Perú, it is not subject to the same types of oversight and scrutiny. While in many situations, such conditionalities work to further marginalize street and working children, they also provide a tool against some of the more brutal forms of police repression that have been documented elsewhere. There is some indication that greater public awareness and surveillance, as well as international involvement, can be used to counter more extreme forms of punitive policing. There is no reason that greater mobilization and public pressure cannot similarly be used to point out contradictions and inadequacies in the contributions and policies of international organizations and actors.

Further, in the case of the Begging Bill, for example, the UN Committee on the CRC specifically recommended that Perú revoke the bill, expressing concern that it ultimately violated children's rights, rather than protected them. Although the Peruvian government has yet to heed the Committee's recommendations, it nonetheless shows the way in which international pressure and formal rights frameworks may offer some promise of more progressive interpretations. In fact, in rare cases, international human rights bodies may offer legal remedies to abuses by the Peruvian government. As argued in Chapter Four, when an NGO for street children was closed down for what the director believed was predominantly for economic motivations, she formally protested, and brought the case all the way up to the Inter-American human rights court. Although she is still waiting to hear the results of the case, the existence of such bodies may offer the possibility for more oversight and protection than would otherwise be the case.

Finally, the very diversity of programming carried out in the name of children's rights offers some possibility for improvement and more inclusive forms of development. In particular, I suggested that the child workers' movement utilizes a language of rights to promote very different understandings of childhood. Rather than emphasizing a need to protect children (and society from children), the movement recognizes children as protagonists of their own lives. In direct contrast to an emphasis on fostering competition, the child workers' movement emphasizes solidarity, and teaches children to organize and advocate for each other. Such an approach resonates with McDowell (2004: 156)'s argument that promoting "greater equality requires a system of social support that will encourage and facilitate forms of social interaction that are not based on individual competitiveness."

Through the Child Workers' Movement, children learn to value their identities as workers, and campaign for better working conditions. In doing so, they directly address neoliberal economic policies and their exploitative effects. This emphasis on teaching children to be political actors and to value their

identities as workers directly combats individual notions of subjectivity linked with neoliberal discourses (see Read, 2009). Through their actions, children in the movement ultimately argue for a very different approach to development than that being promoted by international development organizations, and currently being carried out by the Peruvian government. Redistribution, good social security and health benefits, and an emphasis on fair wages and protection for working conditions, are key. The child workers movement also shows how international connections and networks can be used in more progressive ways. The movement relies on international networks and training as people come to study in Perú and national delegates travel to Italy and Germany to learn from and inform their peers. Such networks also challenge dominant 'flows' of knowledge, as Perú's movement is turned to as an example of successful organizing and theorizing around the dignity of work. However, international pressure and the neoliberalization of social services have hindered children's rights movements and limited spaces in which to advocate for more progressive change.

Rights-based campaigns and programming are themselves increasingly hindered by the neoliberalization of social services. In Chapter Three, I suggested that a need to pick the most marketable child had arguably worked to exclude street children from limited campaigns in the name of children's rights. Because of their age (many are now teenagers) and their association with drug consumption and robbing, they are considered less deserving than their younger more 'innocent' counterparts. One social worker explained that many NGOs no longer work with street children because it is hard to make progress. They see few ways to help them get ahead, and need more rapid measurable results, so switch to other populations. But what is perhaps even more surprising is the way in which street children are increasingly being excluded from the child workers' movement. Increased campaigning against child labor has made some adult proponents of the movement feel pressure to pick a marketable child worker. Street children, because they often do not attend school and frequently use drugs, make it more difficult to argue for the benefits of work. I argued that this in part reveals the way in which formal support of children's rights legislation has ironically made rights-based arguments less radical, as multiple NGOs and local organizations promoting children's rights now work with government and international donors on coordinated campaigns in the name of children's well-being.

Children's Agency, Resistance and Intersubjectivity

Despite Perú's rapid economic growth in the past few years, the experiences of children in this study make it clear that not everyone is benefiting. Children 'manage' their poverty in varied and often creative ways, creating work opportunities for themselves in the street, reworking their own identities and relationships with NGOs and social services in order to more directly benefit, and in some cases,

even playing up their own poverty and vulnerability in order to more successfully street vend. In such regards, my analysis pushes social reproduction literature to consider children not simply as objects to be cared for, but rather as active contributors to social reproduction. I suggested that children offer a particularly useful lens to examine the way in which discourses actually get reproduced and in some cases, reworked. Young people are constantly learning how the world around them works. Because of this, there may be more opportunity or space to disrupt the transformation of dominant narratives.¹⁰⁴ Yet, at the same time, children are not immune to the government and NGOs' more orchestrated attempts to manage the children themselves. They internalize and reproduce aspects of discourses about childhood and subjectivity circulating. In such regards, the stories of children's lives in this dissertation are not as triumphant as other accounts of children's work and agency (see Swanson, 2010). In particular, I argued that many forms of children's agency represent contradictory resistance; while in some ways they create more opportunities for themselves, avoid increased state regulation, or reject dominant representations of childhood, their actions often lead to further marginalization or work to exclude them in other ways. This necessitates retheorizing about children's agency and resistance to consider not just whether children have agency, which they clearly do, but also the results of that agency. In particular, I offer two insights into theorizing about resistance that are often neglected: the first is that children's actions vary over time and are highly spatialized. Second, I argue that it is necessary to consider the idea of social agency (Jeffrey, 2011). The idea of social agency offers an especially important contrast to dominant ideas relating to rights and political subjectivity. In many regards, the CRC, like other human rights bodies, promotes very individualized understandings of rights. Children are considered to be independent rights-bearers, with rights increasingly being defined around choice and the ability to participate in neoliberal market economies (albeit often a delayed participation). Similarly, debates about whether children can even have rights tend to emphasize their lack of independence. In contrast, social agency particularly resonates with ideas of inter-subjectivity. While children may not be able to exercise their rights without the support of other people, often adults, rather than concluding that they therefore do not need or deserve rights, I argue for a more general move towards inter-subjectivity. Reframing children's rights through a lens of care ethics, and focusing on their inter-subjectivity facilitates a more progressive interpretation of rights.

¹⁰⁴ For example, I showed the way in which street children, because they often do not attend school, and may not even live with their families, actually have more space to create their own value systems. This is evident from their tendency to share food and sometimes even money and work together rather than against each other. Such norms are in direct contrast to the individualism and competition emphasized in neoliberal discourse, and challenge the inevitability that such values will exist.

Children point out the weaknesses of framing the subject as a self-sufficient individual. The emphasis on individual responsibility and self-sufficiency so commonly linked with neoliberalism does not fully apply to children. Children actually continue to be denied full self-governance, and within Perú, even in the situation of street children, they are not viewed as fully responsible for their situations. Thus, the goal for the regulation of children is not immediate independence, as it is with adults, but rather future independence. Additionally, while poor children are frequently managed for the purpose of control, many of the people working with them are genuinely concerned with providing services as well. In such regards, I argue that an analysis of child welfare does not simply point out fallacies in beliefs about the neoliberal subject but rather can be used to promote more inclusive approaches to welfare more generally. Various positioned actors recognize that children need care, nurturance and affection as a necessary part of healthy development and well-being. I suggest that we can reclaim certain characteristics associated with childhood, such as the lack of stigma attached to children's dependence, and their need for love and affection, and expand such concepts to broader approaches to welfare. In fact, because of children's presumed vulnerability, it is more apparent that they are dependent on others in order to exercise their rights. Yet, such recognition is frequently overlooked in an emphasis on individual responsibility, self-sufficiency, and rights. I suggest that children make the importance of care obvious, showing how no one is independent. Along similar lines, children make it apparent that simply giving people rights does not insure that such rights will be respected. Inequalities and power dynamics shape all people's ability to exercise their rights, not just children.

Rethinking Children's Rights and Poverty through a Lens of Care

Implementing rights-based development through the lens of care ethics opens up potential spaces for more beneficial and inclusive 'development'. The text of the CRC does not automatically necessitate an interpretation emphasizing protection and increased regulation. Even among scholars who are most vociferous in their critiques of the children's rights regime as a form of re-colonization, the majority nonetheless see the CRC itself as an important accomplishment in a move towards greater respect and inclusion of children and young people in society (see Liebel and Martinez Muñoz, 2009). The official focus on valuing children's opinions and providing them with a right to be consulted on all matters concerning them sets up a legal framework to take seriously children's understandings, interpretations and experiences of poverty. This study has made it clear that exclusion and inequality are essential to understanding child poverty. While a relational analysis of poverty emphasizes social processes that (re)produce poverty, such an approach does not in and of itself necessitate applying principles of care ethics to critical poverty studies. In the final section of this conclusion, I specifically

argue that care is the missing piece both in understanding and better addressing, child poverty and development.

I suggest that children's more apparent need for care makes it easier to politicize the ways in which care is embedded in all of our encounters and interactions (Lawson, 2007a). Feminist care ethics asserts the centrality of care in everyone's lives, emphasizing that care is necessary for individual and collective survival (Kittay, 1998; Lawson, 2007a; Tronto, 1993). Such an approach moves beyond recognition that we all need care to also emphasize that we all need emotional support, something frequently overlooked in distinctly 'uncaring' welfare provisions. In such regards, providing care does not in and of itself equate with a care ethics approach but rather encompasses debates about finding the balance between provision and control. In fact, according to Miriam Webster dictionary, care both refers to 'regard, coming from desire or esteem,' as well as 'charge or supervision'. Relationships between care providers and those receiving care often involve significant power disparities. Yet, applying a care ethics approach begins to address some of these disparities. According to Tronto (1993), caring involves taking the concerns and needs of the other as the basis for action, rather than assuming what those needs are. Further, in its recognition of interdependence, and its emphasis on promoting relationships based on mutual obligations and trust, care ethics challenge the neoliberalization of social services and its focus on discipline and the creation of autonomous responsible people (Raghuram, Madge & Noxolo, 2009; McDowell, 2004).

While current political emphases on disciplining those dispossessed by structural adjustment policies of the 1970s and 1980s may have exacerbated a tendency to manipulate children's rights into a tool of increased regulation, the tension between various children's rights did not just emerge in accordance with neoliberal forms of governance. Since Janusz Korczak, one of the earliest proponents of children's rights, issued his Magna Charta for children in 1919, there has been a debate about how much to protect children versus allow them a life of self-determination and active citizenship.¹⁰⁵ In contrast to Korczak's conception of rights, which emphasized children's right to respect, to live in the present and to make mistakes, among others, most children's rights statements emerging out of Europe and North America in the first half of the 20th century emphasized children's need for protection and focused on parental and (occasionally) societal obligations, over any actual rights of children. For example, children's education was framed as an obligation of parents to send them to school (Liebel, 2009).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ One of Korczak's most controversial rights, for example, included children's right to die, meaning that they needed to be given freedom to live and make mistakes, even if that might result in a shorter life.

¹⁰⁶ Previous to the CRC, there had been some movements of youth themselves arguing for more progressive interpretations of rights, such as Moscow's Youth Movement, which issued a declaration of children's rights in 1918 focusing on children's right to

Similarly, labor protection was not based on the idea that children had rights but rather reflected an interest in caring and educating children for their own futures as well as for the state, the economy, and the military (Liebel, 2009).

From the beginning then, children's rights legislation involved a series of competing priorities and objectives. While the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child represented a significant break with previous rights declarations in that it combined concern for children's protection with recognition of children as rights-bearing subjects, it provided no clear guidance on how to resolve potential conflicts between competing rights. The implementation of the CRC continues to depend on the perspectives and interests of the people that interpret it and leads to very different results that are not always to the benefit of children, as I have made clear throughout this dissertation.

Yet, it is here where I suggest that care ethics provides the beginnings of an approach to move towards a more progressive interpretation of the CRC. Applying care ethics to children's rights law means that justice must be defined in terms of particular relationships and contexts (see Carmalt, 2010). Although discussing human rights more generally, Carmalt (2010) argues that a care ethics approach challenges the idea that particular rights are inherently more valuable than any others and instead suggests that rights need to be prioritized by examining specific relationships and situations. In such regards, the specific way to execute the guiding principles of the CRC could vary while still maintaining legitimacy. For example, increased protection (or what often amounts to control) of children is often justified by appeals to Article 3, which states that the best interests of the child must be of paramount concern in all decisions. In fact, many people in charge of implementing decisions regarding children's rights suggest that Article 3 ultimately overrides children's right to participate in all decisions regarding them. However, applying care ethics necessitates that people take the time to actually consider what children are saying and come up with a solution in conjunction with children, rather than assuming they know what is in the best interests of children. Such an argument resonates with Tronto's (1993) assertion that caring involves attention not just to those giving care but also those receiving care. People might inaccurately assess children's needs or, even when their understandings of needs are correct, may not respond in the best way. This is most clear in efforts to address exploitative working conditions by outlawing all child labor (under a certain age) instead of helping children find work that is not as exploitative. In direct contrast to a tendency to rely on international experts to lead poverty reduction efforts, interpreting rights through a caring lens, would take seriously children's own

voice their opinions, to not be obligated to accept education or religious formation against their will, and to be able to choose which political parties to join, among others. And in 1976, as I outlined in Chapter Three, the first child workers' movement emerged in Peru, emphasizing children's rights to work in conditions of dignity and to organize.

understandings of their lives and what poverty and exclusion mean and thus not assume pre-determined outcomes.

The CRC has some built-in frameworks that provide a good starting point to emphasize rights from a care ethics approach. The actual Convention refers to the word ‘care’ throughout, emphasizing that children are entitled to “special care,” and then outlining the need to support those providing care for children by developing appropriate services and facilities. In such regards, the CRC does provide some recognition of a need to value care, and that care givers may need broader societal support in order to adequately take care of their children. Such a framework provides a direct counter to neoliberal emphases on individual responsibility and parental blame, and may be an important aid in efforts to politicize caring labor. It also directly challenges assertions that care is simply a private affair, and instead could be used to acknowledge that care is the responsibility of all of society.

Further, the preamble to the Convention emphasizes that the child should grow up in “an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.” While the idea of care as love or affection is difficult to legislate for on any wide scale, I nonetheless argue that it is an essential component of more inclusive development. In the previous chapter, I argued that a lack of caring relationships was key to many children’s understandings of poverty. Similarly, it was caring connections between children and various educators and social workers that ultimately shaped how much children benefited from social services and formal assistance programs. In such regards, material assistance itself, while necessary, is not sufficient to address children’s poverty. In fact, one of the main problems with children’s homes, even when they are free from significant forms of physical abuse, is that children feel isolated and lack the warmth and individual connections that many children obtain in their families. The absence of care as defined by caring relationships is so great that some children escape to the streets, even when they do not experience any direct form of abuse. Such findings indicate the importance of the *way* assistance is offered, an argument that can aptly be applied to welfare experiences of adults as well. Recognizing a need for emotional support and affection directly challenges the idea that material assistance in and of itself is enough to address poverty (see Tronto, 1993), and places a much bigger emphasis on the relationship *between* those giving and receiving care. This challenges ideas that welfare is simply an economic exchange, and also pushes us away from dichotomous understandings of autonomy and dependence. That many children themselves not only receive care but also provide care further reveals the limitations of such dichotomies.

Elaborating on this point, I argue that applying care ethics to the provision of care facilitates the idea of intersubjectivity to which I referred earlier. If everyone is dependent on other people, looking at

how we can mutually support each other resolves one of the inherent conflicts in the idea of children's rights: that children's so-called 'rights' are dependent on someone else acting on behalf of children. Instead, through dialogues and relationships of mutual support, we can begin to develop a framework that embraces this interdependence, rather than fears it. While there is no easy answer about how exactly to apply care ethics to notions of children's rights I argue that it nonetheless offers a better starting point than conceptions of rights frameworks based around social risk, fear and regulation.

A care ethics approach is not simply going to erase power disparities and inequalities. However, implementing children's rights through a care ethics approach would limit the ability of rights to be co-opted by any one framework by instead emphasizing a need to exercise rights in the context of notions of mutual responsibility and support. Although some of the very specific articles of the CRC, and especially the way they are interpreted, are often used to push various political agendas, the legislation's four core principles: non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child, are not inherently 'Western'. And although many states and international actors neglect their duties to children, in doing so, they are nonetheless violating legal obligations. In such regards, because the CRC is law, it may provide some legal credence to implementing a more caring approach to development that could be used to challenge neoliberal forms of governance and policies that arguably violate children's right to non-discrimination. For example, some human rights interpretations of non-discrimination argue that equality does not actually mean equality in current treatment but rather necessitates an analysis that looks to see how inequalities came to exist and how they continue to be produced (Carmalt, 2010). Such an approach resonates with relational analyses of poverty. In fact, because children's rights legislation officially emphasizes a need to respect children's opinions, while also recognizing their need for material provision, it actually addresses both the political and material exclusion that are key to persistent poverty.

I suggest that interpreting children's rights through a caring lens raises important challenges to the neoliberalization of social services and forms of governance that emphasize individual responsibility (and thus blame) for poverty in a few important ways. First, recognition of inter-dependence, along with the CRC's formal commitment to provide support and assistance to those caring for children, implicitly acknowledges that care is society's responsibility, rather than simply a mother's obligation. Such an interpretation of rights would arguably challenge increasing tendencies to blame poor mothers for their children's poverty, as well as the stigma linked with dependency. Second, recognition that children need help and support reveals a potential crack in beliefs about the self-made man. Adults,

after all, were children, meaning that they got to where they were with help. Politicizing and drawing attention to this obvious but often neglected connection would raise questions about inequitable distributions of wealth and resources that are currently being justified by the myth of the self-made man (Tronto, 1993). Finally, a care ethics approach facilitates a move away from concern with regulating children along Western guidelines to instead emphasize a grounded relational analysis of children's needs, rights and wants. Such an analysis could raise questions about how uneven power dynamics and knowledge flows favouring the global north have specifically shaped approaches to international development and poverty reduction (see Lawson, 2007b). More specifically, more diverse approaches to children's rights programming would hinder the ability to use universal images of children to justify narrowly defined approaches to development. Drawing attention to some of the hypocrisies between caring approaches to children's rights and the neoliberalization of social services, the increased regulation and discipline of poor people, discourses of individual blame, and universal beliefs about children's and nation's paths to development may be one small but important step in challenging their hegemony.

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