

“These are the Ghettos of Washington”:  
Public Housing and Neoliberalization in Tacoma, WA

Leah R. Montange

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

University of Washington Tacoma

2015

Reading Committee:

Larry Knopp, Chair

Charles Williams

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences

© Copyright 2015

Leah R. Montange

University of Washington

**Abstract**

**“These are the Ghettos of Washington”:  
Public Housing and Neoliberalization in Tacoma, WA**

Leah R. Montange

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:  
Professor Larry Knopp  
School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences

From 2000-2011, the Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) redeveloped a 188-acre worn down, family public housing neighborhood, into a mixed-income neighborhood. This occurred in an area with lagging private investment, and during the Great Recession. I use archival research, interviews, and discourse analysis to investigate this HOPE VI redevelopment process as an instance of actually existing neoliberalism, imbued with local specificities, including regulatory frameworks, political cultures, and housing economies. THA’s promotional literature, and the redevelopment itself produce a particular amalgam of “social justice” and “neoliberal” imaginations and practices that I call “reluctant neoliberalism.” The Tacoma Housing Authority

made substantial effort to maximize the amount of low-income housing available through their public/private hybrid neighborhood, and retain property management jobs for their unionized workforce. However, THA also embraced new roles as a developer, as a shaper of self-sufficient neoliberal subjects, and as a public/private hybrid organization. New (racialized, gendered, and class) meanings of subsidized housing residence and the work of a public housing authority have been produced and materialized.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	vii
List of Tables.....	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2. Neoliberalization, Public Housing Reform, and Discourse.....	8
I. Theoretical Frameworks and Ontologies.....	9
Uneven Neoliberalization, and the Importance of Place.....	9
Geographies of Race, Gender, and Neoliberal Restructuring.....	17
Ontology of Place and Neoliberalization.....	21
II. Public Housing Reform, Welfare Reform, Neoliberalization.....	23
HOPE VI Outcomes.....	23
Neoliberalizing Social Service Provision in the U.S.....	28
HOPE VI and the Neoliberalization of U.S. Public Housing.....	34
III. Discourses of Neoliberalism, Public Housing, and Race.....	40
Chapter 3. Methodology and Methods.....	45
I. Theoretical Positions and Research Questions.....	45
II. Site Justification.....	47
III. Discourse Analysis Methodology.....	48
Textual Analysis.....	50
Discourse Types and Interdiscursivity.....	51
Economic, Cultural, Social and Political Contexts.....	52
IV. My Methods.....	52
Chapter 4. Salishan and Tacoma Housing Authority Transform.....	57
I. Historical Background.....	58
US Public Housing Policy and Salishan in Tacoma, WA.....	58
The Neoliberal Turn and Concentrated Poverty: 1980s and 1990s.....	63
II. Salishan and HOPE VI.....	67

Salishan’s HOPE VI Grant .....	67
Planning .....	69
Community Support Services .....	73
Phasing .....	75
Economic Redistribution .....	78
Relocation .....	79
The Great Recession .....	82
III. Salishan Transformed .....	83
Management Practices .....	87
Disciplined Landscapes .....	90
THA’s Transformed Practices and Everyday Life in Salishan .....	93
THA After Salishan .....	96
IV. Reluctant Neoliberalization .....	99
Chapter 5. “Neoliberal” and “Social Justice” Discourses .....	102
I. The Promotional Imagination of Salishan .....	103
II. Transforming Public Housing Residents .....	110
HOPE VI, Resident Pathology, and the Ordinary People of Salishan .....	110
Diversity Trope .....	114
III. THA Transforms: Reconceptualizing the Work of a Housing Authority .....	120
Unreliability of HUD Funding .....	124
Cost-Effectiveness and Economic Effects .....	126
Growing Up and Self-sufficiency .....	127
Need and Homelessness .....	128
Expansion of Affordability .....	129
Chapter 6. Conclusions – Reluctant Neoliberalization in the Pacific Northwest .....	133
Limitations of This Study .....	137
Directions for Further Research .....	137
References .....	140
Critical Reflexivity, Discourse Analysis, and Positionality .....	157

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 Site Map of Salishan.....	76
Figure 4.2 New Urbanist Design in Salishan .....	91
Figure 5.1: “Salishan is an ambitious project.” .....	104
Figure 5.2: “We also want Salishan to look lovely.” .....	106
Figure 5.3 “Salishan Redevelopment: Community Economic Goals” .....	107
Figure 5.4: The Site of Salishan’s Future Education Training and Retail Center .....	108
Figure 5.5: “New Salishan: The Challenge and the Charm” .....	115
Figure 5.6: Excerpts from THA Press Releases .....	121
Figure 5.7: THA’s Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives .....	122
Figure 5.8 “Thanksgiving Message” .....	124

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 3.1 Documents for Textual Analysis.....	54
Table 4.1 Phases of Development, Salishan .....	75
Table 4.2 Demographic Profile of Salishan Phase 1 .....	81
Table 4.3 Demographic Profile of Salishan Before and After Redevelopment .....	86

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There are many people whose emotional, intellectual, and physical support I could not have written this thesis without. Angeline Zalben has seen me through this whole project, starting from before I even knew it was a project. She told me to keep going, gave me rides, made me coffee and talked to me endlessly about my work. Thank you very much Zalben.

Deep and heartfelt appreciation to the rest of my family, especially Charles Montange, Kathleen Patterson, Zoe Pajic, Rebecca Montange, Joseph Montange, Sarah Montange, Lindi Ladron de Guevara, Cindy Katz, Molly Fair, Laura Northrup, and Shel Harris who have all urged me to dream big. Thanks also to Star Murray for getting me to apply to UW's MAIS program.

My committee members Larry Knopp and Charles Williams have given me lots of advice, guidance, resources and support. Thank you especially to Larry for all the feedback, help with my writing and engagement with theory, and for rides. Thank you to Charles for providing me with resources on Tacoma, conversation, and lots of encouragement. Thank to both for spending so much time reading my thesis. I must also acknowledge my other professors, especially Emily Ignacio, Ricki Thompson, and Lucy Jarosz, in whose classes I drafted my Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods chapters.

Thank you to my Capstone classmates Kari Kennedy, Jessie Mizic, Kayla Stewart, Shawn Jenkins, John Burns, and Marc Miller. Your support and suggestions helped my writing and thinking along.

And lastly, thank you to those Tacoma Housing Authority staff and Salishan residents who made time to speak with me, correspond with me, and pass on documents and resources.

# **DEDICATION**

For Ny, Valeria, Ladan, Heba, and Abdi

## Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

High up on First Hill, overlooking Seattle's downtown, sat a neighborhood of small one-story buildings, all blue and white. Each was a home with a porch and a yard, many with gardens, bikes, and yard art. On a Sunday afternoon in November 2013, I walked through the neighborhood and found it quiet and peaceful, although all of the homes looked shabby – faded paint, moss growing on the roofs. Populated primarily by immigrant and refugee families, this was the longest standing public housing neighborhood in the Pacific Northwest, Yesler Terrace, and it was about to be dismantled.

In Spring 2014, Seattle Housing Authority began moving the residents out in phases, to make way for a new mixed income neighborhood that will integrate subsidized affordable housing with market rate rental and owned units. The stated purpose of redevelopment, building “new structures and new opportunities for residents,” (Seattle Housing Authority, 2013, p. 7), echoes the political consensus that reducing the concentration of poverty will somehow ameliorate poverty. If this public housing redevelopment process is like the others that have happened in Seattle, most of the neighborhood's former public housing residents will not be able to move back – the housing authority will lose touch with them, they will settle elsewhere, and there will be limited space for public housing residents in the lowest income brackets (Popkin, Leby, & Buron, 2009). Moreover, because of its location near the desirable neighborhoods of Downtown, Pioneer Square, and Capitol Hill, the market rate rentals will be affordable only to those with high incomes. I once asked a coworker who grew up in the neighborhood and now works as a social worker in Yesler Terrace what she thought of the rebuild. Without any hesitation, she answered, “It's gentrification.”

The story of Yesler Terrace highlights a basic problem with public housing revitalization and the building of mixed income communities. The discourse of poverty dilution, deconcentration, and amelioration obscures the displacement of residents, the reduction of public housing stock, and the privatization of public sectors (Hanlon, 2010; Newman & Ashton, 2004). However, the revitalization process does not always manifest dramatically as gentrification like it does in the case of Yesler Terrace.

Just south of the City of Seattle, WA, in unincorporated King County, sits another public housing revitalization project, Seola Gardens. There isn't a large rent gap<sup>1</sup> (N. Smith, 1979) beckoning developers to remake Seola Gardens. Nevertheless, when the public housing units needed rebuilding, the funding came through HOPE VI, a grant-making program that operates through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and which requires public/private hybridization and mixed income housing. I worked in the Seola Gardens Community Center as the coordinator of youth while the new subsidized rentals and homeownership units were constructed and became occupied. As I got to know the neighborhood's kids I also got to know their families – my program's funding came from the housing authority, which required that we provide programming to encourage families toward involvement in their children's schools and education.

As I got to know families they began asking me for help with their forms. They had to prove that they were employed, in work training, ESL classes, or volunteering in order to maintain their residency in the neighborhood. Other residents came to me to find volunteer roles in my programs – they needed to turn in timesheets to the housing authority each month proving that they were involved in the community. Residency in the subsidized units was contingent

---

<sup>1</sup> A “rent gap” is the disparity between the actual price of rent for a given plot of land with its present use and the potential price of rent for the same plot from its “best”, or highest-rent, use. Smith identified this disparity as a primary structural driver of gentrification.

upon residents proving themselves deserving, that they were working towards self-sufficiency. Underlying these requirements is an assumption that poor people are deficient, dependent, and that their poverty is an individual problem that can be remedied through behavior alteration (DeFilippis & Fraser, 2010; Goetz, 2013a; Laakso, 2013). Witnessing and participating in this process made me curious about the mixed income solution to public housing redevelopment. I began to ask, Why create mixed income neighborhoods? Do they effectively ameliorate poverty? Is it possible to ameliorate poverty through design and behavior alteration?

Mixed income public housing revitalization projects are based on certain assumptions of how poverty amelioration works. William Julius Wilson's (1987) watershed book *The Truly Disadvantaged* addressed the issue of concentrated poverty in inner cities, which is so heavily associated with dysfunctional public housing projects. He analyzed increases of "social dislocation" in areas of concentrated poverty, including increases in criminal activity, substance abuse, single-parent households, and unemployment in urban areas of concentrated poverty and racial segregation. Ignoring Wilson's conclusion that economic reorganization may alleviate concentrated poverty (W.J. Wilson, 1987; W. J. Wilson and Allen, 2013), housing policymakers focused on one part of Wilson's argument: concentrated poverty correlates with increased social dislocation (Lipman, 2009). A new consensus formed, that deconcentrating poor people by moving them to mixed-income housing neighborhoods is the best way to reduce urban poverty. This deconcentration consensus has shaped public housing policy and urban revitalization efforts in the U.S. since the early 1990s, despite decidedly mixed results (Popkin, 2006) the critiques of scholars and activists who point out an embedded disregard for public housing residents' social

networks and place attachments and a strong resonance with the notion of a culture of poverty<sup>2</sup> (Laakso, 2013; Keller, Laakso, Stephens & Tashiro, 2013; Manzo, Kleit & Couch, 2008).

The advent of mixed income housing and poverty deconcentration in public housing policy occurred in parallel with the restructuring and rescaling of the US economy along neoliberal principles including privatizing new sectors, financialization,<sup>3</sup> decreased regulation of international trade and the new political preference for private market solutions to public problems (Harvey, 2005). In 1992, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiated the Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) project, the centerpiece of a national attempt to remake public housing neighborhoods into public/private hybrid mixed-income communities. This federal grant-making process aimed at turning around “severely distressed” public housing developments and transforming the occupants of public housing. The HOPE VI strategy included tearing down large-scale projects and replacing them with mixed-income family units including subsidized and market-rate homes, incentivizing resident self-sufficiency, lessening the concentration of poverty, leveraging the resources of public and private partnerships, and relying on the private sector to invest, develop, and manage property (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD], 2013a).

Throughout the 1990s, a series of changes to housing policy suspended one-for-one replacement of public housing units (allowing Public Housing Authorities to shrink their housing stock); allowed housing authorities to use “mixed financing”, or public-private partnerships, to fund their work, and required the demolition of larger public housing properties that don’t

---

<sup>2</sup> “Culture of poverty” refers to a social theory that explains the perpetuation of poverty on the value systems and ways of being amongst poor people. Culture of poverty explanations for the existence and persistence of poverty have been critiqued by social scientists and social theorists who have demonstrated the role of structural factors in producing and maintaining poverty (see W.J. Wilson, 1997); however, this theory has experienced a popular resurgence amongst education, housing, and social policy makers since the 1990s.

<sup>3</sup> “Financialization” refers to the process of businesses, corporations, and other organizations becoming more and more *financial* in their orientation. In the words of David Harvey (2006): “the relocation of the power center of capital accumulation to owners and their financial institutions at the expense of other factions of capital” (p. 24).

qualify as “viable,” replacing them with Section 8 vouchers to subsidize renters on the private market rather than housing units (J. Smith, 2006a). Since 2003, appropriations to public housing authorities have decreased dramatically, putting further pressure on housing authorities to rely on private and local funding sources (Goetz, 2011, p. 271).

My study approaches the subject of the neoliberal restructuring of public housing as instantiated by HOPE VI, through a case study. The purpose of this study is two-fold: (1) to understand public housing restructurings such as HOPE VI as neoliberal urban processes, and (2) to understand neoliberal urban processes through the example of public housing revitalization in the Pacific Northwest. More specifically, I investigate the remaking of family public housing developments into mixed-income neighborhoods as examples of “actually existing neoliberalism” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002), inscribed with race, gender, and class formations and processes. I also investigate and contribute to theory regarding the spatiality of neoliberalism. What are the regional specificities, contradictions, and hybridities of local neoliberal processes? How can we understand neoliberalism as both economic restructuring *and* cultural practice, through the example of public housing restructuring?

I explore these conceptual issues through the case of Salishan,<sup>4</sup> a public/private hybrid mixed income neighborhood in Tacoma, WA that underwent HOPE VI redevelopment from 2000-2011 (and, arguably is still undergoing redevelopment to this day). Drawing on the work of critical urban geographers, public housing scholars, and discourse analyses of neoliberalism, poverty, housing and race, this study situates the revitalization of public housing in the United

---

<sup>4</sup> Salishan was the neighborhood’s name before HOPE VI. Once redevelopment began, Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) renamed it “New Salishan.” However, in practice the neighborhood is still referred to as “Salishan,” and a THA staff member even corrected me when I used the name “New Salishan”, informing me that people who live or work there do not preface the name with “New.” It is, however, referred to as “New Salishan” in many of the promotional materials that THA publishes. When necessary, I distinguish between the pre- and post-redevelopment neighborhood by referring to them as “the old Salishan” and “the new Salishan.”

States within the context of neoliberalization, entering into the scholarly debate on the role of neoliberalism in the everyday lives of people and neighborhoods.

The promotional literature that Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) produces, and the redevelopment itself, draw upon an amalgam of inclusive and redistributive (which I group together under the umbrella term “social justice”) and neoliberal imaginations. In its effort to materialize these imaginations, the housing authority transformed its internal structures, its relationships with government and private organizations, the landscape of the neighborhood, who it houses and how, and its mission and vision. New (racialized, gendered, and class) meanings of affordable housing, subsidized housing residence, and the work of a public housing authority have been produced and materialized. I interpret these changes as a case of actually existing neoliberalism – as a specific instance that, together with other local instances, constitutes a pattern of neoliberalization.

This thesis asks how we should interpret the racialized and gendered neoliberal redevelopment of public housing, and especially what the example of an incomplete, partial redevelopment in the Pacific Northwest can tell us about neoliberal public housing restructuring. What happens when capital is reticent to play its part in the public/private partnership? How do housing authorities discursively and materially manage this situation, and how do public housing residents experience it? How are race, gender, and poverty constructed and produced by the neoliberal restructuring of Salishan? Finally, in what ways is the case of New Salishan location-specific, and in what ways does it constitute or diverge from neoliberalization as a broader phenomenon?

In Chapter Two, I situate my research in a discussion of my theoretical framework and the conceptualization of neoliberalization as constituted by variegated, contingent, and place-

specific processes. I also review literature on HOPE VI outcomes; neoliberal social service provision; race, gender, and neoliberalism; neoliberalization of public housing; and discourses associated with urban revitalization and welfare reform. I identify gaps in the literature that lead to my research questions.

In Chapter Three I describe the discourse analysis methodology, justify my choice of Salishan as the site for my research, and describe my methods.

Chapter Four includes an account of Salishan's HOPE VI redevelopment process, contextualized in its surrounding neighborhood and city, as well as transformations of public housing in the United States. This chapter describes the redevelopment process, including planning, phases of development, funding streams and community involvement.

In Chapter Five, I detail the results of my discourse analysis of Tacoma Housing Authority's published texts about Salishan and HOPE VI, as well as of interviews with THA staff and residents. I delineate continuations and disjunctions with the discourses and material circumstances uncovered in my archival research and interviews.

In Chapter Six I bring all the pieces together, in an attempt to add to the scholarly debates about neoliberalism, public housing redevelopment and race. Finally, I close this thesis with a discussion of some implications for the future of public housing in Tacoma, WA and the United States, and for our understanding of neoliberalization and public housing.

## Chapter 2. NEOLIBERALIZATION, PUBLIC HOUSING REFORM, AND DISCOURSE

The HOPE VI program distributed 262 revitalization grants, a total of \$6.28 billion, to 133 different public housing authorities with “severely distressed public housing” from 1993-2010 (HUD, 2013b). Public housing stock decreased dramatically in that time, as local public housing authorities remade themselves and the spaces they manage via programs such as HOPE VI (Goetz, 2011). From 1996-2013, the United States destroyed 255,553 units of public housing, replacing many of these with Section 8 vouchers (HUD, 2015a). At the same time that this changeover occurred, welfare and social service provision in the US restructured along neoliberal lines, and US cities remade themselves in response to neoliberal economic restructuring.

In this chapter, I begin by discussing conceptualizations of neoliberalism, in order to ground my study of HOPE VI in an understanding of what neoliberalism is. I also discuss literature that guides my conceptualization of how materialities and cultural formations of race, gender, and poverty interweave with neoliberal restructuring. These, together with a brief discussion of the ontological frameworks I employ, constitute the theoretical frameworks and ontologies that serve as the starting point for this thesis.

I also situate my study of Salishan’s redevelopment and the Tacoma Housing Authority’s transformation in social science and social services literatures on these changes: HOPE VI/mixed income public housing revitalization outcomes studies; critical studies and commentaries on welfare reform and neoliberal social service provision; and discussions of public housing revitalization as a neoliberal urban strategy.

This thesis' discourse analysis of Tacoma Housing Authority's literature is also guided by a review of literature on neoliberal discourses and intersecting discourses of poverty, race, gender, welfare, and public housing. These discourses provide the context for my reading of THA's promotional literature by providing me with a group of themes and trope to which I attend, whether they are manifest, absent, or presupposed.

## I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND ONTOLOGIES

### *Uneven Neoliberalization, and the Importance of Place*

Discussions of the geography of uneven neoliberalization provide a theoretical framework for my study. As neoliberal discourses, practices, and processes have emerged and flourished across the globe, they have done so unevenly, and have had decidedly uneven impacts on people and nation-states. Concentrations of wealth have increased for some while poverty has deepened for others; social supports have reduced, risk and responsibility have devolved to individuals and families while decision-making power and resources have shifted away from them; the wealth gap has widened both within and between nation-states. Many critical scholars seek to get a handle on how and why the economic, political, and cultural terrain of our world is changing in such dramatic and uneven ways.

There exists much debate among critical scholars of neoliberalism over the term *neoliberalism* and how we should define and conceptualize it (Ward & England, 2007; Hilgers, 2010; Peck & Theodore, 2012). In a debate in the journal *Social Anthropology*, Hilgers (2010) outlined some of the common ground and divergences among anthropological and geographical approaches to neoliberalism. Within these disciplines, there is agreement that neoliberalism applies to

“a radicalized form of capitalism, based on deregulation and the restriction of state intervention, and characterized by an opposition to collectivism, a new role for the state, an extreme emphasis on individual responsibility, flexibility, a belief that growth leads to development, and a promotion of freedom as a means to self-realisation that disregards any questioning of the economic and social conditions that make such freedom possible” (Hilgers, 2010, p. 352).

Researchers further agree that there is a substantive difference between theoretical neoliberalism and practices of neoliberalism, and that neoliberal practices and discourse have spread across the globe, forming a currently hegemonic though uneven and variegated economic regime<sup>5</sup> (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2006; Hilgers 2010; Jessop, 2002; Peck & Theodore, 2012).

Indeed, the term *neoliberalism* has been used to refer to a whole range of processes, discourses and arrangements, and has been theorized in a number of different ways (Ward & England, 2007). Some critics of neoliberalism note a fissure between approaches that analyze neoliberalism as a system or structure, and neoliberalism as governmentality (Hilgers, 2010). Researchers who emphasize neoliberalism as a system try to define a structure or pattern to neoliberal practices, ascribing varying degrees of functionalism, convergence, and coherence (Wacquant, 2012; Harvey, 2006; Peck & Theodore, 2012). While these researchers may disagree on the historical and geographical origins of neoliberalism, all agree that its spread across the globe is uneven and sometimes contradictory. Researchers who emphasize neoliberalism as governmentality and the Foucauldian tradition as their starting point investigate

---

<sup>5</sup> What we call neoliberalism has roots in the writings of Hayek and Friedman, who theorized a utopian system of economic and political organization characterized by radically free markets without any regulation by the state, and free participation in those markets by rational individuals. What started as a fringe economic theory was taken up and advanced by the Reagan and Thatcher governments in the 1980s, and has since spread, though unevenly and in contingent and variegated forms, throughout the globe.

While studies of neoliberalism as a global pattern or phenomenon certainly have a lot to offer, that is not the focus of this thesis. Instead, I analyze a case study of a local and national instantiation of neoliberalization.

or theorize the divergent and marginal practices that together constitute neoliberal governance. Instead of emphasizing patterns or unity, they focus on the disunity of neoliberal practices and their articulation with other political and cultural formations (Hilgers 2010; Peck & Theodore, 2012; Ward & England, 2007; Larner, LeHeron & Lewis, 2007; Ong, 2007).

### **Neoliberalism as structure**

For some Marxist economists and economic geographers, neoliberalism is best described as a reconfiguration of the compromise between classes, and a reconsolidation of political and economic power for the capitalist class (Dumenil & Levy, 2011; Harvey, 2006). For them, the neoliberal period began in the late 1970s as contradictions within the Keynesian/managerial political economic arrangement manifested as a crisis of inflation (Dumenil & Levy, 2011). Following this crisis, a reconfiguration of the power between classes occurred, stabilizing a new neoliberal economic and social order characterized by economic deregulation, strong macro policies to protect lenders, expansion of markets and the opening of trade frontiers, new high management, and the consolidation of power in the hands of capital. Interpretations of HOPE VI and other mixed-income solutions to “severely distressed” public housing in this framework would highlight the new markets for capital accumulation opened by the displacement of poor people to make way for market-rate homeowners and by the involvement of private investors in public housing, and ask for whose expense and whose benefit these transformations are made. However, this approach may be overly rigid and reifying of a monolithic system that is in practice quite variable.

Brenner & Theodore (2002) contributed the concept of “actually existing neoliberalism,” the embeddedness of neoliberal restructuring and projects in local political, economic, and regulatory conditions. This is in contrast to neoliberal ideology or theory, which assumes an

idealized and uniform implementation of economic *laws* (p. 4). Actually existing neoliberalism is historically and geographically specific, contradictory, uneven, and has multiple location-specific forms. Inherited institutional arrangements collide with evolving neoliberalization projects, producing always hybrid, always contingent new arrangements (Brenner, Peck & Theodore, 2010).

Peck & Tickell (2002), in an effort to historicize neoliberalism as a process rather than an end state, periodized the development of neoliberalism into phases: roll back and roll out. Roll back neoliberalism, dominant in the US and UK in the 1980s, consisted mainly of deregulation of economies and dismantlement of Keynesian-welfarism programs. In the 1990s, a phase of roll out neoliberalism gradually began, which consisted of the active enactment and construction of new “neoliberalized state forms” (p. 37). Brenner and Theodore (2002) similarly outline a process of creative destruction<sup>6</sup>, in which “extant institutional arrangements” are partially destroyed and “new infrastructure for market-oriented growth, commodification, and the rule of capital” (p. 15) are created.

Many geographers also emphasize the rescaling of governance as a telltale characteristic of neoliberalism (see N. Smith, 2002; Hackworth, 2007; Harvey, 2005). That is, as Keynesian-welfarist programs are rolled back at the federal level, new neoliberal constraints upon *local* governments unfold, including heightened responsibility to fund social services as well as heightened economic uncertainty and competition for investment (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Responsibility and risk devolve to cities, and even to communities, non-profits, or individuals

---

<sup>6</sup> “Creative destruction” is a concept developed by Joseph Schumpeter (1942) from a close reading of Marx’s account of the cycle of accumulation of annihilation of wealth under capitalism. In order for new wealth and processes of wealth accumulation to be created, the old wealth and process of wealth accumulation must be destroyed.

and their families. N. Smith (2002) emphasizes a concurrent rescaling of power and regulatory control to transnational institutions.

Analyses of neoliberalism's conjuncture with the punitive turn and the carceral state are also important to note. The United States in the 1990s saw rapid increases not only in the prison and detention populations, but also the creation and expansion of new technologies, genres, job types, and specializations in the criminal justice field; simultaneously, welfare was reconfigured into "workfare" (Peck, 2003). For Wacquant (2009) neoliberal social service provision and the expansion of the penal system are both directed at disciplining the poor through punishment, shaping them into neoliberal subjects bearing individual responsibility for their poverty rather than citizens with universal rights. Peck (2003) similarly identifies the state's increasing penal activities as "an active zone of neoliberal statebuilding," an active increase in state authorities' role in criminalizing poverty and privatizing social reproduction, though inflected with the politics of rolling back welfare (p. 230). The rolling out or strengthening of the state's punitive arm has two functions: managing the increasing social dislocation and insecurity of the poor, and reaffirming the authority of the state as its social responsibilities devolve and economic regulatory powers transfer to transnational institutions (Wacquant, 2012, p. 76). Neoliberalization, thus, is a political project as well as an economic one.

### **Neoliberalism as governmentality**

Many geographers with post-structural tendencies or commitments<sup>7</sup> eschew the universalism of these structuralist and Marxian approaches, and instead emphasize the contingency, variation, and context-dependency of the various practices, processes, and

---

<sup>7</sup> It is beyond the scope of the thesis to fully flesh out what post-structural tendencies and approaches to geography are, or look like. In brief, post-structuralist approaches destabilize and upend certain grounds for truth claims and unitary subjects, instead focusing on how these phenomena are either produced or deconstructed (see Turner, 2000, p. 23-24).

formations that constitute *neoliberalisms* (see Larner et al., 2007; Kingfisher, 2007; Lawson and Elwood, 2013). Scholars who understand neoliberalism in this way often take a neo-Foucauldian approach emphasizing the *governmentality* of neoliberalism (Ong, 2007) – that is, the discourses, rationalities, and techniques through which neoliberal subjects are produced and governed. Ward and England (2007) describe this approach as looking at neoliberalism as a spatial imaginary “in and through which peoples and places are understood in particular forms and subjects” (p. 13). They emphasize how neoliberal subjectivities are produced through discursive and material practices that are constantly under revision themselves (p. 11).

Kingfisher (2007) sketches out the characteristics of neoliberal subjectivity, what she calls “neoliberal notions of proper personhood”: autonomy, self-governance, entrepreneurialism, and independence from government welfare (p. 197). This notion circulates as a cultural formation, shaping our understanding of who is deserving (Lawson & Elwood, 2013), and is in constant conversation with other cultural formations, such as discourses and understandings of race, gender, class, poverty, work, and responsibility, many of which are inflected with place-specific meanings. As neoliberalism articulates with other cultural formations already circulating through places, new cultural formations are generated, and re-constitute “neoliberalism” in new ways.

For Lawson and Elwood (2013), “middle class-ness” is a governance technique; it is a cultural formation, not only a material condition. The neoliberal imagination of middle class-ness is a technique of neoliberal governance that shapes citizenship, work, and responsibility. The (heterogeneous) middle-class ideal stands in relation to a neoliberal imagination of poor people as “lacking, flawed and personally responsible for their poverty” (p. 213), thus articulating poverty as a deviation from the norm and a site for governmental regulation and

reform. In their study of contact zones and encounters between middle class actors and poor actors, they document how neoliberal discourses of poverty are reproduced and challenged, thus finding spaces of possibility or openings for resistance to neoliberal governance.

Ong (2007) also examines how neoliberal governance operates through an array of techniques and technologies, including discourses, practices, norms, spaces, exchanges, economic processes, and policies that regulate and restructure everyday life. Neoliberal governance and reasoning are “based on both economic (efficiency) and ethical (self-responsibility) claims” (Ong, 2007, p. 11). This reasoning requires neoliberal citizens to be “free, self-managing, and self-enterprising individuals” (p. 14) who do not make claims on the state but instead are entrepreneurial. Her analysis hinges upon the interrelationships between neoliberalism, exception, and citizenship: those who become *exceptions to neoliberalism* because they lack the skills or qualities of a self-managing and self-enterprising neoliberal citizen are constructed as excludable, as non-citizens; meanwhile, spaces of *neoliberal exception* are transforming existing spaces and conceptions of citizenship, morality, and sovereignty. New inclusions, exclusions, territorialities, and spaces are all produced through the introduction and pursuance of neoliberal governance.

For all these scholars, neoliberalism is conceived of as notions, rationalities, techniques of governance, and relations of power that are contextualized in *places* where meanings and policies and practices are produced on the ground by *people*, rather than taking the form of a hegemonic ideology, economic arrangement, or political system emanating outward from (a) global center(s).

### **Neoliberalization as process**

Peck and Theodore (2012) attempted to resolve the tension between these two approaches (neoliberalism as structure and neoliberalism as governmentality) by emphasize the *spatiality* of neoliberalism. That is, they emphasize geographically-specific histories and contexts that bring out variations within the uneven yet globalizing *process* of neoliberalization. Instead of conceiving approaches that emphasize either neoliberal processes' cohesion and directionality or variegation and discord, Peck and Theodore (2012) conceive of these approaches as “alternate analytical poles, en route to an understanding of unevenly developed yet globalizing process of neoliberalization” (p. 181). They emphasize how neoliberal restructurings and resistances to them work across a “still-moving landscape marked by an array of fast-moving institutions, ideological and ideational currents and counter-currents” (p. 177). Counter-tendencies can be viewed as part of the pattern of uneven neoliberal development instead of exceptions to the cohesive directional whole of “neoliberalism.” Conversely, similarities between cases point to the common constitution or “family resemblances” between neoliberal projects and processes. This account of neoliberalization is generative, because it strongly resists propulsions towards monolithic or universalizing truths. However, it also runs the risk of defining neoliberalization too broadly – as Dierwechter (2008) points out, and my case study suggests, not everything is neoliberalism.

Ward and England (2007) also aim to explore the potentials of pursuing, balancing, and combining Foucauldian or post-structural and Marxian or structural approaches to studying neoliberalism, because of the rich insights that both approaches offer. Their suggestion is to “provide situated accounts of how political-economic changes are mediated in and through a range of cultural, social, and political geographies in various places across the globe” (p. 258).

They call for exploring messy actualities of actually existing neoliberalism, and seeing what happens if we attend to neoliberalization not as a *thing*, but as a family of variegated and contingent cultural, economic, and political processes that also produce social categories, meanings, and material effects. Conceptualizing neoliberalism as a process, as neoliberalization, also focuses attention on the work it takes to create and maintain neoliberalism(s), and on that which the process *produces* (England, Eakin, Gastaldo, & McKeever, 2007).

My study is situated within the context of this debate, and in the space between neoliberalism as structure and neoliberalism as governmentality. I engage not with neoliberalism, but with neoliberalization, a complex of place-specific cultural, economic, and political processes. Without collapsing or condensing neoliberalization processes into a singular or essential narrative, I build a nuanced and detailed account of a “localized manifestation” of neoliberalization of public housing as an economic and cultural project.

### *Geographies of Race, Gender, and Neoliberal Restructuring*

Though there is a long tradition of economic geographies that examine racially unequal outcomes of economic processes and project, the number of geography articles and especially economic geography articles that address race and people of color has been, until the 21st century, remarkable underdeveloped.<sup>8</sup> However, a number of economic and political geographers have begun to call for a new understanding of the co-constitution of race and economy that specifically looks at how economies operate and are regulated through race (Anderson & Sternberg, 2013; Bonds, 2013; D. Wilson, 2009). Bonds (2013) called for economic geographers to “interrogate dimensions of racialized economic difference by

---

<sup>8</sup> According to Dwyer (1997), from 1911-to 1995 only 176 articles focusing on African Americans appeared in the geography journals *The Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *The Professional Geographer*, *Antipode*, *Economic Geography*, *Geographical Review*, and *Urban Geography*. *Economic Geographer* contained only 25 articles out of 1,774.

emphasizing race, not just as an effect or product of capital accumulation but rather as a systemic presence that is thoroughly embedded in economic paradigms, institutions, practices, and actors” (p. 399). That is, race (along with gender and other socially constructed categories) is co-constituted with economic practices, but this conceptualization has not been fully explored. Political geographer David Wilson (2009) developed a concept of racial economy that emphasizes how notions of race are deployed in economies and economic practices; how economic practices produce and connect with notions of race and gender; and how economies are performative spatial and cultural projects. Further, as notions of race and gender are deployed or produced in economies, they relationally construct some as the norm, or as having a privileged status, and others as marginalized.

The interweaving of racial formations and economy is notably taken up by political and economic geographers studying housing economies and 21st century urban redevelopment in the US. For example, Anderson and Sternberg (2013) found that racial conceptions have affected patterns of “redevelopment” or gentrification of neighborhoods in Chicago. They compare renewal efforts in a historically black neighborhood and historically Latino neighborhood. The formerly stigmatized Latino neighborhood of Pilsen is rebranded and sanitized as an exotic locale for cultural consumption. Meanwhile, the formerly stigmatized black neighborhood of Bronzeville’s revitalization is stunted because stereotypes of black residents, even middle-class residents, makes new investment and tourism “reluctant” (p. 449). Their study points to how race was an important mediating factor for the urban regimes driving these redevelopment processes in diverging ways (Anderson & Sternberg, 2013). Similarly, in their study of racial rhetorics employed in redevelopment governances in Chicago, Cope and Latham (2009) found that redevelopment is driven through constellations of government and non-government actors that

justify and guide their work through racial and class stereotypes. Wilson and Sternberg (2012) note how race-class realities are an important element in urban redevelopment because these projects are mediated through notions of race and class, and thus term the redevelopment actors, “racial-social governances”. Wilson and Grammenos (2005) provide an example of racial-social governance at work: youth bodies are encoded as problematic and also spatialized in a neighborhood that is ripe for upscaling; the neighborhood’s social character thus denigrated, clears the way for gentrification to be defined as “cleansing, beneficial, and city-serving” (p. 297).

Gender is largely missing in these conversations about race, housing, and neoliberal urban redevelopment (but see Reid, 2012). However, in a conversation about the redevelopment of family public housing, which historically includes a high proportion of female-headed households, gender is an important factor, both in terms of discursive formations and material effects.

There is attention to the interweaving of gender and neoliberal restructuring in the related field of social service provision. For example, Kingfisher (2007) found that gender categories, notions of masculinity and femininity, as well as notions of Otherness, race, and belonging, swirl through the meanings and understandings of Aboriginal addicted homeless men in a small Canadian city. As the community debated where to place a shelter and what services to provide them, they articulated gendered notions of homeless men (simultaneously hyper-masculine/aggressive and feminized/dependent) with neoliberal subjecthood (how a proper citizen should look and participate in the economy). Decisions about social service provision engaged complex, and sometimes contradicting discourses of gender, race, and economy.

The interaction of discourses and notions of gender with neoliberal economic practices also have material effects. For example, in their discussion of the restructuring of the home care health system in Ottawa, Ontario, England et al. (2007) found that the care workers and care recipients who bear the burden of neoliberal restructuring, through higher work loads, frozen pay rates, and decreased personal and intimate relations between care providers and clients, are predominantly women. Thus, the neoliberal restructuring of the health care economy in this Canadian province has material effects that are disproportionate by gender. An account of public housing restructuring and HOPE VI is still missing from this literature, has the potential to crisscross literatures of social service provision and housing economies/urban redevelopment, and would make for fertile ground to discuss the co-constitution of race, gender, class, and neoliberal formations, processes, and discourses.

A group of feminist political and economic geographers has begun to develop a body of literature regarding the relational construction of poverty, race, and (sometimes) gender (see Bonds, 2009; Elwood, Lawson, and Nowack, 2015; Lawson, Jarosz & Bonds, 2010). This literature emphasizes how discourses of poverty that circulate among gatekeepers, such as planners and service providers, and middle class actors simultaneously construct racialized poor people as criminal or undeserving, and white middle class people as deserving and normal. Such notions displace economic insecurities and justify neoliberal reformulations of cities, welfare systems, and penal systems. This work advances our understanding of the co-constitution of race, gender and economy beyond attending to how economies work through discourses and notions of race/gender and to what race and gender effects economies have, by also examining how certain economic arrangements and reformulations further *produce* discourses, understandings, and truths about race, gender, and class. For example, Lawson, Jarosz and

Bonds (2010) found that locally specific and historically embedded cultural constructions of race and class make possible articulations of rural places under neoliberal restructuring, and that poverty is “actively produced in the articulation of social difference, the practices of social groups, and material historical and ecological processes” (p. 658). That is, in addition to neoliberal restructuring operating through race and class, new understandings, discourses, and materialities of race, class and poverty are produced through neoliberal restructuring. Elwood, Lawson & Nowack, (2015) studied mixed income neighborhoods in Seattle, and found that middle class residents secure and reproduce their advantage through framing their middle class dominance as normative, and discursively and materially reproduce middle class norms in the landscape of their neighborhood. Both of these studies examine economic and political restructurings through a lens that accounts for the complex interweaving of cultural, social, and discursive practices.

The study of the co-constitution of race, gender, and economy is a generative, though budding area of inquiry within the discipline of geography that demands further attention and development (Bonds, 2013). My study looks for the multiple intersections of neoliberal discourses with discourses of poverty, race, and gender; and aims to add to the literature about how public housing restructuring is a racialized and gendered economic process of neoliberalization that operates through conceptions of race and gender, has disproportionate gendered and racial outcomes, and (re)produces conceptions of race, gender, and poverty.

### *Ontology of Place and Neoliberalization*

I conceptualize places, including Salishan, from an ontological position that draws from the work of Doreen Massey. Massey (1994) starts with the spatial nature of social relations, and from there argues that places are not static, ahistorical, or essentialized locales, but are

particularized moments or constellations of spatial social structures. When we investigate economic shifts happening in a place, we must not only look at the decline of an industry or changing markets, but also the reformulation of the political character, local culture, and social structure of that place—global shifts are localized in particular ways. In Massey’s ontology, places “are not so much bounded areas as open and porous networks of social relations. [This] implies that their ‘identities’ are constructed through the specificity of their interaction with other places rather than by counterposition to them” (1994, p. 121). That is, the “here” is implicated in the “there,” and vice versa. Instead of seeing places and spaces as independent locations on a flat grid, or even as frozen moments in time, Massey (2005) conceptualizes them as relational, as intersecting connections and processes, including physical, economic, material, semiotic, and social processes. One of the key consequences of this ontology is the realization that there is no authentic place that one can recover or get back to – relations in space are always shifting. Even the earth itself is shifting. This view refuses Cartesian dualism, which separates the material and the symbolic (matter and mind), and instead works to conceptualize their interweaving.

This understanding of places and spatial social relations also calls for a conception of neoliberalization as an economic and cultural process rather than a structure stamped upon various localities. In this framework, neoliberal restructurings must be understood to be context-specific because they are interacting with complex and multiply scaled relations and processes, both materially and discursively, that vary across space. In approaching the question of public housing revitalization as instantiated in a place, Salishan, I need to keep in mind how various social processes intersect and entangle in place. Neoliberalism is not so much a monolith as a process – neoliberalization – that plays out in contradictory and various ways depending on the constellation of conditions. The economic restructuring of the Tacoma Housing Authority and of

the Salishan neighborhood intersects with, for example, the national and local cultural politics of race, gender, and poverty that are embedded in public housing, the existing social networks in the neighborhood, and the history and culture of Tacoma Housing Authority. Nuances, counter-tendencies or unexpected occurrences are part of the pattern of uneven neoliberal development. At the same time, not everything is neoliberalization; that is, neoliberal restructurings are *interacting* with other types of processes and structures.

## II. PUBLIC HOUSING REFORM, WELFARE REFORM, NEOLIBERALIZATION

### *HOPE VI Outcomes*

In this section, I outline some of the research on outcomes for public housing residents, and discuss researchers' interpretations and evaluations of public housing revitalization. Studies of the outcomes of mixed-income public housing revitalization, and HOPE VI specifically, have showed mixed results (Fraser, Burns, Bazuin, & Oakley, 2013; Goetz, 2013b; Keller et al., 2013; Laakso, 2013; Popkin, 2006; Popkin et al, 2009; Brooks, Lesinson, Azman & Wolk, 2012; Manjarrez, Popkin, & Guerresey, 2007). Researchers all note the following trends: former and returning residents of HOPE VI redevelopment projects experienced increased quality of housing and sense of personal safety, but decreased social ties, and no significant impact on health, education, or employment outcomes (Fraser et al, 2013; Goetz, 2013b; Keller et al, 2013; Laakso, 2013; Manjarrez et al., 2007). Few former residents return and experience the benefits of the revitalization of their old neighborhood (Popkin et al., 2009).

Popkin (2006) and Popkin et al. (2009) reported on the data from the largest scale cross-site study of HOPE VI residents, the HOPE VI Panel Study. They suggested that while mixed-income neighborhood and poverty dispersal strategies do have a positive effect on safety and

housing quality for low-income residents, there is little evidence to support the assertion that these strategies have a positive effect on residents' life chances, self-sufficiency, or economic stability. Popkin (2006) summarized the Panel Study's findings as follows: "Thus far, effects have been mixed, with some former residents clearly better off, others experiencing substantial hardship, and still others at risk for not being able to make a successful transition" (p. 84). Popkin et al. (2009) noted that benefits to safety and housing quality are significant, but not transformative, for those who relocate back into a HOPE VI neighborhood: the program does not effect employment or the factors that keep people out of the labor force, such as health, disability, lack of education, or child care issues. Manjarrez et al. (2007) found no improvement in physical health to residents who relocate to a HOPE VI neighborhood, and emphasized how chronic health issues prevent relocated residents from achieving stable employment and thus alleviation from poverty. Meanwhile, displaced residents who moved to other housing projects or experienced financial struggles while navigating the private market with a Section 8 voucher have seen no improvement or are worse off in terms of financial hardship (Popkin et al., 2009). Voucher recipients tend to cluster in areas of high or concentrated poverty after relocation (see Galvez, 2010; Hanlon, 2010) and report a mixture of outcomes, including satisfaction with their vouchers, but increased financial difficulties (Brooks et al., 2012).

Studies that evaluate the impact of HOPE VI redevelopment on former and current public housing residents' community ties, social networks, and social capital are particularly worthy of note. This is the case because, as many researchers noted, HOPE VI's poverty amelioration effects are supposed to flow from increased social capital due to income mixing in social networks. The theory is that public housing residents living in poverty would gain access to job networks through middle-income neighbors, the quality of public services and resources would

increase as higher income people moved into the area, and middle-income neighbors would model and shape socially acceptable behaviors among the lower-income residents (DeFilippis & Fraser, 2010; Fraser et al., 2013; Laakso, 2013). These studies are also important to consider because they attend to the experiences, relations, and perspectives of residents, and not only quantifiable or measurable outcomes such as increased income.

Many researchers have found that mixed-income revitalization of public housing neighborhoods interrupted social networks and practices of everyday life, with a corresponding decrease in social capital. Manzo, Kleit, and Couch (2008) explored how the public housing neighborhood they studied was not, before displacement, a homogenous, isolating site of distress, but instead a neighborhood where place attachment, sense of community, and place meaning, all qualities that are usually missed in HOPE VI outcome studies, flourished. Manzo et al. (2008) identified how public housing residents had created a place together where they went about the common project of living; “the projects” were not a space of social isolation, but instead of mutual dependence. Laakso (2013) found in her study of Salishan that the HOPE VI redevelopment disrupted strong social networks, informal social controls, and social capital. Similarly, Keller et al. (2013) found that former and current residents of Salishan had a decreased sense of community, socialized with neighbors less, and knew fewer of their neighbors after HOPE VI redevelopment. These effects were exacerbated among the elderly, disabled, and immigrant respondents (Keller et al., 2013). Fraser et al. (2013) found that middle-income homeowners in a mixed-income redevelopment project viewed their public housing neighbors with suspicion, and enacted an “us versus them” construct within their neighborhood. Goetz (2013b) found decreased neighborhood social ties and social networks among former public housing residents who had been displaced by a HOPE VI revitalization project in Duluth,

Minnesota. Although the houses themselves needed replacement in both these cases, the social benefits of displacement and a mixed-income model in these cases is less clear (Laakso, 2013; Manzo et al., 2008). In my review of the literature, I did not find any studies that noted an increase in social ties, improved social networks, or perception of increased social capital amongst residents of HOPE VI neighborhoods due to social mixing.

Finally, many researchers noted that few former residents move back to their public housing neighborhood after HOPE VI revitalization (Hanlon, 2010; Popkin, 2006; Popkin et al., 2009; J. Smith, 2006b; Tegeler, 2005). 10-75% of residents return to the revitalized neighborhood, with the larger numbers returning to rehabilitated sites rather than rebuilt sites like Salishan (Popkin et al., 2009). The majority of the former residents receive vouchers to negotiate the private housing market, often in another neighborhood with concentrated poverty (Popkin, 2006; Popkin et al., 2009). Thus, “HOPE VI programs only partially achieve the goal of deconcentrating poverty” (Brooks et al., 2012). Although poverty does decrease in public housing neighborhoods that are revitalized, it is not necessarily because the poverty of former residents has decreased, nor that former residents live in areas with deconcentrated poverty.

Given the mixed outcomes for public housing residents impacted by HOPE VI, policy analysts, academics and researchers interpret and evaluate the mixed-income strategy and HOPE VI in a number of different ways. Some researchers take the program at face value. Popkin et al. (2009) interpret the purpose of HOPE VI to be poverty amelioration and transforming residents’ lives, and asserted that, although HOPE VI has not quite met these expectations, there could be a mixed-income strategy program that does. Tegeler (2005) suggests that the program has dual goals of revitalization and desegregation through deconcentration, although it has succeeded more at the first goal than the second.

Some researchers point out that the HOPE VI program's poverty amelioration strategy relies on contentious theories that a "culture of poverty" persists in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty (DeFilippis & Fraser, 2010; Goetz, 2013a; Laakso, 2013). Following up on this point, Laakso (2013) suggests that housing authorities and policy makers must also consider residents' cultural efficacy and sense of place when planning for redevelopment.

In contrast, other researchers suggest that since the program's primary effects are not poverty amelioration, and that the mass displacement of public housing residents and decrease in public housing stock are so significant, these may not be an unintended consequence. Goetz (2011) analyzed variables that correlate with public housing demolition (primarily due to HOPE VI redevelopment) in 139 US cities. He found that from 1990-2000 decreasing public housing stock corresponded with gentrification pressure and poverty concentration in cities. After 2000, decreasing public housing stock corresponded with the concentration of African-Americans in the housing stock and negatively correlated with the strength of progressive politics in the city (measured by the existence of a certain portfolio of city ordinances). Goetz (2011) interpreted these results to indicate that HOPE VI redevelopment and other programs that decrease housing stock may be "a means of removing a racially identified subgroup of the poor away from land that has become ripe for investment and a new round of profit-taking" (p. 283). J. Smith (2006b) similarly argued that poverty will decrease in mixed-income neighborhoods not because poor people are less socially isolated, but because the poor people have moved out. She began to attribute the purpose behind HOPE VI and the mixed-income strategy not to poverty amelioration, but to the privatization of public housing.

*Neoliberalizing Social Service Provision in the U.S.*

While subsidized housing in the US was being remade through HOPE VI and mixed income strategies, welfare and social service provision in the US were also dramatically reworked, according to the contours of the neoliberalization of the U.S. economy and state. The transformation of welfare and social service also reverberates through HOPE VI, as social service provision becomes a part of subsidized housing under HOPE VI.

The neoliberalization of social service in the US is epitomized by the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) and eliminated entitlement-based family welfare. TANF is decentralized: PRWORA created a set of guidelines for state and local governments to create their own welfare programs under TANF. While these programs must all provide a five-year lifetime limit of benefits, and require recipients to engage in work-related activities (Ridzi, 2009), state discretion has resulted in a patchwork of programs, with some states deeply cutting their welfare roles (Bonds, 2009). Local welfare programs are often contracted out to private non-profit or for-profit organizations through block grants (Ridzi, 2009).

Many critics of the welfare reform understand PRWORA and TANF under the rubric of neoliberalism: responsibility for social services devolves to local governments and the private sector (Hasenfeld and Garrow, 2012); the social safety net is weakened in favor of “flexible” low wage labor (Ridzi, 2009); and understandings of proper citizenship shifts toward self-sufficiency and independence (Schram, Soss, Houser, & Fording, 2010). The state retreat from social service provision is rooted in discourses of race, gender, and poverty that demarcate who is deserving and who is undeserving (Bonds, 2009; Schram, 2006; Ridzi, 2009). These transformations are

underlined and rationalized by the need to respond to global market competition, and to strip down the federal budget (Schram 2006; Bonds, 2009). This is both because neoliberal rationality understands global market forces to require a “leaner and meaner,” more efficient government with less public debt (Ridzi, 2009), and because labor market flexibility requires a weakened social net that disciplines workers into accepting suppressed wages (Piven & Cloward, 1993). These same characteristics and discourses of neoliberal social service provision extend through the swelling non-profit and voluntary sectors in uneven and multiple ways (Kingfisher, 2007; Elwood, 2002; Milligan & Fyfe, 2006).

Neoliberalizing social services involve a “rolling back” of state involvement in social services, but also the “rolling out” (Peck and Tickell, 2002) of neoliberal governance through the proliferation of public-private partnerships, or even public-volunteer partnerships, that fill the social net void. MacMillan and Townsend (2006) similarly argue for an understanding of the growth and reliance of partnerships and the voluntary sector as an “institutional fix” to the problem of providing social services in an era of fiscal constraint and welfare reform. New political spaces form as the public sector hybridizes with a spectrum of private sector non-profit and for-profit organizations that provide social and welfare services under government contracts (Milligan and Conradson, 2006). Wolch (2006) conceptualizes a “shadow government” of non-profit partnerships that “protects state legitimacy yet maintains flexibility and control” (p. xiii).

Private sector and voluntary organizations that accept increased resources through public partnerships and government contracts may find themselves more deeply involved in policy making and governance, but they also experience a loss of autonomy and control in their decision making, as well as legitimacy among the people who have traditionally supported, volunteered with, or received services from them (Milligan & Fyfe, 2006). The institutional

logic of business management and professionalization are also integrated into non-profit and voluntary sector organizations in this arrangement, as bidding for government contracts requires cost-efficiency, performance measures, outputs, standards, metrics, and the adoption of business plans and business models (Hasenfeld & Garrow, 2012; Schram et al., 2010). Finally, as the non-profit sector has strengthened, new funding allocation patterns have emerged that hybridize not only public and private governance, but also public and private financing, through increased reliance on consumer vouchers and tax credits instead of direct block grants or government contracts (Hasenfeld & Garrow, 2012). As governance is reworked and redeveloped, private and non-profit organizations either become folded into the work of governing and the logic of cost-efficiency and management, or they are marginalized. However, such privatization of public sector and social services has not yielded higher quality care (England et al., 2007; Hasenfeld & Garrow, 2012).

Neoliberal social services approach the project of behavior modification and transforming poor people into proper neoliberal citizens through multiple disciplining space, discourses, and practices. The urge to modify and shape the citizenship of welfare recipients is evident in the decrease in cash aid, increase in welfare-to-work services, and in the amount of funds spent in efforts to modify recipients' behaviors that are "barriers to work" (Schram et al., 2010). Incentives and education, such as classes on resume writing, computers, parenting, how to dress for success, how to behave as a proper worker, are as much a part of the disciplining project as are penalties, such as time limits, removal of aid, and restrictions on who has access to aid (Schram et al., 2010). In his institutional ethnography of welfare-to-work programs in East County, NY, Ridzi (2009) described how the intake "gauntlet," relationships between case workers and clients, and even the software that case workers used all were embedded in and

reproduced a neoliberal common sense that prioritized getting people off welfare by either kicking them off or by disciplining them into the workforce. For Ridzi, neoliberal welfare reform and social service provision is a political project of deliberate cultural reconstruction, remaking the daily practices and meanings of welfare provision along disciplinary lines. Common sense, norms, and values are upended and refocused on bringing market values to bear on every area of human life.

Wacquant (2009) examines the disciplining of poor neoliberal subjects in a discussion of how workfare and prisonfare run jointly to regulate households to accept precarious wage work. Both systems take individual responsibility and behavior-based solutions to poverty as self-evident. The welfare system in some ways works hand in hand with the penal system, requiring background checks, excluding people with felonies from certain services, and surveilling “clients” so that they must constantly prove that they are deserving. Wacquant’s emphasis, however, is less on the techniques of welfare provision and more on the techniques of prisons, criminal justice, and punishment, and how these act upon the same poor “undeserving” populations who are increasingly disciplined by or off of the welfare roles.

Schram et al. (2010) critique both Ridzi (2009), for his over-emphasis on a hegemonic common sense and Wacquant (2009) for his over-emphasis on punishment rather than disciplining through an array of techniques. For Schram et al. (2010), what they both miss is how the disciplinary shift in neoliberal welfare reform constitutes the entire chain, from state official, to local bureaucrats, to case workers, to clients – each is a “free market actor” who is constrained by benchmarks, mandated program goals and requirements, and a maze of incentives and penalties. The street level bureaucrats who are implementing welfare-to-work programs

aren't so much buying into a punishing neoliberal worldview, as they are operating in fields of practice that require them to "do the work of disciplining the poor" (Schram et al., 2010, p. 751).

This is the more disciplinary or punitive side emphasizes the need for rehabilitation, behavior modification, and transformation of poor people under welfare reform. There is also a softer side of the neoliberal turn in social service provision. Through the early decades of the 21st century, the devolution of responsibility for social service provision is rationalized as strengthening local democracy (Hasenfeld & Garrow, 2012) or as community involvement (Herbert, 2005). With increased governance through non-profit partnerships and the voluntary sector has come an increased emphasis on collaboration and community (Herbert, 2005; Elwood, 2002; Dierwechter, 2008), which MacMillan and Townsend (2006) call the "community turn." "Third Way" politics in the UK, or Democratic neoliberalism in the US, rebrand and rework neoliberal social service devolution through increasing reliance on community and collaboration. This communitarian emphasis on the community members' obligation to the whole, has come with its pitfalls (Herbert 2005) and opportunities (Elwood, 2002). Herbert (2005) argues that as the voluntary sector takes on responsibilities that the state formerly held, the rhetoric of "community" is activated to justify this off-loading as somehow democratizing. However, in Herbert's case study of community policing in Seattle, he found that "people recognize state off-loading when they see it" and do not necessarily buy into or accept it (p. 854). Furthermore, the emphasis on individuals, families and communities taking responsibility and finding solutions to their own problems runs the risk of obscuring the structural causes of social problems (Gray, 2011). In contrast, Elwood's study of community development efforts in Minneapolis, Minnesota found that the non-profit partnerships involved in the hybrid governance structure

guiding neighborhood revitalization provided some (limited and contingent) space to “challenge and revise a neoliberal revitalization agenda” (Elwood, 2002, p. 121).

Both the communitarian and disciplinary approaches to welfare reform align with the neoliberal conflation of work and welfare (Peck, 2003), and the neoliberal emphasis on self-sufficiency, independence, and individualism (Schram, 2006; Ridzi, 2009). Such emphases play a central role in neoliberal social service provision, which is aimed at producing neoliberal citizens. Justified and normalized as the “natural order of things,” “ordinary people” are those who are dependent on the private market, while those who are dependent on welfare are Others (Lawson & Elwood, 2013). Kingfisher (2007) argues that discourses and rationalities of proper neoliberal citizenship also articulate themselves with other local cultural formations circulating through a place. This rationality ignores the precarity of the low-skill labor market (Marston, 2008), and negates or bypasses any structural causes of poverty and joblessness, as well as any disabilities, family relationships and responsibilities that might require support.

The constraints of neoliberal social service provision do not preclude noncompliance, ambivalence, or active and passive resistance. Ridzi (2009) notes resistance to the neoliberal social service regime, among case workers and welfare recipients some of whom do not completely buy into their roles as neoliberal citizens. So do Woolford and Nelund (2013), whose study of homeless Aboriginal men and women in Winnipeg, Manitoba found that some “perform the requisite neoliberal identity to access services, while simultaneously obscuring their Indigenous identity,” but others violate the script and refuse neoliberal citizenship (p. 311).

The neoliberalizing of social services is rooted in mythologies of race, gender, and class, and reproduces race, class, and gender disparities (Schram 2006; Ridzi, 2009; Lipman, 2011).

Bonds (2009) elaborates on how the criminal coding of poverty supports the scaling back of public assistance, competitive economic development, and race and class inequalities. (p. 420).

Lipman (2011) goes into detail about how the dimensions of deserving and undeserving that are produced and perpetuated through social service provision, and reworked and hardened by neoliberal social service provision, construct “people of color as the undeserving poor (lazy, pathological, and welfare dependent” (p. 12). Lipman found that racialized conceptions of poverty are the bedrock on which welfare reform and neoliberalizing social services rest: “ordinary people” (read: middle class, white, or aspiring to the status of middle class and white) would not accept the diminishment of the social safety net, if they were not relationally produced as such by the discourses and materialities of an undeserving racialized other. Concurrently, the “colorblindness” of post-Civil Rights era neoliberalization also alleviates the state’s responsibility for ameliorating racial inequality and racialized poverty, instead emphasizing entrepreneurship and individual accountability. This neoliberal “empowerment” (Kingfisher, 2007) reads like social justice, but in fact side-steps any structural causes of poverty, inequality or oppression. Thus, neoliberal ideology powerfully mobilizes racist ideologies without explicitly referencing them, in order to maintain a hierarchical racial social order while denying it, which is part of what stabilizes broad acceptance of neoliberalization.

### *HOPE VI and the Neoliberalization of U.S. Public Housing*

The amount of literature that examines welfare reform and the neoliberalization of social service provision in the U.S. overwhelms the quantity of literature that looks at public housing reform through the same lens. Perhaps this is partially due to a difference in scale: the number of poor people using housing subsidies in the United States has historically been dwarfed by the number of poor people using other public benefits (Edelman, 2013), and therefore scholars

concerned with the privatization and diminution of the U.S.'s social net through neoliberalization may choose to focus elsewhere. Nevertheless, a few scholars have noted how public housing has undergone a series of transformations and reforms in the past 40 years that have aligned it more and more closely with neoliberal rationalities, such as devolution from central control to local control (J. Smith, 2006a), increasing hybridity with private markets (J. Smith, 2006a; Hackworth, 2007; Nguyen, Rohe, & Cowan, 2012), and by producing spatial arrangements and work requirements that dovetail with the neoliberal regulation of labor and the gentrification of inner cities (Crump, 2003). The neoliberalization of public housing, including through the HOPE VI program, is fascinating because it integrates the disciplining and regulation of a labor force and of neoliberal citizenship through welfare reform, with the neoliberal redevelopment of cities for capital accumulation (see Crump, 2003). In this section, I elaborate on those interpretations of HOPE VI and public housing redevelopment that focus on its intersections with neoliberalization. The section closes with questions for further research, particularly in Western Washington, where certain aspects of the public housing context run counter to the dominant narrative.

Studies that interpret HOPE VI and mixed-income revitalization within the context of neoliberal urbanism are limited up to this point. Some researchers have argued for this interpretation of HOPE VI and mixed-income development (for example, Hackworth, 2007; Lipman, 2009), while many more theorists have made more general claims about the strategies and characteristics of gentrification and real estate development in a neoliberal economy (for example, N. Smith, 2002). This literature predominantly interprets public housing redevelopment from a political economy perspective (Lipman, 2009; Hackworth, 2007; Hanlon, 2010; Newman & Ashton, 2004).

Many of the researchers and academics who have studied HOPE VI, deconcentration of poverty, and the mixed-income strategy as an urban neoliberalization process emphasize its role in gentrification of low-income areas close to urban centers (see Wyly and Hammel, 1999). N. Smith (2002) noted that as global manufacturing sectors diminished in North American and European cities, capital accumulation began occurring through the real estate sector, through gentrification and re-development. “Urban real-estate development— gentrification writ large— has now become a central motive force of urban economic expansion, a pivotal sector in the new urban economies” (p. 447). Mortgage capital had previously created a rent gap in certain areas through racist practices like redlining and the dual housing market. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, intensified reinvestment was unleashed upon these formerly divested areas, including neighborhoods around public housing developments, neighborhoods close to downtowns, and close to large universities. Up-scaling and gentrification made these formerly stigmatized and racialized areas sites of capital accumulation through real estate development. Unfortunately, racial minorities are more likely to be denied home ownership in gentrifying neighborhoods than in other neighborhoods, although this phenomenon varies between different types of gentrifying neighborhood (core vs. fringe) and also between different races (black, Hispanic, Asian, other) (Wyly & Hammel, 2004). Furthermore, neoliberal urban governance strategies included opening up these new sites for capital accumulation, and also through contracting public-private partnerships that encourage this type of development.

Newman and Ashton (2004) elaborate on urban revitalization as a “class-based process of neighborhood upgrading” (p. 1156). The authors pointed out what is now obvious to many: that the revitalization of neighborhoods through programs such as HOPE VI is a form of neighborhood change that more closely resembles gentrification and capital accumulation than

community-controlled development, despite the requirement for community engagement and buy-in through the planning process. For Hanlon (2010), HOPE VI redevelopment *is* gentrification—it is the replacement of low-income housing with privately owned and privately financed middle-income housing. However, although cities with higher gentrification pressure are more likely to demolish their public housing through HOPE VI and HUD programs (Goetz, 2011), not all HOPE VI projects result in decreased affordable housing (see Hackworth, 2007), and not all HOPE VI projects occur in inner cities or in redevelopment zones (see Goetz 2013b). It would be an oversimplification to equate HOPE VI with neoliberal strategies for capital accumulation through gentrification of urban spaces, because HOPE VI projects are so place-specific. Instead it seems more accurate to say that HOPE VI can be, and often is, mobilized as part of a neoliberal gentrification process. There is a dearth of research that looks at HOPE VI projects as neoliberal urban processes that diverge from this gentrification mold.

Some researchers have highlighted *features* of HOPE VI and similar mixed-income redevelopment efforts that *parallel* neoliberal urban processes, such as realignment of public housing policy and planning along market imperatives (Hanlon, 2010; N. Smith, 2002); reliance on public-private partnerships (Hackworth, 2007; Hanlon, 2010; Newman & Ashton, 2004; J. Smith, 2006a); and lack of democratic involvement of community members (Lipman, 2009; Newman & Ashton, 2004).

Many researchers have discussed how public housing authorities and policy makers discursively obscure the mass displacement of low-income people and the decreasing amount of public housing that results from HOPE VI and similar programs. Newman and Ashton (2004) argue that a discourse shift to “deconcentrating poverty”, “revitalizing”, and “tapping underserved markets” serves to justify reducing public responsibility for reducing poverty, and

displacing the poor. Hanlon (2010) highlighted how what housing authorities say (they are ameliorating poverty in a community) and the look of HOPE VI redevelopment itself (termed New Urbanism) serve to cover over the net decrease of public housing and the opening up of public housing neighborhoods for capital accumulation. Goetz (2013a) analyzed how public housing directors and HUD officials delegitimize public housing through discourses of public housing obsolescence, neighborhood effects of poverty, and pathologizing public housing residents. All of these analyses draw from an understanding of HOPE VI as a neoliberal project with uneven effects that are justified or obscured discursively, but they do not examine deeply how these discourses also produce new meanings and understandings of public housing, public housing tenants, race, class, and gender.

Little research has been done on the role of race, class, gender, language, ethnicity, and culture in the neoliberalization of public housing in the United States. One study, in the education field, does address the cultural politics of HOPE VI as a neoliberal urban process (Lipman, 2009; 2011). The study focuses on the privatization of public housing and public schools in Chicago through the City's planning and governance structure's enthusiastic embrace of HOPE VI and charter schools. Lipman argued that not only do mixed-income strategies such as HOPE VI further a neoliberal urban agenda, they do so while contributing to the destruction of communities of color. She argued that mixed-income strategies are rooted in a racially coded deficit ideology<sup>9</sup> and discourses of the culture of poverty, which assert that poor people and people of color are culturally deficient and need contact with white and middle class peers in order to succeed. In this logic, obsolescence and disinvestment are naturalized, and the market, a neutral arbiter, can determine whether certain communities should be disassembled and

---

<sup>9</sup> "Deficit ideology" is a term widely used amongst educators and education scholars like Lipman. It refers to and critiques service providers' and educators' focus on cultural or social deficits of marginalized groups, as opposed to building upon assets, or emphasizing a historical or social analysis of the legacies of racial and class hierarchy.

destroyed. At the same time, mixed-income strategies mobilize discourses of democracy, diversity, and inclusiveness that legitimate and obscure “an urban agenda which has as its nexus capital accumulation and racial containment and exclusion through gentrification, de-democratization and privatization of public institutions, and displacement of low-income working class people of color” (Lipman, 2011, p. 75). This resonates with Hanlon’s (2010) finding that public housing authorities cover over the neoliberalization process, displacement of poor people, and reduction in public housing stock by highlighting the reduction of on-site poverty. Like the racial economy geographers cited above, Lipman looks at how notions and discourses of race, class, and poverty are mobilized, and also at the racialized and classed material effects of HOPE VI and school privatization. However, her analysis, though very place specific, lacks an argument about the role of local contingencies.

Public housing in Western Washington exists in a very different context from Lipman’s (2009) Chicago and Hanlon’s (2010) Louisville. Most of Western Washington’s public housing was built during World War II as low-rise single family homes or duplexes, was racially diverse with a mixture of immigrants, refugees, and US-born citizens, and, other than for a period in the late-1980s to the mid-1990s, has had relatively low levels of criminal activity (Laakso, 2013; Sutton, 2011). In Seattle and Tacoma, WA, family public housing developments are dispersed throughout the city instead of concentrated together, or concentrated around the city center. This is outside the stereotype of crime-ridden high rises in racially homogenous inner city neighborhoods that HUD originally intended to disperse and contain with HOPE VI (Goetz, 2011). Because the public housing context in the Pacific Northwest region is so different from that of the major Mid-west and East Coast urban areas, Lipman’s (2009, 2011), Newman and Ashton’s (2004), and Hanlon’s (2010) findings, while generative, are not entirely pertinent. of

A number of researchers have studied the various effects and outcomes of these HOPE VI grants on public housing residents and on the surrounding neighborhoods in the Pacific Northwest (Laakso, 2013; Keller et al. 2013; Manzo et al., 2008; Reid, Liebow, & O'Malley, 2006; Sutton, 2011). However, an analysis of HOPE VI/public housing redevelopment in the Pacific Northwest that takes into account the uneven and variegated neoliberalization of urban economies, and the cultural politics of race, gender, and poverty involved in these restructurings, is still missing. This study of Salishan in Tacoma, WA attempts to do this both through building a theoretically-informed account of the neighborhood's redevelopment and through discourse analysis of the related promotional materials. A review of the literature on discourses of neoliberalism, public housing, poverty, race and gender is therefore critical.

### III. DISCOURSES OF NEOLIBERALISM, PUBLIC HOUSING, AND RACE

Critical scholars who study neoliberalization as a discourse or “constellation of discourses” (Bonds, 2009, p. 418) have identified the tropes and discourse types that depoliticize, naturalize, and legitimize economic or political restructurings. Fairclough (2000) flags some of the key words of neoliberal discourse:

This discourse includes a narrative of progress: the ‘globalized’ world offers unprecedented opportunities for ‘growth’ through intensified ‘competition’, but requiring unfettered ‘free trade’ and the dismantling of ‘state bureaucracy’ and ‘unaffordable’ welfare programmes, ‘flexibility’ of labour, ‘transparency’, ‘modernization’ and so forth. (p. 148)

Referencing these keywords and neoliberal economic discourse obscures or masks sociological factors, historical explanation, or ethical and political concerns with “the appearance of logical necessity” and common sense (p. 2). Justifying neoliberal projects such as the privatization of

public housing with reference to growth, competition, the inefficiency of state bureaucracies, the need for flexibility, or unaffordability somehow trumps or undercuts arguments for maintaining or extending public housing as a stopgap, a treatment for inequality, human need, or housing as a human right. What is taken to be true under the neoliberal consensus often “reigns supreme and goes unchallenged” (Schram, 2006). Neoliberal rationalities particularly appeal to economic globalization and global competition as a major justification for both urban revitalization and welfare reform (Schram, 2006; D. Wilson, 2007). Global competition operates as a self-fulfilling prophecy, creating the competition that it predicts, and erasing the political nature of the choices made over what government programs are trimmed and which are expanded.

Many scholars have analyzed the discourses constructing poverty, welfare recipience, and public housing tenancy, as well as the institutions of welfare and public housing themselves (see Goetz, 2013; Marston, 2008; Watt, 2008). These discourses intersect with and often justify neoliberal restructuring via welfare and public housing reform (Marston, 2008; Martin, 2011; Schram, 2006; Watt, 2008). For example, Marston (2008) summarizes how “the natural order of things” is constructed, with unemployment as a demand side issue and a problem of the unemployed, and “welfare dependency” as creating unsustainable fiscal burdens on taxpayers, leading to a life of crime, addiction and mental illness. Low-income people became coded as different from “ordinary people”, dependence on the state becomes a moral bad, and dependence on the labor market became a moral good (Marston, 2008, p. 360-61). Watt (2008) discusses how the discourse of public housing tenants as an “underclass” intersects with and bolsters neoliberal restructuring, while contesting discourses of tenants as “ordinary people” have the potential to derail neoliberal restructuring efforts. Schram’s (2006) analysis of the discourse of welfare reform found that welfare reform is simultaneously used to discursively legitimize

deregulated economic globalization<sup>10</sup> and to position welfare recipients as deficient, dependent people who need to be reshaped into self-sufficient responsible subjects who fit the economic order (p. xi-xiii). The coding of poor people as dependent, morally bad, and an underclass, has material effects. It creates an urgent moral crisis requiring policies that reformulate welfare into programs to reform the character of low-income people and poor neighborhoods into gentrified, “transitioning”, or “mixed income” neighborhoods.

Some geographers have elucidated how spatialized constructions of poverty code certain places with racialized terms like “ghetto”, “inner city”, or “bad neighborhood” (Wilson & Grammenos, 2005; Hancock & Mooney, 2012). These discourses are mobilized in urban revitalization efforts, urban governances, and public policy, to justify the displacement of poor people and the upscaling and gentrification of certain neighborhoods through criminalizing the racialized bodies that exist in the neighborhood. D. Wilson (2007) similarly emphasizes how the isolation of and divestment from poor black neighborhoods in the American rust belt is justified both through a globalization trope that emphasizes global competition in the neoliberal economy and the theme of hopelessly pathological black ghettos that are draining city resources. These processes discursively construct racialized understandings of poverty and produce racially uneven material effects, such as displacement.

Dominant public housing discourses invoke a blend of these imaginations, framing public housing residents as an underclass (Pfeiffer, 2006) that is afflicted by a culture of poverty (Laakso, 2013), and public housing developments as obsolete and derelict (Goetz, 2013a). Both

---

<sup>10</sup> Schram makes an argument that welfare retrenchment was justified through globalization discourse, not only by the supposed need to cut government spending in order to be more globally competitive or to introduce discipline into the low-wage labor pool, but because it is part of the restructuring of the entire political economy, including weakening social protections and wages for all workers. “By reducing the social safety net for the poor, all workers were affected. A strong signal was sent that workers had less on which they could fall back if they resisted accepting the declines in pay and job security” (Schram, 2006, p. 4).

the people and the place refract stigma upon each other. Henderson (1995) highlights the development of the grim image of public housing residents as primarily unwed black mothers on welfare, teenage fathers, and their undisciplined offspring existing in a world of filth, “‘violence,’ drug use, and random sex” (p. 31). The physical character of public housing (crumbling towers) was linked to the behavior of tenants, and was linked to race, sex, and sexuality in media accounts of public housing (Henderson, 1995). This imagination developed during a time of white backlash to the civil rights movement, and as several large US cities became majority black. While this imagination never described the majority of public housing tenants or developments, it has repeatedly been mobilized to justify divestment from public housing, beginning with Nixon’s 1975 moratorium on public housing construction.

Goetz (2013a) emphasizes how, through HOPE VI, policy makers and housing officials discursively produce a certain reality that legitimates, justifies and normalizes demolition and displacement. Specifically, Goetz identifies discourses of tenant pathology, negative neighborhood effects of concentrated poverty, and building and program obsolescence as the most common discursive themes or tropes. These tropes produce the foregone conclusion that public housing estates must be leveled and that subsidized housing must be (at least partially) privatized. Meanwhile, public housing residents’ discourses about the homes and strong communities that they have built, the practice of housing authorities running down or mismanaging developments to make them decrepit, and of housing as a human right, challenge the validity of neoliberal restructuring of public housing (Goetz, 2013a; Pfeiffer, 2006).

All of these discourse types – the logics, rationalities, and imaginations of neoliberalism, economic globalization, welfare reform, and public housing – have been documented in discourse analyses. Some of them resound strongly in THA’s framing of Salishan’s

redevelopment (self-sufficiency, efficiency, asset building), others are inverted in THA's literature (public housing resident pathology), and others are absent (global competition). My discourse analysis of Salishan searches for the extent they are present in this particular neoliberalization process, and the extent to which local contingencies and specificities circulating through a place and time constitute a context where these or other discourse types develop or flourish.

This thesis is situated in the literatures discussing neoliberal discourses, neoliberalizing social services, public housing reform, and HOPE VI. It is informed by an understanding of places as constellations of processes; neoliberalization as a family of contingent, variegated multi-scalar economic and cultural processes; and of race, gender and class formations as both productive of and produced by these processes. Exploring Salishan from this framework compels me to approach the privatization of public housing, urban revitalization, and neoliberal social service provision as both an economic and cultural project imbued with race, class and gender cultural formations and material effects. This approach, especially applied to a neoliberalization process that has been utterly imperfect in terms of the neoliberal ideal, is missing from geography, housing studies, and social services literatures. This thesis attempts to contribute, by building a theoretically informed account of the privatization of public housing in Tacoma, WA.

## Chapter 3. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

My case study illuminates public housing restructuring as a neoliberal process, and contributes to our understanding of neoliberal processes through an example of public housing revitalization. Again, my broader purpose is to understand the regional specificities, contradictions, and hybridities of local neoliberal processes, set in the context of global neoliberal restructurings, and how we can understand neoliberalization as both economic *and* cultural. I do so through a single-site case study using qualitative methods, including discourse analysis of housing authority literature, interviews, and archival research, to unpack the political economy and cultural politics of neoliberal restructuring processes in Salishan, a mixed-income neighborhood in Tacoma, WA. Like Gowan (2010), I hope to “dig up local traces of the huge shakeup” we call neoliberalization or economic restructuring (p. 78).

In this chapter, I present my methodology and research design, with particular attention to how my research questions are rooted in my theoretical framework, why Salishan is an appropriate site for exploring public housing restructuring; how my research design and method derive from the literature on discourse analysis; and how the methods I have chosen explore my questions.

### I. THEORETICAL POSITIONS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Moreton-Robinson and Walter (2009) call attention to the way that ontology, epistemology, and axiology all inform methodologies, ultimately framing which questions we ask and what methods we choose to answer those questions. For these reasons, I begin this chapter with a brief discussion of the theoretical framework and ontologies that are influential to

my approach. They call for an understanding of places as constituted by constantly changing economic, political and cultural relations and processes that intersect in space, shift, and reform into new constellations. They also call for an exploration of the messy actualities of actually existing neoliberalism, and conceptualizing neoliberalization not as a *thing*, but as a family of variegated and contingent cultural, economic, and political processes that also produce social categories and meanings, as well as material effects. These frameworks direct me to attend to the contexts in which the remaking of public housing in Tacoma emerge, to the material as well as the discursive transformations involved in the neighborhood's redevelopment, and to what the restructurings of Salishan (and Tacoma Housing Authority) produce. My research questions follow from these frameworks: what do neoliberalization and public housing redevelopment have to do with each other? What are the regional specificities, contradictions, and hybridities of local neoliberal processes? And, how can we understand neoliberalism as both economic restructuring *and* cultural practice, through the example of public housing restructuring?

In order to answer my broadest research questions, I have built up an account of Salishan's transformation that addresses the political economy (phases of development, funding streams, and effects on the neighborhood or residents) of the transformation itself, but is very careful to account for multiscalar political, economic, social, and cultural contexts, relations, processes, and effects.

Thus, my study of Salishan includes archival research into the context in which the redevelopment is occurring. What local and national shifts in housing policy, housing markets, race, gender, and income provide the setting for the neighborhood's redevelopment? This archival research is complemented with an analysis of the discourses circulating through this public housing project's restructuring. Some scholars have emphasized how language itself is

important to the discourse of neoliberalism, even more so than in earlier forms of capitalism (Fairclough, 2000; Fairclough, 2002; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2001). Marketing, public relations, promotions, and branding all become increasingly important as more and more sectors of life are privatized and marketized; new identities and new discourses are produced by these increasingly important genres of communication (Fairclough, 1995). In the case of public housing revitalization, the role of public housing in a neighborhood or city is reformulated. How do different parties (the Tacoma Housing Authority, its staff, homeowners, and tenants) make sense of Salishan's transformation into a mixed income, public-private neighborhood? What discourses produce and are produced through Salishan? And, how do the economic, political, social, and cultural contexts of this neighborhood interact, intersect, or contradict these meaning-makings? Finally, what are the material and discursive effects of these processes? My analysis looks for ways that all these strands tangle together.

I approach my research questions about public housing revitalization and neoliberalization through a case study of Salishan, a place of utterly imperfect actually existing neoliberalism, in hopes that this will contribute to our understanding of neoliberalization not as a monolith, but as constituted by many place-specific instantiations.

## II. SITE JUSTIFICATION

Salishan lends itself well to investigating the remaking of family public housing neighborhoods into mixed income neighborhoods as examples of actually existing neoliberalism, inscribed with processes of racialization, gender, and class. Although Salishan has recently undergone a HOPE VI redevelopment process into a public/private hybrid mixed income neighborhood, private investment in the development has been lagging. For many years, empty homeownership lots stood throughout the neighborhood, and when Tacoma Housing Authority

(THA) was finally able to sell them, they did not break a profit. Salishan is supposed to have 850-920 rental units<sup>11</sup> but has 740. If neoliberalism is a concept or ideal as well as a discourse and a process or pattern of organization (Jessop, 2002), Salishan has in many ways *not* lived up to the ideal. Salishan stands out as an excellent site for studying neoliberalization as a material and discursive process constituted by local and specific instances *because* it is imperfect – it is neoliberalization as it actually exists. Through investigating Salishan, I uncover and examine the discourses that shape and are shaped by this situation, and the practices and arrangements that materialize on the ground in a place where the private investment is not fulfilling expectations in the public/private hybrid, with certain consequences for the trajectory of public housing policy and practice in Tacoma.

### III. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Discourse analyses examine the discourse, system of signing, or mode of existence that a text both emerges from and shapes. Discourse analysis is “artisanal” (Dittmer, 2010, p. 279); that is, there are many approaches or ways to go about it (Fairclough, 1992). However, the core of the method is to examine the links between language-in-use, or semiosis, and larger structures or modes of existence. The analysis of texts must tie the language, structure, and assumptions of the text to social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. Rose (2001) outlines two major approaches to discourse analysis: the first asks how a particular discourse is structured in a text or texts, and how it then produces a particular kind of knowledge or “truth”; the second concerns analyzing institutions’ production of texts and visual materials, as well as how texts reproduce these institutions and particular human subjects (p. 164). While the first approach emphasizes

---

<sup>11</sup> This number varies according to the document or person with whom one consults.

the language-in-use and the second emphasizes institutions and their effects, both attempt to tie together the micro-scale of text with the macro-scale of social, cultural and political contexts.

Fairclough (1992) emphasizes how discourses naturalize or make certain realities common sense or logical through a complex of supporting discourses. These interlock in a formation that makes each seem true. In his study of welfare policy discourse in the United States, Schram (2006) makes a similar point, that welfare reform discourses “invoke” certain contexts (global competition) when speaking of events, making certain courses of action seem appropriate or logical. They thus can “make themselves real” by foreclosing some events while framing others to seem more reasonable (Schram, 2006, p. xi). My study of Salishan untangles some of the discourses and supporting discourses circulating through the neighborhood, uncovering the logic and common sense understandings that these discourses produce, and juxtaposes these with their contradictions.

Dittmer (2010) emphasizes the interrelation between scales in discourse analysis: “The discursive turn’s potentially greatest success has been in recognizing the meso- and macro-scale importance of language – most obviously through engagement with the concept of discourse” (p. 275). Fairclough’s (1995) conceptualizes these links by defining discourse as “a complex of three elements: social practice, discourse practice (text production, distribution and consumption), and text” (p. 74). Discourse analyses do not just analyze texts and their language-in-use, but they connect the language or signs in the “text” with the genre, or type of text or meaning making (discourse practice), and the social, cultural, political contexts in which the discourse circulates (social practice). Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis method requires an analysis of not only these three aspects of discourse, but also the links between them in a flexible and iterative process.

*Textual Analysis*

Discourse analysis does not have to begin with textual analysis, and in fact is best thought of as an iterative process of analysis that looks for links between texts, contexts, and practices. However, the analysis of language-in-use, most conveniently in the form of “texts” is essential, and a good beginning. Ferguson (1994), for instance, suggests a method that starts with textual analysis, and demonstrates how distortions revealed by this textual analysis rhetorically construct a certain reality, and then discusses the world, epistemology, and politics that produce and are produced by the text. Ferguson (1994) calls for “a way of connecting observed discursive regularities to non-discursive practices and institutions” (p. 67). Following from Ferguson (1994) in my textual analysis, I search for distortions and convergences with the material context that may signal the rhetorical construction of a particular imagination of reality. I identify the ways THA justifies or naturalizes its imagination of the redevelopment of Salishan, the displacement of its former residents, and the disruption of its social networks.

Fairclough (1995) calls for a textual analysis that attends especially to truth claims, presuppositions, absences, speech functions (to inform, persuade, or regulate), ideological functions of text, context, texture, historicization, as well as the textual type and genre or “ideal text” that the text one is analyzing represents. Rose (2001), also calls for attention to claims to truth, certainty, or naturalness that produce the effect of truth, as well as moments at which dissent is acknowledged or dealt with. Because I analyzed a group of texts and interviews from multiple sources, I prioritized what I looked for. In my analysis of discourses circulating around Salishan, I focused on truth claims, presuppositions and absences, while also looking for complexity and contradictions internal to the discourse, and what might explain these complexities or contradictions. I also attended to the production and use of THA’s promotional

texts, and how they appeal to certain institutions or authorities, or even constitute these authorities.

### *Discourse Types and Interdiscursivity*

In discourse analysis, textual analysis must move beyond simply analyzing a text to specifying the discourse types that circulate through it, and the way that they circulate (Fairclough's "discourse practice"). Discourse types may be tropes, or genres of thought such as "diversity" or "self-sufficiency" or "public housing pathology". Analysis involves detailing the discourse types present in a text, the transformations of these through various texts, and interdiscursivity, or the way manifest discourse types draw upon or interact with other discourses. Sometimes discourses interact interdiscursively with other discourses that are manifest or present in the text. At other times, they may respond to discourses that are latent – perhaps they are no longer accepted or discussed, but manifest discourses respond to them in the field of memory (Fairclough, 1992). My discourse analysis of Tacoma Housing Authority's literature was therefore guided by my review of literature on neoliberal discourses and intersecting discourses of poverty, race, gender, welfare, and public housing (see Chapter 2). In my analysis of discourses circulating through Salishan, in the housing authority's literature as well as through the words of residents and housing authority staff, I looked for and untangled discourses of poverty, race, gender, welfare, and public housing that intersect with neoliberal discourses, or that obscure, naturalize, depoliticize or legitimize neoliberal restructuring. I looked for themes of "welfare dependency" and "ghettos" as well as the flip-sides of these, such as "self-sufficiency" and "mixed income" neighborhoods. Less scholarship has been dedicated to discourses that challenge or contest neoliberal restructuring (but see Lawson and Ellwood, 2013), but I attended to and recorded evidence of this kind of discourse as well.

*Economic, Cultural, Social and Political Contexts*

As noted above, discourse analyses must link discourse circulating through a text, or group of texts, with a broader context (Fairclough's social practice) that the text operates within and (re)produces. Dittmer (2010) warns that making the connection between textual analysis and social context is a challenge and makes some suggestions for how to contextualize the language-in-use: by analyzing the symbolic power of the actor or author (their ability to influence broader discourses) and by contextualizing the audience. Following Dittmer (2010), I contextualize my discourse analysis in an account of the purpose of THA's texts, and what possibilities, responses or performances these texts produce in their audiences, and in the materiality of the neighborhood. In my analysis I build an account of the economic, political, and cultural contexts in which Salishan's redevelopment occurs, and in which THA created its promotional texts. I also pay attention to the effects of these discourses, how they (re)conceptualize, (re)produce, or (re)materialize conceptions of race, poverty, welfare, and gender.

#### IV. MY METHODS

I began my analysis by constructing a narrative of the Salishan's redevelopment, and contextualizing it in public housing policy change and the surrounding City of Tacoma. To do so, I conducted archival research of city records, housing authority records, and newspaper articles, and used U.S. Census, HUD, and Puget Sound Regional Council data to create an account of the demographics, politics, and housing market in Tacoma, WA prior to and during the redevelopment. Following from examples in Martin (2011) and Bonds (2009), I paid attention to the public-private partnerships, mixed financing, changing demographics, development plans, city rankings and bond ratings, as well as national-level public housing policy and housing market changes. I also charted shifts in the neighborhood and City in income,

race, gender, age, employment status, housing costs, and demolition and construction permits. I used this information to create an account of what Fairclough (1992) calls the “social practice,” or the context in which THA’s transformation takes place.

I conducted a textual analysis of THA promotional materials including websites, brochures, press releases, presentations, reports, minutes, and plans pertaining to Salishan, and HOPE VI from 2000-present. The promotional materials that are publicly available are closely linked with THA’s efforts to raise local public and private financial support and partnerships for its Salishan project, and thus are rife with a very specific imagination of the neighborhood and its redevelopment, related especially to the privatization and neoliberalization of the neighborhood. I gathered a corpus of texts and discourses by combing THA’s website, gathering Board of Commissioners meeting minutes, and collecting materials that THA staff felt were important for me to review. I extended this corpus by searching for newspaper articles, meeting minutes at which THA presented on Salishan to other organizations, and national or regional affordable housing network newsletters and publications that discuss THA or Salishan. I ended up with a collection of over 200 documents.

I read through each of these materials one to three times, and coded them for common discourse types and themes emerging from the texts, shifts and contradictions among the discourse types, and the justifications and presuppositions that THA activates to support these shifts and contradictions. I also looked for links, consistencies with, and divergences from neoliberal discourses and tropes: of mixed income housing as poverty amelioration (Popkin, 2006); poverty as an individual problem (Marston, 2008); public housing as pathological, obsolete, or culturally deficient (Goetz, 2013a); public programs as inefficient and bureaucratic; global competition as a justification for social service reduction and urban revitalization

(Schram, 2006; D. Wilson, 2007); tenants as an underclass (Watt, 2008); and racial coding (Davis, 2007; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010).

Finally, I selected a subset of thirteen materials for a more detailed textual analysis (see Table 3.1). This narrowed list of texts represents the breadth of discourse types and practices, as well as texts that housing authority staff had highlighted or discussed with me in interviews. The detailed textual analysis of these materials specifically focuses on the interdiscursivity of the discourses found in them, the presuppositions, truth claims, and justifications found in them, and the discursive and material effects of these texts and the discourses circulating through them (Fairclough, 1995; 1992).

**Table 3.1 Documents for Textual Analysis**

**From THA Website:**

“Statements of Vision, Mission and Values”  
 “History of Salishan”  
 “Construction Phasing and Site Plan”  
 “New Salishan Development (Mostly in pictures)”  
 “Dr. William Mount’s Video on Salishan: Some Notes”  
 “Thanksgiving Message”

**Salishan Press Releases:**

“THA Announces Successful Closing on Next Financial Phase of New Salishan”  
 “Tacoma Housing Authority Announce Ribbon Cutting for Salishan Phase II”  
 “Tacoma Housing Authority Announces Sale of 143 Single Family Lots in New Salishan”

**Other THA Promotional Materials**

“Children’s Savings Account for the Children of New Salishan”  
 “New State and Local Tax Revenues Attributable to New Salishan”

**Minutes of THA presentation**

Minutes from The Conversation: April 15, 2007  
 Minutes from Tacoma City Council Study Session – February 10, 2009

I supplemented both my account of Salishan’s redevelopment and my discourse analysis of THA’s promotional materials with interviews. I conducted 12 interviews, each 30-120 minutes long. I used snowball sampling to select and interview 3 Salishan residents, with an effort to gain participants from different housing types. I used purposive sampling to select and interview 7 current or former staff of the Tacoma Housing Authority who were involved with the redevelopment from the financing, real estate, planning, and community support sides of the project. I also interviewed a City Council member and school principal who reside near Salishan

and serve the neighborhood. Additionally, I spent 30 hours participating in volunteer events, meetings and visiting with residents and observing the neighborhood. I used these interviews and observations to cross-check and complicate information gleaned from the archive, and to locate contestations and convergences with the discourses circulating through THA's official publications. Because THA's publications construct the neighborhood according to a particular imagination for particular purposes, participating in events, interacting with residents and service providers, and analyzing interviews with residents and staff was necessary to develop a fuller understanding of the different discourses and contradictions that do circulate through Salishan. I read and analyzed the interviews iteratively with my archival research and promotional materials, searching for consistencies and divergences in information and discourses. I analyzed these interviews with a combination of inductive and deductive codes that I used in the discourse analysis of promotional texts. Indeed it is misleading to separate these three pieces of analysis as I have in this chapter, as they were overlapping processes that all informed each other.

I brought all of this information together to create an account of the redevelopment process and of the neighborhood in 2014-15, especially highlighting the complexities of this process and place as an instantiation of "actually existing neoliberalism" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002), and of the neoliberal redevelopment of Salishan as an economic *and* cultural restructuring of a housing authority, a neighborhood, and the lives of residents.

I approached the field having theorized the outcomes I expected to encounter, while looking for the unexpected. I expected to find that THA's promotional materials activate a discourse of self-sufficiency, independence, and middle-class aspiration as treatments for poverty, and that they tout spatial proximity of middle class families with low-income families as a solution to poverty; that these constructions articulate with racialized and gendered discourses

about who does and does not deserve housing assistance; that these discursive constructions of poverty and poverty amelioration are not felt to be reflective of reality by residents, but that they articulate well with the funding landscape; I also expected to find a naturalization of mixed financing, public/private partnerships, and the displacement of families living in poverty in order to make way for higher income residents, and that the neighborhood itself is tightly disciplined and controlled in an effort to make it seem as though the neoliberal imagination of the neighborhood is fully materialized, as more public and private investment needs to be attracted to the site. My expectations were validated, but only to a limited extent. What I found, predictably, is infinitely more complex, nuanced, and context-specific.

## Chapter 4. SALISHAN AND TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY TRANSFORM

Salishan's redevelopment process has transformed and continues to transform the neighborhood and the Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) in multiple ways. It produced new organizational arrangements (inter- and intra-organizationally); new roles for the housing authority as a developer and a supportive services provider; new landscapes in Tacoma; and new spatial, management, and disciplinary practices in Salishan. These transformations emanate from the interwoven strands of national public housing policy; local regulatory frameworks; housing economy; dominant narratives about public housing, race, gender and poverty; local political culture; and regional planning and growth practices.

The chapter builds a braided account of federal public housing policy and Salishan's development in Tacoma, WA from the 1930s through the 1990s. THA and Salishan were always already enmeshed in global, national, regional, and local political and economic conditions. The chapter then explores in detail how the remaking of THA and Salishan through HOPE VI and the neoliberalization of public housing played out, but with local contingencies and specificities. Ultimately, THA remade itself and Salishan along neoliberal lines, but with inclusive and redistributive rationalities, influences, and effects. This actually existing neoliberalization process does not precisely align with or parallel neoliberalism as an ideal: the privatization of the neighborhood was stilted and halting because of market forces themselves, and also because of the incorporation of rationalities and practices that diverge from market logic. There are significant redistributive, inclusive, and green imaginations, rationalities, and practices at work within this actually existing neoliberalization process. That is, while public goods were transferred to private hands and became subject to private market forces, and the residents of the

neighborhood began to experience new disciplinary and behavioral controls that shaped them towards neoliberal citizenship, there were also some counter-neoliberal currents and influences shaping the redevelopment.

## I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### *US Public Housing Policy and Salishan in Tacoma, WA*

The US has been ambivalent about public housing since its advent in 1937. Before passing New Deal legislation that would subsidize rentals, US Congress passed the 1934 National Housing Act, which created the Federal Housing Administration, established Fannie Mae, and enabled the federal government to underwrite and issue mortgages. This encouraged banks to lend to first time homeowners. Shortly thereafter, the US Congress passed the 1937 Wagner Steagall Act, which established the US Public Housing Authority (which later became integrated into the Department of Housing and Urban Development or HUD) and set up a framework for the public construction, management, and ownership of subsidized rental housing in the US. The act also required the demolition of an equal amount of substandard units in the community it served, a constraint intended to limit public competition with the private housing market and the number of public housing units that could be built (Hackworth, 2007).

In 1940, the Tacoma Housing Authority formed; in 1941 it had just determined that it could not justify building public housing in Tacoma according to the Wagner Steagall Act's constraints, when the Japanese military attacked Pearl Harbor (Adams, 1999, p. 2). The US government responded to the housing needs of war workers across the US by authorizing funds to build housing according to the National Defense Housing Amendment and Lanham Acts of 1940, which provided for building temporary and permanent structures, to be leased and

managed by local housing authorities. This was the first major effort of the US government to build subsidized housing, and it was not for low-income people.

Tacoma's deep-water port and proximity to Fort Lewis and the McChord Airfield meant that thousands of families and individuals flocked to the city for work in the war industries. From 1942-43, the Tacoma Housing Authority, on a federal commission built Salishan to house war workers. The development was originally planned for a piece of land close to the port, but because of budget constraints was moved to an undeveloped tract along Portland Avenue on the eastern edge of Tacoma.

Salishan was built as 1600 "permanent" structures and 400 "temporary"<sup>12</sup> ones on some 400 acres of land, owned by the federal government but managed by the Tacoma Housing Authority (Adams, 1999). In the ten years after the war ended, the permanent war worker housing had to be converted to low-income housing, according to a 1940 amendment of the US Housing Act. The temporary structures were taken down or sold off and low-income families began moving into Salishan.

In response to the postwar housing needs of returning veterans, The Federal Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 required the demolition of "slums" and the production of 810,000 replacement public housing units (a goal that was never reached, see J. Smith, 2006a). Public housing was not to undercut the rents of the private market, and nor was it to appear like private housing. Thus the "modern" and iconic towers of public housing were erected in major cities in the U.S., to replace tenements that were being demolished. Unfortunately, because of funding constraints, fewer public housing units were built than intended during this era. However, the

---

<sup>12</sup> The "temporary" structures were tent-like constructions of fabric on poles. The "permanent" structures were themselves made on a constrained budget and were not in fact permanent.

large family public housing development in the Pacific Northwest, including Salishan, predated this construction push. They were all low rises, and of much lower density.

By 1955, 900 of Salishan's "permanent" dwellings were deeded over to THA to meet Tacoma's postwar need for affordable, safe, and sanitary rentals for the veterans, servicemen, and war workers who had been housed in temporary homes. However, an equivalent amount of substandard housing needed to be demolished or renovated as part of the exchange. The 900 units in Salishan only met a fraction of the real housing need in Tacoma: the 1950 Census of Housing found that 6301 families were living in substandard dwellings in Tacoma (Adams, 1999, p. 11). About half of the acreage was deeded over to Tacoma's parks department (now called MetroParks), and the remaining dwellings were sold off. The Tacoma Housing Authority was owner and manager of 900 public housing units on 188 acres of land, nestled into open space parkland on the eastern edge of Tacoma. This housing was mostly single-family homes, interspersed with duplexes and triplexes. It was intended for working families, rather than those living outside the labor force or in deep poverty.

The Great Migration of African Americans from the south, mass suburbanization and white flight from the cities, and exclusionary real estate practices such as redlining and the dual housing market together created an affordable housing crisis for black families in many Northern U.S. cities. Public housing advocates began to see public housing as an affordable housing solution for black families (Henderson, 1995). As large public housing complexes were built in urban areas, and homeownership subsidies and loan backing supported the movement of white families into the suburbs, public housing became more associated with African American tenants, neighborhood segregation more cemented, and poverty more concentrated.

In Salishan and Tacoma, things went rather differently. In the Pacific Northwest, black populations were very small prior to World War II. However, the same influx of war workers that had caused an affordable housing crisis in Tacoma also brought 45,000 new black residents to the region (Q. Taylor, 1995). These new residents had to negotiate a patchwork of exclusions in the job and housing markets. After the war, Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood and Salishan were among black Tacomans' limited options for residence in a city that practiced housing discrimination and even voted down open housing in 1964. The Tacoma Housing Authority and its Executive Director emphasize THA's role in racial integration whenever they get a chance:

Salishan was racially integrated on purpose by the federal government, at a time when that was not the expectation. At the time the nation's housing stock was thoroughly segregated by race. And here, this was a community that was racially integrated intentionally. (Gerald,<sup>13</sup> THA staff)

Over the years, Salishan also became home for many immigrants and refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and the former Soviet Union entering the country.

Salishan wasn't segregated, and it wasn't especially dense either: by 1960, Salishan's census tract had a density of 5,176 people per square mile, making it the median population density for the Tacoma census tracts within one mile of Salishan (US Census Bureau). The community was (and is) nested in an undeveloped natural area, with a gulch running through the middle and forested land along the Eastern and Southern edges. The community's long curved roads, built in community spaces, and large yards contributed to a tight-knit community where gardening flourished (Adams, 1999).

In the 1960s, HUD policy and guidelines at the national level shifted towards providing housing of last resort for those with the least resources and the most need, such as disabled people and single parents (Vale 2002). This anti-poverty measure had the effect of concentrating and deepening, rather than ameliorating, poverty in large-scale public housing developments.

---

<sup>13</sup> All interview participant names are pseudonyms.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, these neighborhoods, along with public housing more broadly (Pfeiffer, 2006; Henderson, 1995) became stereotyped and stigmatized increasingly as vertical slums where black residents engaged in anti-social behavior and their children lived in filthy and violent conditions.<sup>14</sup> This stereotype became increasingly pervasive as the representation of public housing in the 1970s: beginning in 1965, public housing was portrayed in US news magazines as almost exclusively “black” (Henderson, 1995). Specific public housing projects, such as Cabrini-Green in Chicago and Pruitt-Igoe in St Louis were rhetorically situated to stand in for the institution of public housing (Henderson, 1995). This stereotype further crystallized in the Reagan-era mythologizing of “welfare queens,” who were black, Cadillac-driving single mothers who defrauded the welfare and public housing systems while leading lavish and lascivious lives. However, it is important to note that the demographic makeup, conditions, and design of public housing developments was always much more varied than the media portrayal (Goetz, 2011; Henderson, 1995; Pfeiffer, 2006).

Many accounts of the publicly subsidized housing in the United States cite 1974, and the creation of Section 8 vouchers, as a major turn towards privatization of public housing (Goetz, 2011; Hackworth, 2007; J. Smith, 2006a). By this point, public housing was thorough stigmatized and racialized in the US public imagination, and dedicating large amounts of federal money to building public housing had become politically unpopular, especially in the backlash to the Civil Rights movement. However, housing subsidies that came in the form of vouchers, such as Section 8, and went straight to private landlords who housed qualified low-income tenants became more politically feasible. In 1986, the Reagan Administration introduced Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), which incentivize private investment in affordable rental housing

---

<sup>14</sup> This discourse is resisted by public housing residents who describe their neighborhoods as home, their communities as interdependent and caring, and housing as a human right (see Goetz, 2013).

through the creation of a market for tax credits distributed to housing agencies who could then sell these to the highest bidder to raise funds for development. As federal funds for building and maintaining affordable and public housing has decreased, reliance on LIHTC to attract private investment has increased.

*The Neoliberal Turn and Concentrated Poverty: 1980s and 1990s*

By the late 1980s, conditions in *some* public housing neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty were dangerous and distressing. De facto segregation and concentrations of deep poverty combined with chronic underfunding and ineffective management resulted in unsafe conditions such as disrepair, lack of effective security, and high rates of vacancy (Popkin et al., 2009). Arguments about concentrated poverty and “severely distressed” public housing became important in public housing policy debates and reforms. A National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing convened to assess the extent of the problem and make recommendations. The commission estimated that 6% of public housing project was severely distressed, whether due to distressing or dangerous physical, economic, or social conditions (National Commission, 1992, p. 2). Other researchers documented how “the narrative of spectacular failure and dysfunction fits only a small portion of the nation’s public housing” (Goetz, 2011a, p. 270).

Within Tacoma, Salishan had become known and stigmatized for violence, gang activity, and residents who participated in the drug economy:

Before the redevelopment it had a strong reputation for having a lot of crime and a lot of drugs, gangs operated out of there was my understanding. And it just had a reputation of just kind of a no-go zone. (Jim, Tacoma City Council Member).

The Salishan community and THA pulled together to turn around the situation and reduce drug-use and crime in the neighborhood. THA applied for and received funding for a Drug Elimination Program through HUD.

And this position involved a lot of partnerships with other service providers, leadership development with the residents, and a lot of effort to not only get rid of drugs and gangs but also replace them with something positive. It was really exciting work, and challenging. (Gloria, former THA staff).

In Salishan, the Drug Elimination Coordinator along with resident leaders got a grant to increase police presence in the neighborhood, hired a security service, and formed a multilingual phone tree to promote connectedness in the community (personal communication, Gloria, December 17, 2014). THA had also increased its eviction efforts and encouraged residents to call the police when they noticed “suspicious” activity. They also increased programming at the community center, with dance groups, language schools, lunches for seniors, and community potlucks. Neighbors used these events and spaces to socialize and form deep social networks. The school inside Salishan, Lister Elementary, also hosted community events and became a model community school. Yard spaces too became places for connection and social life (Laakso, 2013). In recollecting what the neighborhood was like in the 1980s (before she lived there), one resident recalled for me:

I remember there being a lot of beautiful yards, beautiful. Because everybody just had, there was a lot less houses and a lot more yards. I hear that there was way more sense of community with people, because they had a community center. So that’s what I’ve heard. And then my experience being, buying drugs, which I find hilarious because that’s so, two extremes. (Christina, Salishan resident).

The neighborhood was not free from substance use, property crime, or tragedy, but there was also interdependence and community participation in neighborhood activities. Many, though not all, residents described feeling like they knew everyone, like they could trust their kids were safe, and like their neighbors could help them with whatever they needed (Keller et al., 2013).

The privatization of public housing ramped up in the 1990s. Less and less federal funding was budgeted to HUD's public housing programs just when many of public housing developments needed renovation. A series of changes to housing policy strengthened Section 8 programs, suspended the one-for-one replacement of public housing units (allowing Public Housing Authorities to shrink their housing stock), and required the demolition of larger public housing properties that don't qualify as "viable", replacing them with vouchers rather than housing units (J. Smith, 2006a). This program of reducing public housing stock and replacing it with private-sector dwelling subsidized with vouchers was epitomized by 1998's Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) and HOPE VI.

Among its many elements, QHWRA allowed housing authorities to take part in "mixed-finance" (public-private partnership) projects, required background checks for subsidized housing tenants, expanded eviction authority of housing authorities, streamlined demolition and conversion to Section 8 vouchers, and established "income targeting" as a method for reducing poverty concentration (Hunt, Schulhof, & Homquist, 1998). The effect of all of this was to require significantly fewer public housing units be built than are demolished, transforming who can even qualify for public housing, and greatly expanding private sector involvement through mixed financing and tenant-based rent assistance (J. Smith, 2006a, p. 37).

QHWRA also re-authorized the HOPE VI program, the most extensive poverty dispersal program in the United States at the time. Initiated by the National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing, HOPE VI came into existence in 1992. This federal program was structured as a competitive grant-making process specifically to turn around "severely distressed" public housing developments by rebuilding them into mixed income communities and transforming the occupants of subsidized housing into "self-sufficient" subjects. This shift

does not reflect a decreased need for affordable housing, but instead a political marginalization of public housing subsidies and a neoliberal preference for private-market solutions to public problems. From 1992-2000, HOPE VI awarded 262 grants for revitalization and 285 grants for demolition of public housing (HUD, 2013b). QHWR and HOPE VI sped up the demolition of public housing and replacement with vouchers that the creation of Section 8 and LIHTC began.

Throughout the 1980s Tacoma had struggled economically. In 1980 Tacoma's unemployment rate was 9.0% (compared to US rate of 7.0% and Seattle rate of 5.8%) (HUD, 2015b). The City of Tacoma was scrambling to find a way out of its economic downturn. In 1984, the City hired a consultancy firm that posed the choices of supporting existing heavy industry or speeding a transition to a technology- and service-based economy (Carlson, 1984). In 1986, a group of corporate executives and public officials banded together to form the Executive Council for Greater Tacoma, which existed outside of democratic control with the aim of using the members' clout to push through what they saw as important economic development projects (Larson, 1986). These efforts did not jump-start economic or population growth. By the late 1980s, Tacoma also gained a reputation for gang activity and violence, earning the nickname "Tacompton" and landing an Associated Press article about a gun battle between off-duty Fort Lewis soldiers and alleged gang members ("Off-duty soldiers", 1989).

By the 1990s, Salishan lay crumbling on the edge of an economically lagging city that was trying to reinvent itself. A string of mayors, including Howard Moss, Brian Ebersole, and Bill Baarsma, with ties to progressive and Civil Rights organizations to the housing authority would have made simply demolishing the public housing neighborhood untenable. Furthermore, the Washington State Growth Management Acts of 1990 and 1991 instituted a smart growth paradigm that emphasized developing denser urban spaces and neighborhoods that are walkable,

attractive, and mixed use (Dierwechter, 2008). In the 1990s and early 2000s, the City managed to attract a number of showpieces to its downtown area, such as the Washington State History Museum, Museum of Glass, Tacoma Art Museum, a lightrail line, and the University of Washington Tacoma campus. However, development and infill limped along, and even met opposition among Tacoma residents (Dierwechter, 2008).

The neoliberal turn towards privatization of public housing, the city's efforts to pull itself out of an economic slump, the emerging smart growth planning paradigm, and Salishan's diverse tightly knit community, stigmatized spatiality, and association with drugs and violence all became the context for the neighborhood's redevelopment. The housing stock and infrastructure in Salishan needed to be replaced, and the only way HUD would support this was through the HOPE VI grant program. Public housing policy pushed for privatizing the neighborhood, "deconcentrating" the poverty found there, and "desegregating" it – but Salishan was already diverse, and Tacoma's plans for growth required more density rather than less. For better or for worse, undergoing a HOPE VI project would completely transform THA and the neighborhood.

## II. SALISHAN AND HOPE VI

### *Salishan's HOPE VI Grant*

In the mid and late 1990s, THA itself did not have the organizational capacity yet to transform itself in the ways that HOPE VI demanded. In 1996 Tacoma Housing Authority had applied for a HOPE VI grant to redevelop the Hillside Terrace neighborhood on the south end of Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood. They convinced HUD that the neighborhood was severely distressed, and thus needed to be demolished, but not that they had the capacity or the community support to rebuild a mixed income neighborhood in its place.

Before Salishan, THA was probably a pretty sleepy housing authority. Content to run a public housing portfolio and do the paper shuffling for rental assistance programs. And that's about it. (Gerald, THA staff)

They were only awarded a grant for demolition. At this point, Tacoma's Mayor Brian Ebersole intervened, and recruited new members onto the THA's Board of Commissioners. One of the new commissioners traveled to Washington DC to meet with HUD about why they did not receive the grant, and learned about the expectations that HUD had for housing authorities to receive HOPE VI funding. Board commissioners were able to get HUD to reverse its decision that Hillside Terrace was severely distressed, thus saving the development from demolition and its residents from displacement. In 1999 the board hired a new Executive Director, which set THA on its new course.

The new director, Peter Ansara, came from a housing authority in New Jersey and was already familiar with the HOPE VI process. THA's board wanted to keep as much of the work in house and locally contracted as possible. But Tacomans did not immediately embrace the opportunities that the redevelopment of Salishan provided:

So we start engaging in the public and put out an RFP, a Request For Proposal to select an architect that would help us, free, put together a Master Plan so that we could submit it with grant, and some concepts and others, and not one architect in all of Tacoma, and the State of Washington - and that RFP went everywhere - not one would step up to the plate. Searching for, and not finding, a local architect who was willing to work with the Tacoma Housing Authority. (Dominic, former THA staff).

However, HOPE VI had created a whole market for developers, architects, homebuilders, and planners who specialized in these projects. Ansara brought in Torti Gallas, an architecture firm from Maryland who had already worked on HOPE VI developments. Torti Gallas held a series of multilingual planning sessions with the residents of Salishan to design the new neighborhood. THA hired one of their retired grant writers to pull together all the pieces that they would need for the application.

THA's plans for Salishan, though developed through an inclusive process, did receive a challenge from progressives in the affordable housing sector: Michael Mirra, an attorney with Columbia Legal Services filed a letter of opposition with THA's HOPE VI grant for Salishan. The grounds for opposition were that there would be a net loss to family public housing in the new neighborhood, changing the character and purpose of Salishan, should it be redeveloped into a mixed income neighborhood (Interview, Winston Goetz, THA Board Commissioner). This critique of HOPE VI was, and is, widely shared by a number of public housing residents, activists and critical academics (see for example Goetz, 2011). Peter Ansara and THA brought Mirra on board in 2002 as an attorney, and in 2004 he became the Executive Director, when Ansara went into the private sector.

One year after Ansara began his work at THA, HUD awarded a \$35 million HOPE VI grant for the redevelopment of Salishan. This was larger than the average size HOPE VI Revitalization Grant (\$24 million), and triggered a number of transformations within the organization (HUD, 2013b).

### *Planning*

THA spent nearly four years in planning. Because of various funding constraints related to HUD's requirements and the LIHTC financing structure, THA knew that once they started construction that they would not be able to stop or dramatically change course, so they had to plan carefully. They hired a Real Estate Development Director, designed the financing, finished planning and designing the neighborhood, secured a construction company and a homebuilder, prepared residents to relocate, and went through an environmental impact statement and a historic site evaluation.

During the planning phase, THA began to figure out how to integrate with the private housing and tax credit markets, and how to create a new business line for itself. These (neoliberalizing) changes meant that THA had to develop new capacities and new skills. The new Director of Real Estate Development, Tess Colby, found a private company, Lorig, who would help THA start developing Salishan and train the housing authority in how to be developers. Lorig partnered with the THA until just before they completed Phase 1 of development. Some housing authorities contract out development to a private company, but THA chose to cultivate this capacity within the organization. They did this not because they did not wish to work with private companies, but because they could then earn developer fees and even use this capacity to develop affordable housing for other organizations.

There are other housing authorities that figured out that the way they will stay viable into the future, the way that they will assure their sustainability into the future, is to have a business model that allows for development activity. Because HUD wasn't going to be building new public housing anytime soon. ... if you want to be relevant to the community that you are living in, you gotta do something else. And what a housing authority does is, they develop. (Laura, former THA staff).

Development is now a business line and a funding stream for THA. For example, in 2014 THA broke ground on an apartment building for homeless families with disabilities for LASA (Living Access Support Alliance) in the neighboring town of Lakewood, WA.

The \$35 million grant from HUD was only a fraction of what the THA would need to remake Salishan. It was only enough to cover the “dirt work” or the infrastructure needs of the neighborhood, including new electrical, sewage, water distribution, streets, sidewalks, stormwater drainage, and street lighting systems that all needed to be replaced. The remaining money that needed to be raised for the project – some \$200-250 million – needed to come from local public and private sources. Indeed, part of the HOPE VI program’s strategy is to leverage private funds with the federal grant, so that public housing redevelopment is not only mixed-

income but also “mixed-financing.” The HOPE VI grant encouraged housing authorities to hybridize with private investors; in THA’s case, hybridizing with tax credit investors was necessary to remake Salishan. The Development Director designed the financing structure for the Salishan project, figuring out what mix of private homeownership units, private market rentals, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit deals, and public partnerships would work best for the neighborhood.

As THA put together the financing plan, they had to juggle a number of competing interests and constraining conditions that emanated from the private market, HOPE VI’s neoliberalizing requirements, and as well as from redistributive and inclusive values from THA’s board. THA’s board and staff wanted to ensure that they maximized the amount of subsidized or affordable housing in the development; the HOPE VI grant required income mixing which meant the inclusion of market rate units, as well as different income levels within the subsidized units; but the going market rent in the surrounding area was relatively low<sup>15</sup> such that someone making 50 to 60 % of the Area Median Income could rent an apartment. The tax credit market in Tacoma is weaker than in Seattle because of the lower rents –tax credit properties in Seattle can draw higher rents, and so Tacoma must offer the tax credits at a relatively low price. This meant that THA would have to rely on public dollars alongside tax credits in order to build the apartments.

So we looked at whether or not we could include some market rate unsubsidized units, but there was a disincentive. Because if they were unsubsidized – if they were actually market rate and therefore the rents would be allowed to increase – then we would lose access to the public dollars that we needed to be able to build the project. If we took the public dollars then we couldn't have any units at all where the rents could actually escalate as the economy improved. The disincentive was that we would have had to take private debt into part of the project, and that actually made the whole redevelopment basically not pencil out. (Laura, THA staff)

---

<sup>15</sup> Median gross rent in the area around Salishan was \$715 a month in 2000, and median household income was \$49,540 (US Census Bureau, 2000). Someone making 60% the median income, \$29,734 would still be able to afford \$715 a month because it is less than 30% of their monthly income (\$749).

These conditions meant that market rate rentals would not pencil out – the profit margins from tax credit deals were so tight that the housing authority would still need to rely on HUD infusions in order to sustain the rental housing it developed.

THA also had to work within the local regulatory framework, which limited the number of tax credits that the housing authority could receive annually to 90. The Washington State Housing Trust, which issues these tax credits made a deal with THA (and other Washington housing authorities) to reserve an annual allotment of the tax credits for them, so that they could rely on having credits to sell to investors each year.

These factors together meant that THA settled on its mix of 630 public housing and voucher units (540 of which would be owned by an LLC formed by THA and a syndicate of its tax credit investors); 300-350 homeownership units<sup>16</sup> (75% of which would be market rate); 110 units of affordable senior housing (built and managed by private non-profit partners), and 131 “other subsidized rental units” (to be developed with a private partner in the future). While THA-subsidized rental housing overall was reduced from 855 to just 630 units in Salishan, the number of affordable rental units would still be close to 850 in this plan.

THA had to fight for this mix. They needed to get HUD approval for the plans:

So all of this planning had to happen and frankly a lot of backing and forthing with HUD, trying to get to agree with our plan. They had a lot of questions, which we had to answer before HUD would give us approval to proceed with the project. (Gloria, former THA staff).

This took a tremendous amount of effort. Although THA was transforming and hybridizing with private investors and learning how to navigate housing and tax credit markets, it was also resisting a full-scale embrace of neoliberal rationalities.

---

<sup>16</sup> In some THA materials the number of homeownership units planned is cited as 300, in others as 300-350, and in others as 356. The numbers of rental, low-income, and market-rate homeownership units are reported differently in different documents. I arrived at the numbers I report in this chapter by cross-referencing reports, promotional materials, newspaper articles, and walking through the neighborhood and physically counting.

Some HOPE VI projects the US were resulting in notable decreases in affordable housing in the neighborhoods and cities they occurred in: Baltimore, Chicago, and Atlanta. In these cities, significant resistance from public housing residents and advocates called for the preservation of public housing units and affordable housing. THA, in contrast, was trying to also preserve as much affordable housing as it could (even if this meant privately provided housing, not just THA-subsidized).

Atlanta. Atlanta had a golf course integrated in one of them...But look, it takes a lot of political will to do things. You're the housing authority executive director and you have a board, a strong board...Having board members of strength is very important as well. (Dominic, former THA staff).

While it is possible that THA would have wanted to integrate more market rate homes and to upscale the neighborhood, market forces actually stood in its way of accomplishing this, and THA had already figured this out. The housing authority faced pressure from HUD to include more income mixing, more market rate housing, and more neighborhood upgrading, and these challenges had to be weathered.

### *Community Support Services*

HOPE VI required support services to be offered to all families who wanted to participate from the old neighborhood for the duration of the redevelopment. THA created a new Community Services Department and increased its community services staff from three to fifteen. This new department was responsible for administering programs aimed at increasing resident self-sufficiency. It oversaw grants and programs that provided support services for residents, such as job preparation, GED classes, Family Self-Sufficiency, and training and preparation for homeownership. These services are meant to help poor people fit into the labor market, mainly through low-wage employment, and ignore that structural barriers and legacies of racism and classism prevent rapid progression to self-sufficiency. Notions of neoliberal

citizenship, individualism, and personal responsibility for poverty are embedded in the types of social services that HOPE VI grant requires, and that THA provided alongside the redevelopment.

THA's HOPE VI self-sufficiency programs had very mixed results, and did not clearly succeed at shaping HOPE VI residents into self-sufficient neoliberal citizens. Perhaps this was because the housing authority's caseworker to client ration for these services was 237 cases to 1 caseworker, substantially exceeding HUD's recommended ratio of 50 to 1 (Dahlem, 2010). While some of the supportive services had very positive outcomes and exceeded their goals, such as resident employment in Salishan's construction, completion of homeownership counseling, and the starting of resident-owned businesses, others were far from meeting their goals, such as participation and completion of job skills training, GED and ESL classes, as well as employment overall (Tacoma Housing Authority [THA], 2010a). There was an 82% turnover in participation in the HOPE VI support services, as residents aged out of services or lost touch with the agency, and the offspring of former residents aged into the program (THA, 2010a, p. 15).

THA chose to participate in homeownership grant programs that HUD offered.

And also, you know we knew that there were going to be homeownership units at Salishan, and so we knew that to the extent possible, if someone, if it was a family that wanted to be able to stay in Salishan and there were going to be too high income to be able to be in the affordable housing, then we wanted to be able to have them qualify to be homeowners in Salishan. So that was part of the emphasis. (Gloria, former THA staff).

THA efforts included homebuyer counseling, subsidies in the form of Section 8 Homeownership Vouchers, helping residents access other grants and funds matching programs, and subsidizing a quarter of the homeownership units in the new Salishan. 123 THA clients purchased homes, 20 in Salishan (THA, 2008a, p. 11). All of these programs were meant to make homeownership available to low-income families and to help shape THA residents into "builders of assets" who are participating in the housing market instead of depending on rental subsidies. Unfortunately,

Table 4.1: Phases of Development, Salishan

	Projected number of units	Number of units built or in development
<b>Phase 1: Area 1</b>		
Public Housing and Project-Based Section 8	270	270
Section 202 Elderly Housing Units	55	55
Homeownership Units* (below 60% AMI)	47	47
Homeownership: Market rate*	89	89
<b>Phase 2: Area 2A and 3</b>		
Public Housing and Project-Based Section 8	270	270
Section 202 Elderly Housing Units	55	55
Homeownership Units* (below 60% AMI)	45	44
Homeownership: Market rate*	137	138
<b>Phase 3: Area 2B and Area 4</b>		
Public Housing and Project-Based Section 8	91	91
Homeownership Units* (below 60% AMI)	18	18
Homeownership: Market rate*	52	52
Market Rate Rental	18	X
Other subsidized rental – Area 4	131	X
<b>Totals</b>		
Total Units		
Total “affordable” rental	872	741
Total “affordable” housing, including low-income homeownership	981	850

Source: THA (2013a), Dahlem (2010), THA (2009, August 5), THA (2013, May 22)

\* Homeownership Market rate and below 60% AMI are estimates based on known quantities of total Quadrant Homes, Benjamin Ryan Communities, DR Horton, THA, and Habitat for Humanity homeownership units.

as the housing market crashed mid-way through the redevelopment, there is evidence that some of these families experienced the pitfalls of private ownership for low-income people (see The Great Recession section below).

### *Phasing*

In 2004, THA finally broke ground on its first phase of development. Because the tax credits came in bundles of 90, the housing authority was only able to build 90 new units of subsidized rental housing a year. Thus, they planned for Salishan to be redeveloped over the course of 7 years, from 2004 to 2011 (see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1). The subsidized housing in Salishan was redeveloped in three phases, starting with Area 1 (270 units of

subsidized THA housing) from 2004-2007, then Area 2A (90 units of subsidized THA housing) and 3 (180 units of subsidized THA housing) from 2007-2010; and finally Area 2B (91 units of subsidized THA housing) from 2010-2011. The final bundle of THA housing was completed without tax credits. Quadrant Homes and Habitat for Humanity built 118 market rate and subsidized homeownership units in Area 1 at the same time as the rest of Area 1 was built up, and Korean Women's Association built 55-units of affordable senior units as well. A Clinic went into Area 2A, as well as another 55 units of affordable senior housing. Habitat for Humanity, Benjamin Ryan Communities and Quadrant Homes built 39 houses in Area 3. However, because of the Great Recession, Salishan's location in a neighborhood with relatively low home values and its share of foreclosures, the majority of the homeownership units in Areas 2B and Area 3 were not built until 2014-2015. 213 lots have been sold to DR Horton, who is



Figure 4.1: Site Map of Salishan  
(THA, 2013a)

constructing an estimated 160 market rate and 53 below market-rate homes. The Salishan Core and a final Area 4 remain incomplete, awaiting partners who will help develop an Education, Retail and Training Center in Area 2A and an assisted living or senior housing development in Area 4. Upon this thesis' writing, there is an estimated total of 740 low-income rental, 109 low-income homeownership, and 278 market rate homeownership units either built or under construction in Salishan.

While it is true that some diversity in income was introduced with the diversity of new types of housing tenure, it is possible to over-exaggerate the social mixing due to homeownership.

All you had to do in Seattle, you just have to put a home some place and it immediately appreciates by 200%. We've never seen that kind of appreciation here, and so even the for-sale units are really modestly priced and therefore affordable to what we would consider to be moderate to lower income households. So, this is to say that a lot of good came out of Salishan, and the one thing that unfortunately we really weren't able to do was to infuse a greater degree of income diversity on the Eastside. And it just sort of is what it is. (Laura, former THA staff).

While an estimated 387 homeownership units were built in the neighborhood by Quadrant Homes, DR Horton, Benjamin Ryan Communities, and Habitat for Humanity, 109 of these went to low- or moderate-income families. In 2010 the median home value in Salishan was \$216,100, while Tacoma's median home values was \$241,300 (US Census Bureau, 2010). For five years THA waited for a homebuyer for the lots in Areas 2B and 3. When DR Horton finally made a deal with THA in 2013, the housing authority was only able to break even instead of turning a profit on selling the land (personal communication, Gloria, former THA staff, December 17, 2014; personal communication, Laura, former THA staff, January 28, 2015). The lots had depreciated in value so that the market-rate homes are, upon writing this thesis, selling in the \$190,000-220,000 range (D.R. Horton, 2015). Finally, an untracked number of these homes are rented out. The neighborhood has remained in many ways predominantly low- to moderate-

income. This design had to do with the housing market in the surrounding neighborhood – homes in Tacoma’s Eastside are relatively low in value, and do not appreciate rapidly. While the introduction of families in homeownership units brought some income diversity into the neighborhood, it was not to the extent of other HOPE VI projects, or even to the extent that THA had hoped for in Salishan.

### *Economic Redistribution*

The housing authority secured Walsh Construction as the contractor for THA’s housing in Salishan. By this point, local firms were scrambling for contracts and subcontracts, to get some business from this major development project.

What I remember next was, a challenge from the minority community. You know, they want jobs and they want part of the piece of the pie, and we understood that too. And so to make things transparent, we created an oversight committee at that time. (Dominic, former THA staff).

HOPE VI required that a certain number of these contracts go to Women- and Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (WMBEs). There was also a challenge from a number of “community leaders” from racial justice and race-relations focused community groups to make sure that an appropriate share of those contracts went to businesses owned by people of color. Former ED Ansara and THA’s Board formed a Construction Oversight Committee to track their WMBE goals. It functioned in part to make sure contracts were divvied out in a transparent and fair way, and in part to gain the support of Tacoma’s racial, social, and economic justice constituencies into the Salishan redevelopment process. The committee was made up of community members from labor, civil rights, and racial justice organizations.

Well, they were people like the leader of the A Phillip Randolph organization, people from the Black Collective, the staff person with the city who runs their Apprenticeship program, and then other community leaders that had come to a lot of the meetings and frankly expressed concern because they-- well they rightfully, and we agreed with them, they wanted to make sure that the jobs and the money that was generated by this project was going to stay local and benefit the

people who live in the city. And so, at first they were a little bit suspicious. And then eventually they became our biggest supporters. (Gloria, former THA staff).

The Construction Oversight Committee tracked THA's progress on its WMBE goals, and the allocation of contracts. While not all HOPE VI projects meet their WMBE goals, THA exceeded theirs, and received Community Service Awards from A. Philip Randolph Institute (Tacoma Chapter)<sup>17</sup> for this work. The Construction Oversight Committee has since been instituted in THA's other development projects.

HUD also required THA to set what is known as "Section 3" goals for the hiring of public housing and voucher residents, Youthbuild participants, and other low-income people in their HOPE VI construction. THA negotiated with Walsh and subcontractors to ensure they would hire and work with Section 3 workers, supported residents with job preparation and training, and dedicated a staff person to overseeing these goals. THA appeared to take their Section 3 and WMBE goals very seriously, exceeding both and publishing their success in press releases and presentations (THA, 2009, August 5; THA, 2013b).

### *Relocation*

The relocation of Salishan residents was planned and conducted with great care and attention to each resident and family's needs. As ED Mirra likes to put it, this was "retail work, not wholesale work." The Property Management Department held multilingual meetings with Salishan residents and then met one-on-one with each family to make sure that everyone was aware of what their options were, find out if they would want to move back to Salishan after the redevelopment, and to help them plan for where they would go. Because the redevelopment happened in stages, and the first phases opened up before the last parts of the neighborhood were demolished, there were options for some people to remain living in Salishan the entire time. In

---

<sup>17</sup> A. Philip Randolph Institute is a constituency group of the AFL-CIO. It works to forge a black-labor alliance.

some cities, such as Chicago, academics, residents and activists have documented a process of forced removal, including evictions (Lipman, 2011; Bennett, Smith, & Wright, 2006). Tacoma Housing Authority did not evict a single person in its relocation, because of all the one-on-one preparation that they did to make sure that everyone knew that this process was happening for years in advance of the ground-breaking. In this way, THA practices during Salishan's redevelopment embraced a resident-centered ethic or imagination that complicates a purely market-centered or disciplinary neoliberal model.

However, this does not mean that residents were happy to leave. By all accounts, Salishan was a close-knit neighborhood with strong resident leadership. Many people were afraid, or deeply saddened by having to leave. Residents of the neighborhood, despite the crumbling housing, stigma, and reputation of the neighborhood, expressed a deep attachment to this place, and to their neighbors (personal communication, Laura, former THA staff, January 29, 2015; Johnston, 2003). Some residents who wanted to return were not able to because the new units weren't the right size (too many bedrooms) or they did not meet the income limits (Interview, Gerald Rania, THA staff, Administration). Others did not return because of the way the neighborhood changed when it was rebuilt (Laakso, 2013). Of the residents who left, displacement was more difficult for elderly residents and for residents whose dominant language was not English, for whom the loss of the social networks, community events, and the Salishan culture of interdependency made resettling elsewhere especially difficult (Keller et al., 2013).

Although THA demonstrated great care for their residents throughout the relocation process, the results were very uneven. All of the old Salishan residents who moved back into the redeveloped Salishan returned to Phase 1, but THA does not provide actual numbers of returnees. However, it does provide data that allows a comparison of the demographic make up of the Phase 1 residents with the old Salishan residents, displayed in Table 4.2. Table

Table 4.2 Demographic Profile of Salishan Phase 1

	<b>Salishan 2001</b>	<b>Phase One Rentals 2006</b>
<b>Total Number of Units</b>	834	270
<b>Households by Primary Language</b>		
English	40%	76%
Vietnamese	23%	9%
Cambodian	22%	10%
Russian	8%	3%
Spanish	3%	2%
Other	4%	0%
<b>Household Income</b>		
0-30% AMI	67%	38%
31-50% AMI	21%	36%
51-80% AMI	8%	17%
Over 81%	4%	9%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	29%	31%
Black/African-American	14%	22%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%	1%
Asian	53%	39%
Hispanic	4%	10%
Mixed Race/Other/Unknown	n/a	7%

(Dahlem, 2010).

4.2 shows a clear shift in the population of Salishan from 2001 to the Phase One Rentals: the percentage of households with English as the primary language increased from 40% to 76% of the population, while all other language groups (other than Spanish, the smallest language group) dropped by at least half. The percent of the population in the lowest income bracket dropped from 67% to 38%, with each of the higher income brackets increasing. The race and ethnicity makeup of the neighborhood changed, though not as starkly: the white proportion of the population increased slightly (up 2%), the black proportion increased by a third, and the Hispanic proportions of the population doubled, but the Asian proportion of the population dropped by about a quarter. The returnee population was more likely to be English-speaking and higher

income (though still below the Area Mean Income (AMI)), and less likely be Asian. The new neighborhood was more appealing or accessible to some than others.

### *The Great Recession*

Unfortunately, the 2007/08 housing crash and Great Recession hit Tacoma harder than the other urban areas of Washington State. Tacoma's unemployment rate has remained higher than that of Seattle and the US since 1992. In February 2010, it spiked, hitting 12.3%, higher than Seattle's rate of 8.8%, and the US rate of 10.4% (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). There was an increased need for affordable rental housing in the City: from 2000 to 2010, median gross rent in Tacoma had increased by 11.1% but median household income had decreased by 3.5% (US Census Bureau, 2000; 2010). In 2009, Washington State was 26th in the US in foreclosures, but Tacoma experienced much higher concentrations of foreclosures than neighboring counties, with more than 2% of home loans in foreclosure there, and more than 4% seriously delinquent in February 2009 (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco). People of color were hit harder than white home-buyers in Tacoma and Pierce Counties, as were people who took out sub-prime and adjustable-rate loans when compared with those who took out prime loans. Salishan homeowners experienced an unknown number of foreclosures, but at least 20 of the homeowners in Phase 1 had sub-prime or adjustable rate mortgages. Those low-income homeowners who had gone through THA's homeownership counseling and preparation classes were better off (THA, 2008a).

THA's adaptation to the housing market crash and the recession required it to further cultivate its ability to navigate the private market and work with large private businesses and financial organizations. Quadrant foresaw the housing bubble crash of 2007 and 2008 and pulled out of Salishan before breaking ground on Phase 2. They had pulled out of a contract, and THA

was shocked. However, instead of backing down as Quadrant expected, THA negotiated with Quadrant to build some homes for the portion of the contract that THA had already paid. THA still suffered a financial loss from Quadrant pulling out, but they got what they could out of them, weathered the housing crisis, and learned something about what it means to deal with large corporate partners (Interview, Dominic Serrano, former THA staff, Administration). They chose to take out a loan from Citibank, in their first dealing with a large corporate bank, in order to finance the infrastructure and ground preparation in Phase 2. Through this experience, THA began to acquire the capacity to partner with large financial players, and to stand up for its own interests, something it hadn't had to do as a small compliance-oriented housing authority.

The federal government did not respond to the economic crisis by increasing funding for subsidized housing or aid programs. Instead, they responded with The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, or "stimulus package") provided \$13.6 billion for housing and economic development, mainly through stimulating employment and job creation. THA received \$4 million in ARRA stimulus funding, and this freed up funds to finish the final 90 units of subsidized housing in Salishan (personal communication, Gerald, THA staff, January 12, 2015). THA praised this momentary increase in federal subsidies to the affordable housing market, as the first step in recouping "decades of underinvestment in public housing capital needs" (THA, 2009, April 9). However, HUD allocations for public housing and capital repairs continued to decrease over the course of the recession.

### III. SALISHAN TRANSFORMED

Salishan's redevelopment is nearly complete. In 2013, two years after the redevelopment was originally scheduled to finish, D.R. Horton bought 143 homeownership lots, and bought about 70 more in 2014. However, funding for the Education, Training, and Recreation Center has

not materialized upon this thesis' writing, despite considerable effort on the part of THA.<sup>18</sup> The building is a key missing element in the effort to reknit the neighborhood's social fabric, encourage the self-sufficiency of the tenants, and is used as a selling point for the new homeownership units DR Horton is building (D.R. Horton, 2015). However, it is easier to find funding for affordable housing through the LIHTC structure than it is for building and maintain a community center.<sup>19</sup> The other element that is still waiting for development is a property just off Portland Ave that THA is planning to develop with a partner to become subsidized assisted living or senior housing – but a partner has not been forthcoming (personal communication, Gerald, THA staff, January 12, 2015).

There is a broad array of social services provided in the neighborhood. Salishan itself houses a new Community Health Care Clinic, which includes a pharmacy and dental clinic. THA continues with its Family Self-Sufficiency program of intensive case management for certain low-income families, and contracting with partners to offer GED classes and ESL classes. The housing authority also has a small computer lab installed with a WorkSource center running out of it. A group of residents work together under the Community Health Advocates program, providing programming and health advocacy for the community. They offer a community kitchen, monthly BINGO nights, and some clubs for youth. The Salishan Association (the neighborhood's homeowners association) offers Zumba classes, a parenting group, a neighborhood watch, movie nights, and other programs for the community.

---

<sup>18</sup> This is especially unfortunate because the top resident request reported in the 2009 Community Health Survey and 2011 THA support services surveys is a community facility, especially one that will have programming for the neighborhood children and youth (Hodges, 2009; THA, 2011a).

<sup>19</sup> A Salishan homeowner whose son was killed in gun violence has spurred a community effort to build a community center in Tacoma's Eastside. MetroParks, the Tacoma Public Schools, THA, and the City of Tacoma came together to fund the Feasibility Study, and some funding from the Washington State Legislature has come through. The center is slated to be built on the grounds of First Creek Middle School, adjacent to Salishan's southern edge. The community center is planned to serve a much broader community than just Salishan, but also to mitigate the lack of programming and recreational spaces for youth in the neighborhood. Funding to complete this project is still pending.

While both THA and the City had hoped that the redevelopment of Salishan would be a catalyst for further development in the surrounding neighborhoods, this did not quite happen. Building construction and demolition permits data for the census tracts surrounding Salishan reveal that, although there was mild uptick in building around Salishan at first, once the housing crisis hit the area, construction stopped. A couple of retail establishments have opened up nearby since the Salishan redevelopment began – a 7-11 and a produce stand – but the nearest grocery store is over mile away. Multiple interviewees noted their sense that the neighborhood was being divested from by service providers – the Boys and Girls Club, which had been a staple in the lives of many young people closed its Eastside facility in 2010; the Swan Creek Library Branch closed its doors in 2011. Both of these facilities used to be community resources as well as gathering places. On the other hand, MetroParks has invested in creating a bike and trail system and a large-scale community garden and food forest adjacent to Salishan, and the Tacoma Public Schools has built a new Middle School on Salishan’s southern boundary. While the HOPE VI redevelopment of Salishan has leveraged and catalyzed public investment in the schools and parks around the neighborhood, private investment has been lagging. The neoliberal imagination animating HOPE VI that says that opening up public housing to private markets and private investment will reinvigorate and upscale neighborhoods has not had the desired effect in Salishan and Tacoma’s Eastside. It is market forces that are preventing this catalyst effect.

Comparing Salishan’s pre-demolition population in 2000, with that of 2013 – after all the subsidized family and senior housing, and about half of the homeownership units were built and inhabited – it is apparent how the neighborhood’s race, gender, and income makeup have changed (see Table 4.3). Some populations have become more concentrated in the neighborhood (all racial groups other than Asian, Female Householder with Children under 18) while some

Table 4.3 Demographic Profile of Salishan Before and After Redevelopment

	Salishan			Tacoma		
	2000	2013	% Change	2000	2013	% Change
Total # of people	2802	2507	-10.5%	193556	200890	3.8%
White	23.6%	28.3%	19.9%	69.1%	66.4%	-3.9%
Black/African American	10.8%	21.9%	102.8%	11.2%	10.7%	-4.5%
Asian	54.4%	19.9%	-53.1%	7.6%	8.4%	10.5%
American Indian	1.4%	2.6%	85.7%	2.0%	2.5%	15.3%
Pacific Islander	0.9%	4.6%	411.1%	0.9%	1.4%	55.6%
Other	2.6%	3.3%	26.9%	2.9%	3.8%	31.0%
Two or more races	7.2%	19.4%	169.4%	6.3%	8.0%	27%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	6.3%	9.3%	47.6%	6.9%	10.9%	17.2%
Total # of units	845	800	-5.3%	75147	86195	6.3%
Female	55.0%	57.1%	3.8%	51.2%	51.1%	-0.2%
Male	45.0%	42.9%	-4.7%	48.8%	48.9%	0.2%
Under 18	46.1%	47.5%	3.1%	25.8%	22.8%	-11.6%
Over 65	5.0%	9%	75.5%	12.0%	11.8%	-1.7%
Female Householder with Children	43.2%	47.8%	10.6%	13.9%	13.4%	-3.6%
Male Householder with Children	5.4%	4.7%	-13.0%	4.8%	5.0%	4.2%
Median Household Income (adjusted to 2010 dollars)	\$17,104	\$13,470	-21.2%	\$49,540	\$42,273	-14.7%
Families Below Poverty Line	54%	52.9%	-2.8%	11.4%	13.3%	16.7%

(US Census Bureau, 2000; 2013)

have dispersed (Asian). It is apparent that some of these trends run counter to the City of Tacoma's population changes. Specifically, as concentrations of Black/African American populations and White populations have dropped in Tacoma, they have increased in Salishan, with the Black/African American population doubling; as the Asian population has increased in Tacoma, in Salishan it has decreased by half. While there was a 3.6% decrease in single mothers in Tacoma, there was a 10.6% increase in Salishan, with an inversed city-wide increase in single fatherhood but decrease in single fatherhood in Salishan. The demographics of Salishan underwent a dramatic shift with HOPE VI. One kind of diversity was replaced with another. About half of the Vietnamese and Cambodian proportion of the population was displaced and was replaced with a mix of people, including a greater concentration of black, white, and mixed families, and of single mothers. These changes run counter to city-wide trends.

### *Management Practices*

HUD requirements, the demands of the private market, and THA's inclusive and redistributive values all contributed to the transformation of THA's management practices in Salishan. Although these tend towards increasingly managerial and disciplinary practices (both are associated with neoliberal social service provisioning – ideas of cost efficiency and of shaping the behaviors of residents towards market-conforming subjectivities), there are also shifts that preserve or advance an alternative imagination away from neoliberalization.

HOPE VI allows and encourages the transition of management of public housing properties to private entities. When the THA first developed Phase 1 of Salishan, the LLC they formed with their tax credit investors chose to contract with a private property management company for the newly developed areas of the neighborhood. THA continued to manage the old

sections of Salishan during this time. Problems with this private management company, as well as the importance of maintaining jobs for its unionized Property Management and Maintenance staff, led the housing authority to advocate to the LLCs that owned Salishan (and of which THA was a partner) for THA to take over the contract.

I always felt a discomfort with the private managers because they pay poorly and their benefits are lousy and their turnover is high. We pay okay. And this was really THA taking work back, and I was determined to find out if a public unionized workforce could get that work and keep it. And it won't be because we're cheaper. We'll never be cheaper. We will always be outbid. But its for reasons you can't admire. And so we were swimming upstream a little bit when the rest of the world was privatizing, we wanted this work back. (Gerald, THA staff).

There certainly were other pieces of the Salishan project that the THA did contract out. However, the THA's existing management standards, high valuation of its residents, and commitment to protecting the jobs of its unionized workforce did not allow the housing authority to continue contracting out management to a private entity. This decision to bring the property management back to the housing authority is counter to the neoliberal logic of profit maximization and allowing the market to determine the most cost-effective solution to any decision.

In contrast, a number of the THA's practices in the neighborhood advance an emphasis on discipline and behavior, an expression of neoliberal rationality (see Schram et al., 2010; Ridzi, 2009). Surveillance of Salishan residents has increased with redevelopment. HOPE VI funding requires that residents meet work-related behavior requirements, such as documenting work, volunteer, or education hours every week. The use of a mixture of private, federal, and state funding also means that public housing and Section 8 Salishan homes are inspected 3-5 times a year, according to the various requirements and preferences of the various stakeholders (personal communication, Gerald, THA staff, January 12, 2015). Some families also meet with caseworkers twice a month as part of the Family Self-Sufficiency program (personal

communication, Kelly, THA Board Commissioner, February 20, 2015). These practices are all required of THA and do not necessarily flow from neoliberalizing or disciplinary imaginations or rationalities emerging from THA itself.

Evictions also became streamlined in the 1990s through QWRHA and HOPE VI, and THA has become much more assertive in its evictions of tenants who are involved in drug activities. In Salishan, this transition may have begun with the Drug Elimination Program in the 1990s. However, since redevelopment, the THA's focus has shifted towards methamphetamines and the safety/contamination of living units.

So, we definitely started to see a spike in activity, to see physical characteristics in our tenants and with just general activity at Salishan in particular, and didn't really recognize the risks with it until we had staff going in to turn a unit and coming out feeling ill. So we tested the unit and it was very hot. And so just recognizing to be protective of the staff turning the unit as well as the people who would be living in it full time moving forward, that we would tackle testing and knowing that units are safe to be reoccupied. Because the people that live in our units, they don't really have a choice. (June, THA staff)

Meth contamination threatens the health not only of residents and THA workers, but also the value of the newly redeveloped homes, which THA is obligated to preserve. THA chose to test units where suspicious activity was reported, as well as all units that are vacated for other reasons, and evict residents whose units are contaminated or "hot." This led to some controversy, as families with children with little means for finding housing were put out of their homes. Informal respondents shared with me their shock and their sense that some people had been evicted unfairly because contamination had come from previous residents or neighbors (field notes, date). Others shared with me how important they felt that the evictions were to the health and safety of kids:

I guess it was a pretty controversial move because there was a lot of kids put out of their houses over that. And I worked at the school, and the school was mad and people were mad at housing. And I was like, don't get it wrong, a meth house is not a home. This kid, believe me, is going to be better off, eventually, not being comfortable living, growing up in a meth house. You know what I mean? So, that was a huge change. (Christina, Salishan resident).

The tightening of discipline, security, tenant screening, and of management practices is not only in response to THA's diligence in fulfilling HUD regulations or state regulations. There are also local sources calling for it: at a February 10, 2009 Tacoma City Council Study Session where THA presented in order to advocate for Salishan's receipt of stimulus funding, City Council Member, and Chair of the Public Safety Committee, Connie Ladenburg inquired about how THA is addressing the neighborhood's former high crime statistics, and was reassured of THA's collaboration with the Tacoma Police Department and strict screening.

### *Disciplined Landscapes*

When Salishan was remade, it was according to New Urbanist design, which is supposed to facilitate interaction between neighbors. The design includes small yards with front porches, which is supposed give people a sense of "defensible space" or ownership over the space directly in front of their house. THA negotiated with Quadrant Homes to get them to put the garages of the homeownership units in the back so that people would have to get out of their car and walk to their front door, thus increasing the chances of neighbors interacting.<sup>20</sup> The neighborhood is also interspersed with pocket parks, miniature playgrounds with benches where neighbors can gather and interact. The intention of these design features was to create a neighborhood where people would have many opportunities to interact with each other, thus facilitating mixed-income social networks. The design is also supposed to make the market-rate and subsidized units indistinguishable from each other<sup>21</sup> – while the designs and colors of the buildings and landscaping are not homogenous, they are all thematically connected and they make the

---

<sup>20</sup> The DR Horton houses in Areas 2 and 3 do not follow this design. It is more expensive to build than a home with a garage built in front and connected to the house.

<sup>21</sup> Ideally, in a New Urbanist mixed income neighborhood, market-rate and subsidized units would be interspersed with each other. In Area 1 of Salishan they are not, because in order to cut the deal they wanted with Quadrant, THA had to sell lots in one particular section of the neighborhood. The homeownership units are grouped together. This same pattern exists in Area 2, but in Area 3 the housing types are more evenly distributed. See Figure 1.



Figure 4.2 – New Urbanist design in Salishan. Photo by Leah Montange.

neighborhood look middle-class instead of like a slum (see Figure 4.2).

Keeping the neighborhood landscaped and looking "destigmatized" is an important element of the design – maintaining a clean, uniform look makes the neighborhood seem less like a place where poverty flourishes. In my informal conversations with residents, people always commented that they appreciated how “nice” the neighborhood looked, and one resident even commented to me “These are the ghettos of Washington. Look, its so nice” (field notes, May 20, 2014). Making the neighborhood nice-looking and destigmatized is part of THA’s social service practice in Salishan. It serves a dual purpose of providing high quality housing and an attractive place to people who can not afford it, and also of making potential homeowners

and investors comfortable. However, in order to maintain this aesthetic, resident use of the space is tightly managed by THA. Residents are not allowed to garden in the dirt around their homes, hang laundry in their yards, or keep lawn furniture or kid toys on them, including kiddie pools.

However, it is possible to overestimate the importance of a neighborhood's appearance to the stigmas attached to the space and the people within it. McCormick, Joseph, and Chaskin (2012) found that while mixed income developments that are designed to make public housing and market rate housing blend together do reduce public housing residents' experience of stigma in some ways, they actually intensify stigma in other ways, including through interactions between low-income and higher income neighbors. Creating a destigmatizing look does not remove stigma all on its own. In Salishan, there is a tension and distance between renters and homeowners:

But, even the language. I went to a homeowner's association meeting, and even the language they used, because they were trying to get insurance, homeowners association insurance, and the insurance agent was like, "Well with the high-risk property in which you guys are attached to, and the low income-" Even his language was so divisive. I was like -- Without even thinking. I'm sure he wasn't trying to. So I think, I think sometimes that will be, that will be a big bridge to cross. (Christina, Salishan resident).

Among my respondents there was a uniform recognition that the neighborhood was divided between residents and homeowners, with little social contact and mixing between these.

I'd like to see the two intermingle more, as far as renters and homeowners. When we started off, we were all under one management company. Then some homeowners got together and we pretty much sued or threatened to sue, to separate us. And so we've got a homeowner's association, and we've got the housing authority. The two don't collectively get together a lot. Or if they do, it's not broadcast. And so you don't always know what's going on with the renters, or what's going on with the homeowners. And so I feel like I'm in this bubble, and you never know what's going on. (Teresa, Salishan homeowner).

Counter to its intent, the New Urbanist design and landscaping have also made more difficult the kinds of socially interactive activities in which old Salishan's social networks thrived. In the old neighborhood people used to garden and dry their laundry in their yards. This was an opportunity for neighbors to be around each other outside, as well as for people to grow

their own food and flowers (Laakso, 2013; Keller et al., 2013). Gardening was especially embraced by the Vietnamese and Cambodian populations in the neighborhood. In the new neighborhood design, peoples' yards got smaller, and they were no longer allowed to use them for gardening or hanging laundry. This actually caused a struggle between THA and some of the old Salishan residents who were moving or planning to move back into the neighborhood.

And so they would garden in the flowerbeds that housing had just put down around the new homes. And their flowers and vegetables, because that was just their culture and how they lived, and so it kind of for a little bit became a struggle between - I don't want to say THA, but just - they had set up rules and regulations on how to manage the property, and then we had people who were planting on the flowerbeds. So it kind of became an issue of, do we let them do it, do we not let them do it... And because we are a part of an Association, we have guidelines through the association about what you can have outside of your house, and that type of thing. And THA had spent a lot of money on landscaping, plants and trees, to make it look the same. And, so there was a period where we had to figure out what was best for the community. Which is, they should be allowed to plant and have their own gardens. (Kelly, THA Commissioner).

THA had to decide whether they were going to maintain their nice new neighborhood look, or support peoples' ways of life. They decided to be flexible, until they created a community garden as a compromise. Now Salishan residents who would like to garden can get plots in either THA's community garden in Area 1 or MetroPark's community garden in Swan Creek Park off Area 3.

### *THA's Transformed Practices and Everyday Life in Salishan*

The everyday life of the neighborhood stands somewhat in contrast to that of old Salishan. Residents reported an increased sense of safety and there is a lower rate for both property and violent crimes (Dahlem, 2010); nonetheless, many of the people I spoke with described shootings and thefts within Salishan, without my prompting or questioning in that direction.

I mean it has its moments of being just like any other neighborhood in which you have a whole bunch of people crammed together, you have misunderstandings. But for the most part I feel

safe, I feel good about my neighborhood a lot, for sure. I've been robbed a couple times. Got my stuff back the second time because I know my neighbors. (Christina, Salishan resident).

The new THA units also are much more spacious and have more amenities than the old ones (Dahlem, 2010); nonetheless, some residents express dissatisfaction with how large and dense the neighborhood is, and how close the homes are to each other:

Literally, I feel like I could look out my window, stick my arm out, and touch my neighbor's house. It's really that close. And that's not anything particular to Salishan, that's happening all over. But that is something that I think is important in any neighborhood...That just would be one element that, if I had smaller children, that would make me move. But otherwise I'm okay. (Teresa, Salishan homeowner).

Residents who I spoke with were frank about the difficulties of living in a large and densely packed neighborhood, but insist that these challenges are not exceptional to Salishan.

Salishan residents and service providers also reported a regrettable lack of Salishan resident participation in community life, and that this is in contrast with the old Salishan. Residents keep to themselves.

The other thing is minding your own business, don't be a snitch, mind your own business. And I think us advocates are breaking that. And that's been a tough one, because I've been accused of being a snitch, I mean I've had people talk crazy to me for work, and it all passes. They figure out what I'm doing, they figure out I'm still the same person I've always been, I don't work for the man, I don't [laughs]. (Christina, Salishan resident)

There are efforts from neighborhood service providers, in partnership with THA, to reknit the social fabric of the neighborhood. THA circulates a newsletter that advertises community events and programs. The Salishan Association (the homeowners association) and the Community Health Advocates, a group of homeowners and residents who organize activities and advocate for health access in Salishan, run a number of activities that are meant to be inclusive of residents, homeowners, and seniors. These include a Community Kitchen, movie nights, exercise classes, mothers support groups, and clubs for kids. However, these events are sparsely attended (with the notable exception of BINGO) (field notes, February 9, 2015; field notes, February 13, 2015).

There is also no more Resident Council, a HUD-mandated body of resident-leaders who organize programs for residents and serve as liaisons between residents and their housing authority landlord. The old Salishan had an active Resident Council that organized neighborhood activities, and presented resident concerns and appreciations to THA. With the reorganization of the neighborhood to include homeowners and seniors, a different model was determined to be more “inclusive” – there is now the Salishan Association, which includes representatives from THA and from the homeowners. Residents are represented through THA staff. There are town hall meetings periodically, at which residents can bring their concerns – staff and resident leaders alike told me that these are opportunities where people air their complaints, but not where they constructively build towards solutions.

Residents noted the strictness of the housing authority, divisions among the residents and homeowners, resident mistrust in THA, and even mistrust in each other. For example, at an August 24, 2011 THA Board of Commissioners meeting, a Salishan resident shared her appreciation for THA staff, but “has concerns about the recent lack of a clear explanation of the new processes implemented...Some of these communications with staff have left the residents feeling their tenancy is in jeopardy” (p. 2). A number of residents expressed suspicion or fear of the housing authority in our conversations and interviews. One informal informant told me she and her mother did not want to sit for an interview because they feared getting in trouble with THA (field notes, January 10, 2015); two told me, without any prompting or questioning about THA as a landlord, that they had nothing to hide, if the THA wanted to evict them they could come in and test their walls (for meth or cigarette smoke) (field notes, February 13, 2015); one told me, unprompted that THA had gotten stricter since the redevelopment (field notes, May 20, 2014). In a formal interview, a resident explained to me:

Everybody was really kind of wary of THA, because what I've learned is that when you first move in here, they don't want THA or anybody in their business. Because they think that it's going to affect their housing, they're going to get evicted, or you're going to tell on them, or whatever. And so you really have to gain trust in order for them to participate and know that you're not going to run to THA. (Kelly, Salishan resident).

This division and mistrust is in contrast with patterns noted in old Salishan (Laakso, 2013), and may contribute to residents' preferences for non-participation in community events and programs.

Although there is much division in Salishan, a perceived lack of neighborhood involvement, and a fear of eviction, neighbors also practice mutual support with each other, especially those in their immediate vicinity.

I mean we are one big community, but maybe we don't participate that way. We're block communities. So when I lived up here [gestures away], we all knew each other, we all went to each other's back doors, we borrowed stuff, we watched each others' kids... And then I had moved over here and it was the same thing. It was my neighbor and about five houses down, and the kids all played. And it seems to be that's kind of how Salishan is ... Because when you get in that block with your neighbors, you have to get to know them. (Kelly, Salishan resident).

Residents shared with me how their immediate neighbors watch out for each other, watch each other's kids walk to school, and put each others' garbage out. One ground-level service provider who I mentioned this to was surprised – she saw the neighbors as mistrusting of each other (field notes, February 9, 2015). However,

### *THA After Salishan*

The housing authority has navigated decreasing HUD allocations for maintenance and capital expenditures (one of its funding sources for rebuilding Salishan),<sup>22</sup> the Great Recession, federal budget instability, and the challenges of Tacoma's housing market, low density, smart growth planning paradigm, and political culture while attempting to complete Salishan. Maintaining the mainline public housing and voucher programs has grown difficult. THA is

---

<sup>22</sup> In 2012, THA received from HUD 99.6% of their anticipated funding for voucher programs, but only 76% of their anticipated funding for public housing (THA Board, March 28, 2012).

mapping out a route forward via both a relentless effort to promote itself and through restructuring under Moving to Work status and Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversion, two HUD programs that the experience of Salishan redevelopment enabled THA to participate in.

THA has worked hard to attract the investment necessary to finish Salishan. They have taken out loans, advocated through their congressional delegation, and presented at countless community and government meetings to gain support. At a February 2, 2007 Board Retreat, the THA Board expressed interest in “wordsmithing” the mission statement and developing a “branding” statement for the housing authority (p. 3). In 2008 they hired a consulting firm to make recommendations about communicating its mission and values, and to “tailor a corporate identity for THA” (THA Board, November 7, 2008). While the housing authority did not take all the consultant’s recommendations, they did continue their efforts to communicate their mission and brand themselves. The housing authority strategized about “marketing our accomplishments at Salishan to our investors and suppliers” (THA Board, February 27, 2008, p. 4) through media pitches and press releases. Events like the opening of waitlists became opportunities to promote the need for affordable housing in Tacoma, as well as the capability and efficiency and innovation of the housing authority. The website went through at least two overhauls. Board commissioners and staff made countless presentations.

As HUD funding for public housing maintenance and housing subsidies continues to diminish every year, the experience THA gained through the redevelopment of Salishan has allowed it to access competitive HUD programs that make funding options more flexible and allow it to experiment with the types of support it offers. In 2010, THA received Moving to Work status, which HUD has assigned to 39 of its 3,400 housing authorities. This allows THA to

use its federal funding more flexibly. For example, THA can now designate vouchers to go to families in certain schools in order to stabilize the student population (as in the McArthur Elementary and Tacoma Community College voucher programs). It has allowed THA to contribute money to a Pierce County homelessness coalition, so that it can participate in housing homeless people without public housing or vouchers. It has also been able to act as a developer for a senior housing project with LASA, a private non-profit partner, outside the Tacoma city limits. This flexibility has allowed the housing authority to put federal money into housing services outside of the mainline public housing and voucher programs, thin its housing subsidies through rent reform, and grow its business line (as a developer). THA's transformation process that started with Salishan has expanded and flourished with Moving to Work status.

[Salishan] put the housing authority, it placed the housing authority firmly within, from my side of the building, firmly in the camp of a seasoned experienced developer. It opened up a brand new book of business for the housing authority. And then it created, I wasn't there when they got their Moving to Work status, but I'm sure the successes of Salishan paved the way for the housing authority to become a Moving to Work. (Laura, former THA staff)

The Housing Authority also began the process of RAD conversion of all its public housing in 2014. This means converting public housing units into hybrid ownership (LLC with tax credit investors) subsidized by Section 8 vouchers, with a renewable 20-year term limit.

So when you have public housing you have to rely 100% on the federal government and your rent from your tenant, which is very low, to pay for your staff to operate the property, and to pay for improvements. And across the nation there are billions of dollars of unmet capital needs. So the federal government is letting ...185,000 units, across the nation be converted into RAD. And so that will, by allowing you to use this different funding stream, you'll be able to leverage private debt. (June, THA staff)

THA is one of the housing authority's allowed RAD conversions, and it is because of the financial, management, and development skills it gained during Salishan's redevelopment. Due to RAD conversion, THA will be able to act more like a private landlord: they will be able to collateralize their units, and also use rent payments to pay debt, which will help it streamline

funding for its development activities. Critics of RAD conversion do not want to reduce the amount of public housing and are concerned that this “solution” to public divestment by definition can only help certain housing authorities and will only encourage further divestment.

Nevertheless, it is working for THA, who is planning for a future without HUD funding:

[W]e are trying to, every year in the future, become less dependent on that [HUD] money, so we don't have to go, okay, are we going to have to lay off people, are we going to not be able to do this, are we not gonna use all of our vouchers, or not have this service anymore? So I think that its sad that we have to think that way. But at least we're doing it. At least we're preparing for maybe a day when there is no more funding, and then we're just on our own. (Kelly, THA Board Commissioner)

Although THA seems to take every opportunity they can to lament the federal government's underinvestment in the maintenance and repair of its public housing stock, they are also participating in that divestment because RAD conversion allows THA to integrate more private funds into the preservation of affordable housing. The redevelopment of Salishan set THA up so that they could move forward with providing affordable housing on a neoliberal terrain.

#### IV. RELUCTANT NEOLIBERALIZATION

The preparation and development process led the Tacoma Housing Authority and Salishan both to transform: the housing authority developed new roles, changing the nature of the work it does; it went through a corresponding process of reorganization, both internally through altering its departments, personnel, and activities, but also externally through altering the quantity and quality of partnerships it was involved in. Who lives in Salishan shifted; the landscape of Salishan and its surrounding neighborhood changed in expected and unexpected ways; and the Tacoma Housing Authority's practices in managing the neighborhood, providing housing, and other community services transformed. All these transformations emerged through the interweaving of neoliberal housing policy, the housing economy, and local political cultures, economic conditions and regulatory frameworks.

In the end Salishan's redevelopment, in all its complexity, is an instance in the pattern of neoliberalization processes, full of its own local specificities and contingencies. The Salishan case yields an example of a redevelopment process that does not manifest as the ideal neoliberal project – it is neoliberalism as it actually exists, and in this case it is ambivalent, and even reluctant. Substantial non-market influences have imprinted upon, shaped and been shaped by Salishan's redevelopment: THA has retained property management of Salishan for its unionized workforce, and made significant effort to redistribute jobs and resources generated through the redevelopment to low-income communities and women- and minority-owned businesses. At the same time, privatizing the development and efforts to move residents into market-dependency (as opposed to welfare dependency) have been only ambiguously successful: THA was only able to break even through selling its homeownership lots, its low-income homeownership programs and job training programs have seen a mixture of successes and failures, and new private investment was not catalyzed. Nevertheless, the housing authority has embraced neoliberal rationalities and practices in many ways, especially through opening its business line, hybridizing its property ownership with tax credit investors, adopting management practices that emphasize keeping the spaces of Salishan market-ready, and developing a focus on social services with the aim of producing self-sufficient subjects.

The inclusive, redistributive, and green interests, players, politics and discourses that contributed to Salishan's redevelopment have often bolstered and flanked the marketization of subsidized housing, and the neoliberal subjectification of the people served by public housing and voucher programs. This process of bolstering and flanking neoliberalization is keenly visible in the housing authority's promotional materials. These websites, fliers, press releases, presentations are designed and used to secure public and investor support for Salishan's

redevelopment, and for THA's other programs and projects. The co-articulation of "social justice" and neoliberal imaginaries makes Salishan's redevelopment attractive to investors and palatable to a progressive audiences concerned with affordable housing. In the next chapter, this thesis explores precisely how these discourses circulate through THA's literature, and the material and discursive effects of this in the neighborhood.

## Chapter 5. “NEOLIBERAL” AND “SOCIAL JUSTICE” DISCOURSES

There are a multitude of discourse types that circulate through the materials and texts generated around Salishan and THA’s transformation. There are discourses of smart growth and mixed use, diversity and inclusivity, private partnerships, social mixing, asset building, residents as ordinary people, racial justice and wealth redistribution, pro-unionism, anti-homelessness, self-sufficiency, deservingness, and neoliberal citizenship. I worked inductively from the THA texts I analyzed, grouping tropes and themes I found and charting their interdiscursivity. Through my analysis I came to understand the primary formation of these discourse types to be the intersections and tensions between what I call “neoliberal discourses” and “social justice discourses.” These terms are to be interpreted as pointing to two different types or genres of discourse found in THA’s texts, rather than pointing to two different strains of philosophy or political theory. This is a heuristic distinction that I found useful for exploring the contradictions and tensions within THA’s discourses and practices.

“Neoliberal discourses” refers to those tropes, imaginations, and narratives that privilege privatization, market solutions, individual responsibility, and subject positions that fit private market roles. “Social justice discourses” refers to those tropes, imaginations, and narratives that privilege inclusivity, redistribution, and equity. These two discourse types intersect, intermingle, and articulate with and through other discourse types that are present in the texts. My discourse analysis of THA’s promotional texts focuses on tracing these neoliberal and social justice discursive formations.

I first examine the main narrative or imagination of Salishan's redevelopment that THA produces through its promotional texts. This narrative is cohesive and coherent, and explicitly circulates a “social justice” imagination of Salishan. However, it stands in tension with material

conditions and everyday life in the neighborhood. Next, I examine THA's narrative about Salishan residents and who they are. THA engages with a variety of discourse types including asset building and social mixing discourses, and diversity trope. In all three of these discourse types, social justice and neoliberal discourses intermingle. Next, I examine THA's narratives about itself, its transformation, and its mission and purpose. These narratives engage a network of presuppositions and justifications that never directly challenge neoliberal rationalities, and often bolster them.

Ultimately, although neoliberal and social justice discourses are both present and intersect throughout THA's promotional texts, they do so in a way in which neoliberal discourses of market rationality, bureaucratic inefficiency, and individual responsibility go unchallenged. Social justice discourses of inclusivity and redistribution are present but are constrained by neoliberal material conditions, practices, and discourses. They are used to bolster and justify neoliberal transformations in the neighborhood and the agency. Nevertheless, the neoliberalization of Salishan, and of THA, are very much mediated and shaped by these social justice discourses. Neoliberal and social justice discourses and practices intermingle in interesting and contradictory ways here, producing an instance of what I am calling "reluctant neoliberalism."

## I. THE PROMOTIONAL IMAGINATION OF SALISHAN

The Tacoma Housing Authority has generated a cohesive and stable narrative about Salishan through its website, presentations, press releases, and event programs. It can be summarized as follows: In the 1980s and early 1990s there was some crime in the neighborhood but people pulled together and got that under control by the late 1990s. Salishan was a tightly knit community. However, by then the housing was so worn out that it needed to be replaced.

HOPE VI afforded THA that opportunity. Now, with a mix of public and private funding, and a mix of family subsidized, senior, and homeownership units, it is very diverse. Salishan's redevelopment is an ambitious, attractive, successful social justice project. These four qualities interlock into a solid unified imagination about the neighborhood's redevelopment and current status, which I refer to as "the promotional imagination."

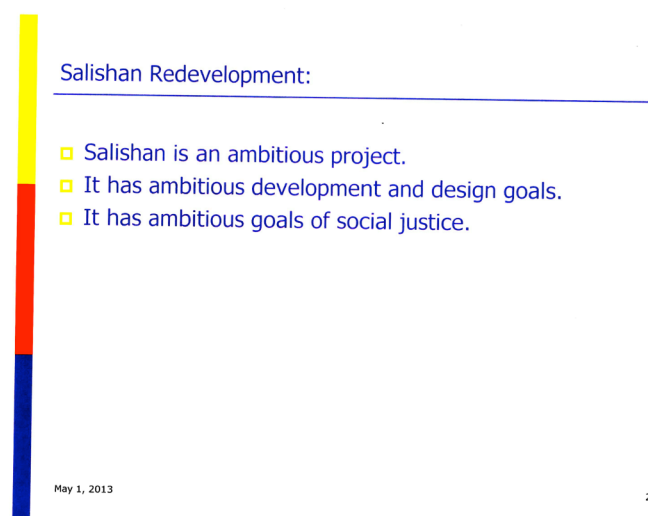


Figure 5.1: "Salishan is an ambitious project."  
(THA, 2013b)

The housing authority goes to great lengths to showcase, and realize, its imagination of Salishan as an ambitious, successful, attractive, social justice project. THA refers to the neighborhood's redevelopment as "remarkable and remarkably ambitious" in its "History of Salishan." Its slideshow "New Salishan Development (Mostly in Pictures)" ("the slideshow")

starts with the words "Salishan is an ambitious project. It has ambitious development and design goals. It has ambitious goals of social justice." (See Figure 5.1). THA materials emphasize the size of the development (\$225+ million,<sup>23</sup> 188 acres, and a goal of 1,300 new units), the replacement of the infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, electrical distribution, sidewalks, street lights), and the mixture of types of units (homeownership, subsidized rental, senior apartments, market rate rental) (THA, 2013b). They emphasize the goals of environmental responsibility, no net loss of affordable units, creating homeownership opportunities for low-income families, and

<sup>23</sup> Like many of the figures that the housing authority publishes in its promotional materials, this number varies from document to document. In earlier THA publications especially, the figure is \$225 million. However, in some more recent documents the number is \$300.

providing jobs to low-income people and contracts for Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses along the way (THA, 2013b). The redevelopment was the largest project that the housing authority had undertaken since the old neighborhood was initially built, and it was a consuming and transformative endeavor. The housing authority was locked into a timeline due to HUD guidelines and Washington State's LIHTC system, and it was quite a feat to pull off the redevelopment on schedule, despite the recession. One THA staff member explained in an interview how large and endless the project had seemed:

Getting it done was the main accomplishment. Sometimes it seemed like our grandchildren would finish it. And its not done yet, but we can see the end of it from here, and that's enormously relieving. (Gerald, THA staff)

Given the magnitude of the project, and THA's inexperience at real estate development when they took it on, it isn't puzzling at all why THA would emphasize the size of its accomplishment.

THA also represents the redevelopment project as successful. The slideshow lists awards the redevelopment process has won, explanations of goals met, and a photograph of Washington State's Senator Patty Murray cutting the ribbon on Phase 2 of the redevelopment process. One way THA portrays its success is by making it difficult to detect the fact that, upon writing this, the neighborhood's development is ongoing. Descriptions of the redevelopment process in the "Construction Phasing and Site Plan" page offer a confusing mix of past and future tense that never explicitly state that the redevelopment plan has not fully come to fruition (THA, 2013a). Some of the buildings in the Site Plan are not yet finished and others await funding. It isn't until one enters and moves through the neighborhood that one can see that there are large swaths of land that are under construction or that stand undeveloped.

## New Salishan (Phase 2) - Rental Housing



May 1, 2013

58

Figure 5.2 “We also want Salishan to look lovely”

THA also emphasizes the neighborhood’s attractiveness (see Figure 5.2). In the slideshow, 35 of the 100 slides contain photos of the homes, parks, and schools in the neighborhood. This creates a unified visualization of Salishan as immaculately neat, landscaped, cheerful suburban neighborhood with lawns, parks, and not many people. The slideshow states, “We also want Salishan to be lovely.” It is lovely. Salishan’s landscaping is immaculate. Walking around the neighborhood, I observed how porches and balconies hold belongings, like potted plants, chairs, decorations, shoes, and kid toys, but the front lawns and sidewalks are clear of traces of habitation. On one visit I watched a pair of landscapers walk up and down the quiet streets blowing away the few traces of debris that were on the ground. The groomed, uniform New Urbanist look of the neighborhood is maintained with precision. This discipline over the space and its “loveliness” echo the way discipline is part of neoliberal social service provision. It

is lovely in a specifically middle-class way, and this design is framed as part of the social service provision, and part of the social justice project that is Salishan:

Participant 3: Salishan is also a place that provides a lot of housing to people who need it in a setting that makes clear to them that they are valuable.

Interviewer: How does it do that?

Participant 3: Because it looks lovely. Because children who grow up in that setting get that. (Gerald, THA staff).

The thinking here is that putting poor people in a place that looks like a beautiful middle-class suburb will destigmatize their poverty.

Finally, THA asserts that Salishan is a social justice project. The slideshow highlights THA's homeownership program for low-income families, the exceeded goals for contracting with Women and Minority-Owned Businesses Enterprises and employing low-income people, the environmentally friendly designs. The slideshow provides tables, data, and photographs as evidence of THA's present day efforts at redistribution and inclusion, and excerpts from old THA publications that attest to the neighborhood's history of diversity and integration (see Figure 5.3). They manage to produce more specific and consistent details about their efforts to meet the WMBE and Section 3 economic redistribution goals than about any other aspect of the project.

Finally, the slideshow ends

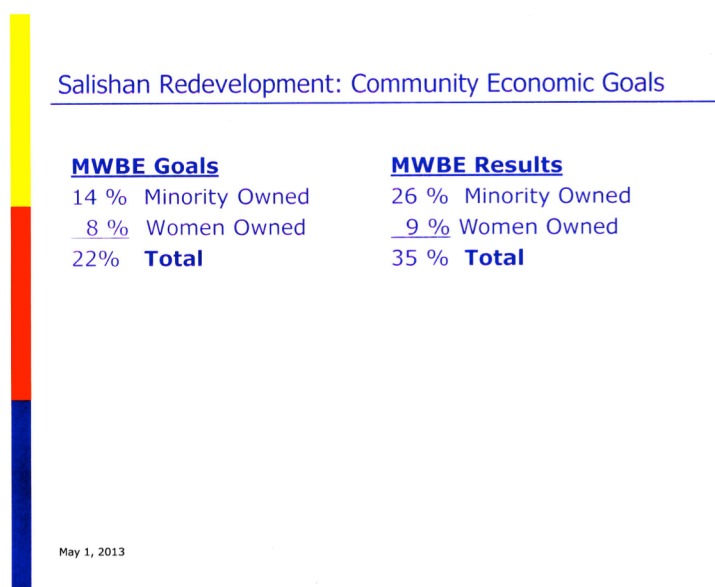


Figure 5.3: Salishan Redevelopment: Community Economic Goals (THA, 2013b)

with a statement about Salishan’s diversity: “New Salishan will be the region’s most diverse neighborhood.” The social justice imagination invoked here is followed by a photograph of three kids of color and a youth of color eating popsicles in the middle of a quiet, immaculate suburban street – Salishan. Salishan is an ambitious, attractive, successful social justice project, a positive place all around.

This imagination is only complicated by a walk through the neighborhood and conversations with residents and ground-level service providers, who offer much more complex and nuanced narratives about Salishan, its redevelopment and everyday life in the neighborhood. While the neighborhood has seen many successes, its redevelopment has been extremely



Figure 5.4: The site of Salishan’s future Education Training and Retail Center  
Photo by Leah Montange

challenging and is ongoing. As of this thesis' writing, empty lots, including an empty space where Salishan's Education, Training, and Retail Center is intended to stand at the entrance of the neighborhood, signal the effects of (partial) privatization in a place where housing markets, tax credit markets, and job markets are lagging (see Figure 5.4).

Everyday life is not as tidy as the manicured lawns and smiling faces of the lovely Salishan photographs would suggest. As noted in Chapter 4, there is a sense of division in the neighborhood between renters and homeowners; while some residents reported cooperation and mutual support among neighbors, others reported mistrust. Fear of eviction, a lack of community involvement, resident turnover, and lack of community space all contribute to a narrative of social disconnection and fragmentation. I was told about and witnessed myself middle-school aged kids gathering in the empty lots for fights (field notes, May 5, 2014); concerns about the lack of activities for young people were evident in my field interviews, observations, and in THA and outside service provider surveys about Salishan (field notes, May 20, 2014; personal communication, Teresa, Salishan homeowner, February 12, 2015; THA, 2011a). Meanwhile, current and former residents have reported increased THA strictness between the old and new Salishans (Laakso, 2013), and this was echoed, unprompted, in my conversations with some residents (field notes, May 20, 2015). Rules about how to use home and lawn spaces, smoking bans on the properties, increased numbers of home inspections, stricter background checks, evictions, and proof of work or work-related activities (such as education or volunteering) all stand in tension with THA's "social justice" efforts and the promotional imagination.

Understanding the function of the promotional materials helps shed some light on this tension: the slideshow, press releases, and website are all useful tools for gaining the support of potential investors and partners, both public and private. THA's promotional imagination is

crisscrossed with the need to appeal to both affordable housing advocates or progressives, and to attract private investment. In Tacoma's Eastside, where housing and tax credit markets are low-performing, there needs to be some added value, some selling point, to attract support. The redevelopment's success, ambitious size, social justice goals, and loveliness are all selling points. Complicating this narrative with information about social divisions, incompleteness, poor market performance, and disciplinary management practices would undermine the promotional materials' ability to serve their function of building support for Salishan and THA.

Any narrative or story is a simplification, with a purpose. This one provides a fulcrum for understanding reluctant neoliberalism.

## II. TRANSFORMING PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

“Public housing serves approximately 1.3 million of the nation's most vulnerable households, but it has some fundamental problems: it concentrates the very poor and is itself concentrated in high- poverty neighborhoods...By the end of 1996, the Clinton Administration will have demolished nearly 30,000 of the most obsolete and irreparable public housing units in order to shift to smaller, more human-scale communities. The new model is to move away from the physical, economic, and social isolation and reconnect residents with the larger community.” (HUD, 1996)

### *HOPE VI, Resident Pathology, and the Ordinary People of Salishan*

At HOPE VI's advent in the early- and mid-1990s, discourses of social isolation and poverty concentration prevailed in HUDs literature, and justified public housing demolitions and displacements. These discourses articulate with a media discourse of public housing pathology, underclasses, ghettos, and welfare queens (Lipman, 2011). However, THA's representations of Salishan residents in its promotional materials studiously avoid any reference to public housing as a pathology, or even welfare dependency. They avoid portraying THA residents in anything but a positive light. Even when facing a battle against meth use and contamination in Salishan

and other THA properties, the housing authority refused to frame this as an issue of public housing, of concentrated poverty, or of underclass behavior. In a somber discussion of the process that THA went through in dealing with evictions, due process, and increasing the health and safety of their communities, they asserted the normalcy of dealing with meth: “We do not think we had a disproportionate problem...no landlord, as selective as they may try to be, can ever feel free of meth or other similar contaminations. Americans just use too many drugs” (THA, 2014a, p. 9). This statement is sanitized of any reference to its residents and clients as pathological or problematic, and thus refuses to engage in discourses that have been repeatedly critiqued as pathologizing, racist, sexist, and anti-poor (see Pfeiffer, 2006; Goetz, 2013b). Instead, it invokes a discourse of housing residents as ordinary people.

The exceptions that prove this rule came from outside the agency. For example, a former THA staff member described the benefits of income mixing and poverty deconcentration in decreasing neighborhood crime:

It’s kind of like cleaning out a rat’s nest, or a hornet’s nest. Once you clean it out, it’s kind of clean. So if you’re taking Phase 1 and you’re raising this whole thing, and had a lot of gangs here, where are they going to go? So what ends up happening is no longer do you have that concentration of poverty. Because poverty breeds poverty. There’s been study after study done on it. And so this is one of the other advantages to a HOPE VI project like this, is it integrates people, it integrates incomes, it’s a melting pot. (Dominic, former THA staff).

We were discussing how Salishan’s redevelopment had made a better community, by eliminating gang violence and crime, and integrating homeownership. Serrano compares certain Salishan residents with a pest infestation, and links this with concentrated poverty. In this discourse, poverty is pathologized, and deconcentrating poverty is the “healthy” solution. Although study after study shows that deconcentrating poverty does not alleviate poverty, and can in fact interrupt valuable social networks that are necessary for the self-sufficiency of poor people (see Keene & Geronimus, 2011), Dominic still appealed to the experts to support his claim.

However, this explicit pathologizing of Salishan and of its residents is carefully avoided in all THA publications, even when Serrano was working at THA.

Although THA's promotional materials do not explicitly or outwardly invoke a discourse of pathology or of an underclass, the social mix and asset building discourses they circulate articulate with these discourses by relationally constructing poor people as insufficient. Here is one example: THA is initiating an asset building in Salishan called the Children's Savings Program. This program incentivizes Salishan kids to save money for college. The document THA has produced describing its plans and promoting the program uses a paternalistic logic about influencing residents' behaviors. THA describes why it is in a good position to run this program thusly: "In serving them, THA is already deep into the lives of their families, as landlord, as provider of highly regulated rental assistance, and as provider of supportive services. This gives THA an influence over behavior and choices" (THA, 2014b, p. 2). The statement presupposes that poor residents should change in order to fit into the market economy and that poverty, at its root, is about behaviors and choices, which can be changed with intervention. This is a neoliberal rationality, that emphasizes individual responsibility for poverty and market forces as a solution. However, it intersects with social justice discourses that emphasize public institutions' roles in redistributing opportunities. Public housing residents are constructed and imagined as both individually responsible for their behavior and choices, and deserving of a new distribution of opportunities for success in the market.

The social mix discourse circulating in Salishan similarly presupposes but never explicitly states that subsidized housing residents are in need of behavior modification, and that such behavior modification will redistribute opportunities. In addition to the obvious benefit of increase to the tax base of the area, the stability, investment, and positive behavior examples that

homeowners provide are all cited as important reasons for income mixing; these are undergirded with the assumption that concentrated poverty in Salishan would be less “healthy.”

That, there's lots of different reasons for [mixed income], but one of them is that you, it helps with the tax base for the area, because our stuff is not taxed but they [the homeowners] are, and then it also has people that are successful. And everybody that lives in the neighborhood...not everybody's stuck there. Some people are there because its an opportunity to go to school while they're raising two kids and a single mom or a disabled dad and a whatever ... But, we want ...the kids, to see that. If you just have a whole neighborhood full of poor people that aren't prospering, there's nothing to look forward to. (Janet, THA staff).

The low-income or poor kids of the neighborhood will see their higher income peers and their families, and this will help them find a way out of poverty. The unstated presupposition is that concentrated poverty leads to social isolation and creates ongoing cycles of poverty. Researchers studying close-knit public housing communities with strong social networks have contradicted this assumption, pointing out the mutually supportive social networks that develop in some neighborhoods of concentrated poverty (see Manzo et al., 2008; Keene & Geronimus, 2011). Furthermore, outcome studies for HOPE VI and other mixed-income strategies have had very mixed results, especially when it comes to job and education outcomes (see Popkin et al., 2009).

The discourses of Quadrant Homes and D.R. Horton make an interesting and illuminating counterpoint, when it comes to social mixing. None of Quadrant's or D.R. Horton's promotional materials for the homeownership units that they were selling in Salishan mentioned that this is a mixed-income community, instead calling it a “master plan community” (see DR Horton, 2014). Many homeowners moving in to Area 1 were completely unaware of the neighborhood's subsidized housing, and were unpleasantly surprised (personal communication, Chrisina, Salishan resident, January 15, 2015; personal communication, Teresa, Salishan homeowner, February 12, 2015; Keller et al., 2014). Clearly the neighborhood's income mixing is considered more valuable for some income groups than it is for others, and is promoted accordingly.

To be fair, there is an ambivalence to THA's imagination of social mixing in Salishan, which asserts both the vitality and warmth of the poor community that was displaced, and the health and vibrancy that its replacement mixed income neighborhood is contributing anew. THA itself does imagine old Salishan, with its homogenously poor residents, to be a community where people could build deep attachments to place and support each other. THA's "History of Salishan" states, "By the time THA starting [sic] demolishing it in 2001, Salishan was a successful and safe neighborhood that was well organized, tightly knit, and occupied by people who were very fond of it." Furthermore, the "social engineering goals" of income mixing were questioned by one of the neighborhood's designers who I interviewed (personal communication, Laura, former THA staff, January 28, 2015).

THA avoids explicitly circulating the pathologizing discourses that dominate public housing's neoliberalization, instead invoking these as a presupposition or an undertone. It especially avoids explicitly stigmatizing racist and sexist discourses and visual tropes that associate dysfunctional public housing with residents of color, especially black residents and single mothers. Instead, THA circulates what I call the diversity trope, which serves a function within both neoliberal and social justice discourse types.

### *Diversity Trope*

The diversity trope is a discourse type that asserts diversity as a desirable attribute, as a strength, of a community. Although the presence of "diversity" serves as a counterbalance to racism and racial segregation it also refers to categories beyond race. THA's slideshow ends

## New Salishan: The Challenge and the Charm

---

New Salishan will be the region's most diverse neighborhood:

- By race
- By language
- By national origin
- By income
- Homeowners and renters
- Tots, teens and seniors
- All abilities
- People who have lived in Salishan for 4 weeks
- People who have lived here for 4 decades

May 1, 2013

98

## New Salishan!

---



May 1, 2013

99

Figure 5.5: "New Salishan: The Challenge and the Charm" (THA, 2013b)

with a statement and a photograph that exemplifies the diversity trope and a broadly inclusive imagination of Salishan (see figure 5.5). THA emphasizes the diversity of the residents of Salishan, starting with diversity among recognizable social categories, but then loosening in definition to include less specific social categories (“Tots, teens and seniors”), and even qualities that are not commonly considered to be social categories at all (“Homeowners and renter” “People who have lived in Salishan 4 weeks”). Diversity can refer to anything!

The photograph in the next slide is also featured in other THA promotional materials, such as the “Thanksgiving Message” (see Figure 5.5). The photo displays three elementary school-aged kids and a young woman, each with a popsicle. An ice cream truck, blue skies, mowed grass, clean street, and colorful freshly painted low-rise homes are in the background. The photo is captioned “New Salishan!” The tone is sunny, cheerful, and optimistic. The young woman and the three kids are all of color, possibly not all the same race or ethnicity, but none are black. Their bodies are relaxed. Everyone looks calm and content, not desperate or starved for attention. The children are supervised. This image stands in contrast with the defining images of public housing – bleak towers, unsupervised needy kids, and groups of loitering adults (Henderson, 1995). The image here speaks back to and dissolves the dominant discourse about which bodies live in public housing and the state of that housing, while also affirming the diversity of the residents.

Pointing out the diversity of Salishan works to neutralize the racist narrative of public housing pathology – “diversity” is the opposite of segregation and concentrations of certain populations. It is ironic that the population that was supplanted by Salishan's redevelopment was also diverse, but differently so. As noted in Chapter 4, the racial and ethnic makeup of old Salishan was already diverse, but it shifted with redevelopment, and not necessarily in ways that

the blanket term “diverse” implies. As the community in Salishan was disrupted by the (necessary) rebuilding of homes, Asian residents were less likely to return to Salishan. The neighborhood’s white and black populations increased significantly while its Asian population and speakers of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Russian decreased sharply (see Table 4.3 in Chapter 4). The differently diverse residents of new Salishan had displaced another set of diverse residents from the old Salishan. Referring to the diversity of new Salishan erases this displacement, while legitimizing new Salishan’s partial privatization according to an inclusive imagination.

Although the diversity trope works to disarm or neutralize racist stigmas of public housing and its residents, it does so without actually challenging those racist tropes - it is not completely open, because it does not actually have any content when it comes to stigmatized categories such as black people, drug users, single mothers who don't work, or nontraditional families. Its content is directed towards pointing out the existence of those respectable categories of people whose place or lack of place in the market is understandable or legible.

In my interviews, when people talk about diversity in Salishan they are usually talking about the existence of homeowners, exotic people from “different cultures” (not American), and sometimes seniors living in the neighborhood. These are the kinds of diversity that people seem to appreciate as positive, as building a special place where people can build rewarding connections and learn from one another.

You've got senior housing set as--you've got actually two senior housing projects in there. You've got homeownership. And so you have the full broad spectrum of what a community is a model of across the country. So it went from concentration of poverty to more mixed income, more diversity of people and different age groups and ranges, and just think it makes a better choice of a neighborhood to live. (Dominic, former THA staff).

Its so cool to go through there and see the Samoan Pacific Islanders out, they've got a volley ball court and then you'll go past a barbecue with Hispanic music at it and you'll - just walking

through there you'll see such an immense diversity of people who just enjoy living together. And that is amazing. (Jim, Tacoma City Council Member)

These comments are among the many that highlight the diversity of national origins, ages, and the existence of homeowners (or income diversity) as being utterly positive. Ironically, there are less immigrants and more white and black Americans in the neighborhood than before, and there is a social gap between the homeowners and renters. One resident pointed out to me that some homeowners view public housing tenants as a liability, and that there are racial tensions within the neighborhood (personal communication, Christina, Salishan resident, January 15, 2015). But even that resident praised the diversity of the neighborhood and what she learned from living in close contact with people from different (non-American) cultures. The point remains that the diversity trope's content is aimed at those categories of people who are easily imagined as deserving. It does little to challenge or configure racist tropes about public housing. Instead, it sidesteps stigmatized categories of people by referring to other, positive, deserving role models.

This is made clear in a document that THA produced and distributed in response to a viral video in which a "gentleman" named Dr. William S. Mount drove around Salishan with a companion and commented on how outrageous it was how the government spent millions of dollars on "social security housing for foreigners". THA's response is a line-by-line fact check that reveals Dr. Mount's claims to be unfounded. THA's diversity discourse is put to work against Dr. Mount's use of racist and xenophobic tropes and assumptions about poor people.

"New Salishan was not built for 'foreigners.' Most of its residents come from the United States. 97% of the renters are citizens of the United States. This percentage would be likely be [sic] higher if it included the homeowners. Salishan is one of the region's neighborhoods most diverse by race, ethnicity and national origin (as well as income, age, and ability and disability)" (THA, 2011b).

The citizenship of Salishan's diverse residents is asserted upfront as a legitimizing factor, and the diversity of the neighborhood (including not only race, ethnicity, and national origin, but a broad spectrum of social categories) is asserted proudly in order to disarm racism. Acknowledgment of noncitizenship, let alone a lack of documentation, "illegality", or "foreigners" would not work as a rhetorical defense against Dr. Mount's attacks.

The diversity trope refocuses our attention on who deserves subsidized housing support instead of who doesn't deserve it. This functions to make a positive claim for the persistence of subsidized housing, which is under attack, and it aligns with a social justice discourse that calls for social inclusion. Though the diversity trope can be interpreted as an inclusive or social justice discourse, it is also constrained by a neoliberal discourse that insists on the privatization of public housing by producing a positive image of the right kind of resident who are supportable by public and private investors. The right kind of residents are those who are either excluded from the market because of age or ability, participate in the market as home-owners and workers, or are temporarily inhibited from participation because of language or education barriers, but are working towards finding their place.

There are certain elements that will not get out of public housing. If you are disabled, or you're elderly. You've been the victim potentially of abuse of some sort. Those are folks that are in public housing to stay. And they are the least among us, who deserve as much assistance as we can afford to give them. There are those who are temporarily challenged and the goal there is to facilitate their self-improvement by offering educational opportunities, adult basic education, English as a Second Language instruction with some of our community partners, job skills training. Access for medical care or mental health care, in a way that might restore people to a level of self-sufficiency. That's our mission too. (David, THA Board Commissioner)

Neoliberal subjects who participate in, are preparing to participate in, or are exempt from the market are deserving. The diversity trope is an inclusive discourse, but it also reconfigures and reasserts exclusions.

The diversity trope does not acknowledge the displacement that occurred in the

neighborhood, or the exclusions it involves. As discussed above, the housing authority has to continually promote its work to the City, private partners, and potential critics. To do so, it must negotiate an ambivalent path between social justice, and neoliberal discourses – the way that the housing authority approaches “diversity” exemplifies this negotiation. In the HOPE VI redevelopment of Salishan, THA does not refer to “problematic” black and brown populations who need to be displaced. Instead, they frame the redevelopment as a “diversity” project. Their deployment of the term “diversity” and the inclusive imagination that it taps is used to flank and support neoliberal restructuring, while simultaneously erasing discursive and material shifts in who lives in the neighborhood.

### III. THA TRANSFORMS: RECONCEPTUALIZING THE WORK OF A HOUSING AUTHORITY

Over the course of the Salishan redevelopment and afterwards, THA has reconceptualized itself and its work. In comparing THA’s press releases regarding private investment in “New Salishan,” one dated October 27, 2008 and the other dated May 22, 2013, there is an evident shift in THA’s narrative about itself. Both press releases serve the function of signaling that private investors have “confidence in New Salishan” and position THA’s redevelopment of Salishan as bringing investment into the City of Tacoma. Both also emphasize the housing authority’s roles in developing and managing real estate, providing rental assistance, and “helping families succeed” in neoliberal subject positions, such as “tenants,” “wage earners,” and as self-sufficient individuals who can “live without assistance.” Finally, both assert THA’s place in working toward a vision of a city that is “prosperous” and “just.” Neoliberal *and* social justice discourse types clearly circulate through these conceptions of THA and its work in Salishan.

However, in 2008, THA's description of itself sets the organization's purpose simply as meeting the City's affordable housing needs (See Figure 5.6). The 2013 description reflects a reconceptualization of its purpose: the provision of services *to people*, and the expansion of its role in *helping Tacoma develop* have moved to a more central role. These two capacities were developed in the Salishan redevelopment effort, and are key ways that the housing authority has reimagined

### **About Tacoma Housing Authority**

**October 27, 2008**

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority engages in a wide range of efforts to help its City meet the growing need for affordable housing.

**May 22, 2013**

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority provides high quality housing and supportive services to people who need them. It does this in ways that help them prosper and that help Tacoma develop.

Figure 5.6: Excerpts from THA Press Releases

itself ever since. THA has refocused its work from providing housing to serving people, and from providing housing to urban development. What does this mean?

As the Salishan redevelopment continued, and the housing authority adapted to the double-squeeze of reduced federal funding for its public housing program and the recession's housing and low income tax credit market, the housing authority continuously worked to re-envision itself, its mission and values.

THA's Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives are published on the organization's website and are consistently referred to and echoed throughout its promotional materials. These statements were created in a collaborative process, beginning in 2006 and involving staff and the Board of Commissioners, and have been revised numerous times as THA reflected on its efforts to redevelop Salishan (personal communication, Gerald, THA staff, January 12, 2015).

THA's Vision, Mission and Strategic Objective statements (see Figure 5.7) articulate with a straightforwardly neoliberal imagination that emphasizes the roles of the people it support

**THA's Statement of Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives:**

**THA's Vision:**

THA envisions a future where everyone has an affordable, safe and nurturing home, where neighborhoods are attractive places to live, work, attend school, shop and play, and where everyone has the support they need to succeed as parents, students, wage earners and neighbors.

**THA's Mission:**

THA provides high quality, stable and sustainable housing and supportive services to people in need. It does this in ways that help them prosper and help our communities become safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive and just.

**THA's Strategic Objectives:**

**Housing and Supportive Services:** THA will provide high quality housing, rental assistance and supportive services. Its supportive services will help people succeed as tenants, parents, students, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance. It will focus this assistance to meet the greatest need.

**Housing and Real Estate Development:** THA will efficiently develop housing and properties that serve primarily families and individuals unable to find the affordable and supportive housing they need. Its work will promote the community's development. Its properties will be financially sustainable, environmentally innovative, and attractive."

Figure 5.7: THA's Vision, Mission and two of its Strategic Objectives. (THA, 2013d)

as “tenants, parents students, wage earners and builders of assets,” thus emphasizing moving people towards self-sufficiency, and limiting the legitimate subject positions that THA residents can perform. The statements also articulate with a less obvious neoliberal imagination that emphasizes innovative programming, attractive properties, efficiency, and financial sustainability achieved through private partnerships. These statements express how THA conceives of its work as moving forward and away from administering HUD programs and towards providing housing and support services

that are “high quality,” “efficient,” “safe,” “vibrant”, “attractive” – all words that work in counterpoint with the neoliberal discourse of public housing failure. Public housing obsolescence, the bureaucracy and inefficiency of state control, and hazardous and bleak conditions are all tropes used to justify HOPE VI redevelopment. For example, former HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros wrote that [Housing authorities]“had to transcend the ‘command and control’ bureaucratic model and use market dynamics unleashed by proven real estate management practices” (Cisneros, 2009, p. 11).

Instead of engaging these tropes directly, THA asserts their work as a positive but parallel alternative: high quality instead of obsolete, efficient instead of bureaucratic, safe and vibrant instead of hazardous, and attractive instead of bleak and stigmatized. These tropes are counterpoints but not contradictions to the neoliberal rationalization of public housing transformation – they are a progression from it. They advance market logic by asserting, and materializing, an imagination of an affordable housing authority that does innovate, runs efficiently, and is a public/private hybrid. HUD funding is not “stable and sustainable,” and is not sufficient to provide “high quality” housing and services; thus THA is moving *beyond* these traditional funding sources, as well as beyond the traditional role of public housing provision. In this conceptualization of themselves, a neoliberal imagination co-articulates with a “social justice” one: the housing authority is a positive, innovative force for affordable housing and for economic and community development; it is opportunity-seeking, efficient, and forward-looking.

The neoliberal discourses that the THA’s Vision and Mission Statements and Strategic Objectives advances have adapted to and interact with concerns for resource or opportunity redistribution and inclusivity. These statements express a drive to meet the “greatest need,” envision a world where everyone has an affordable home, and with prosperity for low-income communities. The housing authority further flags inclusive, redistributive, and environmentally friendly imaginations through words like “just,” “sustainable,” and “community’s development.” A social justice discourse is clearly activated here, and the neoliberal discourses and imaginations of THA have adapted to it. Market solutions are not challenged, and they are made more digestible to a progressive or center-left constituency that is concerned with social service provision and affordable housing.

As noted in Chapter 4, the housing authority has taken what it has learned through the

HOPE VI redevelopment of Salishan, and continued its transformation through the Moving to Work program into a flexible entity that is released from certain HUD regulations and restrictions. For example, the housing authority is now able to charge its voucher holders a little more in rent and put a 5-year time cap on the program participation for those who are not seniors or living with a disability. It is now also able to invest more in its social services and approach its development role in the City of Tacoma and Pierce County more flexibly.

In his 2014 “Thanksgiving Message” to partners and colleagues, THA’s Executive Director elaborates in detail on the new directions the organization is taking as it reimagines itself and transforms. He describes its effort to go beyond developing, managing, and administering affordable housing as new, innovative, and world changing (see Figure 5.8). The old mainline programs of a housing authority are constructed as important, hard, and doable. The agency’s focus, however has shifted towards providing social services that help people find their way in the private job and housing markets, and that helps Tacoma’s economic development. This work is what makes special and innovative – because “the world does not nearly as much” about how to do this. This transformation rests upon a series of presuppositions

From THA’s “Thanksgiving Message”:

The world knows how to develop and redevelop real estate. It knows how to manage and rent properties. It knows how to design and manage rental assistance programs. Yet the world does not know nearly as much about the other part of THA’s work: to provide this housing in ways that also gets two other things done: help work-able people prosper so their time with us is transforming and temporary, certainly for parents but emphatically for their children because we do not wish them to need our housing when they grow up; and help our community develop equitably so that low income people experience it as a place that is “safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive, and just.” What I like about THA is its efforts to find out how to do that.

and justifications that invoke an interesting amalgamation of neoliberal with social justice discourses.

*Unreliability of HUD Funding*

References to the federal budget cuts to HUD,

Figure 5.8 “Thanksgiving Message” (THA, 2014a)

and specifically to the public housing program, pepper THA's materials. In the "Thanksgiving Message," the rockiness of the budget due to the Budget Control Act of 2011, the threat of "sequestration" and the "fiscal cliff" are also offered in an in-depth explanation of how the housing authority has had to reconfigure (THA, 2014a). These challenges caused THA to plan for a potential cut of \$3 million to its \$45 million budget. The Executive Director writes, "The only plausible way to take \$3 million out of THA is by substantially reducing our largest expense: our rental assistance program."<sup>24</sup> Rent reform to the voucher program began in 2012 and rent reform to the public housing program is under study, upon this thesis' writing. Elsewhere, RAD conversion, or the conversion of public housing units to Section 8 project-based units that are co-owned with tax credit investors, is also justified under this same logic – federal funding is unreliable and this must be planned for. The (neoliberal) politics behind HUD cuts to the public housing program are neither challenged nor discussed – they are accepted as the facts of life.

THA avoids explicitly invoking HUD as an inefficient bureaucracy, and never attempts to justify the privatization of public housing as necessary to the US's position in the global economy. They refer to HUD as one of their partners and as a funding stream, and as such any frustration with HUD and its regulations is expressed mildly.

[I]ts very interesting always working with HUD because sometimes the rules and all are just, they seem so complex and unnecessarily complicated... But the interesting thing about HUD is there are also all these people working in Housing and Urban Development that are just really dedicated to trying to help housing authorities. (Gloria, former THA staff)

While HUD's regulations are complex and difficult to follow, the institution is not doomed to obsolescence in THA's imagination. Public housing is never denigrated as a failed experiment.

---

<sup>24</sup> However, the same "Thanksgiving Message" also explains that \$1 million had been reallocated to homelessness rapid rehousing, cutting 120 vouchers. It seems that there are other ways to shift the money around besides raising rent for voucher holders (THA, 2014a).

Its problems are attributed to a lack of federal appropriations, especially for maintenance and repairs. In the “History of Salishan,” THA makes the claim that the crumbling infrastructure and housing stock of old Salishan “was showing what happens when the nation does not invest adequately in the capital needs of the nation’s public housing portfolio” (THA, 2013c). THA’s adoption of neoliberal practices, roles, and rationalities are justified by the decrease to their public funding stream, not because THA sees privatization as essential to innovation, efficiency, creativity, and excellence.

### *Cost-Effectiveness and Economic Effects*

On February 10, 2009, representatives of THA presented to a City Council Study Session in Tacoma. The housing authority was attempting to get the City to move a library branch to its Education, Training and Retail Center (which unfortunately, has yet to be built) and to consider allocating stimulus funding to Salishan’s final phase of development. This pitch for support emphasized the positive economic effects that Salishan’s redevelopments will have, through job creation, “a strong multiplier effect” in attracting other spending, and “a positive effect on the surrounding areas measured by surrounding property values.”

The housing authority has also published a document “New State and Local Tax Revenues Attributable to New Salishan” that it can use in fundraising from state and local taxing jurisdictions. The document breaks down how “New Salishan’s newly taxable properties will repay this public investment with additional tax revenues” (2013e). Affordable housing and housing subsidies in New Salishan are mentioned nowhere.

These sources make clear what THA’s role as a developer and Salishan’s role as a development are in a city with lagging economic prospects – for some audiences Salishan’s economic effects on its surrounding neighborhood, city, and state, must justify the

redevelopment and investment. THA must make a case for Salishan and its affordable housing work based on its cost-effectiveness and economic effects rather than emphasizing the benefits or importance of providing affordable housing or a social safety net. THA reveals a sophistication here in understanding how to present and justify its work to different audiences: sometimes being able to justify their development work purely in terms of revenues and economic effects is critical both for securing support, but also for creating an imagination of THA as a successful and critical player in Tacoma's development.

### *Growing Up and Self-sufficiency*

The supportive services that THA is interested in providing “help work-able people prosper so their time with us is transforming and temporary, certainly for parents but emphatically for their children because we do not wish them to need our housing when they grow up” (THA, 2014a). The housing authority is adopting new roles in partnering with educational institutions and programming for children, in order to ensure their future self-sufficiency. These programs increase resources and opportunities for some families in a funding environment where social services are being cut back.

This way of conceptualizing THA's work relies on a paternalistic structure that sees the housing authority in the role of a parent and its tenants, certainly the adults, but “emphatically” the children as needing guidance and assistance in building assets. Growing up and self-sufficiency are conceptually related, as are dependency and childhood. The problem of poverty is thus affixed to people who do not work, rather than lack of support for single parents who raise their children (81.1 % of the families living below the poverty line in Salishan in 2013 were single parents), or lack of jobs and especially living wage jobs.

Interestingly, the equation of growing up with self-sufficiency and immaturity or childhood with dependency extends to the housing authority itself and its funding structure:

Yes, and that was pretty thrilling. That was exciting. It was like we had all grown up and put our big girl panties on. (Laura, former THA staff, on what it was like for THA to become their own developer)

I think [THA has] matured more by way of its savvy-ness in how it develops affordable housing, and how it delivers programs too. I think it's matured by making the community and people that live in it more mature by offering and helping them through programs to make them more independent in their lives versus less independent in their lives. So, to do a project like this you got to be pretty grown up. This is pretty sophisticated mixed income mixed finance stuff in some ways that you learn as you go. (Dominic, former THA staff)

As the housing authority cultivated its capacity to navigate private partnerships, to create its own funding streams (as a developer), and less dependent on HUD and public dollars, it too becomes more “mature” and “self-sufficient.”

### *Need and Homelessness*

The “Thanksgiving Message” was interspersed with emails and letters sent to THA from various families in desperate situations, seeking housing or a Section 8 voucher (THA, 2014a). In each letter, a person lays out the case for why he or she deserves the voucher – how hard he or works, but what a hard time they have making it. The letters are not commented upon directly, but the message is clear: these peoples’ need for housing is immediate, and the mainline programs with their long waitlists, and their “deep permanent subsidies” are not “an accessible or efficient way serve [sic] a family in crisis” (p. 4)

The housing authority has used this reasoning, along with the assurance that they have some “distaste in our mouths” for doing so, to justify “thinning the soup,” or rent reform. The housing authority has instituted a 5-year term limit on housing vouchers for “work-able” families, and has also reduced the rent subsidy. “This would ask every family on our programs to

accept less from us so we can serve more families” (THA, 2014a, 7-8). THA can justify moving away from its mainline programs to an audience that is concerned about affordable housing and homelessness and believes that there should be intervention by referring to increased need.

The plea to homelessness and need is also used to justify developing the kinds of housing that LIHTC investors and the City of Tacoma would like – housing that is for people with moderate incomes, workforce housing:

And we try to target housing availability for all of these income levels. Because, my belief was and is that, yes, if you are making less than 30% AMI, that certainly makes your housing challenge acute. But, whether its 60% AMI or 30% AMI, if you're homeless, you're homeless. And so, I think that those are all populations that have to be served somehow or another. The trick is figuring out how most efficiently to do that. (David, THA Board Commissioner)

The housing authority’s transformation, towards income mixing and towards more temporary and shallow subsidies are justified through indications of increased need. Interestingly, the increased need, presumably due to the Great Recession, high unemployment rates, and Tacoma’s ongoing struggle towards economic development is reinforced by cuts to social services, the very strategy that THA proposes undertaking in order to meet this need.

### *Expansion of Affordability*

On April 15, 2007 representatives from THA presented on the Salishan redevelopment to a progressive audience, an all-volunteer social justice discussion and study group known as The Conversation. THA adjusts its promotional discourse according to its audience, and this presentation to a progressive audience reveals a new dimension of THA’s imagination – a justification for the decreasing public housing units in Salishan. “It’s true that public housing is decreasing because it’s not sustainable, but when focus [sic] on number of units rather than how they’re financed, you see that Salishan will have an increase in units affordable to the neediest families” (The Conversation, 2007). While the unsustainability of public housing (due to HUD

funding cuts for that specific program) as self-evident, the privatization of the neighborhood is justified with an “increase in units.” This justification asserts that there will be more affordable housing, and also more ways of that affordable housing to come about – through tax credit investors, senior housing provided by private partners. The expansion of affordable housing both in quantity and in meaning is key here.

Expressing its transformation in terms of expansion of affordability ignores the qualitative changes in the types of affordable housing that are available in Salishan, and elsewhere. It sidesteps the substantial changes to the nature of public housing by denying that they are changes (if we can say that affordable housing is expanding, then a critique of the loss of public housing is neutralized). However, the amount of family subsidized housing, and of permanently subsidized housing has diminished in Salishan (see chapter 4). What’s more, in the case of Salishan, the amount of affordable housing overall has diminished, not only because of unreliability of public funds, but because of the illusiveness of private ones as well.

As THA moves forward with its transformation post-Salishan, affordable housing will be expanded to incorporate more income groups. One THA staff member described to me a new development project the housing agency was working on:

That building will be workforce housing. Workforce housing is like I think 80% of AMI. Higher AMI [Area Median Income]. But its still considered low income... If someone is a receptionist somewhere that has to drive from Buckley to come to work, and if they could live here, then, and we provide them with, and they do have some disposable income, which the corridor needs disposable income, I mean people who have some money that can invest in the retail businesses, so it sort of is... And there might be a few more expensive units in there that help the cash flow. (Janet, THA staff)

The same staff member let me know that market rate rentals would be affordable to people at 60% of the Area Median Income, but that THA is building subsidized units for people with a higher income. The kinds of affordable housing that are in the agency’s purview expands to include those with a disposable income, whose presence and spending in a neighborhood is

desired. In this way, the privatization of public housing is glossed over as unproblematic, even though it was in Salishan; the expansion of the housing authority's role from providing affordable housing to supporting a city's economic development is prioritized.

The unreliability of federal funding, the cost effectiveness of THA's transforming programs, its self-sufficiency and maturation, the growing need of the community, and the expansion of affordable housing it is able to provide lock together into a discursive formation that makes the neoliberalization of public housing seem inevitable, reasonable, and even progressive. The transformation of THA's role in the city, and of its role with its clients is made rational, even natural.

Both neoliberal and social justice discourse types circulate in Salishan. These intersect and merge in the diversity trope, in THA's mission, in the discursive formations used to rationalize the neighborhood and the agency's transformation, and finally in the promotional imagination of Salishan. The housing authority is quite careful to construct Salishan's redevelopment into "New Salishan" in a way that will appeal to both the progressive political cultures in Tacoma, the affordable housing sector and fit within the marketizing, commodifying discourses demanded by HOPE VI and its hybridization with private investors. They are careful to brand the neighborhood as attractive, successful, ambitious, and diverse, as a social justice project. This construction, however, hinges upon the "self-evidence" of the notion that public housing residents are broken and in need of fixing, the deservingness of certain diverse bodies but the firm exclusion of others, of the unassailability of prevailing economic and political system, of the importance of a progression to self-sufficiency and "maturity" as a housing authority, of the "naturally occurring" expansion of need, and of the nobility of a fight against

homelessness and the expansion of affordable housing.

What emerges is a messy amalgam, an ambiguous and ambivalent mixture of neoliberal and social justice discourses, which I call “reluctant neoliberalism.” In this discursive configuration, neoliberal imaginations are expanded to include social responsibilities such as asset building, homelessness intervention, and the celebration of diversity. However, neoliberal discourses constrain the reach and imagination of social justice discourses, restricting THA’s conceptualization of redistribution to training resident behavior toward self-sufficiency; inclusion is restricted to certain deserving bodies. Neoliberal rationalities such as individualism, discipline, and market logic are embraced pragmatically rather than dogmatically, but they go unchallenged. Further, neoliberal rationalities are bolstered or justified by social justice discourses that refer to increased need and the expansion of affordable housing, seeking solutions to the problem of uneven distribution of resources and opportunity through public/private hybrids and an only partially successful effort to attract private investment. Emerging from the interaction of these two discourses comes a new understanding of what “social justice” is, of who “subsidized housing residents” are, and what “public housing authorities” do.

## Chapter 6. CONCLUSIONS – RELUCTANT NEOLIBERALIZATION IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The transformation of Salishan through the HOPE VI redevelopment process also transformed THA. My analysis of the ways that THA and Salishan changed is rooted in an understanding of places as the constellation or intersection of economic, cultural, political, and social relations and processes (Massey 1994, 2005). It is also rooted in an understanding of neoliberalization as economic, political, and cultural restructuring processes that takes place in locally specific, contingent, and even contradictory ways (Peck and Theodore 2012). Approaching the case of Salishan with this framework has yielded an account of the new arrangements, roles, landscapes, conceptions, and imaginations that THA has produced. It has also led me to understand the neighborhood and organization's transformations as a process occurring across a terrain marked by ambivalence: social justice imaginations and neoliberal rationality ambivalently intermingle in Salishan, and in the THA. The result is reluctant neoliberalization.

Salishan has had many successes – the odds were truly stacked against THA being able to finish this project, and it has gotten through building the public housing Section 8, senior, and homeownership units. The neighborhood is relatively safe, and is served by a brand new clinic and new schools. But much of what was hoped for has not come to fruition: the social service core which is key to both providing connection, activity, and community in the neighborhood, and is a selling point for potential homeowners and investors is an empty lot; the housing and tax credit markets and regulatory framework in Tacoma have meant that the sales of homeownership lots has not been profitable to THA; and the full allotment of affordable rental housing slated for the neighborhood is still incomplete (no partners are forthcoming for Area 4). An ambivalent

tension between embracing the market, privatization, and neoliberal citizenship and embracing social justice, inclusivity, and redistribution manifests in this unfinished redevelopment.

The materialization of neoliberal practices is tempered in Salishan and THA by a commitment to a set of redistributive and inclusive social justice values. For example, marketization is embraced (the housing authority has built a business line as a developer, and has hybridized its property ownership with tax credit investors), though not entirely (THA elected to self-manage Salishan, in order to preserve jobs for its unionized workforce). The privileging of self-sufficiency and dependency on the market are also thoroughly embraced, though this is softened by an emphasis on asset building, health, and education rather than punishment. Sometimes the materialization of neoliberal practices is constrained by the market itself: the LIHTC market was not favorable in the last phase of development, and THA instead finished the development with a combination of ARRA stimulus package money and loans; the housing market in Tacoma is such that THA does not see itself profiting off of property sales to homebuilders in the future.

The discourses circulating through THA's promotional materials imagine, legitimize, and produce an ambivalent articulation of neoliberal and social justice rationalities. At times social justice commitments work to justify or legitimize the neoliberalization of public housing, Salishan, and THA, as is the case with highlighting to the diversity of the mixed-income neighborhood as a selling point. At other times, neoliberal logics form the terrain that THA must tread across in order to shape redistributive or inclusive outcome (such as preserving and expanding affordable housing options in Tacoma). In the end social justice discourses and imaginations seem to be part of the neoliberalization of the neighborhood, and even advance it. Neoliberal discourses are softened by social justice commitments, but the displacement of

families, the diminishment of public resources and social rights, the disciplining of poor people, and the (re)definition of deservingness go unchallenged.

The neoliberal and social justice processes that circulate and interact through Salishan's redevelopment also produce ambivalent discursive and material effects. THA's practices in Salishan, and as an organization moving forward, tread an ambivalent path between centering residents' needs and lives, and implementing programs that align with the neoliberal paradigm of disciplining residents to meet work- or market-related standards of citizenship. In Salishan this looks like a deep concern on the part of THA for building an interconnected positive community, tempered by strict guidelines for the aesthetic of the neighborhood, standards for residency in the neighborhood, and an emphasis on filling and turning units and improving outcomes measures. The tension between these goals is exemplified in the case of returning residents who wanted to be able to garden – THA had to confront the contradiction between maintaining the tidy middle-class market-ready look of Salishan and being inclusive of residents' cultural practices. This tension further thrives in resident fears of eviction and mistrust in the housing authority, which partially stems from the disciplinary mode of the housing authority, and undermines the reknitting of Salishan's social fabric. The case of meth evictions and the smoking ban are examples – on the one hand the housing authority has justified these practices in terms of promoting residents' and THA workers' health, but on the other hand residents have grown less trusting of the housing authority, as they have watched neighboring families with children displaced from their homes.

The housing authority's assertion of the value of diversity in Salishan is in tension with the contours of deservingness that its practices and discourses produce. Certain diverse subjects are made more valuable than others: citizens and documented immigrants on a pathway to

citizenship, workers or those who are exempt from work because of age or ability are all lifted up in THA's promotional materials about the neighborhood. Meanwhile others are made invisible: black residents and single mothers, both of which are stigmatized social categories when it comes to public housing are becoming increasingly concentrated in Salishan, but are not referred to with the diversity trope. Others are categorically excluded from the neighborhood because of legal status (undocumented immigrants, and people with certain kinds of criminal records). The word "diversity" connotes inclusiveness. But in practice it can actually exclude, as is the case with the elimination of a Resident Council in favor of the Salishan Association, which nominally is meant to include both the representation of THA residents and homeowners, but of which only property owners can be a part. It seems that THA's practices in Salishan arise from a belief that a certain kind of diversity does strengthen a neighborhood or an organization, but this can be undermined by another set of values that sees some behaviors and statuses as inherently more valuable or worthy of preservation. These behaviors and statuses are laden with racialized and gendered meanings that are produced at the conjunction of THA's neoliberal and social justice discourses.

Moving forward, the housing authority is further transforming by cultivating a set of activities that continue and deepen its ambivalent or reluctantly neoliberal embrace of market logic and the drive for self-sufficiency. The housing authority has decided not to pursue any more homeownership programs in the near future. They continue to develop properties with tax credit partners and as a business line, especially in an effort to "revitalize" Tacoma's historically African-American Hilltop neighborhood. They are also shifting their focus to tying housing services with education programs. Some of these programs, such as the Children's Savings program, emphasize asset building; others, such as the McCarver project, emphasize using

housing vouchers to stabilize a school's population. These education projects deepen social service involvement in shaping the arrangements, schedules, and routines of service recipients' lives, and emphasize integrating people into the market.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This thesis relied on a careful study of THA promotional materials that were publicly available on the web, as well as some that were passed my way by willing and helpful THA staff. A study of THA's archive would be fruitful, especially extending back into the 1980s and 1990s, in order to understand better how economic, political, and cultural restructurings of those times worked through THA. A cross-site comparison with other housing sites, such as Rainier Vista in Seattle, which is in the same region and was redeveloped over the same time span, but with diverging results, would provide more dimensions to our understanding of actually existing neoliberalism as it applies to public housing reform. My ability to draw conclusions about neoliberalization processes and economic, political, and cultural change is constrained by these temporal and spatial limitations. More immersion in neighborhood activities over a longer span of time, including more in-depth interviews with residents and street-level service providers would also provide a more complete picture of the everyday life and power relations in Salishan, and would allow for stronger conclusions to be drawn about the impacts and effects of neighborhood change on residents.

#### DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis flags a number of questions for future study. It draws attention to the ways that neoliberal practices and discourse adapt to, incorporate, and co-opt left-leaning rationalities, imaginations and practices. As neoliberalization processes evolve in this manner, what are the

consequences geographically, in terms of distribution of effects and unevenness, and socially, in terms of outcomes and daily life for real people? Comparative studies of similar and diverging processes in other places will help illuminate this phenomenon.

This study of Salishan points to the generative nature of research that attempts to work in the intersections of the material and the discursive – the two are not as separate as social sciences have traditionally imagined them – and that attempt to conceptualize neoliberalization as constituted by actually existing neoliberalism projects and processes. The findings from this study also point towards the great potential that could come from future analysis through two other theoretical frameworks: critical race theory and a Foucauldian biopolitics approach. What are the implications of the incorporation of the diversity trope into the imagination of mixed income housing and public housing reform for critical race theory? How are race, gender, and other categories reconceptualized here, and what are the consequences for various racialized and gendered bodies? In what ways would a biopolitics framework and approach elucidate the practices of managing spaces and bodies that public housing reform has introduced?

Ultimately, this case study raises important concerns not only for theoretical understanding of neoliberalization, race and poverty, but for policy development and political organizing. The political economy of the US is drawing public funds away from public housing, and housing authorities must adapt at a local level. The involvement of private funding will necessarily be uneven. This has consequences for housing authorities and subsidized housing residents, including in places like Tacoma, where capital has been reticent to play its part. It is not possible or desirable to turn back time – despite the critiques of privatized subsidized housing implicit in this study, I would not argue that the public housing system as it stood previously was not also oppressive. But my findings point to the need to pursue a different

course than the one that public housing reform is now on. What would it take to envision a future in which housing existed as a right instead of something that one has to repeatedly prove that one deserves?

## REFERENCES

- Adams, A. L. (1999). *Historic survey of Salishan: Documentation in conformance with the Historic American Buildings Survey*. Tacoma: Artifacts Architectural Consulting.
- Anderson, M. B., & Sternberg, C. (2013). "Non-white" gentrification in Chicago's Bronzeville and Pilsen: Racial economy and the intraurban contingency of urban redevelopment. *Urban Affairs Review, 49*(3).
- Bell, L. A. (2003). Telling tales: What stories can teach us about racism. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 6*(1), 3-28.
- Bennett, L., Smith, J.L., & Wright, P.A. (2006). *Where are poor people to live? Transforming public housing communities*. Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe.
- Bonds, A. (2009). Discipline and Devolution: Constructions of Poverty, Race, and Criminality in the Politics of Rural Prison Development. *Antipode, 41*(3), 416–438.
- Bonds, A. (2013). Racing Economic Geography: The Place of Race in Economic Geography. *Geography Compass, 7*(6), 398–411.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (2001). NewLiberalSpeak: Notes on the New Planetary Vulgate. *Radical Philosophy, 105*, 2–5.
- Brenner, N. & Theodore, N. (2002). Cities and the geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism." In Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (Eds.). (2-32). *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell.
- Brenner, N., Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2010). After neoliberalization? *Globalizations, 7*(3), 327-345.

- Brooks, F., Lewinson, T., Aszman, J., & Wolk, J. (2012). Voucher users and revitalized public-housing residents 6 years after displacement. *Research on Social Work Practice, 22*(1), 10-19.
- Carlson, R. (1984). *Strategies for Tacoma's economic development: Phase II, final report*. SRI Interantional.
- Cisneros, H. (2009). A new moment for people and cities. In H. Cisneros & L. Engdahl, (Eds.) *From despair to HOPE VI: HOPE VI and the new promise of public housing in America's cities*. (3-13). Washington DC: Brookings Institute.
- City of Tacoma. (2009, February 9). City Council Study Session Minutes [Meeting Minutes]. Retrieved from <http://www.cityoftacoma.org/SSMinutes>
- Cope, M. and Latcham, F. (2009). Narrative of decline: Race, poverty, and youth in the context of postindustrial urban angst. *The Professional Geographer, 61*(2), 150-163.
- Crump, J.F. (2003). The end of public housing as we know it: Public housing policy, labor regulation and the US City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 27*(1), 179-187.
- Davis, D.-A. (2007). Narrating the mute: Racializing and racism in a neoliberal moment. *Souls, 9*(4), 346–360.
- DeFilippis, J. & Fraser, J. (2010). Why do we want mixed-income housing and neighborhoods? In J. S. Davies & D. L. Imbroscio (Eds.) *Critical urban studies: New directions*, (135-147). Albany: State University Press.
- Denzin, N. (2009). The elephant in the living room: or extending the conversation about the politics of evidence. *Qualitative Research, 9*(2), 139-160.

- Dierwechter, Y. (2008). *Urban growth management and its discontents: promises, practices, and geopolitics in U.S. city-regions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Dittmer, J. (2010). Textual and discourse analysis. In D. DeLyser, S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M. Crang, & L. McDowell (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography* (274-286). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- D.R. Horton. (2014). A new home is within reach! Salishan [Flier]. Tacoma: Author.
- D.R. Horton (2015). Salishan [Web Page]. *D.R. Horton American Builder*. Retrieved from <http://www.drhorton.com/Washington/Pierce-County/Tacoma/salishan.aspx>
- Duggan, L. (2003). *The twilight of equality?: Neoliberalism, cultural politics, and the attack on democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Dumenil, G. & Levy, D. (2011). *The crisis of neoliberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Dwyer, O. (1997). Geographical research about African Americans: a survey of journals, 1911-1195. *The Professional Geographer* 49(4), 441-451.
- Edelman, P. (2013) *So rich, so poor: Why it's so hard to end poverty in America*. New York: The New Press.
- Elwood, S. (2002). Neighborhood revitalization through 'collaboration': Assessing the implications of neoliberal urban policy at the grassroots. *Geoforum*, 58(2-3), 121-130.
- Elwood, S., Lawson, V., & Nowack, S. (2015). Middle-class poverty politics: Making places, making people. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 105(1), p. 123-143.
- England, K., Eakin, J., Gastaldo, D., and McKeever, P. (2007). Neoliberalizing home care: Managed competition and restructuring home care in Ontario. In K. England and K.

- Ward (Eds.) *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, People*, (169-194). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Fairclough, N. (2000). Language and neo-liberalism. *Discourse & Society*, 11(2).
- Fairclough, N. (2002). Language in New Capitalism. *Discourse & Society*, 13(2).
- Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. (2009). *Trends in Delinquencies and Foreclosures in Washington*. [PDF]. Retrieved from [www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/washington\\_april\\_09.pdf](http://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/washington_april_09.pdf)
- Ferguson, J. (1994). *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Fraser, J. C., Burns, A. B., Bazuin, J. T., & Oakley, D. A. (2013). HOPE VI, colonization, and the production of difference. *Urban affairs review*, 49, 525-556.
- Galster, G. (1996). Comparing loan performances between races as a test for discrimination. *Cities*, 2(1), 33-39.
- Galvez, M. (2010). *What do we know about housing choice voucher program location outcomes? A review of recent literature*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.
- Gillie, J. (2013 May 24). National builder buys 143 Salishan lots for \$5M. *The News Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2013/05/24/2609815/national-builder-buys-143-salishan.html>
- Goetz, E. (2011). Where have all the towers gone? The dismantling of public housing in U.S. cities. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 33(3), 267-287.

- Goetz, E. G. (2013a). Audacity of HOPE VI: Discourse and the dismantling of public housing. *Cities*, 35, 342-348.
- Goetz, E.G. (2013b). Too good to be true? The variable and contingent benefits of displacement and relocation among low-income public housing residents. *Housing Studies*, 28, 235-252.
- Gowan, T. (2000). Excavating “globalization” from street level: Homeless men recycle their pasts. In M. Buroway, et al. (Eds.) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, (74-105). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Gray, M. (2011). Back to basics: A critique of the strengths perspective in social work. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 92(1), 5-11.
- Hackworth, J. (2007). *The neoliberal city: Governance, ideology, and development in American urbanism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hancock, L. & Mooney, G. (2012). “Welfare ghettos” and the “broken society”: Territorial stigmatization in the contemporary UK. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 30(1), 46–64.
- Hanlon, J. (2010). Success by design: HOPE VI, new urbanism, and the neoliberal transformation of public housing in the United States. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(1), 80-98.
- Hasenfeld, Y. and Garrow, E. (2012). Nonprofit human-service organizations, social rights, and advocacy in a neoliberal welfare state. *Social Service Review*, 295-322
- Harvey, D. (2006). *Spaces of global capitalism*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A brief history of globalization*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Henderson, A.S. (1995). “Tarred with the exceptional image”: Public housing and popular

- discourse, 1950-1990. *American Studies (AMSJ)*, 36(1), 31-52.
- Herbert, S. (2005). A trapdoor of community. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 95(4), 850-865.
- Hilgers, M. (2010). The three anthropological approaches to neoliberalism. *ISSJ International Social Science Journal*, 61(202), 351-364.
- Hodges, J. (2009). *Salishan Community Health Assessment*. Tacoma: Tacoma Pierce County Health Department and Comprehensive Health Education Foundation.
- Hunt, L., Schulhof, M., & Homquist, S. (1998). *Summary of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998*. Retrieved from:  
<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=titlev.pdf>
- Jensen, K.B. and Glasmeier, A.K. (2010). Policy, research design, and the socially situated researcher. In D. DeLyser, S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M. Crang, & L. McDowell (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography* (82-93). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Jessop, B. (2002). Liberalism, neoliberalism, and urban governance: A state-theoretical perspective. In Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (Eds.). *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell.
- Johnston, B. (Director). (2003). *Salishan past, present and future* [Video]. Retrieved from  
<http://www.tacomahousing.net/content/new-salishan>
- Keene, D.E. and Geronimus, A.T. (2011). Community-based support among African American public housing residents. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 88(1), 41-53.

- Keller, J., Laakso, J., Stephens, C., & Tashiro, C. (2013). Ethnically diverse HOPE VI redevelopments: A community case study from the Pacific Northwest. *Cityscape*, 15(2), 29–46.
- Keller, J., Laakso, J., Stevens, C. & Tashiro, C. (2014). Ten years after: Re-assessing sense of community post HOPE VI in partnership with community health advocates. 44th Conference of Urban Affairs Association. San Antonio, Texas. March 19-22, 2014.
- Kingfisher, C. (2007). Spatializing neoliberalism: Articulations, recapitulations, and (a very few) alternatives. In K. England and K. Ward (Eds.) *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, People*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (195-222).
- Laakso, J. (2013). Flawed policy assumptions and HOPE VI. *Journal of Poverty*, 17, 29-46.
- Lapenga, P. (2014). Global ethnography and genetically modified crops in Argentina: On adoptions, resistances, and adaptations. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 43(2), 202-227.
- Larson, G. (1986, January 5). Business elites unite to push for downtown. *The News Tribune*, pp. 1A, back page.
- Larner, W., Le Heron, R., & Lewis, N. (2007). Co-constituting ‘after neoliberalism’: Political projects and globalizing governmentalities in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In K. England and K. Ward (Eds.) *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, People*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (223-247).
- Lawson, V., Jarosz, L., & Bonds, A. (2010). Articulations of place, poverty, and race: Dumping grounds and unseen grounds in the rural American Northwest. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 100(3), 655-677.

- Lawson, V. & Elwood, S. (2013) Encountering poverty: Space, class, and poverty politics. *Antipode*, 46(1), 209-228.
- Lipman, P. (2009). The cultural politics of mixed-income schools and housing: A racialized discourse of displacement, exclusion, and control. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 40(3), 215-236.
- Lipman, P. (2011). *The new political economy of urban education: Neoliberalism, race, and the right to the city*. New York: Routledge.
- MacMillan, R. & Townsend, A. (2006). A 'new institutional fix'? The 'community turn' and the changing role of the voluntary sector. In C. Milligan and D. Conradson (Eds.), *Landscapes of Voluntarism: New Spaces of Health, Welfare, and Governance* (15-32). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Manjarrez, C., Popkin, S., & Guernsey, R. (2007). Poor health: Adding insult to injury for HOPE VI families. *Urban Institute Metropolitan Housing and Community Center Brief*. Retrieved from [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311489\\_HOPEVI\\_Health.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311489_HOPEVI_Health.pdf)
- Manzo, L. C., Kleit, R. G., & Couch, D. (2008). "Moving three times is like having your house on fire once": the experience of place and impending displacement among public housing residents. *Urban Studies*, 45(9), 1855-1878.
- Marston, G. (2008). A war on the poor: Constructing welfare and work in the twenty-first century. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5(4), 359-370.
- Martin, L. (2011). Good deals for homebuyers, not for the poor: Erasing poverty from affordable housing discourse. *Journal of Poverty*, 15(3), 3-21.
- Massey, D. (1994). *Space, place, and gender*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Massey (2005) *For Space*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

- McCormick, N. J., Joseph, M. L., & Chaskin, R. J. (2012). The new stigma of relocated public housing residents: Challenges to social identity in mixed-income developments. *City & Community, 11*(3), 285–308.
- McDowell, L. (2010). Interviewing: Fear and liking in the field. In D. DeLyser, S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M. Crang, & L. McDowell (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography* (156-171). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Milligan, C & Conradson, D. (2006). Contemporary landscapes of welfare: The voluntary turn? In C. Milligan and D. Conradson (Eds.) *Landscapes of Voluntarism: New Spaces of Health, Welfare, and Governance* (1-14). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Milligan, C. & Fyfe, N.R. (2006). Renewal or relocation? Social welfare, voluntarism and the city. In C. Milligan and D. Conradson (Eds.), *Landscapes of Voluntarism: New Spaces of Health, Welfare, and Governance* (33-52). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Moreton-Robinson, A. and Walter, M. (2009). Indigenous methodologies in social research. In M. Walter (Ed.) *Social Research Methods* (2nd ed., p. 1-18). South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Naparstek, A.J., & Dooley, D. (1997). Countering urban disinvestment through community-building initiatives. *Social Work, 42*(5), 506–514.
- National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing. [National Commission]. (1992). *The final report of the National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing: A report to Congress and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development*. Retrieved from: [https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC\\_9836.pdf](https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_9836.pdf)
- Newman, K. & Ashton, P. (2004). Neoliberal urban policy and new paths of neighborhood change in the American inner city. *Environment and Planning A, 36*(7), 1151-1172.

- Ngueyn, M.T., Rohe, W. M., & Cowan, S. M. (2012). Entrenched hybridity in public housing agencies in the USA. *Housing Studies* 27(4), 457-475.
- Ong, A. (2007) *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- “Off-duty soldiers trade gunfire at a house linked to drug sales.” (1989, September 27). *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/09/27/us/off-duty-soldiers-trade-gunfire-at-a-house-linked-to-drug-sales.html>
- Peck J. (2003). Geography and public policy: Mapping the penal state. *Progress in Human Geography* 27(2):222–232
- Peck, J. & Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing space. In Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (Eds.). *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell. (33-57).
- Peck, J. & Theodore, N. (2012). Reanimating neoliberalism: Process geographies of neoliberalisation. *Social Anthropology*, 20(2), 177-185.
- Peck, J. & Theodore, N. (2015). *Fast policy: Experimental statecraft at the thresholds of neoliberalism*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Pfeiffer, D. (2006). Displacement through discourse: Implementing and contesting public housing redevelopment in Cabrini Green. *Urban Anthropology*, 35(1), 39-74.
- Piven, F.F. and Cloward, R.A. (1993). *Regulating the poor: The functions of public welfare*. Vintage Books.
- Popkin, S. (2006). The HOPE VI program: What has happened to the residents?. In L. Bennett, J.L. Smith & P.A. Wright (Eds.), *Where Are Poor People to Live?: Transforming Public Housing Communities* (pp. 68-90). Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.

- Popkin, S., Levy, D. K., & Buron, L. (2009). Has HOPE VI transformed residents' lives? New evidence from the HOPE VI panel study. *Housing Studies*, 24(4), 477-502.
- Reid, C.K., Liebow, E., & O'Malley, G. (2006) Building community during HOPE VI redevelopment: Lessons from a Seattle case study. *Human Organization*, 65(2), 192-202.
- Reid, M. (2010). Gender and race in the history of housing policy and research: From industrialization to Hurricane Katrina. *Sociology Compass*, 4(3), 180–192.
- Ridzi (2009). *Selling welfare reform: Work-first and the new common sense of employment*. New York: New York University Press.
- Roberts, D. J., & Mahtani, M. (2010). Neoliberalizing race, racing neoliberalism: placing “race” in neoliberal discourses. *Antipode*, 42(2), 248–257.
- Rose, G. (2001). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to the interpretation of visual materials*. London: Sage Publications.
- Said, E. (1981). *Covering Islam: How the Media and Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. New York: Pantheon.
- Schram, S. F. (2006). *Welfare discipline: Discourse, governance, and globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Schram, S.F., Soss, J., Houser, L., & Fording, R.C. (2010). The third level of US welfare reform: Governmentality under neoliberal paternalism. *Citizenship Studies*, 14(6), 739-754.
- Schumpeter, J.A. (1942). *Capitalism, socialism, and democracy*. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Seattle Housing Authority (2013). *Relocation plan for Yesler Terrace*. Retrieved from <http://seattlehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/YT-resident-relocation-plan.pdf>

- Smith, N. (1979). Toward a theory of gentrification: A back to the city movement of capital, not people. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 45(4), 538-548.
- Smith, N. (2002). New globalism, new urbanism: Gentrification as global urban strategy. In Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (Eds.). *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell. (88-103).
- Smith, J.L. (2006a). Public housing transformation: evolving national policy. In L. Bennett, J.L. Smith & P.A. Wright (Eds.), *Where Are Poor People to Live?: Transforming Public Housing Communities* (pp. 19-40). Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.
- Smith, J.L. (2006b). Mixed-income communities: designing out poverty or pushing out the poor?. In L. Bennett, J.L. Smith & P.A. Wright (Eds.), *Where are poor people to live?: transforming public housing communities* (pp. 259-281). Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.
- Sutton, S.E. (2011). Struggling for the right to housing: a critical analysis of the evolution of West Seattle's High Point. In S.E. Sutton & S. P. Kemp (Eds). *The paradox of urban space: inequality and transformation in marginalized communities* (pp. 29-51). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2008a). *Tacoma Housing Authority's review of its homeownership programs*. Tacoma: Author. Retrieved from <http://tacomahousing.net/content/new-salishan>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2008, October 27). *THA announces successful closing on next financial phase of New Salishan* [Press Release] Retrieve from <http://www.tacomahousing.net/content/news-updates/news-updates/tha-announces-successful-closing-next-financial-phase-new-salishan>

- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2009, August 5). *Tacoma Housing Authority announces ribbon cutting for Salishan Phase II* [Press Release]. Retrieved from <http://tacomahousing.net/content/news-updates/articles/tacoma-housing-authority-announces-ribbon-cutting-for-salishan-phase>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2009, April 9). *Federal stimulus funds spur Tacoma Housing Authority apartment improvement projects* [Press Release]. Retrieved from <http://www.tacomahousing.net/content/news-updates/articles/federal-stimulus-funds-spur-tacoma-housing-authority-apartment>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2010a). *Salishan: Community and Support Services HOPE VI grant close-out report*. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2011a). *Salishan campus community survey data report*. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2011b). *Dr. William Mount's video on Salishan: Some notes* [Press Release]. Retrieved from <http://www.tacomahousing.net/content/news-updates/articles/dr-william-mount%E2%80%99s-video-salishan-some-notes>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013, May 22). *Tacoma Housing Authority announces sale of 143 single family lots in New Salishan* [Press Release]. Retrieved from [http://www.tacomahousing.net/sites/default/files/print\\_pdf/Newsworthy/2013-05-22DRHortonTHAPressRelease.pdf](http://www.tacomahousing.net/sites/default/files/print_pdf/Newsworthy/2013-05-22DRHortonTHAPressRelease.pdf)
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013a). *New Salishan*. [Web Page]. *Tacoma Housing Authority*. Retrieved from <http://www.tacomahousing.net/content/new-salishan>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013b). *New Salishan development (Mostly in pictures)* [PDF]. Retrieved from <http://tacomahousing.net/content/new-salishan>

- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013c). *History of Salishan*. Retrieved from <http://tacomahousing.net/content/new-salishan>
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013d). *Statement of vision, mission and values and Strategic objectives*. Amended by the THA Board: February 27, 2013. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2013e). *New state and local tax revenues attributable to New Salishan*. Dated September 4, 2013. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2014a). *Thanksgiving message*. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority [THA]. (2014b). *Children's savings account for the children of New Salishan, Tacoma, WA*. Revised August 29, 2014. Tacoma: Author.
- Tacoma Housing Authority Board of Commissioners [THA Board]. Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes. Tacoma: Tacoma Housing Authority.
- Tacoma Housing Authority Board of Commissioners [THA Board]. (2007). Board Retreat. Tacoma: Tacoma Housing Authority.
- Taylor, K.-Y. (2013). Back story to the neoliberal moment. *Souls*, 14(3-4), 185–206.
- Taylor, Q. (1995). Swing the door wide: World War II wrought a profound transformation in Seattle's black community. *Columbia Magazine*, 9(2).
- Tegeler, P.D. (2005). The persistence of segregation in government housing programs. In X. de Souza Briggs (Ed.) *The Geography of Opportunity: Race and Housing Choice in Metropolitan America*, (197-216). Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute.
- The Conversation. (2007, April 15). Recap for April 15, 2007 [Meeting Minutes]. Retrieved from <http://conversationtacoma.blogspot.com/2007/04/recap-for-april-15-2007.html>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (n.d.). Unemployment Rate – Seasonally Adjusted [Data File]. Prepared by Google Public Data Explorer (accessed May 12, 2015).

- U.S. Census Bureau. (1960). Population Density, 1960 [Data File]. Prepared by Social Explorer (accessed May 14, 2015).
- U.S. Census Bureau (2000). Social Explorer Census 2000 [Data File]. Prepared by Social Explorer (accessed July 29, 2014).
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). Social Explorer Census 2010 [Data File]. Prepared by Social Explorer (accessed July 29, 2014).
- U.S. Census Bureau (2013). Social Explorer American Communities Survey 2013 5-year Estimate [Data File]. Prepared by Social Explorer (accessed July 29, 2014).
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (1996). *Public housing that works, the transformation of America's public housing*. Washington DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/pubasst/transform.html>
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (2013a). *HOPE VI*. Retrieved from [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/hope6](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/hope6)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (2013b). *About HOPE VI*. Retrieved from [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/hope6/about](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/hope6/about)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (2015a). *Picture of Subsidized Households* [Data File]. Retrieved from <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/picture/yearlydata.html>
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]. (2015b). *State of the cities data system* [Data Set]. Retrieved from <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/socds.html>
- Vale, L.A. (2002). *Reclaiming public housing: A half century of struggle in three public*

- neighborhoods*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wacquant, L. (2009) *Punishing the poor: the neoliberal government of social insecurity*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wacquant, L. (2012) Three steps to a historical anthropology of actually existing neoliberalism. *Social Anthropology*, 20(1), 66-79.
- Ward, K. & England, K. (2007). In K. England and K. Ward (Eds.) *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, People*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (1-22).
- Watt, P. (2008). 'Underclass' and 'ordinary people' discourses: Representing/re-presenting council tenants in a housing campaign. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5(4), 345-357.
- Wilson, D. (2009). Introduction: Racialized poverty in U.S. Cities: Toward a refined racial economy perspective. *The Professional Geographer*, 61(2), 139-149.
- Wilson, D., & Grammenos, D. (2005). Gentrification, discourse, and the body: Chicago's Humboldt Park. *Environment and Planning. D, Society & Space.*, 23(2), 295-312.
- Wilson, D. & Sternberg, C. (2012). Chicago realities: The new racialized redevelopment rhetoric in Chicago. *Urban Geography*, 33(7), 979-999.
- Wilson, D. (2007). *Cities and race: America's new black ghetto*. New York: Routledge.
- Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wilson, W. J. (1997). *When work disappears*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Wilson, W.J. & Allen, S. (2013). Reflections on *The Truly Disadvantaged*: A conversation with William Julius Wilson. *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*. Ss, 81-87.

- Wolch, J. (2006). Foreward: Beyond the shadow state? In C. Milligan and D. Conradson (Eds.), *Landscapes of Voluntarism: New Spaces of Health, Welfare, and Governance* (xii-xv). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Woolford, A., & Nelund, A. (2013). The responsibilities of the poor performing neoliberal citizenship within the bureaucratic field. *Social Service Review*, 87(2), 292-318.
- Wyly, E., and Hammel, D. (2004). Gentrification, segregation, and discrimination in the American urban system. *Environment and Planning A*, 36, 1215-41.
- Wyly, E. K., & Hammel, D. J. (1999). Islands of decay in seas of renewal: Housing policy and the resurgence of gentrification. *Housing Policy Debate*, 10(4), 711-771.

## **CRITICAL REFLEXIVITY, DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, AND POSITIONALITY**

“Critical reflexivity,” as applied to social science research and analysis involves reflecting upon one’s research process, the political and ethical questions that come up through the process, and allowing this reflection to shape or transform one’s research. For those who reject the notion of objectivity and universal truth or knowledge, critical reflexivity is an ongoing practice throughout research and analysis, in which social scientists try to understand how their own positionality and uneven power relations are constituting the research, and visa versa. For example, as I conducted my research I reflected upon how my autobiography, positions and relations, and political and ethical commitments shape my research, from sparking my interest in the topic, to compelling my use of a particular theoretical framework, to forming specific relations with interview participants and interpretations of materials.

However, there is some reason to be cautious here. In her book *Visual Methodologies*, Rose (2001) notes that autobiographical reflexivity may be incompatible with discourse analysis. As Rose explains it, “modesty is what discourse analysis substitutes for more conventional notions of reflexivity” (p. 160). That is, instead of emphasizing the making of autobiographical positionality statements, the critically reflexive discourse analyst is careful to think about the truth-effects and discursive productions of his or her own writing, and to understand that writing as both constrained by and emerging from these. I worked from the template of other students’ theses from the University of Washington. My thesis chair worked with me on terms and precision of language. The literatures that I review both sparked and inhibited my thinking. I am not the sole author of my thesis, because I am participating in a discourse community that

requires specific practices, rituals, and orders to be followed. One of these rituals is to claim sole authorship of one's thesis – however, this is just a truth-effect, a function of the thesis discourse.

Nevertheless, I do not think that the solution, as Rose seems to suggest, is to eschew autobiographical statements or reflection on one's positionality and process. This thesis is not *merely* a discourse. The various subject positions, autobiographical details, and ethical and political stances that informed my work are or were enacted on the ground in material ways; they were subject to material constraints and propulsions in addition to discursive ones. Just because one's subject position as author and relations with one's research subjects are discursively produced does not mean that they are not also materially produced and embodied.

Here is an example: my materially conditioned position as a gatekeeper (first as a school teacher and then as a youth services coordinator) in two different partially privatized public housing neighborhoods in King County put HOPE VI redevelopment on my radar. It is true that I was steeped in particular discourse communities, social service provision and education, and this shaped my understanding of the phenomena I researched, this is only partially true. I did learn how to identify and be critical of “deficit thinking” and “culture of poverty” explanations and discourses in these roles; I came to view myself as a helpful presence in the neighborhoods where I worked, another truth-effect of social service discourse. However, I was also involved in caring relationships with the kids and families I worked with, and these did not always follow the social services and education scripts. Through sharing food, laughter, and tears, and being honest and real with people about the personal and structural challenges that they faced, we exceeded our discursively constructed positions of social service provider/client or teacher/family. I saw how much people appreciated and struggled with the housing spaces they had, and what disciplinary scrutiny public housing residents were under to prove their deservingness; I had

conversations about this with my students, and some parents. The experience of caring about children and adults who live in HOPE VI neighborhoods doubtlessly sparked my interest in the topic. It isn't just the discourses that produce my thesis, but also material circumstances and embodied practices, including relationships.

The same biographical and political factors that affected my choice of topic and methodology, also affected my early predictions about what I would find. My analysis of Salishan isn't what I initially thought it would be – an indictment on the housing authority for neoliberalizing a neighborhood and imposing strict behavior control over the tenants while calling it social justice. The argument could be made that this initial analysis has some truth to it, but only partially, and in a way that is qualitatively different from what I expected to find. It just wouldn't be *thorough*, or intellectually rigorous to stop there. I found something quite different from what I predicted and was open both to what the literature says about urban redevelopment, public housing, neoliberalization, race and gender, and to what I saw emerging from my discourse analysis of texts and interviews on Salishan's redevelopment. There are many discourses circulating in and around Salishan about its redevelopment, and I can't interpret the materiality of the neighborhood as straightforwardly "successful" or "unsuccessful". These things are a matter of perspective and position, and come in scales of gray. Would I be as willing to see the scales of gray if I were more personally enmeshed in the neighborhood, or if I had grown up in public housing? How different would the neighborhood look?

I know that my experiences working in neighborhoods like Salishan, and especially working with young people and their families, has continued to color what I see, but I think this happens in a way that is eye-opening rather than limiting. I did not grow up in public housing; I am in no way an insider in Salishan, but I approach the residents of the neighborhood with a

respect that comes from having close relationships with kids and adults who did grow up in public housing.

I have had Salishan residents tell me they are impressed I am brave enough to come in the neighborhood and talk to them, and tell each other “she’s one of us.” Well, I’m not—and how few public housing residents are willing to actually sit down to an on-the-record interview is testament to that. But I *know* that poor people are people, not just one of the factors that need to be accounted for as an organization goes about its mission, and I carry this with me into my analysis. I notice when developers and executives and politicians (in my interviews) list off who they are accountable to, and the last group on their list is the public housing residents. I notice when people are afraid of or look down upon public housing residents. Similarly, I approach the service providers, including the housing authority, with the compassion that comes from seeing what it is to provide services in a neighborhood where the need is perennially greater than what the resources can meet. I think this affects the experiences I have in the neighborhood, and it affects what I notice in the discourses circulating around the neighborhood.

However, I do hold this project at a distance. My personal detachment and intellectual consumption in this project stems from its function in my life: as I conducted my research I knew that I had a time limit. I was trying to get into PhD programs. My field site is like a web or a tangle, and as I spent time there, and with the texts and documents generated around it, I began to unravel it and unlock intersecting layers of meaning. But I have kept myself distanced from Salishan, not because I believe that this is necessary for good research, but because I believe this is necessary for me to be efficient. I was goal-oriented here: Get through my degree and on to a PhD. Do really good work along the way.

There is a way in which my treatment of this project as an intellectual exercise has been greatly rewarding to me as an academic – I have had to practice thinking deeply, linking my empirics to theory, and looking beyond what I thought was going on. But it is an exercise for me, not a life project. It needles at me that I have such an emotional distance from the life of Salishan.

In the end I have had to strike a balance between distance and closeness. This balance is partially constructed through the discourse types and communities that I am a part of, that encourage me to maintain distance, and that enabled me to feel like I was connecting and empathizing with both residents and staff. This balance is also produced through the material circumstances of my life, my job history and career trajectory. In this way, it makes little sense to distinguish between the discursive and the material conditions and positions that I inhabit and that shape my work.

