Baltimore's Urban Fix:
Sounds of Excess and Exclusion in Station North

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Dedicated to John E. Tomassoni,

my grandfather and second wind

– may you rest in peace.

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Preface

In the Ruins of 1968: A History of Baltimore

The year 1968 remains a legendary turning point for Baltimore and the nation as a whole, as racial tensions (along with racial injustice) peaked and ideas of postmodernity were coming into play alongside devastatingly disruptive plans for urban renewal. When I mention the year 1968, it seems everyone has a story. Not just on a scholarly level, or a political level, but for the everyday human in America, that number means something. And those stories get passed down. A friend, Jenny Mikulski, writes of the riots in Baltimore and her family's barbershop:

> "My Mom and Dad were newly married, living above my Dad's uncle's barber shop in East Baltimore. He gave them a deal on rent to look after the place sometimes. That weekend they'd gone to the beach spur of the moment; the uncle thought they were home and left the store, lights on, radio playing... and it so it was empty, and left untouched, during the riots & as other places were looted." (Mikulski, Personal Exchange, 2012)

In this inescapable, framing, watershed political moment, which some say gave birth to postmodernity itself, and the politics of gentrification/urban redevelopment were forever changed, it's true. But the process had already begun, and perhaps ever was. Therefore, I use 1968 as a pivot through which I tell portions of Baltimore's history that are relevant to my argument. The non-linear nature of this section allows me to move back and forth in time to reveal the complicated way in which the present and past are interwoven - in Baltimore's changing urban spaces.

1968 symbolized a coming to bear of racial inequality as it played out - spatially, in the city and in the nation. Old wounds, still raw, were not mended by the Civil Rights movement, and in this vein, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "The Other America" speech was given at Grosse Pointe High School on March 14, 1968, just weeks before his death. He spoke of two America's in order to highlight the stark economic contrast, worth quoting at length:

> "There are two Americas. One America is beautiful for situation. In this America, millions of people have the milk of prosperity and the honey of equality flowing before them. This America is the habitat of millions of people who have food and material necessities for their bodies, culture and education for their minds, freedom and human dignity for their spirits. In this America children grow up in the sunlight of opportunity. But there is another America. This other America has a daily ugliness about it that transforms the buoyancy of hope into the fatigue of despair. In this other America, thousands and thousands of people, men in particular walk the streets in search for jobs that do not exist. In this other America, millions of people are forced to live in vermin-filled, distressing housing conditions where they do not have the privilege of having wall-to-wall carpeting, but all too often, they end up with wall-to-wall rats and roaches. Almost forty percent of the Negro families of America live in sub-standard housing conditions...." (King, "The Other America")

1940s Highway Mania

True to the details King supplied, Baltimore's housing was in disrepair and all of the working class, especially inner city blacks were experiencing major economic pains through the 1960s. But white negligence and black suffering were built directly into the urban landscape, planned even in the 1940s. The idea that the city could be improved if, and only if, the slums were cleared out gave birth to a specific type of urban development project – highways.

Highways were major undertakings requiring deep pockets and great amounts of space, but were viewed by planners and the city government as the ultimate in urban renewal - a knock-it-down and build-over-it strategy for fixing the city. Highway officials at no point seemed interested in differentiating between black neighborhoods and blighted ones (Lieb 65).

To begin the urban renewal process through highway building in the 1940s, Baltimore's officials contacted Robert Moses, New York City's post-war urban planner extraordinaire and one of the most polarizing individuals to ever prioritize highways over public transit. Similar to his approach to paving over the slums of New York, Moses recommended that no less than 200 city blocks be destroyed for the creation of the Franklin St. Expressway, also known as Route 40 (which I can attest is now a winding and confusion connection of existing roads). Moses' 1944 plan made his intentions quite clear, as he stated explicitly that "some of the slum areas through which the Franklin Expressway passes are a disgrace to the community, and the more of them that are wiped out the healthier Baltimore will be in the long run" (Moses). However, some of these neighborhoods ended up being white working-class, and once they got involved with anti-road protests the highway plan's failure was ensured. Nevertheless, years had passed and damage from this and other plans had taken a major toll on black neighborhoods.

As such, Baltimore's ghettos quickly became sectioned-off casualties of "ham-fisted and poisonous urban-renewal and transportation policies that undermined the city they were supposed to be saving" (Lieb 52). They were so before and after the riots, which I argue along with other scholars of Baltimore's history, were a symptom rather than cause of later (continued) urban decline. The impending doom of clearance due to urban renewal projects left no room for black residents to invest in their own neighborhoods – why bother if they were just getting paved over? And by 1968, the devaluation of black neighborhoods had ruinous results.

Post-War Deindustrialization & Suburbanization

Baltimore experienced an industrial climax due to war spending in the 1950s. Before World War II, it was a merchant capital city, trading with Latin America and Cuba for things like sugar. Baltimore didn't truly become an industrial town until the brief period when ships and steel were being produced for warfare in the 1940s and 1950s, leading to an influx of workers to the city, mainly African Americans from the Carolinas. Without military demand, the steel and ship industries declined, leaving those populations who had migrated out of work. In the context of the Civil Rights movement and deindustrialization in Baltimore, racial tensions started to peak in the late 1950s and into the 1960s.[1] By 1968, ethnic neighborhoods had been established, but were experiencing major poverty due to the declining industrial base. People who lived in neighborhoods slated for clearance under the auspices of urban renewal and a new highway learned to care less about the places where they abided. In this way, urban planning policies continually treated black neighborhoods as disposable.

When the war was over and the GI Bill was introduced, a major pattern of suburbanization led to the first decline in Baltimore's population since its founding. In addition to the GI Bill, ethnically mixed neighborhoods experienced blockbusting between the 1950s-1960s. *The Baltimore Sun* aided the process by classifying housing advertisements according to race and using headlines like "Negroes Encroaching" while printing then unsubstantiated claims

[1] David Harvey describes this process: "Industrial capital started to take off big time in the 1920s-1930s and really consolidated very big in World War II. World War II was the time when the steel industry, the ship building industry, all those things, that's when Baltimore became a very solid blue collar town. At that time there was a very strong migration of African Americans, particularly from the Carolinas, even the Lumbee Indians who still exist over in Fells Point, they still have their community over there, and came from North Carolina in that time to work in the shipbuilding industry and the steel industry. So this was a big period of migration and industrial labor. So after World War II, when things quieted down, a lot of their population suffered the same fate as Rosie the Riveter and they were told to go home, but they didn't go home. They stayed in the city and that was then when you started to find some of the racial tensions becoming very, very, very difficult in the city during the 1950s-1960s." ("Speech Overlooking Federal Hill 2009)

about devastated property values. Baltimore had reached a demographic peak due to the industrialization of the 1950s. But by 1960, 48% of the metropolitan population had moved to the suburbs (Csicsek 78). Not surprisingly, 1960 was also the year in which Baltimore became officially a majority Black city (Baum 156).

A wave of suburban politicians with suburban values followed, including one Spiro T. Agnew who, as Governor from 1967-1969, approached the riots as a divide between suburb and city as much or more than a racial divide (Csicsek 78). Although Agnew seemed to show a commitment to civil rights in the years surrounding the riots, it tended to be on his own terms (80). In response to the riots, he drew a hard line, shifting to conservative because he did not view civil disobedience to be a legitimate response to political inequality. He saw himself as the protector of "average citizens" from an unruly and violent minority.

As a consequence of his response, he gained popularity and fame from conservatives around the country, running with Nixon in two election cycles. His response was symbolic of the white perspective on the riots as "senseless violence and destruction," whereas blacks viewed the riots as a "fight for equality." (Schneider "Summer of Fire") Further, the riots seemed to highlight the growing urban-suburban divide by enhancing white perceptions of the city as being dangerous, leading to a prioritization of policies around safety and security, and years later, surveillance (Csicsek 85).

From Thursday to Sunday, From Sorrow to Anger

Thomas D'Alesandro III was elected Mayor of Baltimore in 1967 and won, in part, due to his progressive stance on school desegregation. He was a smart politician in that he chose to

work with blacks against discrimination in a city where their vote could win him the election. Four months into his term, King was assassinated and the riots began.

When Martin Luther King, Jr. died on Thursday, April 4th, 1968 , Thomas D'Alesandro, then mayor, held his breath. His public response was mournful and commemorative, hoping against hope that the churches could help the African-American population in Baltimore mourn on Sunday morning. But by Saturday afternoon, the black community had moved from sorrow to extreme anger and rioting began (Carney 92). Disturbances erupted, order broke down, and the city police couldn't handle the huge extent of the civil disobedience.[2] D'Alesandro was forced to call in Agnew for support from the National Guard which, according to oral histories of black residents, were placed largely on the borders of black neighborhoods so rioting didn't seep into white ones (Carney 95). David Harvey describes the situation as follows during his *City from Below* informal lecture while overlooking the Inner Harbor from the vantage point of Federal Hill:

> *"And in fact, the end of the 1960s, early 1970s saw the city in a desperate situation which followed upon the uprisings in the city, and after the assassination of Martin Luther King. At that time a large portion of the inner city – there were fires, there was*

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[2] "Rioting, looting, and arson worsened and then largely subsided by Tuesday evening. Six persons had been killed, and injuries had reached 600, including 50 policemen. By the end, on Friday, 5,512 people had been arrested, nearly all black, about 1 in every 75 black citizens. There had been 1,208 major fires, and 1,049 businesses were destroyed. Nearly 12,000 troops had occupied the city -- 1 soldier for every 75 of Baltimore's 900,000 residents." (Baum 160)

[2]Levy echoes Baum's statistics, revealing some different impacts of the riots: "Over the course of one week, 5,512 men and women were arrested. Ninety-two percent of the arrestees were black; 85 percent were males. The plurality of arrestees were over the age of thirty. Sixty-three percent of all arrestees were charged with curfew violations and an additional 7 percent with disorderly conduct. Although 910 men and women were charged with larceny, many charges were later dropped because of the difficulty in proving them in a court of law. Only thirteen men (no women) were charged with arson, few of whom were convicted.... Suffice it to say that authorities resorted to extraordinary measures, ranging from holding many arrestees in the city's main indoor arena to getting defendants to accept pleas to lesser charges in exchange for light sentences, during the crisis." (Levy 10)

looting, there was violence. They had to bring the tanks in, the national guard in to control the city, and basically the sense was that the city was in a situation where nobody could possibly want to invest in it – nobody would want to live here given that almost everybody through the 1960s who'd had money had fled the city and suburbanized, so the big problem was what to do." (Harvey 2009)

The rioting mostly ended by Tuesday evening, and on Thursday, Agnew summoned between 80-100 black leaders of Baltimore to ream them out for failing to contain their populace. Deeply insulted, many walked out before Agnew finished his talk, especially since it was felt that the African-American vote had helped Agnew land the vote two years prior.

Black Grief, White Apathy

King knew how whites responded to riots that had already occurred, and his analysis was precisely accurate in post-riot Baltimore when he wrote "I'm absolutely convinced that a riot merely intensifies the fears of the white community while relieving the guilt." (King "The Other America") White anxieties about black violence were rationalized (Baum 160), in part due to Agnew's public blaming of black leaders and in part due to a biased media portrayal. Thereafter, D'Alesandro and other white liberals felt justified in having a more callous approach to urban racial injustice, as if their trust had been violated (Baum 161). They were ready to wash their hands entirely clean of the inner city racial mess. Due to Agnew's response, black leaders felt their years of civility prior to the riots "counted for nothing" and felt they were left without a voice. Black city residents quickly grew to mistrust the whites who backed and cheered on Agnew's racism (161). In short, although daily life resumed and some businesses were revived, racial inequality was never so stark in Baltimore.

Schaefer's Reign of Neglect

First, deindustrialization left the inner city destitute; then urban renewal threatened to break up neighborhoods that were hanging on. Racial mistrust meant that by 1974, schools remained segregated as "business, education, and church leaders no longer supported integration" (Baum 166). Federal intervention did nothing to counter the ambivalence felt by blacks and whites alike about desegregation. Baum describes these ambivalences as, first, the whites' paradoxical "American dilemma" in which they both feared blacks and were in favor of civil rights. And second, black ambivalence hovered between wanting a color-blind society and an entirely separate one in which they could maintain their own cultural and political power (171).

Baum sees these growing out of the racial sentiments which had emerged directly from the 1968 riots. It appears that the political response to the riots engendered the most dangerous climate of all - one of widespread apathy and hopelessness born of a fear of talking about race at all. In this way, neighborhood degradation and the riots were caught in a vicious cycle. With suburbanization and white flight, income from taxes decreased hugely[3] and the 1970s ushered in a new, terrible era of neglect for social services, inner city poverty following further deindustrialization, and educational under-spending.[4]

Right when WWII was ending, Baltimore-native, William Donald Schaefer, who would later become a four-term mayor, was elected to the City Council precisely because of his interest in city planning and housing. From that vantage point, Schaefer watched the 1968 riots and subsequently rose to power – and stayed in it – nearly until his death in 2011. The reprioritization of public funds can be blamed almost entirely on Schaefer. In effect, Schaefer

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[3] Taxation is still a major source of concern for Baltimore city residents, especially as it is applied unevenly.

[4] "By the middle of the 1970s, Baltimore's highway ghettoes were indistinguishable from its riot ghettoes. The riots were a symptom, and not the cause, of the epidemic of abandonment that was spreading through the city's residential neighborhoods." (Lieb, p. 52)

destroyed the educational budget of the city such that there was no expansion of education monies during the 1970s-1980s as he focused on city-building, infrastructural changes (Reutter 2011). This devastated the city's already problematic school system, which had a catastrophic effect on education and the prospects of those who had already been deprived of access to a decent education before the 1950s. (A reference can easily be made here again to King's "The Other America" speech.) So, as the city's poor were hurting the most, Schaefer allowed complete educational decline in favor of public/private partnerships to rebuild the Inner Harbor using TIF financing to redistribute funds, which I describe further in Chapter V, "The Spatio-Racial Fix."

The Inner Harbor: A Public/Private Fiasco

From the 1970s to the late 1980s, Baltimore was in the midst of very rapid economic transformation emphasizing the reconstruction of downtown and the reorganization of downtown as a consumer place and office space. In 1969, when Harvey arrived in Baltimore to teach at Johns Hopkins University, the Inner Harbor didn't exist as such, but was in the process of being pondered as a redevelopment project. A coalition of people interested in revitalizing the city for commercial purposes formed, and it included people of a liberal persuasion like Harvey who had their minds set on improving the city from a social justice perspective.

In 1970, the city held a fair in order to mend some of the wounds from 1968 and demonstrate that Baltimore had a wide range of diverse neighborhoods with strong ethnic character. The fair went over so well that it repeated for a few more years, drawing 2 million people downtown each time, which implied that "the city was not necessarily dead, that therefore there was a possibility to try to reconstruct a downtown that would initially bring the population together" (Harvey 2009). The well-known planner responsible for the design of Columbia, Maryland, Jim Rouse, suggested a revitalization of the Inner Harbor around the idea

of the city fair, with pavilions and a festival-like atmosphere. Some of this plan was built, and many other ideas were in the works, but most significant was the role Schaefer played in developing public/private partnerships in the redevelopment process.[5]

Schaefer espoused the notion of a public/private partnership at a time when banks were reluctant to invest in the city. That being the case, he set up a reconstruction bank of his own that existed as a private, quasi-public entity, which created a type of shadow government where the real decisions were being made about commercial development (Harvey 2009). The city subsidized a number of highrise buildings, bearing all of the risk but receiving none of the reward for structures that served mainly upper class residents remaining in the city and tourists.

The failed investment in these buildings in turn created a need for further investment and development through the early 1980s as the job market was collapsing. Wave after wave of investment was required to "feed the downtown monster" (*ibid*). Ideally, when the public investment paid off, there would be enough profit from the venture to "fix" the rest of the city. In Harvey's eyes and in mine, this has not happened. The city is divided and fragmented starkly between rich and poor and has been since the end of WWII, if not since its establishment. Any success of the Inner Harbor, or any other district that has been redeveloped since, has not touched the poor of the city except in the case that they might have to move out of the way for it to happen.

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[5] David Harvey describes the public/private dilemma: "This is a principle of course which is basic to the whole neoliberal period: In effect, what you do is privatize the profits and socialize the risks. The private takes all the profits, and if there's a problem then the city is left with it. Now, the interesting thing about this was the city became so heavily involved that ... the investments in the inner city were not really paying off. I mean, the argument always was, "Well, if we get this stuff downtown, then the property taxes are going to be high and we're going to then be able to use that money to provide services to the rest of the city." But by the time you got to the middle of the 1970s or even into the 1980s, you were not taxing the downtown to its full capacity *at all*. And in fact, you were making net losses a lot of the time in terms of the service provisions and all the rest of it. So in a sense, the public was subsidizing the corporate sector all of the time and at the same time finding it wasn't getting enough profitability." (Harvey 2009)

The Larger Context Since the 1980s

Baltimore's development as a city has followed a similar trajectory as other Rustbelt cities in the US. In *Cities and Race: America's New Black Ghetto*, David Wilson outlines three key changes that have happened over the last 30 years to Rustbelt cities, with special concern for how these changes affect poor black communities. First, he notes that poverty deepens and suffering increases among the black poor as persistent inequality makes education and jobs inaccessible. Second, ghettoes are described in media and policy in ways that are damaging and debilitating ways to black social capital, citing disorder and social pathology as the norm. And third, the prison system hangs over the relationship of the black poor with the city in myriad ways (73). Further, whatever improvements have been made to the economy in the last 30 years have not been available to the entire city population and have been ephemeral at best. Wilson paints a picture of a swift, but transient economy stabilization during the dot.com years followed by a deep recession after 2000 fueled by the collapse of the digital sector. In the past decade, years of decrease in the GDP have proven "devastating" to jobs, manufacturing, and investment (102).

Currently, urban scholars such as Wilson and Harvey see no end in sight. The ensuing effort to cultivate a productive and pro-business climate only leaves room for cities to focus on growth and re-growth. In order for the city to survive, capital must move and grow. Whatever is lost in the process was nothing but a necessary sacrifice for city-survival. Moreover, whatever might stand in the way of urban development is comparable to a parasite, draining the city's life force, or worse, a terrorist threatening to destroy progress itself. The Right to the City, proclaimed by the likes of Harvey, has been utterly lost in the face of urban revitalization that seems so beneficent on its surface - aiming to please, to entertain, and to bring economic

advantages to a once dangerous and poor neighborhood – like Charles North through the designation of Station North.

I. Expectations

I have been gathering debris of sound in Station North off and on for the past five years, stories and makeshift moments that lend themselves to any number of ideas and interpretations.[6] This dissertation spans the past five years of my ethnographic research of everyday life in Station North, an arts and culture district in Baltimore that's under pressure as a site for redevelopment, placemaking, and gentrification. It also juxtaposes sonic remnants taken from daily life with the planned vision for what Station North ought to be - a fix for a city in crisis, a vibrant and safe arts community, and an economic haven in the midst of complete desperation born of poverty.

In Baltimore, as in many other cities, there are swaths of marginalized land that self-sustain through drugs, alcohol, prostitution, and funeral parlors. In advanced marginalized places, the state has a bounded, territorial way of viewing humans as detritus, decomposing, useless messes just waiting for demolition, cleansing, and making productive. There are certain mysteries about this city... it's shrinking and the economy is declining despite the city's supposed best efforts. I'll state up front that all of my research is pointing towards my biggest discovery in the process of research – that the city government is so concerned with quick fixes, through renovations and entertainment, that it is completely neglecting the real systemic issues. Without fixing those, people are not staying in the long term.

[6] "Stories about places are makeshift things. They are composed with the world's debris." (de Certeau 107)

Population decline has led to its current black majority status was accentuated during white flight in the ruins of the 1968 riots, in the ruins of industry, in the shifting US political economy, amidst what Harvey would call 'flexible accumulation' - meaning that social institutions that once cradled the middle class eroded while labor and laborers became increasingly expendable. Population decline is just one way of looking at it, and I expand beyond and beneath this urban issue by asking a series of layered questions.

In this research, I ask (1) questions about mutually formative processes; (2) a question about the consequences of how these processes interact in the urban sphere; and (3) a question of method, since I've adopted a method that requires both explanation and exploration:

1: Questions around gentrification processes and everyday life

How does the redevelopment of an arts/culture/entertainment district affect changes to everyday life of residents in and around Station North? More specifically, and in reverse, how does everyday life of marginalized Baltimore residents affect the redevelopment process taking place in Station North?

2: A question of urban consequence

What are the racial, spatial, and cultural consequences of planned urban redevelopment in tension with the everyday lives of marginalized residents?

3: A question of method

How can a little-used medium of sound be used in a geographic study of everyday life to reveal the stakes of urban redevelopment?

While I argue that the processes of people living out their daily lives and major redevelopment are mutually transformative, I also explain that the gentrification process is

given priority over everyday life by urban developers, arts boosters, and city government who want to believe gentrification is a dominant force. The dissertation sets out to explain, from this standpoint, everyday life is an invisible force that, though bracketed off in the urban planning process, is a force indeed. The challenge in my research became how to innovatively and evocatively capture the fragmented moments, flows, and secrets of everyday life in Station North. Rather than focusing on visual and textual explanations alone, which are also the preferred tools of top-down urban planning methods, I chose to record sounds throughout Station North over the course of five years which are unavoidable and unavoidably attached to everyday life and build them into an interactive sound map.

My hope is that the experience of listening to the sound map reveals the mixed results and practices falling outside of theoretical constructions of place, yielding an exploratory account of the antagonisms and, in some ways, competition between urban redevelopment and everyday life. In the course of doing fieldwork, I quickly learned something that has since been reaffirmed during each encounter I've had with Station North as a neighborhood - this focus of gentrification around the Arts in Baltimore has not fully developed into a realization of the intention that the city has for the economic and cultural identity of the place. I implicate artists, activists, residents, and tourists alongside planners, developers, and investors as part of the "planning vision," but simultaneously recognize that these same actors contribute to unintended consequences of everyday life. By engaging with aspects of daily life that are not part of the planning vision, I performed ethnographic fieldwork that was full of stark contrasts, laden with meaning derived from being in a place. In the following chapters, I situate these moments against each other in the hopes that they, like the accompanying sounds, will reveal the differing desires and outcomes of people and organizations present in Station North's ongoing redevelopment.

In questioning the stakes of redevelopment, I probe the consequences of my analysis of urban morphology. Because current redevelopment is mired in Baltimore's racially unjust history, there are inescapable questions about the interplay between race, culture, and space that call into question gentrification's effect on social justice. But rather than repeat this argument, my research enriches and adds to it by effectively capturing moments of everyday existence that consistently escape notice by using a new methodology -- sound mapping. That which escapes attention is the same that thwarts the all-encompassing plan to which prior and ongoing gentrification studies wholly object to. In the process, the sounds and text reveal a story which has yet gone untold, though it is relevant and presently occurring...

Welcome to Station North

"Welcome to Station North: Mission"

"By promoting and supporting artists and cultural organizations in the District, the Station North Arts & Entertainment District seeks to create a vibrant neighborhood where arts, artists and entertainment venues flourish in the midst an economically diverse community with an abundance of healthy residential, retail and commercial offerings." (StationNorth.com 2012)

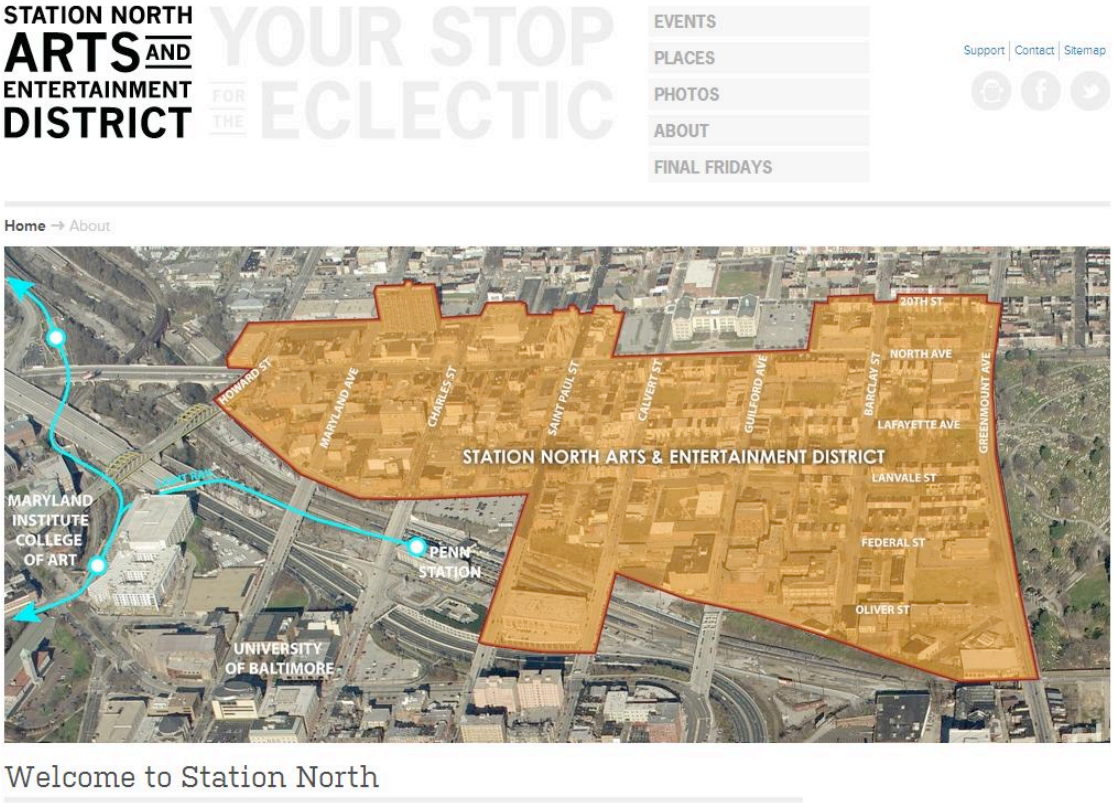

FIGURE 1 . STATION NORTH'S SIGNIFICANT BOUNDARIES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

Screenshot with map of Station North's significant geography and relationships, particularly MICA, University of Baltimore (in Mount Vernon) and Penn Station to the exclusion of all things North (StationNorth.org 2012)

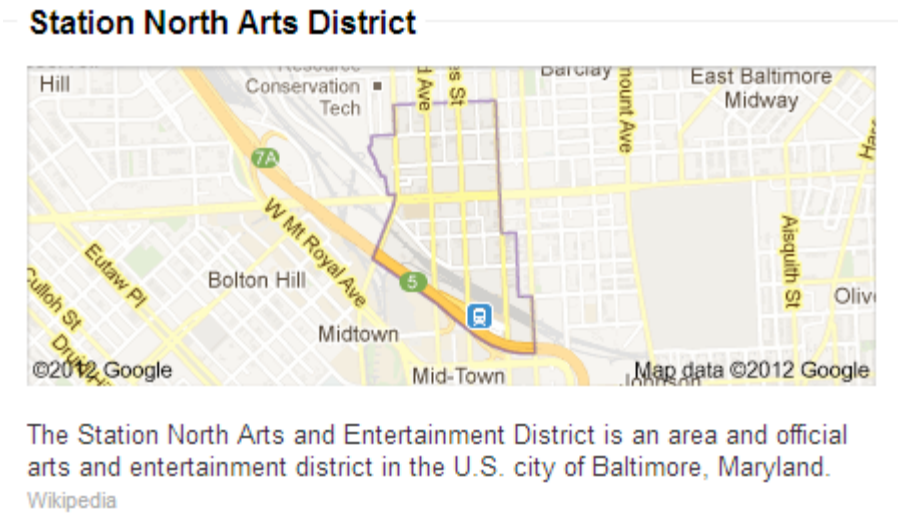

FIGURE 2 . STATION NORTH ACCORDING TO GOOGLE MAPS

(Google Maps, 2012) This outline more closely resembles Charles North.

Station North is an arts, culture, and entertainment district. It has become a destination, a place to spend some time, with a role in Baltimore's hoped-for revival. It's supposed to attract two kinds of economic development – (1) tourists for sales and hotel tax and (2) homeowners by presenting a welcoming and culturally rich atmosphere of consumption and opportunity (or the consumption of opportunity). How is it working out? It's certainly not going according to the Baltimore Development Corporation's (BDC's) 2008 plan. Although Penn Station appears to be thriving and there are identifiable points of entry (See Fig. 3), the redevelopment has been incredibly patchy and fragmented.

FIGURE 3 . WELCOME TO STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Just over a decade ago, there was no Station North. The neighborhood was designated as an arts and culture district in 2001 by the Baltimore City Government, replacing the crime-ridden, impoverished, and demographically heterogeneous neighborhood once named Charles North. The neighborhood's failing housing market had lent itself to low-income artists in the DIY, or Do-It-Yourself, subcultural scene. The neighborhood had a majority black population, some of whom were impoverished and participated in illegal economic activities. Popular bars, music venues, drug trade, and prostitution made for a dynamic and often dangerous nightlife. The opportunity to recreate the place with potential for profit became and remains a discursive

move on the part of local policy makers to encourage investment in the neighborhood. The goal of reinvestment has combined with the desire to rid Baltimore of the negative effects of violence and illegal economic activities that were and are prevalent in Charles North, and these motivations were and are tangled up with the memory of Charles North as an uninterrupted place, as well as its economic underground and racial composition.

Studies that focus on a neighborhood like this often critique the gentrification process and ensuing displacement of former residents on the basis of race and class. These studies set gentrification up as this all powerful force of redevelopment that has potential for providing the city with new economic growth, but my project is positioned to describe Station North through stories, as a place that is understood and created by many. And there are lots of different opinions... Through Georges Bataille, an economic theorist, it can be understood also as a celebratory space of nonproductive expenditure. Through the New York Times, a charming, if ramshackle neighborhood containing murals. For tourists, a "stop for the eclectic." For others, a space that's relatively safe from heroin addicts and transvestites. For even others, still not safe enough.

Meanwhile, there are Others inhabiting the space who by rejecting regulated forms of labor, produce instead unpredictable happenings on a daily basis deemed criminal, pathological, dangerous... or artistic, full of potential, eclectic, depending on how capital functions around creativity and depending on their race. The existence of all these things at once, this layering of places, is enabled by its status as a border between bad/good, white/black, rich/poor, and enabled by all the peoples, places, and stories that pass through, have passed through, will pass through. I provide a sonic window into those emergent stories through my methods of documentation.

This case study of the Station North neighborhood illustrates an immediately relevant project meant to improve the city as a whole by attracting capital through businesses, tourism, and taxes. However, the social challenges, political ramifications, and economic contradictions carried by the gentrification and reinvestment of Station North offer a chance to explore the real consequences of a spatial fix for an impoverished urban neighborhood.

The Sound Map

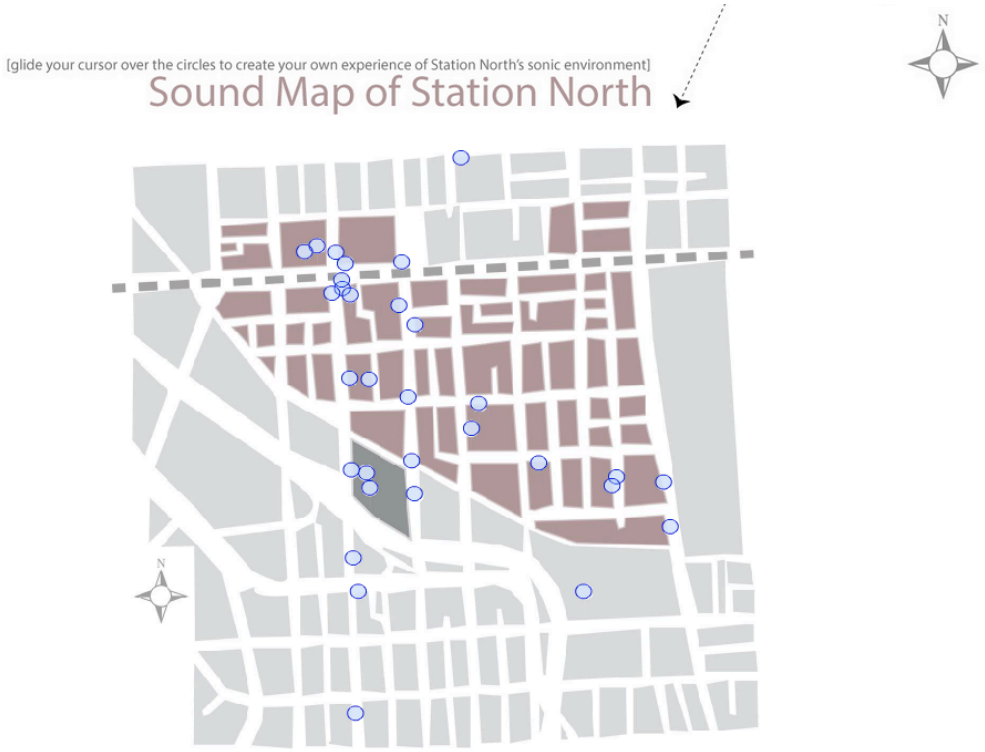

FIGURE 4 . STATION NORTH SOUND MAP CREATED BY AUTHOR . AVAILABLE AT JKOTTING.COM/SOUNDMAP.HTML

It is tricky for geographers to attempt to surpass the constraints of typical qualitative analysis by bridging into multimedia and more artistic methods that include multiple frameworks; ways of looking at causal relations; systems that do not exist in isolation; arrangements of individuals with multiple goals; a series of moments; or different types of

interactions in space. It is not surprising that new representation methods have developed concurrently with new theoretical approaches in geography. However, it is surprising that geographers haven't taken as much advantage of available technologies and techniques from outside the discipline as they have from inventive theoretical approaches. The goal of sonic representation is to present a complex evocation of a social system that allows the interpreter to engage critically and creatively with the information.

I define my approach to research as ethnographic and the process as "new ethnography." Because I'm also attempting to engage readers/listeners in an immersive sense of place, this dissertation is a "new media art dissertation" in addition to an ethnographic one. In fact, the two fit well together in the form of a digital sound map. Typically, sounds are presented as singular bites or longer, synthesized (synthetic) compositions born from the mind of a sound artist or, occasionally, ethnographer. Like many others, I have recorded memories of place in transition and explored its nooks and crannies, hidden throughts, silences, overlooked moments, and have done so in order to reveal what is not explored often by participants in space, people elsewhere, city government, and sound art addicts.

However, in order to yield imaginative thinking about how everyday space functions, my process has been not to synthesize or interpret but to offer experience of listening. I produce this opportunity for affective, interactive listening in this new media format of a sound map. A sound map derives from the way sound, technology, and culture have combined in recent decades into new assemblages of media that are ripe for experimentation and analysis. This sound map will act as a metaphor and narrative of public, urban exploration that provides an evocative documentation of the experience of daily life in Station North.

A significant methodological and ethnographic contribution I make here is in the form of an online Flash-based sound map at www.jkotting.com/soundmap.html with a visual map I

created on which to supply points of sound for exploration. Sounds range from 10 seconds to 1 minute long and play when rolled over by the mouse cursor of the user/listener. Currently, there are existing online sound mapping projects and interactive sound sharing projects, but my research will add to the current body of work in three ways. First, in recognizing the current limitations of media sharing in open source mapping APIs, I integrate Google Maps with the dynamic online animation software of Flash CS5 to create a new sound map type. This type of sound map will be experienced through a projection of the self – moving the mouse will enliven areas of sound simultaneously, based on proximity as opposed to current maps which promote single sounds through clicking or multiple sounds which can be modified only through volume (not movement or choice).

Second, I have adopted Coolidge's concept of "cacophonography," the overlay of dissonant, chaotic sounds with the more visual study of the earth's surface. What better way to study all the chaos that happens on top of it? I will make use of caconography for the specific case of Station North, rather than the much broader spectrum project of 'anyone, anywhere' or "as many voices as possible" (Coolidge, 2010). By limiting the zoom and scope, my project will allow for more focused insights into the neighborhood itself.

Third, I have integrated oral history into the acoustic ecology of the map so that stories and voices from people are partially layered with the stories and voices from non-human sources. Oral history is the most tried and true of methods used for this project, as sound mapping is newer to geographic studies. While recording human oral history has been used by social scientists for many years, treating non-human sounds as worthy-of-preservation has not yet become integral to the social sciences. Acoustic ecologists and environmental studies have developed solid methods of preserving soundscapes of endangered places where humans are nearly absent, so combining these approaches will yield a uniquely textured and evocative

interpretation of Station North, one which explores and offers opportunities to interpret the place from a wide variety of sonic perspectives.

In the case of Station North, oral history recorded now will preserve experiences and opinions of local residents with regard to the changes of the district, perceptions of everyday life, and larger concerns about tensions between the planned vision and lived experience of the place. Layered with ambient sounds and sound signals of Station North, this fieldwork will produce a sound map that reveals messages from everyday life that may contradict positive views of gentrification and neighborhood redevelopment. The interactive, layered map sounds are an opening to move beyond the descriptive and evocative in the dissertation text, which will engage with the relationships of "fixing" urbanity in Baltimore.

Playing with meaning by using a sound map also allows for playful analysis of place. Voegelin writes of the relationship between sound and place: "Sound maps the world not as borders and nations but as dynamic trajectories of individuals moving, being moved and remaining in place. Sound casts doubt on whether a town, an architectural site, a room, a spatial landmark and border actually exists as a solid (spatial) fact, however firmly it is established on a map, or evidenced in a slide collection or a photographic tourist brochure." (Voegelin, 2010 p. 144) The relationship between sound and place thus complicates any ideas about belonging to or exclusion from a place because place is in fact revealed as a much more dynamic and much less static timespace than any planned vision might imagine it to be. That doesn't, however, mean that sound itself encourages inclusivity or by necessity rejects segregating forces. Instead, sound emerges from complicated relationships forged by those things and the way everyday life is lived. Regarding all of the capabilities of sound, I have drawn on Salome Voegelin throughout this section. However, there is something slightly dissatisfying about the last sentence of Voegelin's book as she writes, "The sonic meeting is agonistic rather than antagonistic: it

generates the community, as contingency, in the playful chance of exchange." (190) One might hope for this to be true, but sound also represents tension, in the case of Station North, and even death. Playful? Perhaps... Dire, absolutely. There is a politics to sound that mirrors the politics of space in what LaBelle calls "an acoustic politics of space," in which all sounds are heavy with meaning (LaBelle xix).

Why Sound?

Sound, as a sensation and an artistic medium, can be used to gain specific kinds of insights into a city. Movement and stillness in a city are akin to sound and silence. The still image of a neighborhood redevelopment plan doesn't reveal the richness of movement and layers of history and possible futures. A rich sampling of recordings in a place can portray movement through space and time, but can also betray the supposed boundaries of the place's existence. Treating oral history expansively, sound mapping can reveal many kinds of stories besides the ones told by human voices. Treating the city as a body, sound mapping can reveal how urban places possess "subconscious gestures, grumblings, ties, stretchings, rustlings, unexpected noises..." (de Certeau 175). There are three major objectives at stake in my argument: first, to show sound works through perception to help the human mind discern characteristics of an environment; second, to make use of sound as a virtually untapped resource for study of place; and third, that transformations of place can be captured and represented using layers of sound.

An interactive map can be just an aural collage of everyday sounds and oral histories, but my theoretical considerations of what urbanity means opens up a way to richly move beyond the descriptive and engage the relationships of 'fixing' urbanity in the constantly changing city. The mapping focuses on the analysis of urban 'fixing' while also creating an 'environment' for exploring. The two are not juxtaposed but bound up together, and at times in

opposition. In my ethnographic explorations of the environment in and around Station North by attending events like Artscape and recording there (in 2009) or by focusing on recording at this venue or that street corner, the movement of recording made me extremely aware of things like sidewalks, machines, the crunch of glass on these sidewalks, a roach dying on another, and perfectly laid and restored brick on another. Sounds of construction were juxtaposed in my mind with sounds of women cursing at each other, or the sounds of ladies discussing art patronage and the best route to the Harbor juxtaposed with a man yelling nonsensical words gleefully (either stoned or mentally challenged) a mere half block away. There were safe and unsafe spaces to record. There were musical spaces, bird and bugs, booming bass, people asking for change. It was really inspiring, but I think you can imagine how, when these sounds are attached to specific points or areas, what kinds of stories could be told, or what kind of questions could be raised. The urban fix is working in places, but the places where it's not working are not organized carefully around the edges... they are intermingled and out of control.

The connection between sonic mapping and the process of change is, in a sense, cacophony juxtaposed with the quiet staging of the master plan. Although I draw upon Coolidge's concept of "cacophonography," actual cacophony could easily overwhelm a listener, so I attempted to create sonic layers that can be turned on and off like map layers. The sounds of each layer are like tracks sans mix board controls. The "cacophonography" comes from a brush technique that follows the cursor's movements over the map and 'boosts' the sounds from the area of the brush. The brush is a touch of the cursor without clicking and represents a body brushing through space and encountering sound vibrations - the cursor simply stands in for the body. And the sounds included in the map are as follows in the list below. I provide location,

title, length, and a short ethnographic description. This list is also available as a guide for the sound map.

Sound comes into relationship with a place through the material characteristics of environment and perception: wind rustling leaves on a tree; the actual size, shape, and form of an individual human ear; as well as the ear's location in time and space relative to the leaves on the tree. A sense of place develops, or becomes, through this type of interaction between matter and perception that occur with relation to space and time. Brandon Labelle describes sound as being "promiscuous" and emplaced by teaching us "how to belong, to find place, as well as how not to belong, to drift. To be out of place, and still to search for new connection, for proximity." (LaBelle xvii) Sound is also a tool that people and animals can use to influence changes in place. It can escape the private and move through public spaces. Sound can be such a part of a place's identity that it sets boundaries for behavior and other sounds. Sound waves can even cancel each other out depending on the physical structure of space. Since I'm focusing on public space, I tried to be cognizant of moments when sounds were being used to create place, claim space, or escape private space.

Consequently, there are particular dynamic relationships in space and time through which places form and fall apart. I will argue that action causes vibration to produce sound with a character of extensity, or a sense of deposited and relational distances through space. Further, I argue that no experience of place stands alone in one instant, but possesses duration, or the rhythm through which the present relates to the past and future, thereby offering a sense of time. In other words, perceiving sounds that come from actions in a place allows certain questions to be raised about space and time.

Because sound not only evokes place, but also expresses extensity in space, it also aids in understanding time through duration and memory. In doing so, sound raises new questions

and serves as audible evidence for ethnographic research. Andrea Hammer asks questions and uses sound as evidence. Some of the questions raised in her 2007 article "Audible evidence: on listening to places" include, "How do places speak, and how might attention to hearing produce compelling, site-specific work?" and "How do we hear the voice of the world in which we participate?" (Hammer) Sound is extraordinarily complicated, very rarely pure, and often involved multiple processes of movement that irradiate into so many vibrations that human ears somehow interpret as meaningful, especially when the sounds are recurring. On a small scale, this can happen as a car door – a recognizable sound that a human learns to understand after one childhood instance of climbing into a car. On a large scale, entering into a location can carry wider, deeper, and more complex meanings that form into memories through perception and never can be reproduced in quite the same way. Places witness things that reverberate through space and time. And we can tap in using a sound recorder, headphones, and our very own ears. Sound synchs up with the visual so humans can locate themselves in space and time through perception and memory. Rick Altman sums up this perceptual phenomenon: "… the sound asks where? And the image responds here!" (qtd. in Hammer)

Wherever here is, sound is available because vibrations are happening all the time, even when the human ear can't discern them. All objects vibrate and, in doing so, send "air molecules in rapidly moving waves of pressure toward a funneling ear, where they are amplified, directed toward a tympanic membrane, transformed into fluid waves, and ultimately transformed into nerve impulses." (Hammer) More than moving air molecules, sound moves our bodies, and as we have seen, it moves and shapes changes in place even while affecting perception.

FIGURE 5 . SINGLE CARROT THEATRE IN STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Every January, Single Carrot Theatre in Station North does a reading of names – all of the homicide victims in Baltimore from the previous year. I missed my chance to record this year's reading, but I have experienced something similar on the banks of the Mississippi in St. Paul, when the Heart of the Beast Theater asks the audience to speak the names of their dead during a yearly Halloween outdoor play. The Single Carrot homicide readings are, I hear, a powerful moment of a community mourning many deaths that brings a sense of both great tension and relief. This kind of sound, among other sounds of sirens, gunshots, and weeping, can be thought of as a long spread of death sounds overlaid on the time-space of Station North and surrounding territories.

The tensions of urban places are available through sound, to be understood and interpreted so that new imaginings of place can be approached. Sound studies therefore approach sound artists and composers of soundscapes with great admiration. Voegelin writes, "Soundscape compositions work to make the listener aware of his acoustic environment, to

extend auditory awareness, and stretch the processes of the listener's own sonic engagement." (Voegelin 31) Further, Voegelin describes the experience of listening to Stini Arn's place-based sound art:

> "Arn records real places and her trajectories through them, and I produce a sound walk in a space of my imagination, preserving the sounds of my own memory in my present listening: thin lines loosely coming together to produce sheer figments of a composition. No sooner have they arrived they dissipate. I can linger on some incidental stories, ignore others, and forge a relationship with other sounds heard in my own acoustic environment. . . . I do not think about Arn's sources anymore as I am moving along her microscopic trips: the places passed are constructed in my imagination, and the duration of this journey is mine rather than hers." (29)

The freedom Voegelin describes as she experiences a piece of place-based sound art emerges from the composition created by Arn. The map I am creating, available online, allows instead the user or listener to guide the composition of various sounds. Nevertheless, her description resonates with what my own research and the resulting sound map mean to accomplish. Hildegard Westerkamp is another artist who has "focused on environmental sound, and... uses location sound to produce places that encourage a focused listening while enticing the production of a new place... [whose] compositions are torn between preservation and invention." (Voegelin 32) The sound map I have created is similarly "torn" or, better yet, dually operating between notions of preservation and invention.

In large part, I am providing moments of sound –ambient, vocal, and otherwise—in transition along threads of time and space; and in doing so, what I am really guiding is a sense of transition between sounds, or the allowance for a transition between sounds on the part of the listener who is self-guided over the sound map. The ability to transition between sounds in the

context of a sound map highlights both the sense of time and sense of space as happening "in a simultaneous drawing out of a non-chronological fantasy all that could ever be." (133) I have attempted to replicate the types of transitions found while walking 'for real' in urban space by offering gentle fades and flows within the points of tension and sources of sound on the map.

The sound map does not make evident, but makes resonant.[7] It treats anyone who uses it (as I've been calling "users") as a performer and potential philosopher hearing allegory in the play of sounds. The sound map asks the user to listen to the past - which also refers to future possibilities of what can happen in the same place - to tell a story and become part of it. It has the ability to take advantage of what the act of *listening* is, in the words of Jean-Luc Nancy, "to be straining toward a possible meaning, and consequently one that is not immediately accessible" (6).[8] In trying to make sense of sonic resonance instead of a visual depiction of place, a user replicates the way sound spreads in space and resounds both inside and outside of one's body while going about daily life.

The Planned Vision vs. Everyday Life

In this dissertation, I hypothesize that there are parts of everyday life that are neither part of the urban planning process, nor considered useful to it. Sound recording and mapping can help represent otherwise ignored phenomena that escape flattening processes of gentrification and thereby reveal the consequences of redevelopment to be socially unjust. The

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[7] Why is it that "...*auricular* confession corresponds to a secret intimacy of sin and forgiveness? Why, in the case of the ear, is there withdrawal and turning inward, a making *resonant*, but, in the case of the eye, there is manifestation and display, a making *evident*?" (Nancy 3)

[8] "To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning, or in an edgy meaning of extremity, and as if the sound were precisely nothing else than this edge, this fringe, this margin - at least the sound that is musically listened to, that is gathered and scrutinized for itself, not, however, as an acoustic phenomenon (or not merely as one) but as a resonant meaning, a meaning whose *sense* is supposed to be found in resonance, and only in resonance." (Nancy 7)

process of redevelopment can be thought of in terms of "fixing" the city, and I use the term "fix" consistently to imply the negligence that accompanies that redevelopment process that blindly tunnels its way toward profitability and survival, churning up whatever cultural capital can be gained and scrapping issues of race and justice along the way.

In this critique, I tell a different kind of story about gentrification and urban development, one that is attentive to the details of everyday life that are customarily ignored by both supporters and critics of redevelopment projects such as the one I'm describing – Station North. Using geographic theory and gathered data (discourse analysis and descriptive ethnography in later chapters), I argue that visions for urban redevelopment have unjust racial, spatial, and cultural consequences. The text of this dissertation operates as a critique of urban redevelopment policies and practices by representing less explored and less visible components of everyday life in Baltimore's Station North Arts and Culture District.

I describe how happenings in everyday life that may be insinuated rather than intentional and are not necessarily bound up in planned visions of place, but can crack the hard (or delicate) shell of placemaking strategies. The nonproductive nature (meaning, not for sale in the legal market, or maybe not for sale at all) of everyday life brings me to the first strand of theory I use to disrupt the idea of Station North as a gentrified or gentrifiable space.

Everyday life is a space of "little somethings dreamed up in the course of things." (Stewart *OA* 9) It's the space of being that phenomenologists examine to understand how encounters between bodies in spaces matter. It's the space of meaning that geographers want to understand where the push and pull of status, the embarrassment of income, and the trajectories of movement seem all but natural parts of being a person. When being a person is questioned and the movements of everyday life are revealed as containing meaning, everyday life takes on the appearance of trench warfare in the most subtle moments of interaction,

encounter, and avoidance. Everyday life doesn't feel like warfare. Yet David Wilson writes of unique modes of resistance, both everyday and cultural within its capabilities : "Yet, amid a deeper squeezing of these space and people, we can detect and now discuss a continuance of both flagrant activism and nuanced forms of resistance." (Wilson *Cities* 131) Regardless of its level of subtlety, Wilson sees possibility in small and large demonstrations, performances, and actions; he derives his insights into everyday life from de Certeau, who also describes how

> "seemingly mundane acts of politics are constant, individually liberating, and always threatening to crystallize into full fledged social movements.... Such innocuous acts can be individually empowering." (132)

De Certeau and Wilson share a subtext of hopefulness in their expression that innocuous and barely-sensed activities performed in everyday life slip beneath the social and political radar while actually impacting social and political change. I hope to capture some of these elusive forms of resistance through the medium of sound and will further discuss de Certeau later in this section.

In Wilson's argument and in mine, the antagonisms between urban redevelopment and everyday life are subtly warlike. In order to create a safe, sanitary, and profitable arts district, redevelopment necessarily includes expectations for wiping clean what existed before. Former Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon, who has since been indicted and impeached for various corrupt dealings, commented on the plan for Station North, "I know how North Avenue used to be. I know how significant this is for the city." (Janis 2008) The rebranding, redistricting, and redevelopment of Station North has had an intentionally homogenizing and cleansing effect with higher property values and an increased emphasis on appealing to mainstream taste. Even so, the reinvention has yielded unexpectedly mixed results. Although Station North is seen as a

defining moment of change in Baltimore, so much of everyday existence escapes, and therefore thwarts, the all-encompassing plan for redevelopment and surrounding policies.

Establishing a tabula rasa[9] is regularly an essential part of this urban renovation that seeks to conceptually redefine the neighborhood. Renaming the southernmost portion of Charles North as Station North was a powerful political act, but has yet to be fully realized and, as such, the past and present of the neighborhood cannot be considered distinct. The implications of this name change are currently being experienced by residents as a tension between the neighborhood's intended identity and its existing social inequality that was displaced without being addressed. Charles North exemplifies the sustained social inequality that Station North displaced but didn't fix. Its spectre still disrupts the formulation of Station North, especially at the periphery where forbidden activities persist. As a palimpsest of contradictory urban practices, Charles North/Station North necessitates a rethinking of political and scholarly discourses that have not adequately linked redevelopment to social inequality. This orchestration of private and public activities is an opportunity to engage with the oral histories and sounds of what the neighborhood was, is, and will become. In taking up this task, the project will connect phenomenological and political economic theories, all with regard to place.

Because the city's plan[10] is a conceptual, geometric, and visual, composed from a panoramic perspective that allows the planner to stay aloof from the ground. Michel de Certeau describes the resulting 'concept-city:' "The panorama-city is a 'theoretical' (that is, visual) simulacrum, in short a picture, whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a

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[9] "Every urban 'renovation' nonetheless prefers a tabula rasa on which to write in cement the composition created in the laboratory on the basis of discrete 'needs' to which functional responses are to be made." (de Certeau 201)

[10] The plan was put forth by the semi-private Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC).

misunderstanding of practices." (93) The plan is mapped, and the map becomes a tableau that flattens future possibilities on top of present and past movements. The existing ground is actually filled with the movements of ordinary people who use the city and walk over its strange surfaces. Beneath the surface, heterogeneous places are piled up. The concrete skin of the city is only the visible limit to a vast array of invisible and irrepressible stories that can potentially interrupt the city as a concept. Practices that fall outside of theoretical constructions of place are therefore of particular interest in my research.

Rather than exploring the visible surfaces, outlines, and edges with which we are all transfixed, this research will give preference to hidden places and invisible things in order to "bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the *nets of 'discipline.'*" (de Certeau xiv-xv) These nets of discipline are revealed in processes of racial exclusion through the marginalization of urban bodies in urban space and formal economies of the city. They are also revealed in the disciplining of places through the economic and political strategies of neighborhood redevelopment and gentrification. Interruptions, cracks, disturbances, and subversions of the city's plan come from the everyday tactics of the city's users, the excesses and transgressions that are necessary for human life, and from the stories that can never quite be erased through the reformation of place.

Understanding 'proper' or planned place through de Certeau also allows for a distancing from the visual, which is the subject matter of panoptic, panoramic planning strategies. The planner's strategy is a geometric vision for a place that can be circumscribed, rule-bound, and capitalized upon. It rules out adversaries and others by distinguishing what the place is and what is supposed to happen within its geographical and political constraints. De Certeau differentiates between planning and the everyday by distinguishing between 'strategies' and 'tactics.'

De Certeau's distinction between tactics and strategies is also a distinction between the concept-city and the city-in-the-making, or poetic city. Planning strategies for place engage the "solar Eye" of the urban theorist or designer, who looks down on the city from plan vision, from above the city (92).[11] Neighborhoods come about through "placeness," a political and cultural activity of bringing together and dissolving of chaotic space into something named that appears to have boundaries. In a way, the idea of a neighborhood is an oversimplification, a reduction, a stereotype – through which race, class, and gender are also bounded into stereotypes and attached to place. Rob Shields has theorized marginal places, not just at spatial edges, but also economic, social, and political, and he writes,

> "[We] also organise our lives around spatial routines and around spatial and territorial divisions. These surface as the carriers of central social myths which underwrite ideological divisions between classes, groups and regions. Spaces, fields of homogeneity, are conventionally subdivided into significant nodes and points: places." (Shields 47)

Places are labeled, named, made 'proper,' much like individuals. These social and spatial divisions are constantly at interplay, forming everyday knowledges, a sense of place and a sense of inside/outside that is reflected in the habits of individuals. These everyday habits reveal the relationship between people and places. Shields argues that they also "betrays a systematic 'disposition' towards the world coded into the framework of common sense" (Shields 11). Geographers can now attempt to decode these frameworks in order to understand how race

[11] De Certeau writes, "A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, 'clienteles,' 'targets,' or 'objects' of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model." (1991, xix)

and class are embedded in the phenomenon of neighborhood change, with special concern for disruption and displacement (McDowell 3).

Tactics aren't bound and tied the way strategies are. Instead, a tactic is "a calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality." (de Certeau xix) Tactics are not defined or identified according to place, although they occur at times in response to the forces of placemaking or the constraints of place (29). As such, a tactic belongs to the heterogeneous world of the other, as it is insinuated without encompassing or manipulating events into opportunities. Tactics, which are part of the practice of everyday life, can momentarily silence strategy, producing areas of 'free play' in which excesses and transgressions take place (106). These cracks make neighborhoods habitable because they allow for saturations of meaning to well up, stories to gather, and memories to haunt the otherwise regulated urban environment. Even though Station North is both a place and a strategy of place, or a proper, I will show that it is also a palimpsest, meaning that there are parts that can't be bound up in a singular idea of place. Mainly, I will show these qualities through an exploration and mapping of its sonic landscape.

Bataille and Harvey

I use Georges Bataille in conversation with Marx as my primary theoretical insertion into these kinds of urban case studies. Bataille emerged as a post-revolutionary communist philosopher and writer of erotic fiction in the 1930s and 1940s during a time in which Marxist political theory was being recast. He envisioned a different type of community forming around activities that weren’t aimed at labor or production. Bataille sees hope in the basic drives of

mankind that veer away from production-oriented conception of the social in the form of nonproductive expenditure, which can happen in all sorts of glorious and catastrophic ways - go to a city and you'll see it happening everywhere.

In this dissertation, Bataille's vision will unfold, first, by briefly explaining how he understands bodies and society to be fractured or ruptured through the deceptions of capitalism and Reformation morality. Then, in describing what has been lost through those economic and social systems, he opens new ways of speaking about what needs to be regained, using words like sovereignty, intimacy, and community. Though familiar words, in Bataille's writing they acquire new depth and meaning. Other philosophers, like Alphonso Lingis (1994), Jean-Luc Nancy (1991), Jurgen Habermas (1984), and Allan Stoekl (2007) have followed Bataille's thought and will make appearances in the process of ascertaining his intended meaning and position.

My Bataillean argument can be demonstrated and described in Station North, an extreme situation of transition in which exclusionary boundaries are being rapidly redefined. My contribution includes a "sonic turn" to offer insight into underlying processes of the 'spatial fix' (annihilating space in order to create space) while exploring the rich textures of people's experiences in these spaces. Bataille's concepts also help make that turn by documenting the searches for lost community, both Charles North and the Station North as the city transitions.

Even so, there are many spaces in cities that are vulnerable to crises of capital, to being remade through a process David Harvey calls the "spatial fix" - which means that new spaces of capital accumulation must be created in order to also create new sources of profit. Think of public housing, built cheaply, torn down easily, rebuilt as condos when the city needs to expand in that direction.

But beneath the formal economy and the intensity of the urban economy, there are nestled many ways of behaving, creating, and living that don't fit in. So I'd like to make two points about informal economies before moving on. First, people's involvement in informal economies can't be seen as driven simply by practical necessity. Second, informal economic tactics are posed against formal strategies in place (which are tied with establishing a formal economy). As such, they help display the spatial fix as also a cultural and racial fix. Knowing that race is inseparable from these processes, I would like to briefly show how this happens. I take you into a story spoken by a woman who is a creative consultant in DC. Her words not only represents pride in gentrification, but also a direct commentary on the racial structure of the area – and desirability of race and racial proclivities for eating. She says, to a room full of urban designers and arts boosters:

> "So a place where you could not get anything but, as I was saying, a 40 in a paper bag or potentially fried fish or fried chicken from behind bulletproof glass, um, as soon as we opened the dance studios, now you could get, for instance, Taylor Gourmet makes sub sandwiches. They import bread from Philadelphia every single morning because they say it's better..." (Coulter, NSACED Symposium 2012)

Sometimes illustrating these moments yields a very clear way of understanding complicated ties between economic, racial, spatial, and cultural processes in cities. So I will present you with many ethnographic moments through the dissertation that display some of the theoretical points I make in the dissertation.

What does Station North tell us about Baltimore?

Instead of replicating the (impossible) plan, Station North is better understood as a productive zone of difference, racialization, violence, and the poverty/wealth divide. Station North is not a predictable zone, but even now presents the city, its residents and visitors, with an uncontainable production of culture. Trying to contain the "insane ingenuity" there is an artifice. Alternately, there is a desire for depravity, grit, and grime is translated into a relationship of spatial and cultural consumption.

But I claim that Station North, in fact, operates as a place to journey, to encounter purposefully, to be consumed and to consume, but not necessarily in a "productive" way. Baltimore is a good place for that in general, which is why bubbling off certain neighborhoods strikes some residents as unnatural, especially when crossing that street and witnessing utter decay and desolation. Such divides are difficult to cross, but the false and imposed structures of racial and economic division made visible, audible, and palpable are unavoidably meaningful.

It's impossible to ignore and, at times, terrifyingly sad, as stated in an interview with Baltimore resident, musician, and activist, Sine Jensen, who states beautifully her position in the poetic city:

> "My relationship is always going back and forth, and I feel like I'm not alone in that – I'm lucky to have even the choice to leave Baltimore, which a lot of people don't have. It's not a love/hate relationship [with Baltimore], but the love is at once joyous and sad. What's happening in the city is obviously difficult sometimes, but I'm committed to staying here, maybe because of that." (Jensen, personal interview 2012)

This is the interruption and my contribution - the unpredictable, and uncontainable creativity represented in the people who care for the city every day - this is my focus - but it's where the city's focus is not currently located, and that's what I see as my obligation to change.

Chapter Summaries

In the second chapter of this dissertation, I delineate the extent to which I use and diverge from relevant literature, in addition to establishing my theoretical framework. The introduction to this chapter ties together theories about fixing cities as I outline my understanding of what I call Spatial, Racial, and Cultural "Fixes," which serve as the basis for three of the following chapters. Next, I describe my fieldwork methods in the third chapter, particularly discourse analysis, interviews and oral history, environmental sound recording, and sound mapping as ethnography.

The fourth chapter is titled "The Cultural Fix," in which I confront how creative capital and gentrification have shaped Station North as an arts district amidst the social, economic, and artistic conditions of Baltimore. I begin with an ethnographic account of the National Symposium of Arts/Culture/Entertainment Districts (NSACED) and return to points made during that symposium throughout the chapter. I describe how the DIY arts culture in Baltimore operates as an informal economy that is both sanctioned and a desirable part of creative capital in the city. Additionally, I present an interview with Sine Jensen, who has lived in Station North as an artist and activist for years. The chapter is bastioned by several years of information gathered through promotional materials in Baltimore and Station North, including news and magazine articles, newsletters, promotional materials and advertisements, signage, and email list serve subscriptions. Through these sources and participant observation, I trace Station

North's planned development, cultural policy and arts districts, and future options for arts districts in the city while critically applying gentrification theories.

"The Spatio-Racial Fix" chapter extends the argument of the previous chapter into a joining of the creation of spatial and racialized zones with specificity to conditions in Baltimore. Further, I expand the conversation between Marx and Bataille that begins in the Theoretical Framework chapter in order to raise a question about the place of nonproductive expenditure among the nonworking poor of the city (and the subsequent consumption of Baltimore's grittiest spaces and 'hyperghettos' by the nonworking elite). I accomplish this argument through ethnographic moments as textual sound bites throughout the later sections of the chapter, linked not only to Station North but also surrounding areas of Charles North and Mt. Vernon which are known in the city as divergent representations of the best and worst neighborhoods - not just in Baltimore, but in the nation. Station North emerges as an interstitial zone of movement and transition, a wished-for buffer that is not quite living up to the top-down Baltimore Development Corporation plan.

The title to the final chapter, "Conclusion: The Poetic City," is borrowed from de Certeau in order to complete the conversation running between Bataille and Marx throughout, yielding a sense of hope through poetic imagination of the kinds of interruptions that might happen in a transitional neighborhood like Station North - all the while using sound as a medium for exploring how those things might occur. And in conclusion, I complete the conversation between Marx and Bataille through the concept of self-contestation as a way of reclaiming individual autonomy and the intimacy of community. I present the need for and an ethnographic moment of self-contestation, a moment that is blanketed by the planned version of place and inherent in the way a liminal place is experienced every day.

II. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework here presented sets the stage for the in-depth arguments of each chapter as well as describe my argument as it relates to existing literature. I use the language of "fix" through the chapter titles in reference to Harvey's concept of the spatial or spacio-temporal fix. However, I complicate the concept by drawing it past arguments in gentrification and urban planning, into political economic theory and underlying issues around race. Here I present overviews of each "fix." The Spatial Fix is established already through Harvey, and so I examine urban political economic theory. I also unpack the "strange capitalisms" of Bataille in juxtaposition with Marx. The racial fix is built upon notions of the Other and so I examine critical race theory and terminology around race. In order to frame further my political economic argument I describe existing literatures around informal economies so that I may make an insertion from the urban sphere, which relate directly to the Cultural Fix around creative capital and arts districts, including Station North.

The Spatial Fix: Urban Experiences of Property, Accumulation, and Dispossession

There is no lack of placed-based studies of gentrification and underground economies, but much of the existing literature ignores intersections of theories of race, urban economies, and the built environment. My contribution is to begin to fill this gap in current geographic research that is also part of a larger rupture in the discipline. For several decades, the idea of place has been theorized, but locality studies have been relegated largely to empirical work. Political economic theory has been suspicious of the notion of place (Harvey 1989; Massey 1994 and 1997), while humanistic geography was inattentive to the economic processes that shaped urban form (Ley 1980; Darling 2009; Dreier, Mollenkopf, et al 2004). Consequently, the relationship between race, place, and underground economies is misunderstood, and the built

environment is not consistently viewed as a site of racial political formation. Rifts over the viability of gentrification, ethics of deconcentration, and threat of informal markets cannot be resolved without adequate attention to the reciprocal development of race and the heterogeneous political economies of urban places.

David Harvey defines “spatial fix,” or “spacio-temporal fix” as a strategy used in a crisis of capital to create new spaces of capital accumulation in order to create new sources of profit. (Harvey *NI*, 115) To justify the spatial fix in the form of neighborhood redevelopment, the city will cite cultural and safety reasons, or simply city-survival. The kinds of inassimilable remainders produced by the spatial fix are rather unpredictable and can even turn on the thing that made them. In other words, the spatial fix can be thwarted as it grabs for prosperity and undermining the social improvements that it was meant to impose. Harvey writes,

> "A certain portion of the total capital is literally *fixed* in and on the land in some physical form for a relatively long period of time (depending on its economic and physical lifetime). Some social expenditures (such as public education or a health-care system) also become territorialized and rendered geographically immobile through state commitments. The spatio-temporal ‘fix’, on the other hand, is a metaphor for a particular kind of solution to capitalist crises through temporal deferral and geographical expansion." (*NI*, 115)

When capital has been over-accumulated to the extent that it can no longer be invested solely in commodities, a new space of accumulation can result in new sources of profit. To justify the spatial fix in the form of neighborhood redevelopment, the city will cite cultural and safety reasons. In the process of transition, the spatial fix is capable of excluding individuals from a place, sometimes on a racial basis, thereby extending the fix from space and time into race and

the right to the city. The very bodies and practices rejected by neighborhood redevelopment by necessity and by definition must cope in excessive and transgressive ways that disturb the redevelopment plan.

Although Harvey's concept of the Spatial Fix is a powerful one, it does little to explore the intentional "fixes" relating to racial formation and cultural normativity imposed on the city through the redevelopment process. Racial and cultural fixing aren't just side effects of the spatial. They are tangled and tied, but also crucial to placemaking, society-making, and power-grasping in the urban sphere. In *Cities and Race: America's New Black Ghetto*, David Wilson suggests that they are "inseparable, nested elements in power-laden social formations" and I argue the same throughout this dissertation (12). I have themed the chapters of this dissertation also around racial and cultural fixes in order to give them equal weight, to demonstrate the complex relationships between the three, and even allow some messy overlap and repetition across the chapters. In truth, each chapter will deal with racial, cultural, and spatial fixes.

The racialization of city-space happens through patterned systems of body grouping, distribution, and deprivation of socio-economic control, and surveillance of criminalized spaces in which bodies are coercively organized and disciplined. Foucault writes,

> "Discipline sometimes requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself. It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony. There was the great 'confinement' of vagabonds and paupers; there were other more discreet, but insidious and effective ones." (*Discipline* 141)

The spacialization of race and discipline of racialized bodies is made simpler by confinement and partitioning so that each individual in society, and "race," when formed hegemonically, has a disciplinary space to occupy that may be more or less supervised. Discipline organizes an analytical space." (143)

The breadth and complexity of the topic is challenging, but allow for this research to contribute and acknowledge new connections between critical theory and analyses of ghettoized urban neighborhoods in America. Race thus occupies an unavoidably important place in urban geography, where city policy and planning decisions can greatly impact racial inequality and segregation. And yet race is so often left out of the way these decisions are made. Classification of bodies into categories of wealth and morality follows, but Bataille reveals these classifications as a false and "unattainable" ideal (Bataille *AS*,136). Surpassing the self through excess and transgression only to return, changed, is revealed as the repressed human desire that bourgeois capitalism excludes and, therefore, racializes. The spatial and economic formation of place is simultaneously overdetermined by and overdetermines racial formation.

Station North and the surrounding neighborhoods can be seen as a surveilled kind of space in which bodies are grouped, racialized, presumed to have criminal proclivities, and then left to its own desperate devices. Koskela believes that the space is left "dead" to positive and creative performativity yet open still to criminal behavior in a "vicious circle of defense" (Koskela 293). I see things differently. Or rather, I hear things differently. Using sound, my research shows that a great deal escapes the confines of what would otherwise be a fully gentrified, sanitized, and segregated space. I argue that this is not at all the case, and that all one has to do is walk around and listen to experience the unplanned for diversity and heterogeneity that remain.

The Spatial Fix as Part of Urban Experience

Harvey is inspired by the Marxian idea of perpetual revolutionary change which is possible because of the everyday (and every-moment) effect of commodity fetishism on social relations, especially in an urban setting. His evidence is often grounded in real urbanization

processes in existing cities at that time. But his theoretical methods are more valuable to finding a way out of the current dispersal debate. His work exhibit an ontological strength that is lacking in this debate so that his argument retains relevance through different temporal and spatial circumstances. Ontology allows him to relate the urbanization that occurred under Haussmann in 1860s Paris to urbanization in 1980s cities in the US. To unmask the fetishisms that regulate social relations, Harvey draws from Marx's method of representation - the way he builds meta-theory - almost more than what Marx says capitalism is or is not. In this way, Harvey's *The Urban Experience* exemplifies well the dialectical quality through which he relates theoretical developments to participation in social change. He argues the importance of understanding cities as a continuing process of urbanization through which capitalism perpetuates itself. In this process, the rich retain wealth and power by reproducing economic practices, political action, and social values. To retain both capital and the fictive idea of it, capital must move. For this movement to occur there must be a constant shifting of surplus and lack resulting in changes to the built environment through processes of investment, disinvestment, and reinvestment. The insidious nature of these processes becomes more visible as Harvey identifies the process of accumulation by dispossession as it occurs in the built environment, mainly expressed through the valuation and devaluation of property.

Urbanization is not just generally produced by accumulation, but also typified and organized according to it. This uneven distribution of capital through bodies and the built environment happens in part through the legal and social definition of rent and property. Consequently, the movement of capital has real consequences for inequality in cities. Money, credit, and property are distributed differentially through categories like race, class, gender, and place. Harvey argues that inequality results from the manner in which capital becomes urbanized. The buying and selling of labor power results in spatial divisions of labor (socially and

geographically). Labor and commodity markets, including these spatial divisions, have a geographic presence with tensions, stickiness, condensations, and expansions among people and the built environment. Therefore, Harvey argues that "capital accumulation and the production of urbanization go hand in hand" (Harvey *UE*, 22) which I describe in more depth in the Spatio-Racial Fix chapter.

The primary goal of a city is to capture surpluses from the circulation of revenues. This relatively new fixation on appropriation rather than production has emerged as globalization moves industry to the Global South and as Post-Keynesian politics have put cities into competition. Cities have changed their strategies for acquiring surplus, especially when the urban economic situation becomes dire. Under city strategies of "urban revitalization" and "urban renewal," real estate speculation is often a way to generate and attract capital. Paradoxically, creating this opportunity for investment often requires the destruction of what came before. Neil Smith argued throughout his life that gentrification arrived in this form when the gap in rent made the destruction potentially profitable, from his 1979 article, "Toward a theory of gentrification," to *Uneven Development* in 1984, and "Gentrification Generalized" more recently in *Frontiers of Capital* published in 2006.

Harvey and Smith argue rent-gap from a specific perspective in which *property* is a term that can both describe an object or bound physical space, but also a legal enactment of settlement and ownership that is always at play, at odds, and in process in the urban landscape. In *Unsettling the City*, Nick Blomley provides a nuanced description of property. His lens into urban property and its politics is through "settlement," and he begins by revealing its multiple valences. First, settlement is the fixing of the unstable, arrangement, making permanent (Blomley xiv). In this definition, "property" appears settled under the ownership model, which also relates to ideas of privacy, exclusion, and rights. Blomley argues that this model is

hegemonic in current society and has been for some time. The second meaning of settlement is to be free from disturbance, calm, and quiet, as in a dispute. In this definition, property and settlement appear synonymous because both are idealized as prerequisites for certainty, peace, and prosperity.

Property is obscured as nonsocial, and in the obscurity, property's affect on social relations and power is also obscured. An imbalance in property rights is the justification for reorganization, allowing for destruction, displacement, gerrymandering (instead of moving the lines, moving the people), and new spaces of surplus. This idea aligns with Harvey, who shows how there must be inequality in order for capital to move, and there must be movement in order for capitalism to survive in his concept of the "knife-edge path." [12]The knife-edge is the infinitely fine space in which capital must contradict itself in order to perpetuate and be reproduced. Moments of contradiction occur constantly and can be recognized in various forms, and one example described in *Capital, Vol. I* is the spatial concentration of workers. When workers must be gathered in order for production to be efficient, then everyday life and societal values are regulated and controlled. This extension into everyday life (by reducing people to consumers/producers) puts into play something autonomous Marxists call "the social factory," out of which contradictions emerge. The contradiction occurs when these workers, concentrated for the sake of production, can build solidarity because of their geographic proximity. At that moment, political strategies supported by ethical bases will emerge to disintegrate the solidarity that had developed through a "spatial fix" - dispersal of bodies or

[12] I refer to the following quotation from Harvey, represents the fine line between creation and destruction in the movement of capital. "Capitalist development has therefore to negotiate a knife-edge path between preserving the exchange values of past capital investments in the built environment and destroying the value of these investments in order to open up fresh room for accumulation . . . . The effects of the internal contradictions of capitalism, when projected into the specific context of fixed and immobile investment in the built environment, are thus writ large in the historical geography of the landscape that results." (Harvey *UE*, 83)

resources. This contraction and expansion of workers' living quarters was visible in Marx's time, past decades, and now. Other contradictions in capital also include the Great Depression as a crisis of underconsumption and the following production of the Keynesian city (Harvey 1989); the devaluation of capital in order to bring new surplus; and, some believe, the devaluation of associated, racialized bodies.

Strange Capitalisms: Bataille Juxtaposed with Harvey

The examination of ways that capitalism affects power in cities down to the individual city resident is of primary importance to Marxian geographers. At the first buying and selling of labor power, at the introduction of a capitalist economy based on production and accumulation, social relations are ruptured into false categories of wealth, class, and behavior. Marx speaks of this rupture through the words of the Venetian monk, Ortes, who sees the poor and idle as "a necessary consequence of the rich and active." (*Capital*, 320) This commoditization of human beings causes the social to become fragmented into classes, composed of bodies that are alienated, exploited, and self estranged. Situating the rule of production as such, Marx describes the damage to man's "animal spirits" and his "pangs of hunger" in intimate connection to the extravagant consumption of the rich. The hidden nature of that social connection between rich and poor, and the ethics of expenditure implicated therein, may be revealed through the laws of economy that striate all of human life and society. Marx recognizes excess in bourgeois luxuries, but does not place excess in the context of the surplus of everyday human life the way Bataille later did.

Bataille is indebted to Marx in his view of capitalism as creating the conditions of possibility for a post-capitalist future, albeit one conceived principally in terms of expenditure rather than production. However, Bataille diverged from Marx's political economy on a basic level, completely disengaging with any tenet of utility and production. Bataille's general law of

economy based on surplus and limits permits value beyond utility. Excess is that which is beyond what is normal or sufficient; a surplus that is also a way of behaving, and so can be embodied and (over)indulged in by humans. Transgression, like excess, surpasses the human boundary of sustenance, but does so in violation of a law, duty, or moral principle. Because both excess and transgression are attached to Bataille's concept of surplus, they evolve from his rethinking of the earthly condition. By negating utility and describing a general economics of surplus, he introduces an ethic of excessive and violent expenditure embodied by his general instead of restrictive economy. A general economy could be said to envelop informal practices, while a restrictive would privilege formal, legalized capitalism and seek to root out the informal.

From Restrictive to General Economics / Thinking Marx through Bataille

To understand excess and transgression outside of a reading of Marx, Bataille's general law of economy based on surplus and limits permits value beyond utility. Excess is that which is beyond what is normal or sufficient; a surplus that is also a way of behaving, and so can be embodied and (over)indulged in by humans. Transgression, like excess, surpasses the human boundary of sustenance, but does so in violation of a law, duty, or moral principle. Because both excess and transgression are attached to Bataille's concept of surplus, they evolve from his rethinking of the earthly condition. Instead of a predominant focus on scarcity of useful commodities as a universal economic condition, Bataille argues that the condition is one of continual surplus and, even more so, a "global exuberance of energy." (*AS,* 74). He writes further,

> "On the whole a society always produces more than is necessary for its survival; it has a surplus at its disposal. It is precisely the use it makes of this surplus that determines it: The surplus is the cause of the agitation, of the structural changes and of the entire history of society. But the surplus has more than one outlet, the most common of which

> is growth. And growth itself has many forms, each one of which eventually comes up against some limit. Thwarted, demographic growth becomes military; it is forced to engage in conquest. Once the military limit is reached, the surplus has the sumptuary forms of religion as an outlet, along with the games and spectacles that derive therefrom, or personal luxury." (106)

This shift from a world of limits to one of surplus has several effects. The initial response to surplus is expansion; growth is a natural response to surplus, but is bounded. So destruction becomes necessary through glorious or catastrophic sacrifice. For Bataille, destruction is the surest way to negate utilitarian relations between human and non-human. The concept of sacrifice necessitates direct encounter between the sacrificer and victim. Sacrificing the accursed share, the nonproductive expenditure of surplus undoes the master-slave dialectic by reversing the valuation of the thing, removing its utility and, therefore, subject-hood in the process of meaningful spending/consumption.# In this view, the value is reconceived, not as originating in raw materials or labor power, but in Bataille's characterization of human activity, accumulation, and production through nonproductive expenditure like sacrifice, gift-giving, and ritualized exchanges like the potlatch (Stoekl 41-42).

For Marx, value beyond the useful is "conceivable, even inevitable; but it is immanent to man, or else it does not exist." (Bataille qtd. in Nancy *IC*) And in this idea, production does not transcend man as it does under capitalism, however it is not absent from the picture. Bataille speaks outside of the Marxist spheres of freedom and necessity by emphasizing nonproductive expenditure that "confirm[s] the sovereignty of human beings and their authentic existence" (Habermas 79). Bataille thus problematizes even this basic tenet of communism in its continued involvement with utility by hinting at something more:

> "But it remains to be determined whether man, to whom communism refers as the producer, has not taken on this sovereign value on one primary condition: namely, having renounced for himself everything that is truly sovereign.... For the irreducible desire that man is, passionately and capriciously, communism has substituted those needs that can be brought into harmony with a life entirely devoted to producing." (Bataille qtd. in Nancy *IC*)

Here Bataille steps past the limits of communism as a system of change by undermining the need for utility in productive practice and expenditure. But this is only part of the difference between Bataille and Marx's social theory.

Another disjuncture in the philosophies of Marx and Bataille lies in the trajectory of political economies and the problem of wealth accumulation. There is a certain fated-ness about Marx's expression of capitalism – from the passage from feudalism to capitalism, and then by describing how capitalism is bound to self-destruct by its very essence. The accumulation of wealth, or hoarding, is a maxim of capitalism that also drives it to its demise. Hoarding is paramount not only as a function of capitalism, but a function of destructive repression of the working class, who cannot accumulate wealth as such. But Marx doesn't recognize the third problem with accumulative hoarding – its metaphysical rejection of the sun's radiant and violent death trip. In a sense, the same fated-ness exists in Bataille's conception of political economy and the social, but Bataille's society burns violently, radiantly, and limitlessly, as opposed to the restraint of trying to burn less slowly, which is impossible from start. It is a difference of characterization of the entropic erosion of all things.

Bataille's economic writings will be useful in developing a fresh perspective on informal economic activities, even and especially illegal ones. He envisioned a different type of community forming around a set of activities based primarily on the richness of surplus and

necessity of excess, the source and modality of life on earth. Bataille's theory of general economy could thus be understood as affording an enlarged, non-functionalist ecological perspective. His notions of expenditure recast the parsimonious effects of accumulation by dispossession into a wider field, in which an environment of sun-induced surplus leads to informal economic activities that are not only meant for individual profit and survival. Informal economies can thereby be understood as much more than a response to the constraints of the formal and exclusion from participation in the official capitalist economy of the city. Instead informal economies are necessarily parts of everyday life.

Nonproductive Expenditure as an Anti-capitalist Tactic

Because Bataille believed capitalist and industrial society reduced the human to "the condition of a thing" - in contradiction to the fearful and delightful impulses outside of the world of commodities - he envisioned excess as a way to release humans from the enclosures of scarcity and utility in response to the dominance of capital (Bataille *AS*, 129). More true to human life, the general economics of surplus instead of the restrictive economics of scarcity can be achieved through exuberant expenditure and consumption. He moved from restrictive to general economics through a new conception of surplus which was quite different from its capitalist counterpart, as a state of being in which the earth resides. The sun burns itself up as quickly as it can, delivering such energy to the earth as cannot ever be fully spent there, so humans must devote themselves to expenditure, whether it be glorious or catastrophic. This concept of sun-induced surplus is a radically non-utilitarian way of understanding economic activities that do not emerge from lack, but dwell in generosity, exuberance, and the complex heterogeneity of human and animal life.

Nonproductive expenditure then ties crucially to the burning off of this energy, which is represented in the economic underground where the producer ethic has no purpose and erotic,

criminal, and generally marginal behaviors are antagonistically related to productive labor. Consequently, for Bataille nonproductive expenditure is essential to class struggle and revolution as he conceives of it. Bataille sees hope in the basic drives of mankind that veer away from production-oriented conception of the social. Those basic drives are violent and exuberant, exposing "the severity of our will" in spontaneous action. Thus, our own sovereignty is made visible in others and we tremble with fear (Bataille *AS,* 34). The community that arises from these "dangerous" heterogeneous encounters is one that has nothing more in common but their paradoxical and simultaneous freedom and subjugation.[13] Thus two important points can be drawn from Bataille and de Certeau. First, people's involvement in informal economies can't be seen as driven simply by practical necessity. Second, informal economic tactics are posed against formal strategies in place (which are tied with establishing a formal economy).

Bataille and Marx might see today's American 'black ghetto' very differently from one another based on their contrasting perspectives on morality, surplus, and excess. Marx sees the increasing moral degradation of the working class into dirty citizens, prostitutes, and street people where Bataille sees excess, money being blown, and beautiful waste as a form of transgression that does have the capability to unite and further affect the ethics of waste. Where Marx pictures the subsequent moral degradation of the working class as part and parcel of the alienation imposed by the reversal of use and exchange value and the deskilling of the worker, Bataille sees shifting patterns of exchange, glorious and anguish-filled expenditure, and ecstatic revelry of which the bourgeoisie is denied. Because transgression, morality, and violence are treated so differently in Bataille than in Marx, I will emphasize the Bataillean

[13] "These heterogeneous and even contrary elements fill the homogeneous form of the story. Things extra and other (details and excesses coming from elsewhere) insert themselves into the accepted framework, the imposed order.... The surface of this order is everywhere punched and torn by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning: it is a sieve-order." (de Certeau 107)

perspective on these when faced with moralistic interpretations of the 'black ghetto,' as presented by those who support urban redevelopment and those who don't.

There are critical theorists who point to the heterogeneity in the practices of urban residents who rely on underground markets as a source of income when their involvement in the formal economy is prohibited or limited (Castells et al: 1989, Slackman: 2009). Although Harvey offers a strong theoretical background for understanding urban political economy, he does not theorize the alternative economic practices that accompany social exclusion as others have (Imbroscio, 1997; Mitchell, 2005; Gibson-Graham, 1996; Slater and Tonkiss, 2001; Williams, 2009). Just as political economic theory of the built environment has largely neglected race, diverse economies literature disregards exclusionary processes of racism and the connections between underground economies and place (Chasin, 1997; Gough and Olafsson, 1999; Mann, 1999). Timothy Mitchell and J.K. Gibson-Graham both describe a diverse range of practices, dreams, and desires that exceed the logic of capitalism and are therefore presented by capitalist discourse as being outside it and excluded from it (Mitchell 303). They show how capitalism must externalize certain practices and relies on them to establish the conditions of its own existence. This logic is similar to Foucault's argument that the state externalizes some bodies to establish the conditions of its own existence. Racial and economic exclusion have not fully been described as - more than parallel and abstract concepts - mutually formative in place.

The Racial Fix: Critical Race Theory applied to Urban Geography

There is a continuous temptation to think of race as essential and fixed. Simultaneously, there is the opposite temptation to imagine that race is a mere illusion, a purely ideological construct which some non-racist social order could eliminate (Omi and Winant 54). Critical race theory seeks to define concepts surrounding race by wrestling with difficult theoretical questions:

Is race real?

Is it biological, constructed, or some combination?

Should the word 'race' be used?

What does it mean to say 'race' in today's society?

How does racial formation happen?

How is race a part of politics today and how are ideologies of race maintained?

Michel Foucault, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Richard Delgado, Derrick Bell, and others have provided the theoretical basis for a variety of new trains of thought. Recent works arise from a variety of intellectual inheritances and, consequently, attend to "race" in very different ways. Although there are certainly differences between critical race theorists, many agree that race is not simply an irregularity within a social structure, but a "dimensions of human representation" and an element of every social structure (55). Furthermore, racial formation is a term which is widely considered to be an important sociohistorical process through which political power is also formed. Racial formation is the dual process of integration and exclusion of bodies in politics, society, and space that helps to reify the unity of the hegemonic state. It is a social and political process that is deeply embedded in the organization of urban space. Critical race theorists, Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994), show that race is not a stable system of categorizing bodies, but a process that undergoes discursive change because of political struggle. As such, race has an historical context that makes it impossible to dismiss out of hand - that's simply not the way society operates. For Omi and Winant, race is not something to be ignored or relegated to a dark political corner; racial formation must be spoken if political change is to occur.

Political change occurs through the process of racial formation such that the goal of sovereignty is to secure individual power by ensuring state continuity and advancing state authority. According to Foucault, this has been accomplished through the homogenization of the nation as entity and state as structure in language, labor, religion, and biology using myths of unified origin and tactics of definition of "who's in and who's out," rejection and domination of who's out, and the exercise of power in the form of the right to kill (or increase the likelihood of death). In "Right to Death and Power over Life," Michel Foucault theorizes the "race struggle" that occurs in the formation of state power. By identifying certain groups of people as a threat to the state, governance and a right to kill are established around the stakes of life itself (1998). The groups and individuals determined to be "out" may not be killed outright, but may be exposed to death, experience increased risk of death based on administrative rules, and may not have any political life and so experience political death (*Lectures* 255).

Wherever the dividing line may be between in and out, self and other, racism alone can "justify the murderous function of the state" (Foucault *Lectures* 255). Biopolitics must deal with the presence of the other within the state, and state racism justifies all sorts of human rights violations, even death, in the name of state continuity. Racism is a basic mechanism for power under the paradigm that "If you want to live, the other must die" (254). The sovereign power over life and death is extraordinarily problematic because, as demonstrated even in the title "Right of Death," the power that is truly exercised is the sovereign right to kill. Foucault determines that unity of state is dependent on historic myth (kinship of nations) that binds different groups of people in, which defines other groups as other and out. This homogeneity aims towards a continuation and stability of state, which was a "mechanism of power-knowledge that had bound the administration apparatus to State absolutism since the 17th century" (Foucault *Lectures* 129).

The social construction of race is a theory that Paul C. Taylor (2004), Stuart Hall (1986), David Goldberg (1997), Winant and Omi (1994) offer as a response to the simplifying effect that racial definition has on groups and individuals. Social structure and race are involved in a constantly fluctuating feedback loop, but this causal relationship hardly removes the responsibility of change from individuals or institutions. In earlier chapters of *Racial Formation* (1994), Winant and Omi explain how the process of racial formation occurs through dual forces of structure and representation that occur in order to support hegemony. The hegemonic state has a need for racism if it seeks to maintain unity by rejecting the 'other.' Winant and Omi describe this process as racial dictatorship. In the spectrum of racial relations in the US, they describe three aspects of racial dictatorship: it is the norm against which all US politics must be measured; it organizes the "color line" as a fundamental division in US society; and it has consolidated oppositional racial consciousness and organization (66). These functions of the racial state are deeply embedded in the entire organization of current society. Consequently, racial formation happens in cyclical and overlapping processes of identity formation, rearticulation, and political opposition. These processes help to affirm and reify hegemony because they are tied to conceptions of whiteness (either overtly by keeping white people in power or more subtly by keeping normative elements of power associated with whiteness).

Strains of racial thinking reject the Other through notions of the pure and impure, capable and incapable, rational and irrational, and inferior and superior. Michel Foucault characterizes the criminalization of bodies according to race as "knowledge of the criminal, one's estimation of him, what is known about the relations between him, his past and his crime, and what might be expected of him in the future" (Foucault *Discipline* 18). Consequently, theorists following Foucault, such as Wacquant, Wilson, and Stoler show how citizens are

socialized to be suspicious of the "violent other" as the relationship between state formation and racial thinking is spread through juridical, socioeconomic and infrastructural changes.

The racial state may abduct character in a racial group defined in the hegemonic context of power, endowing them with exceptional markers and using those markers to describe the form of the "race" which is then internalized and reproduced so that a group of people develops false identifies that they live out to be true. In fact, it's essential to tie unwanted group of people to crime, to enhance their monstrosity. The presence of surveillance exists as a way to define areas of crime because criminal bodies that must be watched, more than as a way to effectively reduce crime in the city. Individual and group tactics enter the feedback loop to engage with the state, which is inherently racial, intervening (through policies) and intervened upon, and structuring (through institutions and conditions/rules) as well as structured because it is embedded in social relations (Winant and Omi 82). In this unstable or disrupted equilibrium, hegemony preserves the unity and stability of the state through a trajectory of rearticulation, disparity, crisis, absorption, insulation, and new racial and social orders (Winant and Omi 84-86). Omi and Winant exemplify the continuance of racial formation through neoliberalism, especially in the changing language of race.

In 1990, William Julius Wilson published *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*, following his 1980 work, *The Declining Significance of Race*. By arguing that impersonal market forces led to impoverishment that just happened to affect racial minorities, Wilson provided the Clinton administration with clever justification for dismissing ideas of racial discrimination (Omi and Winant 149). Following their endorsement of Wilson, Gore and Clinton also published a book called *Putting People First*. Winant and Omi considered it to be "neoliberal racial coding at its finest" because Clinton and Gore's use of glaringly ambiguous phrasing:

> "…fight for civil rights, not just by protecting individual liberties, but by providing equal economic opportunity; support new anti-poverty initiatives that move beyond the outdated answers of both major parties and instead reflect the values most Americans share: work, family, individual responsibility, community." (qtd. in Winant and Omi 150)

In texts such as this one, Wilson's influence became pervasive. The political field was being emptied of words like "black," "race," and "white supremacy," and filled instead with talk of ethnicity, diversity, and multiculturalism. The language of social pathology, personal responsibility, and opportunity remains dominant in current political discourse as a form of racial decoding. But does saying it make it so? Has refusing to speak race made racism go away?

In *Psychadelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race*, Arun Saldanha (2007) doesn't just talk about the word 'race.' He explodes the boundaries of social construction found in Gilroy, Winant, and Omi by arguing that the *embodiment* of race must be taken seriously. He describes how the term 'viscosity' can describe the dynamic interaction of embodiment, familiar faces, and locations. Other critical race theorists make similarly bold strides to encourage new understandings of race. Kobayashi and Peake (2000) emphasize the need for inter- and multi-disciplinary approaches to geographies of race for this purpose. Laura Pulido presented a paper titled "Black/Latino Relations and White Supremacy" regarding lived white supremacy as a pervasive element of social injustice at the 2008 Association of American Geographers conference in Boston. Colin Webster (2008) questions the broad determination of "whiteness" by identifying hierarchized and criminalized categories of marginalized whiteness. These theorists help to explain the way otherness happens, the way exclusionary tactics work, and how racial identities are invented. In other words, they examine how race is understood as a biological, phenotypical, political, and moral category for human bodies.

Terminology around Race

On the last page of *The Poetics and Politics of Transgression*, Stallybrass and White address political distribution of power through poetics, or literary discourse. They describe how poetics ultimately reveal the contradiction inherent in the political because of the dichotomies it produces in order to establish the dominance of certain people (and places) over others (202). Race is described phenotypically and biologically by political and social forces. Those forces are capable of reinforcing the categories through institutional and economic modes such as spatial segregation and division of labor. These divisions are hierarchical, powerful, and laden with meanings outside of the strict categories of race. Furthermore, certain racial categories are described as grotesque, filthy, smelly, and unsightly for the purpose of defining what is beautiful, acceptable, clean, pure, and worthwhile. These essentializing descriptors are a blatant form of reductionism. Foucault writes of this reductionism:

> "Generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized; how he is to be recognized; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc.)." (*Discipline,* 199 – and I would add other binaries like black/white to his list.)

Foucault focuses relentlessly on the invention of outsiders through binaries. Thereby, he reveals the way otherness is constructed by dominant culture, especially in the way bodies are seen. When a body is defined as "grotesque," the classical body gets preserved in its position as high, inside, and normative. Stallybrass and White examine this process of hierarchizing bodies in Foucault and Bakhtin. These writers show thereby show how a terminology of binaries creates

hierarchy and patterns of behavior by inscribing value onto embodied characteristics and making some more visible than others.

Some words draw dangerous metaphors so that a majority black area may be described with animal-like adjectives without calling a black individual an animal. In Alison Isenberg's *Downtown America*, she describes the use of frightening and morbid terminology to describe urban spaces: "The vaguely 'spreading,' 'crawling,' and 'burrowing' slums posed a more specific threat: that the downtown would become a local shopping destination for nearby residents and cease to draw from entire regions." (Isenberg, 189 – in reference to ACTION pamphlets from 1954, HADV Pamphlet Collection, ACTION speeches). The words bring to mind underground vermin and hidden decomposition. Slums become a nefarious enemy and a threat to status quo city space. This language of fear has been used to introduce moves in investment, policing, and development. The language also becomes part of a paradigm that feeds into continuing binaries of worth and worthlessness. Judging something as worthless, unproductive, or disorderly happens when aspects of a place are perceived as unsettling.

Wacquant reveals the difficulties of using words like 'social disorder,' 'disorganization,' and 'dangerous classes' like the lumpenproletariat by reworking both the terms and the concepts. His critique shows how the words are used to construct ghettoized spaces. By introducing a new term like 'advanced marginality,' Wacquant is able to reveal those exclusionary spatial and political processes that rely on supportive jargon. Wacquant defines advanced marginality as,

> "the novel regime of sociospatial relegation and exclusionary closure (in Max Weber's sense) that has crystallized in the post-Fordist city as a result of the uneven development of capitalist economies and the recoiling of welfare states, according to modalities that vary with the ways in which these two forces bear upon the segments of

the working class and the ethnoracial categories dwelling in the nether regions of social and physical space." (*UO*, 2)

'Disorganization' is another term that Wacquant rejects. In recognizing that 'disorganization' research has been an institutional force since the Chicago School, he shows how the term has a fatal flaw – it denies the existing and intentional organization of existing isolated urban spaces called 'hyperghettos' (3). Wacquant uses ethnographic methods to describe 'hyperghettoization,' the transition from communal ghettos to a more dangerous and more fragmented type of ghetto, the 'hyperghetto.' He shows that hyperghettoization is a major change that has happened in cities over the past fifty years. The communal character of ghettos in the 1950s changed drastically when enclave communities lost strength and solidarity. Already marginalized territories became more economically and socially impoverished. Wacquant writes that "violence in its most brutal forms – including assault and battery, shootings, rape, and homicide – is so intense and prevalent inside the hyperghetto that it has forced a complete reorganization of the fabric of daily life" (210).

Regarding the so-called disorganization of the hyperghetto, Cresswell would agree that it's a misnomer to describe it thus. He states very simply in *In Place/Out of Place* that "any landscape is a representation of order." (87) Disordered places are not disorderly at all, but have a different order from hegemonic ideas about use-value, productivity, and beauty. The meaning of place is partially created through inclusion and exclusion, by differentiation between *us* and *them*, how *we* behave and how *they* behave (60). The meaning of a body thus changes according to the place it encounters, and the meaning of an act changes according to the place in which it occurs. Wacquant's analysis relies on this thesis. Working through geographies of race, crime, and space allows for the exploration of refreshed terminology, like 'hyperghetto' and not so fresh words that have become overdetermined, like 'ghetto' and 'community.'

The Cultural Fix: Gentrification of Everyday Practices

Given the theoretical approach outlined in this chapter, this project is thereby positioned to describe the continuity or fragmentation of urban change over time according to three variables: the economic, political, and social dimensions of urban change. But even as I attempt to join these, I acknowledge that urban geography tends to branch off into these three directions, each privileging one or the other perspective using distinct theoretical frameworks and methodologies. In the cultural fix portion of this research, I contribute an analysis of the connections between gentrification on a city-level economic scale as well as the turgid cultural and racial elements of everyday life. Gentrification is a process which binds these scales through appropriation and punishment, each of which is associated with different everyday practices that can also be identified as informal economic practices.

Gentrification is a process of urban change that has been under contention in urban geography for the last 30 to 40 years, even though the phenomenon goes back further than even Haussmann's slum clearances in Paris (Parker 86). Loretta Lees, Neil Smith, Tom Slater, David Wilson, and others have studied the process of gentrification as well as the discussions around it with varying degrees of attention to the three components to urban change. I also emphasize Harvey's work initially because of Lees, Slater, and Wyly's reliance on it to make certain points about gentrification in the expansive and consumptive process of urbanization. They write,

> "Harvey offered a panoramic view of urbanism and society, and in later work he outlined a comprehensive analysis of economic, urban, and cultural change. But his attack on the dominant neoclassical explanation of inner-city decline and ghetto formation is crucial for our analysis of gentrification." (Lees et al 48)

Although there are major differences in the approaches as applied to gentrification research, there are commonalities and absorptions that assist in describing gentrification as a politically, economically, and socially unjust process in the urban built environment.

Gentrification is a contentious topic in urban geography today with widely ranging definitions, dependent on varying interpretations of its existence as a material process or a sociocultural one. In the 1980s, Neil Smith tended towards explaining the materialism of gentrification with his rent gap argument, while David Ley focused on class attitudes towards urban change (Lees "Rematerializing geography", 104). But by 2000, Smith and other historical materialists like Harvey began to recognize the complex social dimensions of investment and rent. Most recently, in 2008 and 2009, the argument has flared up again, this time between Zukin who sees gentrification as a solely materialist process, while Lees, Slater, and Wyly focus on intrinsic aspects of social inequality. Zukin's argument is a marked change from her position in 1998 in which she argued that urban geographers should connect the political, economic, and social (Lees "Rematerializing geography", 105), and even now her position is not entirely clear to me, especially in passages such as the following:

> "Properly speaking, however, gentrification is an individual action, involving the preservation, restoration, and re-use of old houses of some certified architectural quality, which – when broad in scale – produces both a demographic change and a change in a space's social character. But gentrification excludes – again, properly speaking – new construction. And though it creates a new market for both buildings and spaces, it does not refer either to repeated changes in a single space or the spread of changes on a citywide scale. A block or a neighborhood can be gentrified; a city cannot. To speak of 'gentrification generalized' is a brave attempt to create a rubric for hegemonic global urbanism, but it neglects some of the specific cultural features and

> implications of this mode of socio-spatial production." (Zukin "New Retail Capital and Neighborhood Change", 544)

If she does speak of social inequality or racial segregation, she seems to think it manifests through consumption patterns - "the right to the city passes through the right to shop there" - which seems to remain grounded in material, capitalist processes (Zukin "Changing Landscapes of Power", 62).

In their recent textbook on gentrification, Lees, Slater and Wyly have written a definition of gentrification that is solely based on social processes, making a strong statement in argument to wholly materialist arguments: "Gentrification is nothing more and nothing less than the neighborhood expression of class inequality." (Lees et al 80) Because of the clear divide, Lees, Slater, and Wyly seek to both summarize arguments being made as well as add their own in a way that binds political economic and sociocultural geographies of gentrification. First, they want to keep the word 'gentrification,' because to lose the term would be to lose the politics around it. Next, they want to emphasize how "theoretical divisions between production and consumption explanations have been overdrawn," when they are only part of gentrification.

It follows then that the methods gentrification researchers use become implicated in ideas about gentrification which have been formulated over time, especially with regard to scale and scope. Humanist and sociocultural researchers, they argue, seem to focus on the scale of the individual and small groups of people using survey and interview data, an approach that makes gentrification seem more chaotic and differentiated, with gentrifiers demonstrating important differences and distinctions. Political-economic scholars of gentrification view it as a larger scale phenomenon. In their perspective gentrifiers are a collective social group or class "bound by economic rationality" so that they don't explore motivations of individuals so much as changes in investment practices and neighborhood demographic turnover, mainly focused on

class (Lees et al xxii-xxiii). Consequently, they believe research on the topic should be less devoted to its conceptualization than to affecting policy and addressing existing inequalities in urban life, "upon which gentrification thrives" (Atkinson qtd. in Lees et al xxii). Ultimately, they think a critical geography of gentrification should focus on social justice and "resist gentrification where necessary," treating it as a hegemonic process, much as Holcomb and Beauregard argued in their 1981 monograph, *Revitalizing Cities* (xxiii). With this call to research in mind, I have chosen a topic of research that includes gentrification, but focuses on issues of social inequality in a neighborhood in Baltimore.

I argue that profiting from the marginalized spaces of everyday life is the same as gentrifying those spaces through urban development. Consequently, informal economies are necessarily tied to gentrification as a process – the existing and often underground arts culture of a neighborhood attracts development. Simultaneously, the process of deterring illicit and violent underground economies is an inspiration for a type of development that "cleans up" a part of the city – this has historically been the case and is visible in Baltimore.

Thinking Informal Economies

The exchange of capital that lies outside the bounds of taxation or the GNP can be termed as the unofficial economy, underground economy, black market, and shadow market. To say "unofficial economy" is to say something different from "informal economies." I have chosen informal economies to explain processes of exchange (both licit and illicit) for several reasons. First, "informal" doesn't so much oppose itself to institutional financial hierarchies as "unofficial" does. Second, "informal" relates culture and the experience of trade to economic practices. Informality is part of everyday life and when applied to economy, the term is an agreeable one. Informal economies are happen through transactions that can't be measured

and included as part of the Gross National Product (GNP), regardless of whether the transaction is legal or illegal, licit or illicit, safe or dangerous, moral or immoral, and so on. And third, "economies" is plural because I wish to acknowledge the complexity of economic practices. Economies are created by varied practices and aren't self-sustaining or independent from social and political factors.

There are three debates around the relationship of informal and formal economies and markets. The first regards the procyclical/anticyclical relationship of the formal and informal economies. Relying on the separateness of the formal and informal economies, economists assume there is a specific causal relationship between them that can be measured and controlled. Some say the informal economy (as a category) threatens the formal economy in a crisis of production by distracting value from existing flows of capital and decreasing demand for commodities produced under the auspices of capitalism. Others believe the informal economy mirrors the formal and supports its continuity by supplying new trends for cultural consumption. A supplementary facet of the debate questions the contradictory relations between social and economic sectors of human life. Those contradictory relations are not understood as a complex overdetermination, but as two categories that are either mutually supportive or threatening. The packaging of informal economies in scholarly discourse can be explored in the writings of Greenfield (1993); Heertji, Allen, and Cohen (1982); Tubak and Crichlow (2000); and Wiles (1987).

In Chapter III of *Capital, Vol. I*, Marx writes about money, capital, and value in the circulation of commodities. Money is the universal measure of value but it does not directly represent labor time even though it is the "socially recognized incarnation of human labor" (Marx *Capital* 100). It functions in two ways: as a measure of value and as a standard of price. Marx's value is a concept that represents socially-necessary labour time. That labour time is

agreed upon for exchange by describing its use-value. Use-value is not an inherent quality of the labour, but can only be determined retroactively through use, and so the use-value varies. Similarly, exchange value can only be determined retroactively through exchange. Consequently, value is not equated with a stable price amount, but varies according to use and exchange. Price is merely the money-name of labor realized in a commodity. A hierarchy of financial institutions leads to a contradiction between money and commodities so that "profane commodities can no longer replace [money]. The use-value of commodities becomes valueless. Value vanishes in the presence of its own independent form" (ibid 137-8). In other words, contradictions develop between money and commodities when use and exchange are delayed in an artificial credit system. When there is a crisis of money, such as the last example, an ever-lengthening chain of payments and an artificial system of settlement becomes a mechanism whose disturbance transforms money from an ideal shape into hard cash. While there are also informal types of credit, such as payday loans and loansharking, cash can provide immediate payment for exchange of goods and services as well as privacy from law enforcement. Here, cash is money as money, and the functioning of money as money is bounded because the commodity itself is the focus of the exchange. The functioning of money as capital is limitless because money itself is the focus of exchange. Consequently, crises of money happen when money is an end in itself.

The second kind of crisis that Marx explains is that of overproduction, when credit moves beyond the sphere of circulation of commodities and becomes a commodity that is the "universal subject-matter of all contracts" (Marx 1967:139). Rents, taxes, and other forms of contract are all set up around credit so that specific dates for payments, or installments, are commonly agreed upon. Therefore, it is necessary for people to accumulate against those dates fixed by society for payment (ibid. 141). Daniel Bell explores the cultural side of the crisis of

overproduction in American society in his book, The Cultural Contradictions of Capital. The crisis of overproduction is also significant to understanding the use of money in formal and informal exchange. In times of overproduction, societal ideas of consumption are invented to resolve the crises by encouraging people who don't have money to go into debt, which has ramifications for the formal and informal economies. Within his argument, the tension between cash and credit is framed in terms of Puritanical saving-up and debt. Bell uses a famous excerpt from Marx's Communist Manifesto to show how everything a society knows cycles through change and "melts" away.

> "The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society . . . . All fixed, fast, frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with his sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind." (ibid. 208-209.)

Bell argues that bourgeois taste has not always been the inspiration for commodified culture, but that the less wealthy parts of society actually affect bourgeois taste. Consequently, a second contradiction exists between freedom and wealth. This contradiction is palpable in the contrast between official and unofficial economies – the safety of one is generated by heavy control and regulation, while the freedom of the other results in danger; anything that seems free is always under the threat of coming under some kind of control by a force that wishes to profit. So in a sense, 'capitalizing' on something means controlling it, whether that thing is an item, a market, an economic system, or even notions of value.

The idea of value has a contentious relationship to what some label "reality." In *The Philosophy of Money*, Simmel describes reality and value as independent categories. He relies heavily on Kant to differentiate value and reality. Any object cannot gain or be assigned a quality of value, but a human will attach value to the idea of an object because of its existing qualities (Simmel 60). Therefore, value is the way humans put objects, thoughts, and events in order or rank. Value relates to money because money measures value. Simmel seems to address the psychology of value through an almost archetypal, universal human. He does not, however, explore the sociology of value as it is agreed upon and homogenized.

George Henderson, however, takes 'value' a step farther by reading Marx through Harvey's Limits. He emphasizes that value is not just about a differentiated, ranked world, although there are quantitative aspects to value for Marx. Value is also qualitative, socially determined, and experiential. The qualitative nature of value comes forth in the briefly mentioned concept of socially necessary labor time. There is a possibility that people feel differently about an object's value than the whole of society. In fact, for Henderson, the more Harvey writes about value through the social, "the more value as an abstraction threatens to break down" (450). This is why Henderson argues for further modification of the concept of value. While social reproduction produces ideal types of value, value cannot be consolidated and is never static. Otherwise, how can people claim their own desires? Otherwise, how can practices of

The last paragraph of Henderson's "Value: The Many-Headed Hydra" provides powerful integration of the relationship between value in formal capitalism and "social relations in excess of itself" that implies a lack of domination of capitalism even when informal practices mimick capitalist exchange and create new fields of exchange in formal capitalism (459). Value is the key to understanding the "limits to capital" and informal economies are an example of what

economic practices might surpass those limits (even as they help to define what the limits are). Henderson also offers a way to move from the abstractions of value and informality into the realm of everyday life when he describes how "value outlaws and makes abject whole worlds of want, need, and desire" when subjects encounter the illegitimacy of their desires at the limits of capital. This vision of experience reinforces Gibson-Graham's argument that capital produces relations in excess of its own boundaries, so that its inner logic necessitates its own limits of domination.

In my research on cultural fixes and creative capital, I spend some time theorizing illegal capitalism because it is a space of tension in urban geography – in theory and in cities. Informal economies can include drug trade, illegal gambling, prostitution, illegal abortion, pornography, cigarette smuggling, loan sharking, bartering, skimming, hustling, but also artistic products, performances, and other so-called "creative practices". These activities are not sufficient sources of employment (Greenfield 48) Informal economies are also not "shadow" to official, mature capitalism. However, they do have significant differences that can be explored in part through the commodity forms of cash and credit. The differing use-values and materialities of these money forms elucidate the contradictions and crises of informal and formal economic practices. These questions are important to ask because of the current state of economic polarization in cities in which certain groups of people are excluded from participation in the formal economy. By engaging in illegal forms of capitalism, portions of the urban poor are at risk of incarceration, violence, and death. Alternately, those forms of underground activities termed "creative" are highly desirable and result in urban change through development and investment, setting up a starkly racial contrast between different types of informal economies that I explore more deeply in Chapter IV. Additionally, ideas about informal economies have bearing on the experience of exclusion as part of urban life as they are deeply embedded in everyday life. These

are the practices and spaces that are being systematically appropriated – highly racialized, distant from officialized spaces, undesirable, except if there's a potential for profit – and as such, the process of gentrification also lives on a cultural level at the city scale that can be accessed and assessed according to the methods I outline in the next chapter.

Conclusion: The Real Urban Connections Between Theories

In my research in Baltimore, I have come to see inextricable ties between everyday urban life, the urban economy, and racial inequality. The way space is produced and changed, neglected or gentrified, occurs on the basis economic and racial thinking without much attention paid to effects on everyday life. In fact, racial and economic exclusion are more than parallel and abstract concepts – they are mutually formative in place.

When I put Bataille's theory in conversation with Harvey and Marx, it's far easier to contextualize alternative economic practices that accompany social exclusion. I refer to the informal economic exchanges and criminal behaviors that don't so much imply a degradation of the "moral working class" as shifting patterns of exchange, glorious and anguish-filled expenditure, and ecstatic revelry. This theoretical viewpoint enriches my argument that capitalism (as enacted in urban spaces) can be interrupted in the span of daily life.

III. Methods

There are three major objectives at stake in my use of sound in this dissertation: first, to show sound works through perception to help the human mind discern characteristics of an environment; second, to make use of sound as a virtually untapped resource for ethnography of place; and third, that changes in place can be captured and represented using sound. Although using sound can lead to rich, thick, and even artistic ethnographic products like documentary film and experimental multimedia, I will show that sound can represent place without necessarily sojourning (much) into the visual.

Ethnography of the Ordinary

My research for this dissertation took a mixed-method, four-pronged approach that included discourse analysis, interviews and oral history, environmental sound recording, and sound mapping as ethnography. I define my research in terms of ethnography, performed with a sense of experimentation in the midst of major urban change. I define it as "new ethnography," modeled after Kathleen Stewart's *Ordinary Affects*. This approach is predominantly a writing method that exercises personal reflection and narrative and pays special attention to the "ordinary," which fits my research about everyday life in Baltimore and does not conform nor is limited to scientific description; instead, the guiding task of my work is, as Clifford writes in *Allegory*, "to make the (often strange) behavior of a different way of life humanly comprehensible." (101) Partially, I accomplish this task of description through moments of ordinariness (ordinary affects) which I hope interrupt my dissertation from time to time in order to succinctly express in someone else's words what I am also arguing theoretically.

Ordinary affects, as Stewart writes, are “the varied, surging capacities to affect and to be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences” (2). She draws on Deleuze and Guattari as well as Massumi, each of whom inform her theory on affect and everyday encounters. Her approach is especially pertinent to my research, which focuses as she does on “public feelings” and “things that happen” (2). By attending to the everyday and the ordinary, Stewart traces “the potency of force” and the significance that makes the everyday so compelling and revealing. She regards “things that happen” as complex, interwoven, and overdetermined that cannot be individually and totally analyzed. Stewart’s new ethnography is as rigorous and observant as any, but makes no claims of being conclusive. There is a freedom in this kind of ethnography because the onus is both with the ethnographer as well as the reader to speculate and interpret in a tangled and messy way, breaking with the hierarchical nature that occurs in various social sciences in which authority is not easily shared with the subject or the reader. The messiness, she argues, is appropriate to representational thinking because there can be no final knowing or perfect ending. But there can be texture, exploration, and connection that create what she calls a “contact zone for analysis” (5).

In the social sciences, we are always pushing at boundaries. What some call the "tyranny of the visual" is one of those boundaries that can be exceeded simply by studying other sensory experiences. Energetic sound waves escape human lips, rumble out of car engines, surpass radio speakers, and arrive in fully public space. Although these sounds are byproducts of communication and movement, they never really belong to the ethnographer who captures them. But recording sounds in a place allows a person to learn about it, like one might try to learn about a person – by listening.

Sound recording (followed by listening) is a good technique to use when attempting to express the subtle exchanges between people and place[14] in order to ask questions like:

(1) *How do places speak and how do we hear the voice of the world in which we participate?*

(2) *How might attention to listening produce compelling, site-specific ethnographic work in the social sciences?*

The qualitative nature of ethnography is the ideal context for answering these questions by gathering and interpreting sounds in place. I chose to record sounds in Station North because it is undergoing great change, which allows me as an ethnographer to explore the becoming (and disintegrating) of place using sound. My objective, therefore, is not only to perform ethnography, but to better understand sound as a method and an integral part of place.

In the context of my research, this new ethnographic approach to everyday occurrences allows me, for example, to demonstrate significance in the sound of dilapidated and burnt-out rowhouses now under construction. I can present the sound and the scene of saws buzzing and describe the smell of dust in order to gain insight into the material changes occurring in the city. The sounds have something to do with housing, decay, investment, and redevelopment, but drawing out those relationships is an imaginative process, not a simple or objective one. In another moment of the dissertation, I describe the sensation of glass crunching on sidewalks and note how the sound cannot be heard in the more well-maintained area in order to question

[14] Treating sound as a method through which to understand phenomena, Douglas Kahn writes in *Noise, Water, Meat*: "In these techniques and situations there is a supple give and take between the subject and his or her world, where phenomena threatened to take on their own agency, appearing to climb out of chaos like an amoeba finding form and hitting stride, or where attributes of the observer are discovered in a self-consciousness exercised on a hobby horse of noise." (23)

what that uncanny feeling means in patches of ground throughout Station North. But the narrative of my perception and the identity of the place are somewhat tentative - the details are discovered, not predictable. Speculating on the sounds and ordinary events taking place in this manner can be descriptive and evocative, opening up a world of analytical connections without ever reaching a final destination of proof for a static hypothesis. In Stewart's words, her ethnographic style "does not find magical closure or even seek it, perhaps only because it's too busy just trying to imagine what's going on" (5).

I have also shaped my methods around ethnographic writing as described by James Clifford. He reminds me that ethnography is determined in many ways in what amounts to fiction, in the sense of "something made or fashioned" around partially accounted for historical truths and the inventive process of interpretation (Clifford 6). Ethnography has been moving into realms previously occupied by "sociology, the novel, or avant-garde cultural critique" at least since Clifford wrote and edited *Writing Culture*, if not earlier (23). Clifford encourages a discursive approach to cultural representation such that an "objective distance" dissipates into an ethnographic voice that is more entrenched in and reflexive about the relations at stake in ethnography. In other words, he recommends that ethnographers relinquish the impersonal descriptive (supposedly objective) voice in favor of more honest writing that reveals the entrenched positionality of ethnography itself.

Partially, I reveal my entrenchment through the use of a personal narrative voice, similar to that employed by Kathleen Stewart who writes narratives in short scenes, offering little analysis.[15] Partially, I limit my authorship role by also limiting my interpretive role in moments

[15] I have met with resistance to this style due to the staunchly guarded form of the dissertation, especially in the field of Geography, as opposed to the relative freedom afforded one in Sociology or Anthropology, which have had more time to accommodate the changing styles of ethnographies. After three decades of theoretical and stylistic advances (including the combination of narrative with traditionally impersonal

(while accentuating it in others) - by including recorded sounds for interpretation beyond my dissertation writing. If the visual gives authority, what does sound give? If authority is no longer held so completely by the ethnographer, what is the ethnographer's role?

I am neither a cultural translator nor a self-reflexive authoress. I am no intruder, neither perverse nor innocent, neither detached nor embedded, but I am a version of myself - the one who is exploring the city. My ultimate goal is to allow the sounds I record to in part speak for themselves, or to not be entirely consumed by my own analysis, leaving room for others to explore and imagine this place in transition. By providing oral history, discourse, analysis, and theoretical explanations, my sound map will yield dynamic interpretations to listeners. Because ethnographies can only be provisional and incomplete, the ethnographer must at some point acknowledge the limits she imposes on herself. Feeling inadequate with this knowledge that one is presenting an incomplete story, some ethnographers turn to what they know best - themselves. Revealing as auto-ethnographic accounts may be, I do not aspire to analyze myself. I do aspire to "only tell what I know" which will be a story connected to many other stories (Clifford *Introduction* 8). Clifford also comments on "the truth of vision in Western, literate cultures... over the evidences of sound and interlocution, of touch, smell, and taste" (11). He later argues that making texts from events and dialogue is "a kind of death in life," which both rescues the event from disappearing and causes its irretrievable loss by reconstructing it as text (*Allegory* 115).[16] Since ethnography has already become a "hybrid textual activity," so why not

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description), I think Geography departments should ready themselves as these changes influence in PhD writing.

[16] "...writing is both empowering (a necessary, effective way of storing and manipulating knowledge) and corrupting (a loss of immediacy, of the face-to-face communication Socrates cherished, of the presence and intimacy of speech)." (Clifford *Allegory* 118)

encourage the traversal of genres and disciplines by extending it past text alone and into other forms of media.[17]

This ethnography borrows and wields auditory images in a way that evokes a place as it becomes something else in every moment. I say "evokes" because my ethnographic methodology has undergone a transformation in the course of my fieldwork. I initially felt that sound was such an outlier to geographic fieldwork that I had to justify its use in a positivist way. But sound is really an *evocative* thing - I'm not measuring decibels or hertz, I'm gathering qualitative information and interpreting it. It's an expressive, almost artistic process. I edit, interpret, and present it as a type of narrative - a story moving through time and space. Sound helps describe the extensity of space. This means that sound moves across distances and has outward trajectory from its source, which is quantitatively and qualitatively measurable. In other words, sound expresses relationships of distance and trajectory in space and time. The sound map and ethnography are shaped by three main conceptual moves that appear as the three topical chapters of this dissertation:

A. The Cultural Fix (discourse analysis and interviews):

In order to accommodate capitalist institutions, a rhetoric around arts and entertainment emerges as cultural policy which supports redistricting and redevelopment in cities. I examine this trend using the method of discourse analysis, which captures a wide range of opinions and visions about arts and entertainment in the city. I also interview several Baltimore residents who offer their perspectives around issues of the creative class and capitalizing off of culture.

[17] Clifford writes, "Once cultures are no longer prefigured visually - as objects, theaters, texts - it becomes possible to think of a cultural poetics that is an interplay of voices, of positioned utterances. In a discursive rather than a visual paradigm, the dominant metaphors for ethnography shift away from the observing eye..." (Clifford "Introduction", 12)

B. The Spatio-Racial Fix (interviews and oral history, environmental sound recording):

David Harvey defines "spatial fix," or "spacio-temporal fix" as a strategy used in a crisis of capital to create new spaces of capital accumulation in order to create new sources of profit. (*NI* 115) To justify the spatial fix in the form of neighborhood redevelopment, the city will cite cultural and safety reasons, or simply city-survival. The kinds of inassimilable remainders produced by the spatial fix are rather unpredictable and can even turn on the thing that made them. In other words, the spatial fix can be thwarted as it grabs for prosperity and undermines the social improvements that it was meant to impose. In order to untangle the city's efforts from the unintended consequences, I have performed interviews and oral history with local gatekeepers and residents. Exceeding Harvey's concept of the spatial fix, the way gentrification marginalizes transgressive activities has become a guise for predominately African American racial segregation in urban neighborhoods. In response this move to determine what is "in place" and "out of place," subtle and extravagant forms of resistance emerge in everyday life. The very bodies and practices rejected by neighborhood redevelopment by necessity and by definition must cope in excessive and transgressive ways that disturb the redevelopment plan. These forms of transgression and resistance are not always noticeable in the visual and textual explanations of place identity. In fact, the identity-creation or place-making of Station North ignores the racial tensions and racial formation happening. I attend to these happenings through the method of environmental sound recording.

D. Sonic Tactics (sound mapping):

As described, each of these three fixes is met with subtle and extravagant forms of resistance in everyday life. By engaging with these socio-political issues through sound and sound mapping, I aim to release part of my positionality as a cultural translator and ethnographic interpreter - leaving it up to the person who perceives and draws meaning by using the sound map. I also describe the 'sonic turn' as a new form of representing a place in transition, turning the dissertation to reflect on the process of documentation. I both use and analyze my use of the method of sound mapping.

Introduction to Sound as Method

In the past five years alone, I have witnessed a great flourishing of thoughtful, philosophically compelling explorations of and explanations of sound. The historical moment generated by these sonic studies texts is one in which sound cannot be overlooked or taken for granted any longer, and the poetic response along with the theoretical outpouring from writers such as Salome Voegelin (2010) and Brandon LaBelle (2010), both through Continuum, originally spearheaded by Douglas Kahn (1999) and Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky (2004) under the MIT Press. These works move far beyond the soundscape research of the 1970s, the phenomenologies of the 1980s, or the experimental art writings of the 1990s and 2000s. It is something entirely new and different. A critical sonic theory, which LaBelle calls "Sound Studies, " emergent from "musicology to anthropology, histories of media and cultural practices, to performance and voice studies, the range is dynamic and also highly suggestive." (LaBelle xix)

What is clear? Sound as a perceptual mode, material entity, and binding logic inspires impassioned thinking about the world and its geographies. In an urban context, sound studies can be applied through the concept of the 'sonic turn,' a concept I am introducing which has not

yet been formally announced or explored as part of theories of sound or the urban. In my methods section, I attended to the ways I'm using sound to describe and inform my research. Beyond sound in ethnography, the ecology of sounds in urban everyday life compose a rich text from which to draw observations, make comparisons, and sense place. There is an automatic interdisciplinarity to this approach, which yields "a new object that belongs to no one" (Barthes, 'Jeunes Chercheurs' in Nancy 5). Sound studies, as developed in recent years, links phenomenology, acoustics, noise, and ethnography such that I can approach topics of gentrification, racial injustice, and urban development from a dynamic and experiential perspective.

The usefulness of sound is seemingly boundless, but worth detailing both from the writings of the aforementioned theorists and from my own experiences as an ethnographer. I begin with Jean-Luc Nancy, whose meditation on listening (in *Listening*, originally published in French in 2002) provides a deep philosophy of the secrets offered and made public, not just by being in the world, but by listening to it (Nancy 5). Early, he explains how sound relates to the human body, an essential beginning in order for me to describe then the interaction of body, sound, and place. Timbre is the most obvious entry into understanding the relationship between sound and bodies, or even sound and things/places.[18]

Timbre, the texture of sound due to bumping of particles and the materialities of the things that produce sound in interaction, is inescapable - a manner of sounding, a quality of thingness in sound. Vibrations travel through matter, arriving at the surface and penetrating the human body that perceives, remembers, and moves toward action. The human body perceives

[18] Sound bring out the verb of thing, its *Dingheit* or thinging, as described by Heidegger. Voegelin writes, "The thing as sound is a verb, the thing is what 'things' in its contingent production. To thing, it is to do a thing rather than be a Thing.... The sonic thing as a doing 'substance' is not sublimated to the noun in the sentence. Rather it abandons the hierarchy and becomes the noun as a thinging being." (19)
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while acting within the world – never outside the world, but always implicated in it, encountering the world through sensation and image. Sensation is always just past, and the vibrations are "felt" after the moment of impact – images perceived with an overlay of memory. The thin skin of the present is continually surpassed by the past even as it precedes itself into the future. Nancy writes of how timbre communicates the incommunicable, describes the shape of a body, and echoes the space and time between things when the body "opens up and closes at the same time" and then "arranges itself and exposes itself with others" through the medium of sound (Nancy 41). Regarding the plurality proffered by timbre, Nancy senses the "communication of the incommunicable," the echo of the body displayed externally, the shape and texture of the body reflected within the sound (41).

The resonance of the body as it voices sound is thereby referential to both the production and reception of sound. Sound then occupies an in-between position in space and time such that boundaries are constantly surpassed through the communicative experience of listening. Timbre is the grain of voice. And the grain of voice is a seed, a pixel, a glissade, an ongoing disruption that stretches away from the artificial purity of a plan. The grain of the voice is "an expression of the body that culture has yet to constrain" (Dyson 18). Resonances of the body, like resonances of the city - remind us that our bodies are vessels of experience in which our minds reside, with varying degrees of separation between people in space and time. Sound weaves stylishly in between these things, and the sonorous moment spreads out, opening space through resonance, expansion, and reverberation, through all spaces, obstacles with inescapable" "penetration and ubiquity" (Nancy 13). Similarly, Salome Voegelin describes what sound is to the brain - a form of knowing: "This knowing is the experience of sound as temporal relationship. This 'relationship' is not between things but is the thing, is sound itself." (5) This knowing engages with time and space in ways that sound is uniquely able to display such that

sound “challenges the possibility of a dialectic definition that purports their autonomous discussion and pretends them as stable absolutes “ (Voegelin 124).

Thus, the listening subject cannot help but invent while listening (“in a phenomenological sensory-motor action towards the heard”), resulting in the listener’s own in-betweenness, overlapping with space, connecting with a sound already made only now arriving (Voegelin 10). And yet, as Voegelin says that the listener is “entwined with the heard,” I cannot help but think that it’s not that simple. Our minds filter sound like any other perceptual matter, discerning between useful and useless information, or discerning between that with which we are familiar versus that which is too unknown to process. The very creation of sound is the creation of space within time, and in this, there is automatically power and potential for resistance. A sound can be disruptive, claiming, overriding, disturbing, or threatening. Or it can be soothing, embracing, enveloping, giving safety and authorization.

There seems to be a hierarchy between the senses, within which sound takes on the diminutive role of informing the visual. Authority can often be found in the visual - a blueprint, a plan, an evidentiary photograph, a glimpse. In the context of research and writing, sound takes on no responsibility at all, or else exists only to inform ethnographic writing, without existing as an end or purpose unto itself. Voegelin describes this marginalization of sound as it is “left to describe and enhance but never to do and become.” (13) And yet, the ongoing in-betweenness of sound interrupts the authority of a singular visual moment. Furthermore, sound cannot be equated to the visual or textual because, although they certainly do not represent simplistic unity of perception, they are “already there” such that it is not possible to “participate in the complexity of their unfolding.” (Voegelin 8) She writes, “Sounds are like ghosts. They slink around the visual object, moving in on it from all directions, forming its contours and content in

a formless breeze. The spectre of sound unsettles the idea of visual stability and involves us as listeners in the production of an invisible world." (Voegelin 12) In my methods section, I asked:

> *If the visual gives authority, what does sound give? If authority is no longer held by the ethnographer, what is the ethnographer's role?*

Sound gives story, or narrative, and the ethnographer prepares stories for many tellings and retellings. Of this process, Clifford conceptualizes that "The fieldworker presides over, and controls in some degree, the making of a text out of life." (*Allegory* 116) As place is produced in the imagination, it means something to be a listener; and there are consequences to listening that aren't entirely within the listener, but move in waves past, through, and beyond the listener simply because listening is taking place. In the recorded, ethnographic realm of the street, we are talking about sonic ghosts. Moments of inertia between bodies, entities, molecules that pass out of existence quite quickly, but not without duration – for it is duration that lends sound this sensual proclivity to include the listener in the making of a mutually-constitutive experience between the sound, the context of its production, and the listener.

Because the visual and textual are prioritized ways of ordering words and images spatially, sound offers a means to represent a phenomenon or a memory in a unique way through time, but non-consecutively, and not just as a chronology or sequence. Composers and artists like John Cage and Alvin Lucier who work with music and sound offer insight into the way sound emerges from the body and is received by the body in a way that is unique from less vibrational senses like smell and vision. The simultaneous materiality and immateriality of sound relates the human body to what is outside of it. Lucier specifically explores the way places have resonance in his composition, "I am sitting in a room." I make a similar claim about the built

environment by using sound as a metaphor for everyday life and the rhythms of urban experience. Places are dynamic, and our relationships to places are, consequently, dynamic and changing, unstilled by the visceral quality of abrupt and slow moving change, made so readily apparent by the sounds of a place.

Method A: Discourse Analysis

First, I examined relevant discourse[19], including historical documents, online media, journalism, policy and planning documents, advertisements and mailing lists.[20] Perspectives on cultural policy are especially rich in this method. Discourse analysis will allow this study of a place in transition to approach changes in the built environment from a variety of perspectives. Ideas about gentrification vary widely through time and discipline, and the rhetoric around it has not been consistent. The purpose of the rhetoric around gentrification has been in some cases to encourage investment and, in other cases, to discourage a spatial fix for social inequality. Analyzing written and spoken dialogue around redevelopment, specifically dialogue surrounding the redevelopment of Station North, will help to decode political language that argues for redevelopment, thereby demonstrating a tight relationship between gentrification and racial formation. This method has been used in qualitative and quantitative ways, but my analysis will be qualitative and ethnographic, similar to the discourse analysis of Abu-Lughod (2007), Isenberg (2004), Crump (2002) and Blomley (2004).

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[19] In using the word "discourse" I refer not only to text and discussions that have taken place in the course of my fieldwork, but also their implications as set out by Creswell in *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*: "Discourses are ideological insofar as they attempt to define what is good and true, what exists, and what is possible (the limits to change) and insofar as they serve the interests of powerful groups." (60)

[20] In *Cities and Race: America's New Black Ghetto*, David Wilson used textual analysis in a similar manner to deconstruct "stories about city growth and redevelopment in sevel local dailies". (17)

My primary and secondary sources of data will include current news media in Baltimore, specifically *The Baltimore Sun*, the Baltimore *City Pages*, the *Urbanite*, the Baltimore *Examiner*, and *The Investigative Voice*. The articles I've read have been organized based on topic and integrated into my arguments throughout the dissertation. Through the Station North website, I have access to tax incentive documents and district legislation that defines the policies around the arts and culture designations, which directly influence how the neighborhood functions economically and politically. I set up alerts to receive weekly emails on topics including crime, gentrification, and urban redevelopment in Baltimore. I've also been receiving weekly updates from Station North, Inc. since 2008. I have attended multiple Artscapes in the Station North area and events to gain insight into the artistic community. Additionally, during the entirety of my fieldwork, I have gathered and kept printed materials describing Station North and surrounding areas, such as the Mobtown Beat, Urbanite, City Paper, posters, and neighborhood maps. I draw from these in moments to support specific pieces of my argument.

I attended the grassroots City from Below conference in 2009, at which David Harvey both spoke and listened. The City from Below conference was attended by a diverse group of non-academics, academics, artists, urban planners, and union organizers who had gathered to discuss social and political change in Baltimore. In particular moments, the City from Below conference yielded what has ultimately transformed my conclusion from a dire critique of Station North as a failed gentrification zone that attempted but never succeeded in dominating the city's racial minorities into a more open and exciting idea about Station North as a place which the city's residents move through in order to make change. The City from Below conference accomplished this for me by demonstrating that a diverse group of people from many classes, races, genders, and ages could indeed gather and plan out political strategies countering normative modes of development. I pull from the conference in moments to enrich

my ethnography. When I later attended the National Symposium on Arts/Culture/Entertainment Districts in early 2012, those ideas were put into stark relief when compared to the talks given by arts boosters and urban designers with a pro-gentrification focus.

Method B: Interviews and Oral History

I am fortunate to be well-connected with a variety of city employees, journalists, and residents of Baltimore, in part because it is home territory for me. I held interviews with these local experts on subjects like prostitution, city government, journalism and crime, urban planning, minority issues, and the design and vision for Station North. These interviews, in person, by phone, and online included Tracy Williams, Hieu Truong, Stephen Janis, Andrew Bertell, and moments with other local residents, prostitutes, drug dealers, and business owners from within and without the Station North vicinity.

My work is especially enriched by contact with Stephen Janis, reporter and editor of *The Investigative Voice*, an online journal established in 2009 to report on corruption and crime in the city and was the first to break the news about former Mayor Sheila Dixon's impeachment. *The Investigative Voice* is a good alternative source for news in Baltimore in addition to the *Baltimore Sun*, which is a larger conglomerate news source. Janis is also a digital media instructor and author who has served as a key informant based on his years of study on related topics specific to Baltimore. He has served as a gatekeeper into some impoverished neighborhoods in the past and agreed to assist me in my research and help me develop contacts. With the contacts I have formed over the years, I was able to ask questions about economic practices and lived experiences in Station North.

I also accompanied Stephen Janis as a reporter at times when he was gathering information about crime in the city, especially pertaining to drug use, theft, and interactions

between police officers and perpetrators in order to gather information about the economic dimensions of crime in Baltimore -- but also in moments where politicians and community leaders were talking about cleaning up the city. These interviews, aided by Stephen, show how Station North illustrates the contradictions within the city's political imaginings of what Baltimore should be in order to survive, decades after deindustrialization. Ultimately, a thorough exploration of Baltimore's alternative economies and imaginaries of property have complicated the city's envisioning of economic growth, the property ownership model, and exclusionary political tactics.

Tracy Williams, a former employee of Baltimore City provided me with both data and qualitative information as a long-time city resident. Harvard-educated urban planner and nonprofit worker, Hieu Truong, is also a long-time city resident and has aided me in the process of participating in Design Conversations and sharing frustrations after the fact. I was also in contact with Eden Savino, who wrote a Public Policy Masters thesis in Baltimore on the topic of prostitution (2003). She has been cited in articles in the *City Paper* and is an expert on the subject of female street prostitution in Baltimore. Savino describes the economic and social consequences of regulating prostitution in order to make it taxable, and since her perspective is based in both fieldwork and policy research, she was a helpful contact in the area although I did not interview her. Finally, Sine Jensen is a local artist and activist who I met accidentally and interviewed purposefully to discuss the validity of my arguments around art, culture, and urban change. Many of my informants, including Tracy, Hieu, and Sine, along with urban residents, are people of color with informed views about racial politics, which was helpful in the context of other types of questions.

The most significant oral history I was able to glean from this process came from an East Oliver resident named Eli Whitener. His story, along with some shorter ones, supports my

argument in the Spatio-Racial Fix chapter. The qualitative nature of oral history is an ideal point of departure for gathering and interpreting sounds in place. However, in the wide range of available material on the topic of sound, authors have rarely introduced the kind of analytical content useful to the social sciences. The potential for using sound in studies of place is missing, as is attention to non-human oral histories of any kind. Consequently, a researcher using experimental sonic methods must be deliberate in practice and ready to justify sound as a method for both gathering and representing qualitative data. In this, my project will not just produce an oral history, but will justify and theorize sound as part of both the method and the place.

It's not entirely fair to treat a voice as "sound," or only as sound at least. For the larger purpose of engaging with experiences of Station North through oral history, voices serve as a bridge for the story being told, its timbre contributing to the immersive qualities. The evacuation of sound from the body in the form of voice - is wholly from the body and therefore inseparable as phenomena, but also wholly apart - the intention of using the voice requires the voice to escape in the form of air particles vibrating materially and immaterially. Momentarily part of our bodies as breath, which we couldn't survive without, but unstable and always in transition once we are rid of the idea of our body as bound and solid. The voice is an expulsion - another oozing and defecation, but with systematically applied and shared meaning, providing occasion for translation and communication. Dyson writes of the voice outside of pure reference to language and places it in the context of sonic connection between things like people and places:

> "In imitating the nature of the thing or event, the voice sonically re-presents its essence, creating a physical (because acoustic) resonance between the speaker and the thing

> spoken of, and confirming that words correspond to referents, not through mere imitation; but through a sonorous reconnection." (Dyson 22)

In this statement, I question the nature of some of the human sounds I recorded, words screamed, sometimes unintelligible. These voices aren't entirely atmospheric, and do stand independent from place. They carry meaning, but don't entirely fall into the category of interview or oral history either. At times, it was disconcerting to hear a voice that was not being used for conversational communication. The cries and groans we hear on city streets can be awkward, terrifying, humorous, and I don't always know how to react. But the communication that is happening is still interpersonal, in one way or another, intentional, and certainly meaningful. The pained, excited, and angry human voices I recorded, that are part of the sound map, are just as crucial to my ethnography as the oral histories and interviews.

Method C: Environmental Sound Recording

The atmosphere of a public place belongs to everyone. It rises out of a flourishing of social noises and pulsations, and space is created and then dissipates in the temporal span of each sonic resonance.[21] Because sound exists as perceptual information gathered in the form of vibrations through time, it lends itself well to exploring and evoking narratives of place. A story can be told almost accidentally, through remnants of sound dispersed into the atmosphere.

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[21] "...the social is the realm of noise and rumor, of pulsing and multiple waves rather than discrete signals, and it moves against technologies and systems... that are oriented toward the individual body. Thinking of atmospheres also returns us to the breath, to the continuous and necessary exchange between subject and environment, a movement that forms a multiplicity existing within the space necessary for sound to sound, and for Being, in whatever form, to resonate." (Dyson 17)

Although the concept is now somewhat aged, there are parts of how a “soundscape” is understood that remain relevant to my project methods, particularly environmental sound recording. A soundscape, as defined by R. Murray Schaeffer, has three elements or zones: *keynote sounds* (not always immediately audible or noticeable), *sound signals* (foregrounded and consciously interpreted), and *soundmarks* (unique to a place) (*The Tuning of the World* 1977). My methodology adopts these three categories or elements of a soundscape to organize the types of sounds I'll have actively recorded during my fieldwork. Ambient sound, or environmental sound that amounts to *keynote sounds*, have been recorded in various zones around Station North. I recorded ambience in public spaces at different times of day and in gridded locations in the neighborhood. *Sound signals* were explored through a more active recording technique in which I moved toward sound sources, human or otherwise, intentionally based on an understanding of what sorts of sounds hold information that cue action or understanding of a sound's meaning. In my fieldwork, sound signals were recorded and noted as encountered while moving through the neighborhood. Finally I have reinterpreted *soundmarks* as oral history. Rather than attempting to pursue or identify sounds unique only to Station North, I have treated the stories people tell about Station North as unique to that area. Oral history is a tried and true method in the social sciences, especially anthropology, that engages subjects' personal experiences in order to record and preserve the historical moments from which those stories arise.

Collecting these sounds is a bit like picking through layers in garbage pails and dumpsters. Stewart writes, “The snatching practice mixes a longing for a real world (or something) with the consumer’s little dream of spying a gem or tripping over a bargain. And in the mix, all kinds of other things are happening too.” (Stewart *OA,* 21) To “snatch,” there must be “apparatus proximity” between the recording device and sonic event (Dyson 83). Listening

later, I found unique remnants expressing a series of anonymous and yet particular stories. Removing visual cues, each sound became a question, clue, and artifact whose temporality is "extended beyond" the event itself and could be stored, kept, replayed, and repeated (Dyson 10). As material artifacts, sounds are important precisely because they're thrown out into the world – that's what sound is. But sounds really are more like events: energetic sound waves have escaped human lips, rumbled out of car engines, surpassed radio speakers, and arrived in fully public space. Although these sounds are byproducts of communication and movement, they never really belong to the researcher who captures them. Then again, they belong to anyone who can hear them. The researcher borrows and wields auditory images in a way that evokes a place even as it becomes something else in every moment.

Environmental sound recording is a common method of documenting and analyzing ecosystems, but not often used by ethnographers except to record music or interviews. My efforts to record environmental sound recording focused on what it's like to walk through the city and encounter areas populated by vacant lots and crime, gentrified areas of redevelopment, and the transitions between. The sounds gathered could be interactions between bar patrons and bartenders, pigeons and sidewalks, car drivers shouting at pedestrians, police sirens and rowhouse walls, and the sounds can be found in any location where social reproduction or social conflict occur or could occur.

My research in Baltimore has focused on what it's like to move through the Station North and its edges, encountering areas populated by foreclosures and crime, gentrified places, and the gradients between them. My methods are engaged with everyday patterns of movement, economic exchange, and sound on urban streets, privileging not only human to human interaction, but also encounters between humans and their environment, including buildings, cars, trees, trash cans, dogs, buses, and everything in between. Moving as a

pedestrian through Station North, captured through sound, is an important supplement to the textual portion of my dissertation. In turn, my writing helps to contextualize the sounds and words I have gleaned during research.

My method for sound recording comes from sound artists like Jem Finer who composed an album of "Visionary Landscapes" based on stories, environments, and songs in a region; and Janet Cardiff who bends the historical past into the present through sound art that allows listeners to walk through space focused on the temporal and audible information around them. I learned from listening to Finer and Cardiff that layered, place-based information can be stitched together with clarity so that the method lends itself to envisioning lived experience. Sound represents more than sensory experience, ethnographic method, and art. It is a ripe metaphor for understanding human life, space, and time through concepts like tempo, rhythm, duration, and frequency (Reese and Katovich 1989). Through resonance and duration (which implicate memory), buildings, streets, and other urban surfaces can be treated as agents in the production of sound life in Baltimore. Consequently, I will treat the sonic environment of Baltimore as a lived practice of daily social, political, and economic realities.

My ears, my body, and my microphone are points that receive sound. At each point, the sound is being perceived or recorded. Similar to the way the human ears and brain are selective when listening, an ethnographer must isolate and negotiate with sound while recording. Using a portable recorder, microphone, and headphones, it's seems that it would be a simple matter to be somewhere and pick up sound. Of course, it's not quite that easy to record "good sound." The ethnographer has to be mindful of technique in order to collect high quality sound. Otherwise, it's like taking a picture with the lens cap on. Technical precision requires knowledge about what sound is, how it vibrates and moves, and how not to collect unnecessary noise. Unnecessary noise might be background voices when performing an interview of one person,

wind hitting a microphone and canceling out other sounds, or the sound of a car going by instead of the song of a bird in a nearby tree. Similar to the way the human ears and brain are selective when listening, an ethnographer must isolate and negotiate with sound while recording. Additionally, there are technical standards (like wind-screening and microphone directionality) that are important to master before recording in the field. Consequently, a lack of expertise can act as a barrier to effective use. More problematically, it has acted as a barrier to sound recording in ethnography as a whole.

The other barrier to using sound is what some call "the despotism of the visual," the privileging of visual information over other kinds of sensory data (Henley 2007). Douglas Kahn, Andrea Hammer, and Paul Henley have written about the primacy of visual data in the way humans interpret and think about the world while sound remains a sort of unsung hero. This primacy happens through film, photography, television, and other types of media. In an article aimed at convincing visual and film ethnographers of the importance of sound, Paul Henley writes,

> "My argument is that by taking greater care to record these environmental sounds in the field and by handling them in the editing suite with the attention that is normally reserved for images, we should be able to improve the quality of our films in three related ways: by 'thickening' the ethnographic description on which the films are based, by enhancing the spectators' understanding and vicarious experience of the subject matter presented in the film, and by enhancing the modes through which the filmmaker can propose an interpretation of the significance of that subject matter." (56)

Although Henley is arguing for the importance of layering sound with visual information for a rich ethnographic product, I am also making a case for stand-alone sound ethnography. Sound

can be isolated from the visual for an intensive immersion in place that reveals how place becomes unified in space and time.

This relationship of sound and place brings us back to the idea of soundscape. The landscape part of the word can now be examined, having understood more fully the relationship of landscape as "a meaningful crystallization of place" in space and time that precipitates from and influences "social, economic, political, and environmental processes." (Hammer) Sound can thus provide entry into topics such as race, investment, commerce, and other changes taking place. Whether place is perceived through a secondary representation or directly through the ears, a soundscape is always taking place because it is a "total field of sound wherever we are." (Hammer) Kahn evokes this fact poetically when he writes that "noise is the forest of everything."

Listening to a place without seeing it forces a person to get outside their visual sensibilities and into a thicker field experience. But why would an ethnographer want their readers to focus just on sound? Initially, it's possible to grasp details not available through photographs. Without visual distraction, the listeners are able to concentrate exclusively on the speech, resonances, and silences of a place. Going a bit deeper, sound is well-equipped to explore the narrative of place by virtue of perceptual information gathered through time, picking up signals humans have learned to process by habit. A story is told almost accidentally, through remnants of sound dispersed into the atmosphere. Collecting these sounds is a bit like picking through garbage pails. Guessing at the origins and finding treasures is part of the pleasure. By removing visual clues, each sound becomes a question, clue, and artifact.

As a final, crucial part of this method of environmental sound recording, I turned reflexively to my own sense of time and place while recording and experiencing Station North. I whisper notes into the recorder to mark intervals and locations. I comment on the sounds of

passing cars, while sitting in a coffee shop in the morning, and my own footsteps punctuated the sense of time that developed during my study. These moments yield evocative descriptive passages in subsequent chapters that are rich with interpretation and analysis in ways that I avoid by using the recordings and sound map (in which I invite playful interpretation on the part of the listener/user instead). Nevertheless, accumulating sound through the recording process "wrenches" the sound out of time and place. But when I reassemble the sounds in the context of a map, I am able to represent one experience of a place's duration with continuity into other times, to influence other perceptions of place. Ironically, the violence of stealing sound from one space-time allows its survival in other times and spaces.

Method D: Sound Mapping

> *"These are the reminiscences of bodies loaded in ordinary language and marking its path, like white pebbles dropped through the forest of signs. An amorous experience, ultimately. Incised into the prose of the passage from day to day, without any possible commentary or translation, the poetic sounds of quoted fragments remain." (de Certeau 1991,163)*

Mapping gentrification and neighborhood change is common, but mapping the unexpected contradictions and consequences of redevelopment using sound is less typically part of ethnographic research. Sound helps to connect political economy to racial formation by adding a textured, experiential interpretation of everyday life in a place where they are at play. Interactive sonic environments in the form of sound mapping can yield textured, complex representations of urban space. Ultimately, this sound map will supplement my written

dissertation and will be available online so that participants and other local residents can engage with the material on a continued basis.

For researching (and representing) Baltimore, the methods of sound mapping will be engaged with everyday patterns of movement, paces of walking, trends of sound on urban streets, and encounters between human and non-human agents. Representing the findings through sound becomes as important as data gathering because the format actually describes the multiplicity of voices and complex relationships in the city. To outline the method of sound mapping, which is not a familiar tool for most geographers, I first delve into more comfortable territory (mapping) before attaching the idea of sound to it (later in this section).

Mapping: Why So Visual?

Geography has long been both a textual and visual discipline, the visual portion of which has historically functioned through cartography. Cartography is an art and a science. The very idea of a map has instant connotations. A person may visualize the vinyl pull-down map of the world in front of the elementary school blackboard. A person may imagine clicking the Maps button on a Google toolbar, typing in to and from destinations, and loading a highlighted tracing over a scaled road map. Geographers are in an authoritative position to create maps that people trust every day out of necessity. Cosgrove describes the everyday nature of maps as he writes, "In the contemporary world, with its seemingly limitless capacities for producing, reproducing and transmitting graphic images, the map is a ubiquitous feature of daily life… Maps are thus intensely familiar, naturalized, but not natural, objects working within a modern society of high if uneven cartographic literacy." (2)

The symbolic reduction of a concept, space, or network into a visual image (such as a map) requires a level of simplification, which is neither a good or bad thing in itself. Without some simplification, the representation would duplicate the object itself. Historically,

geographic philosophers sought to give authenticity to their theories by representing scientific information visually through diagram and pictorial representation. However, this type of simplification may not be representative of more complicated ideas. Therefore, the creation of graphic symbolism can effectually produce a simultaneous creation of new ideas through the interpretive process such that mapping "begets further mappings" (Cosgrove 13).

The simplest kinds of maps are directive in that they function under an imperative system, a foregone conclusion, or a path the interpreter must follow in order to make sense of the information at all. However, there is a danger in misreading the seeming stability or naturalness of a map as a contextual interpretation. Cosgrove explains how maps can be misleading,

> "At the same time [maps'] spaces of representation can appear liberating, their dimensionality freeing the reader from both the controlling linearity of narrative description and the confining perspective of photographic or painted images" (2).

For instance, USGS imagery-based programs like Google Earth have allowed popular access to aerial imaging that was not readily available in the past, thereby framing the way users actually see the world. As geographic mapping and aerial imaging have become increasingly available, cartography has become a more creative and personal enterprise and, in some ways, liberating. Large systems of information rely on user input to define the end result by showing and hiding information, zooming, or focusing on one aspect of a path of information links.

Interactive graphics allow for changes in viewpoint and, therefore, movement where non-interactive ones are static. Using a classical style and updated aerial photographs, Google Earth takes simplistic mapping to an interactive level. Not only can a user tour localities anywhere on the globe to whatever resolution Google Earth provides, but inventive users can layer information on top of the imagery using mash-ups in the form of KML files.

However, as Cosgrove cautioned, the usefulness of the maps are limited and not to be trusted wholeheartedly, especially for research. Google Earth is not geo-referenced and the years of the photos used are not consistent, so the data is not usable for some branches of geography. Visual information can be warped as easily as statistical data. Nevertheless, institutions have depended on the presence of political and social boundaries as defined by cartographic methods, even when the results are inconsistent. This dissertation treats mapping quite honestly and loosely as a form of representation for two reasons:

(1) To call attention to issues of representation in Station North.

(2) To interrupt and counter-represent ideological representations of Station North as a sanitized space where only certain types of economic, social, and political activity are acceptable and even legal.

Subversive cartography contradicts the basic imperatives of mapping through varied stylistic and representative methods, often while revealing social inequalities and political betrayals in order to counter a previously written history. David Pinder expresses the spirit of new cartographies in his literature review, "Cartographies Unbound," in which he recognizes the "current interest in unmaking, remaking and unbinding cartographies from powerful institutions and from monochromatic views that see them as expressions only of the dead-hand of power" (454).[22]

Mapping as representation can be approached through the perspective of geographers and cartographers who are invested in the simultaneous progress of representation methods and advancement of geographic philosophy, including Edward Tufte, James Corner, Denis

[22] And of subversive cartographies, Pinder writes, "As antagonist maps primarily distributed at activist meetings and reproduced on the web, they are meant not only to act as guides conveying specialized information but also, in their very excessiveness, to function as what the group's collaborator Brian Holmes calls 'subjective shocks, energy potentials', which inform protest performances and encourage resistance." (456)

Cosgrove, David Pinder, and Gillian Rose. Denis Cosgrove is the editor of *Mappings* and author of the introductory chapter within. Of particular interest to my research in this book is James Corner's article, "The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique, and Invention," regarding mapping techniques that have emerged from postmodern thinking. Edward Tufte has published several books on the topic of visual representation including maps, but also graphs, diagrams, and other visual methods. Tufte is concerned with the interpretation of geographic representations, made easier by certain stylistic approaches and artistry.

Christian Nold's "Bio Mapping" constructs emotional cartographies generated by movement through particular spaces (www.BioMapping.net). He visits different cities, like San Francisco, London, and Tokyo and uses 3D visualization technology on top of Google Earth mapped territory to track GPS-monitored emotional responses from whatever person is moving through the space (see Fig. 1 and 2). He describes the technology in an interview, "A Galvanic Skin Response sensor in the form of finger cuffs measures the sweat level. Fitted out with this device, people go for a walk and when they return their data is visualised and annotated." (Bentkowska-Kafel). Nold characterizes his project in response to the constant ambient "topdown interrogation" that individuals experience every day, using technology to empower individuals to be analytical of their own bodies in space in ways that disinterested outside parties are not capable of. Nold writes in explanation of his project concept, "By recording our own body's bio data along with our geographic location we can review the information and make meaningful decisions about our life." (www.BioMapping.net)[23] The strength of this data is

[23] Christian Nold's "Bio Mapping" work was presented at the Dislocate Symposium in Zaim, Yokohama in July of 2007. The goal of the symposium is as follows: "Artists, researchers and theorists will join with the audience in an explorative investigation of the creative and social potential of new media to engage us with our direct locality." (www.dis-locate.net). Of the concurrent exhibit in Kiowa, Dislocate defines the purpose of this type of geographic art as: "Held over two sites, of contrasting locality, Dislocate will present new possibilities of our immediate space and the multiple connections which link to elsewhere. There will be a particular relationship to the surrounding site of the exhibition venues encouraging

its intentionality regarding personal life experiences and choices as they relate to geography as opposed to what individuals are told and how they are measured by outside powers. Nold's methods directly oppose the pretense of an imposed or directive mapping system by allowing for individual creativity in analysis and interpretation.

In "The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique, and Invention," James Corner offers applications for complexity and artistry in mapping. His "optimistic revisions of mapping practices" will also be helpful for the following sections about diagramming and photographic arrangement because he focuses on creative layering and outside-the-box representation methods (Corner 213). I first read this chapter in 2005 and found it inspiring to mapping techniques I applied to landscape architecture analysis and designs, which shows that his inventive suggestions are applicable to a range of fields outside of geography, including art, history, and landscape architecture, among others. The basis for creative mapping is first in the realization, also explained by Cosgrove, that the agency of mapping finds power in "uncovering realities previously unseen or unimagined" (213). Corner describes the representation of what is already known as "tracing," a term he borrows from Deleuze and Guattari to express a much less imaginative venture than the kind of visual representation that embodies the function of new research in its originality.[24] Mapping and other forms of visual representations can illustrate relationships and interactions through experimentation and performance, in some ways admitting a lack of omniscience on the part of the representer.

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interaction and engagement with this environment while also fusing with spaces beyond. Installation, video, audio, performance, mobile, locative, interactive and web-based media will all be included in this exhibition."

[24] Corner quotes Delueze and Guattari: "What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency… The map has to do with performance, where as tracing always involves an 'alleged competence.'" (qtd. in Corner 214)

For Corner, this kind of mapping requires an introduction because it is not yet widely or inventively used by the academic disciplines in which he operates. So through examples such as Buckminster Fuller's alternate arrangements of the world map; Torres-Garcia's inverted map of South America; and urban theories of well-known geographers like Edward Soja, David Harvey, and Bernard Tschumi, Corner demonstrates "the interrelationships amongst things in space, as well as the effects that are produced through such dynamic interactions, [that] are becoming of greater significance for intervening in urban landscapes than the solely compositional arrangement of objects and surfaces" (227). In addition to affecting landscapes, mapping interrelationships can change mindsets, research methods, and the trajectory of an entire discipline.

For example, Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to define rhizomatic characteristics in society is significant to mapping indeterminate relationships where causality is more complex than traditional mapping styles can show. Corner also draws on the example of the Situationists as both artists and activists who drew from contemporary artistic practices in order to increase public consciousness and act as advocates through art and performance. One mapping type the situationist Guy Debord used to represent life and social formations were his "psychogeographic guides" of Paris (231). Situationism and psycho-geography have influenced the geographic discipline as a whole, and material/artistic expressions of new theory are a part of that influence. Towards the end of his groundbreaking chapter, Corner demonstrates his mapping technique with some graphics of his own. True to the thrust of his argument, the maps he created speak volumes about the imagination that can drive representation. In my own mapping, I hope to allow for the kind of creative interpretation mapping instead of tracing should allow.

The above geographers and artists believe that new tactics are necessary to provide interpreters a means to rethink the power networks around them. A different metaphorical depiction, one that is charged with electricity like the firing of nodes in the human brain, may inspire more creative interpretation. In part, I model new methodological possibilities (and their eventual proliferation) based on the methods of more artistic disciplines. Why not do so when everything from cartographic drafting, illustrating, painting, photography, film, sound art, multimedia, websites, online network maps, digital layers, photo-collage, even to kaleidoscopic visual and sound media are available as tools? I have chosen to open up my methods to the wealth of new technologies and connections between technologies, allowing for ever more intricate weavings of ideas in increasingly imaginative ways. These tools and methods allow us to step outside the boundaries of the maps on our walls; the composite edges of our computer screens and the way our eyes and ears engage with them; and, therefore, the limits of the geographic discipline. In the case of my research, the representation of place relies on the addition of sound recordings, layered upon a digital/visual map.

Sound + Mapping: Resonance instead of Evidence

> *"...reduced listening requires the fixing of sounds, which thereby acquire the status of veritable objects." (Chion 29)*

> *"Chion's solution was to think of sound as an event rather than as an object, and in doing so to incorporate a sense of organic process, of movement, change, and complexity, while maintaining a sense of identity and individuality." (Dyson 10)*

I have defined my approach to research as ethnographic and the process as "new ethnography." Because I'm also attempting to engage readers/listeners in an immersive sense of place, this dissertation is a "new media art dissertation" in addition to an ethnographic one. In fact, the two fit together nicely in the form of the digital sound map. A sound map derives from the way sound, technology, and culture have combined in recent decades into new assemblages of media that are ripe for experimentation and analysis.

A sound map is a necessarily digital undertaking that attaches clips (or "events") of sound to a graphic map with the expectation that various people will visit and interact with the layers of sound on the map by looking, pointing, clicking, and listening. Creativity is thereby required of the sound artist/ethnographer who arranges the sounds in layers on the map. Creativity and imagination are predicted on the part of the map's users, who can make a variety of choices when "playing" or playing with the map.

The successful creation of a sound map, requires technical expertise to record and edit the sound, as well as the programming knowledge to create an online map with embedded sound. Technical precision in recording requires knowledge about what sound is, how it vibrates and moves, and how not to collect unnecessary noise. Unnecessary noise might be background voices when performing an interview of one person, wind hitting a microphone and canceling out other sounds, or the sound of a car going by instead of the song of a bird in a nearby tree. The use of sound to share these ordinary details is a purposeful way to highlight the delicate spheres of movement, the passage of time, and the ongoing transience of each moment recorded. The resonance "lingers" long enough to be captured imperfectly by a sound recording device and played through imperfect speakers (Stewart OA 6). I gather the sounds on the map as an assemblage so that a person using the map can draw out unique meanings. In this way,

the sound map is a mediated tool between a place and the recipients of sonic information about the place, the users of the map.

The sound map does not make evident, but makes resonant.[25] It treats anyone who uses it (as I've been calling "users") as a performer and potential philosopher hearing allegory in the play of sounds. The sound map asks the user to listen to the past - which also refers to future possibilities of what can happen in the same place - to tell a story and become part of it. It has the ability to take advantage of what the act of *listening* is, in the words of Jean-Luc Nancy, "to be straining toward a possible meaning, and consequently one that is not immediately accessible" (6).[26] In trying to make sense of sonic resonance instead of a visual depiction of place, a user replicates the way sound spreads in space and resounds both inside and outside of one's body.

I'm asking for immersion in the digital content of the sound map as part of this resonant play. I'm asking the user to enter the screen by pointing and rolling the mouse cursor over various areas within the confines of the map. By doing so, the scrolling movement of the pointer simulates the user's embodiment in the place being represented as the digital content undergoes play. Interactive digital content is a type of "new media," as described by Frances Dyson in *Sounding New Media*, which gives users high levels of agency, "freeing them from the passive experience of simply watching" (2). By working with and for "new media" (such as digital maps that enable high levels of interaction) part of the method and product of this

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[25] Why is it that "...*auricular* confession corresponds to a secret intimacy of sin and forgiveness? Why, in the case of the ear, is there withdrawal and turning inward, a making *resonant*, but, in the case of the eye, there is manifestation and display, a making *evident*?" (Nancy 3)

[26] "To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning, or in an edgy meaning of extremity, and as if the sound were precisely nothing else than this edge, this fringe, this margin - at least the sound that is musically listened to, that is gathered and scrutinized for itself, not, however, as an acoustic phenomenon (or not merely as one) but as a resonant meaning, a meaning whose *sense* is supposed to be found in resonance, and only in resonance." (Nancy 7)

research will be a type of new media itself - an immersive, interactive, online, digital sound map. Interactivity allows users to "be in" as well as "look at" and "listen to" the virtual environment of the sound map.[27] Sound mapping is a way of extending ethnography past the text of this dissertation and past myself as ethnographic interpreter. A person using the map can recombine sounds and pass through them at will, using the point of a computer mouse to explore. The map represents a gathering of resonances that can be performed even after the writing is done, and a "dense network of mostly unknown links" (Stewart *OA* 6).

Sound is essential to interactivity in immersive digital media because it "naturalize[s] what could be called the disembodying effects of new media technologies," an effect Dyson elaborates upon throughout *Sounding New Media*. Completely apart from the silent refusal in Heidegger's phenomenology (see previous chapter), Dyson sees Being as *between* materiality and "technologized immateriality" (104). Our material being can make noise, but it's mainly through technologized immateriality that we speak. We already project past our bodies in order to communicate, so immersing ourselves in new digital media is never too much to ask.

Integrating Sound into the Textual Dissertation

Sound, as a sensation and an artistic medium, is profoundly different from the sense of sight and can be used to gain specific kinds of insights into a city.[28] The still image of a neighborhood redevelopment plan doesn't reveal the richness of movement, layers of history, or possible futures. The visceral qualities of sound can be used to think anew and recreate a

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[27] "By 'being in,' rather than 'looking at,' virtual environments, the viewer is said to occupy the space and time, the here and now, the virtual present of a separate but ontologically real space." (Dyson 2)

[28] Francis Dyson writes exquisitely of sound as a (new) medium "...sound is the immersive medium par excellence. Three-dimensional, interactive, and synesthetic, perceived in the here and now of an embodied space, sound returns to the listener the very same qualities that media mediates: that feeling of being here now, of experiencing oneself as engulfed, enveloped, absorbed, enmeshed, in short, immersed in an environment. Sound surrounds." (4)

place in one's own mind. A rich sampling of recordings in a place can portray movement through space and time, but can also betray the supposed boundaries of the place's existence. Sound doesn't generate knowledge so much as it generates experience, or as some prefer to phrase it, resonance. While this argument is a departure from the norms of dissertation research that aims at the attainment of knowledge, it does move toward a questioning kind of knowledge that operates *through* the attainment of experience in order to erase the kinds of ideologies of place that tend also to erase the importance of everyday experiences.

Sound is by necessity discursive, non-essentializing, and definitely not deterministic. The weakness here is that it is never a "full guarantor of knowledge," but the strength is that it challenges the researcher to question the conceit of representation (Dyson 5). Ontological vagueness is amended by textural richness and an opening of new ways to understand space, time, and place. Treating the city as a body, sound mapping can reveal how urban places possess "subconscious gestures, grumblings, ties, stretchings, rustlings, unexpected noises..." (de Certeau 175). Treating oral history expansively, sound mapping can reveal many kinds of stories besides the ones told by human voices.

In a dissertation, the text can only serve as a distant representation, empty of the richness of sound itself. Some written works have tried to mediate this problem by providing supplemental material. Paul D. Miller's *Rhythm Science* is in the shape of a record and comes with a cd, as long as you purchase it new. Douglas Kahn's *Noise Water Meat* comes with a cd or access code. Online journals provide a decent setting for integrating sound with text, or even privileging the sound and treating the text as supplemental, as exemplified by the new Journal of Media Geography called *Aether*. I have hopes that with the presence of online and digital text, digital music players, and other technologies, there may be more opportunities for sound-rich ethnographies in the future.

IV. The Cultural Fix

The cultural fix refers to the city's way of profiting from creative capital. The chapter begins with a self-reflexive ethnographic retrospective describing to the National Symposium on Arts/Culture/Entertainment Districts (NSACED) in order to then describe what an arts district is; what processes and people are associated in its production; and how Station North, among other arts districts in Baltimore, have come about. I frame the arts districts within the larger Baltimore art and culture scene, including the DIY movement (related to DIY urbanism in part), cultural policymaking, and the history of organizational involvement and marketing/branding strategies. The next ethnographic moment occurs early in my research in 2008 at the inception of the Baltimore Design: Center conversations, demonstrating how DIY urbanism, art, and activism can be both powerful and problematic.

In the process, I explore the existence of artists as both activists and, as some see it, harbingers of gentrification. Baltimore's DIY movement is a type of informal economy that the city seeks to capitalize upon and, in doing so, appropriate through the process of gentrification. Given that Baltimore's city government has focused on creative capital as a profitmaking strategy since 2003, I examine and critique Richard Florida's concept of the "creative class," which is the precise population that Baltimore intended to import as resident, with some measure of success. I critique the "creative class" concept and policies around it in Baltimore based on specific ties to social inequality in the city, returning to the NSACED conference in an ethnographic moment that exposes a strong underlying racist message during one panel as I transition to the following chapter on the subject of spatio-racial fixing through urban redevelopment.

I am sitting in a room with 150-200 arts boosters.

Conferences and symposiums are where educated people go to present their ideas, as I have done on many occasions. I have not, however, come across many studies that treat the spaces and encounters of such conferences ethnographically. I have decided to be nothing more than a participant observer at the National Symposium on Arts/Cultural/Entertainment Districts - the first ever, a two-day event hosted by Station North. It's being held at MICA, pronounced like the name of a type of flaky geo-shimmery rock, also known as the Maryland Institute College of Art, where Maryland's middle class of young artists come to study and commit to their craft.

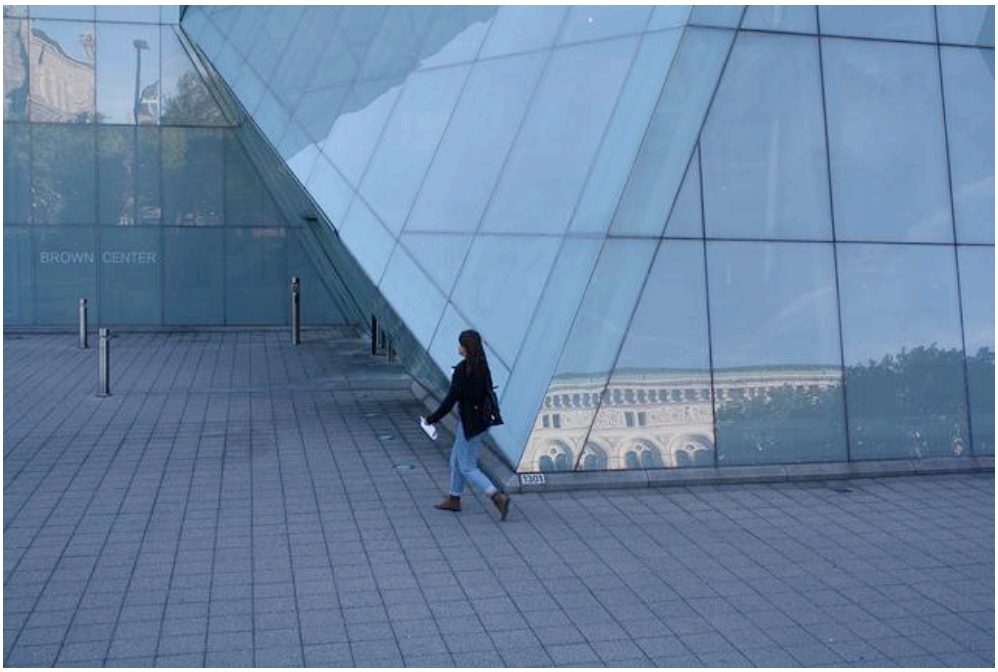

FIGURE 6 . MICA'S BROWN CENTER . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

MICA's "Brown Center" is an abruptly geometrical, shiny white translucent glass structure with odd, jagged angles and a reflective surface in which one can occasionally glimpse old Baltimore across the street. Today, the Brown Center is home to the arts and culture district symposium which I am attending, and a small crowd gathers at 8:30am to nibble on little pastries and scones – the dainty fare which allows one to survive quite luxuriously while waiting for the first talk to begin at 9am. No food or beverages are allowed inside the lecture hall, so be quick and finish up before you go in.

I set up basecamp... The Brown Center is like being in an airport. I wander around a massive exposed concrete column (New Brutalism lives on!) and glimpse maroon vinyl in the distance, hidden. I feel victorious, claiming this modernist bench, and it's right by an outlet. I charge my computer and wonder... how would I negotiate this building, this conference, this "arts and culture" world if I were grossly unfamiliar, if I'd never been in a hundred of the same situations before, whether a theater event or an art opening. Could I walk in off the street into a building like this? Hardly. Among the crowd nibbling on scones and mini-bagels, I have yet to see a person of color. It's not an accusation, but a pertinent fact. Those in attendance, including myself, represent a cross section that is in one way or another concerned with the strategic planning and policies around arts/cultural/entertainment districts. This cross section includes very few African Americans, Hispanics, or Asians.

An older gentleman in glasses carries two suitcases. His greying hair is freshly washed and hangs in ringlets around his leather jacket. It's a surprisingly cool day. He walks up to me and asks where the first talk will be held. I point him to the lecture hall. He looks

like a professor of design. I remember a different conference I attended in 2009 – the City from Below, diametrically different to this wherein anyone and everyone attended and it was held in an old Methodist Church and various community buildings, here and there within a few blocks of each other – except, of course, for the lecture David Harvey gave on top of Federal Hill. Union and labor organizers gave talks. Designers. Non-profit workers. Children. City residents. People who wanted to make change – and have.

Proceeding to the lecture hall, I see the curly-haired man on stage. I think he may be on the panel. I wait for the panel to begin and reflect on the questions that have brought me here:

How do artists impact and connect with their community? Do artists see themselves as somehow overseeing? Owning? Judging? Or perhaps representing and shaping the "communities" in which they find themselves.

I feel like an outsider here, gazing in on a tightly knit collaborative group who want to make arts districts relevant and sustainable. Not being invested in the processes and outcomes in which they all seem invested, I am able to be critical, however. Especially, I am critical of the all-penetrating aspect and ambition of Placemaking.

How Art Boosters Think About Arts Districts

Deborah Frieden (NSACED 2012) speaks all over the country, at conferences and universities, as a proponent of arts and culture districts whose key strategies generally include

stabilizing existing communities, enhancing and activating the public realm, enhancing the creative arts community, reducing vacancies, and so on from there. In order to implement these key strategies, Frieden advises that interested parties (1) survey, evaluate, and support existing arts assets by using large multi-use anchors as community buildings, layering arts and cultural components, and creating unique and authentic branding; (2) make an early effort to gain public attention through arts, storefronts, and publicly funded programs in order to "activate the streets"; (3) offer real estate assistance to arts organizations through cultural loan funds, advising services, pairing of property owners and organizations that need space, offering tax credits, and advising small businesses in how to maximize their visibility and success; (4) help to create and expand arts organizations; and (5) understand the importance of economic incentives. (Frieden 2012) Frieden particularly emphasizes the importance of economic incentives in the process of developing an arts/culture/entertainment district. Maryland, for instance, has state level incentives, but some places accomplish the same on a local level.

FIGURE 7 . SPEAKERS AT NSACED 2012 . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Frieden by no means ignores the strategy of stabilizing a community through the arts. She recommends catalytic projects for social development that use the arts to improve the quality of life, which in turn makes the area more attractive for further development. Additionally, she sees arts districts and the spaces they contain as potential centers for cultural and social dialogue – places to talk about issues that can't be addressed in other venues such as immigration reform, redlining and zoning, domestic abuse, and other kinds of violence and crime. In order for this to happen, though, the arts district must be stable in itself and "authentic" to the area rather than stamped in from another place.

As Frieden spoke, I could actually hear the wheels turning throughout the room – people at earlier stages of development, thinking "we need that!" Who were the people in the audience? Not quite artists, but those who plan around artists and the cultural capital they create. They were urban designers and developers, organization chairs and marketing directors, who also operate as art boosters. More than anything, it was a core group of people who believe in their hearts that gentrification is the best possible solution to urban ills, which should be solved or "fixed" culturally, spatially, and economically through placemaking. So I observed at this symposium how strategic planners of arts/cultural/entertainment districts speak about their pet projects, how they talk to each other, what language is used to confirm their ambitions and desires in the creation of arts districts.

The Beginnings of Gentrification in Station North

There are several ways to define an arts district and all sorts of connotations abound around the phrase. Central to the district is a legal designation through which an area receives reinvestment as businesses and taxpayers receive legal and financial benefits (Clisham et al, 21). The success of any art district, according to the city is not based around the art produced or the culture of the place but instead, it's fiscal improvement and economic potential for profit. The designation aims to magnetize a specific urban space in order to encourage types of work and behavior that fit into the vision for revitalization, attract economic growth, and engage tourists and residents as consumers of products and cultural capital. But first, the city needs a good reason to designate. In Baltimore, the designations have arisen in three ways: a pre-existing artist community (Station North); a grassroots community effort to bring the arts in (such as the Creative Alliance in Highlandtown); and most recently as part of a push from Mayor Rawlings-Blake whose policies favor entertainment above all other city issues (Bromo-Seltzer District).

FIGURE 8 . HOTEL UNDER CONSTRUCTION NEAR PENN STATION . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

There had been collections of artists living in the vicinity of what is now named Station North since the 1970s, including the Copycat Building and the Cork Factory. Defunct after the collapse of manufacturing in Baltimore, the industrial spaces was often rented to artists for work and residence. More recently, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) has expanded and welcomed many young adults to live and work in and around Station North as artists. It wasn't until 2001, that Station North came to be officially designated as an art district, accomplishing the following things: tax incentives for artists and developers; financial and legal support for redevelopment of vacant properties; financial assistance for artists and businesses located within the district; and promotion as a tourist destination (Clisham et al 15).

Fred Lazarus, President of MICA offered his perspective on the evolution of Station North and MICA's involvement in it. Lazarus is also the founder and current chair of The Baltimore Partnership. He described the scene in Charles North in prior years, when it was seen as "the hold in the donut for development in Baltimore." Although Station North hadn't experience riots, it was disenfranchised by civil unrest in the 1960s and left undeveloped. Twenty years ago, in the days of Kirby Faller, a few pioneering efforts established anchors, such as the Everyman Theater, but planning efforts did little to sustain momentum and never generated enough critical mass for the area to be fully developed. People who had been living in the area for a long time saw artists as "a real threat," so a comprehensive strategy was developed by Tim Arbuster and the Central Baltimore Partnership (CBP) that incorporated more than just arts-related development, such as low income housing, market rate housing, business development, crime and grime issues, and code enforcement issues.

Although the CBP never saw itself as a community development entity, they worked to facilitate other organizations in that capacity. They provided resources for Station North and negotiated through the agendas of other types of neighborhood organizations in what Lazarus calls a "complex ecology that makes the district work." Arts schools served as a strengthening element toward bringing in artist housing, music and eating venues, galleries, and the like. Although MICA could not have accomplished this alone, collaborations and partnerships made the district more sustainable by allowing MICA to make major investments in its own property, providing expertise around the arts, and promoting arts projects and partnerships with other local organizations. The process was also facilitated by marketing and branding of Station North as a tourist destination.

Tax incentives are still in place for both property and income. Property improvements for live/work artist spaces or gallery/performance space for organizations are rewarded with a

tax credit that lasts ten years (Koh). Artists living and working in Station North receive income tax credit for any work created in the arts district, with the goal of retaining artists in a particular area who might otherwise choose to live in a different city. Lazarus admits that tax incentives never seemed to be the driving force behind what's making Station North work. Instead, he suggests that the other factors are coming together – "a combination of people thinking of this as a place" (NSACED 2012)

In 2009, the City Arts Building was completed, symbolizing a major success in the continued existence and enhancement of Station North as a profitable arts district. Simultaneous to its completion, Station North reported having 500 artists and 21 arts-based enterprises registered in the district (Clisham et al 15). The City Arts Building has been classified as "low-income housing" (rent starts between $600-700 with no rent increase for the next 50 years) and now serves as a home and workspace for up to 59 artists in the Station North area. The City Arts Building is at a narrow end of a corridor of reconstruction, but is within a block or two of either high-end development or poverty and foreclosure. It's no accident that some of this new construction is so close to that which is decaying, burned out, and until recently, considered by some to be useless. Stephen Janis, reporter/editor of the online journal, *The Investigative Voice* commented on the geographic positioning of the building in one of several interviews:

> *"The City Arts building...is anybody living there? Because that's a nasty neighborhood, at least it was... now it's pretty much emptied out. People get shot on Greenmount and North Avenue all the time." (Janis, Personal Interview in September 2012)*

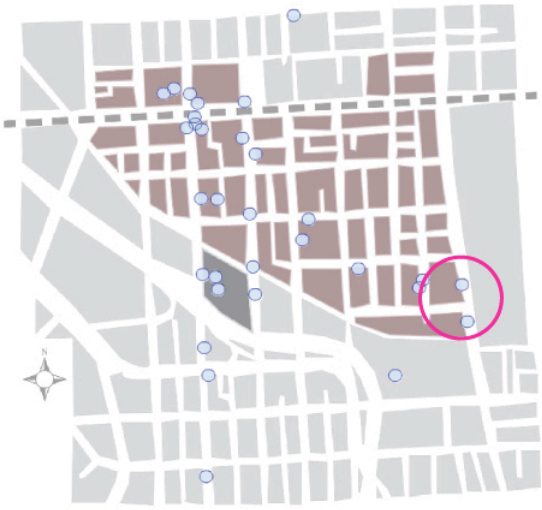

FIGURE 9 . SOUND MAP . GREENMOUNT SOUNDS AREA

10-2011 Passing Bike on the Corner of Oliver and Greenmount, by the Cemetery

Cars and the brief spinning wheels of a bike.

10-2011 Station North Thrift Store

1400 Greenmount Ave

Door bells jingle upon entering, a sale is made, a bag is taken.

It's easy to make the case for revitalization in an area like this, and it can be easy to make a profit, but in terms of image, it's such a uniquely abrupt disjuncture, ripe for artistic picking in what Brenda Kayzar describes as a high "hip factor" in her 2008 article, "The Perpetual Undoing of San Diego's East Village." The staggering fragmentation of this area is quite visible and, to some, inspiring. I listen closely as I walk through, and I record everything I can.

The imagination of the present unfolds through the sounds I am hearing, and listening presents a series of possible futures and pasts. More than this even, these possible stories also lend themselves to imagining courses of action, moment to moment. These sounds are grounded in the everyday but invoke and unpeel the generic in favor of the hidden, latent, useless, and overlooked – the very same things that the public/private system of development (explained in the last chapter) would like to cover up, unarchive, erase entirely. This sound trash consists of the "incoherent whispers" (Voegelin 187) of place, which can be used to promote/provoke thought about the movements and flow of space. Thought around movements and flow is especially revelatory when presented with the sound trash of an area filled past capacity with movement and flow – a place like Station North in its daily operations as an interstitial buffer zone. Connecting sound trash, movement, flow, and imaginative possibilities leads me towards a specific tactic of presenting these everyday sounds.

In October of 2011, I stand on the sidewalk on the block between the Cork Factory and the City Arts apartments. It feels as if the transformation of Station North was congealing around that point – new construction alongside old artist housing across from an abandoned and dangerous fenced off property. I hear the sounds of drills, saws, and large pieces of old rowhouses being tossed from a distance into a dumpster. Next to these rowhouses undergoing renovation, I watch a man in his 30s hurl a ball across a vacant lot to his German Shepherd. Treating the vacant lot as a park for the moment, I see a large sign announcing new townhouses to be built, sure to attract the young "creative class." In a small alley behind the Cork Factory, a series of rowhouses are painted each in a unique pastel, and it's as if they've agreed to hold hands and be cute together. Just south, across the street from the painted rowhouses and new construction, clearly visible, there is a massive abandoned, burned out factory fenced off with

chain link. Three or four homeless men are standing outside, chatting loudly, comfortably. The alley on its west side is trashed, and there are rotting banana peels, smashed beer bottles, a rusting tricycle, and human feces.

FIGURE 10 . CITY ARTS BUILDING . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

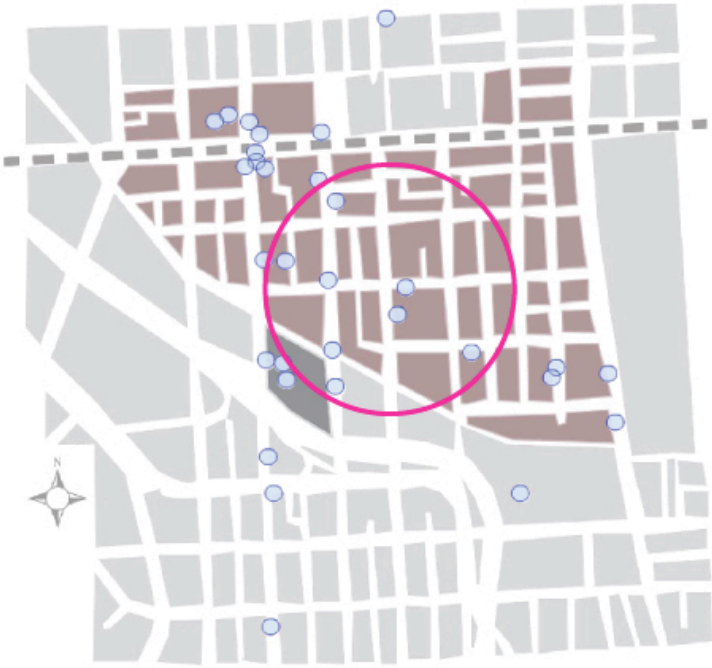

FIGURE 11 . SOUND MAP . FRAGMENTED AREA OF CONSTRUCTION/DESTRUCTION DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION

10-2011 Deconstructing/Reconstructing Rowhouses on 400 Block of East Oliver

Circular saws and sawdust flies within rowhouses.

10-2011 Crickets Near Train Tracks on E. Preston St.

Distant cars on Jones Fall Expressway. Crickets sing, muffled slightly by weeds.

10-2011 Children Playing Outside of Baltimore Montessori Charter School

Teachers and kids shout from a distance, one goes down a slide, perhaps.

10-2011 An Alley Outside the Copycat Building (See Fig. 10)

1501 Guilford Avenue

Your shoes crunch gravel. Some women are laughing.

10-2011 Calvert and Federal Park

No one is here in the middle of the day. There are leaves and birds and distant noises.

10-2011 Birds at St. Paul and Lafayette

Two birds chatter to each other. A car horn sounds from far away.

FIGURE 12 . SIGN ANNOUNCING CONSTRUCTION OF CITY ARTS TOWNHOMES . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

FIGURE 13 . ALLEY BESIDE ABANDONED BUILDING ACROSS FROM THE COPYCAT . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Baltimore's Art and Culture Scene

> *"Picture this: It's a golden age for young artists in Baltimore. In once-vacant warehouses and rundown rowhouses, creative types—students and recent grads of the Maryland Institute College of Art, plus newcomers and associated hangers-on lured by the city's vibrant cultural community—are setting up shop. They live and work in collective studio spaces, stage edgy spectacles on city streets and in DIY performance spaces, and occasionally attract the attention of the national media. Fed by Baltimore's native grit and socio-economic tumult, they create innovative, collaborative work that blurs the lines between artistic disciplines, challenges the status quo, injects life into underused corners of the city, and speaks to a unique cultural moment—the challenges of contemporary American urban life. In 1969.*
>
> *Or is it 1979? Or 2009?" (Dudley "State of the Arts")*

In 2009, J. Lewis wrote an article titled "If you lived here, you'd be cool by now" for *Baltimore Magazine* in which he describes the hype around Baltimore's "DIY" art and music scene, especially given the recent review by Rolling Stone Magazine which deemed Baltimore to be "the nation's new, youthful, edgy, provocative, and productive hotspot." For Lewis, it comes down to an atmosphere and sense of place leading to an artistic sensibility driven by some of Baltimore's defining traits. "Iconoclastic," blue-collar, and at times grungy, the creative impetus that comes from the city itself is seen as excitingly unpredictable. The city's DIY scene is well known, its independent bands are gleaning followers around the country and world, and some of the most popular venues are in Station North.

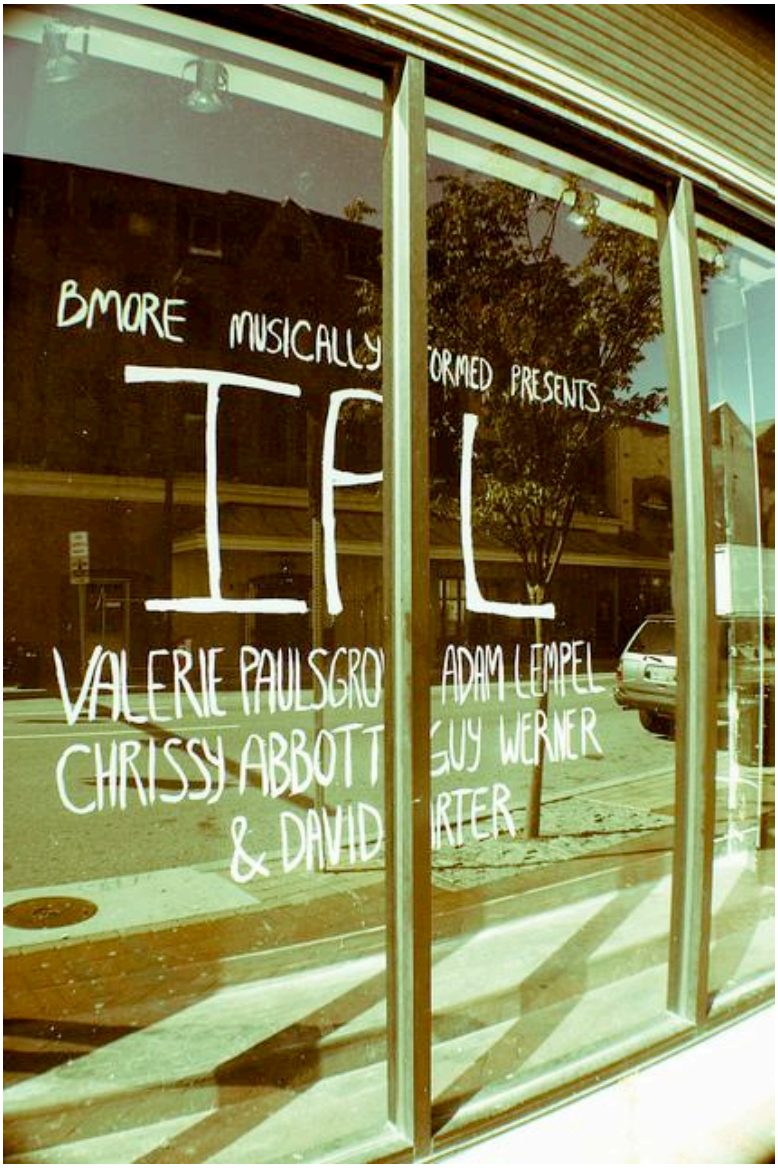

FIGURE 14 . DIY SPACE IN STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUTHOR

"DIY" means "Do It Yourself" and represents a style of living as well as marketable art, popularized in Baltimore through its underground arts scene whose artists use minimal and found materials in creative ways. Much like independent music labels, this independent type of artistic expression requires the artists themselves to market and manage consumption of their

work through local networking while displaying in both approved and unapproved venues and urban locations (Clisham et al 8). It's characterized by art galleries in homes, music venues in basements, and blowout parties around performance art in spaces not intended as art spaces. Although people in Baltimore refer to DIY in terms of art and music making and experiencing, it does tie into DIY urbanism, especially as venues are established and struggle to exist despite obstacles like money for rent, need for volunteers, and city violations. The DIY scene happens largely through informal economic exchange such as cash, bartering, and even free services/performances. In the process, DIY revitalization methods were being adapted into the planning paradigm while a young population was continually being asked to cobble together their own means of employment in the shift from industrial service to service economy. The treatment of DIY artists thereby represents a combination of the desire for creatives in the city to both plug creative holes and add own flare to it in the context of cooperatives and galleries in addition the new trend in the planning realm of coopting DIY for gentrification purposes.

The current art scene in Baltimore grew in this style due to largely economic factors - primarily the city's deindustrialization and loss of manufacturing in the 1960s. The economic downturn left city residents by and large with less income, also affecting the class composition of the city. Middle and upper class residents had consumed and patronized the arts in earlier decades, but the decline in consumption removed traditional kinds of support for art in the city (Clisham et al 1). Large museums, theaters, and venues (some now undergoing revitalization) experienced a decline in funding. Small and medium sized ones (including community arts groups and organizations) became more common and manageable, thereby introducing a diverse landscape of thematic, and at times fragmented, artistic consumption. Smaller venues tended to be open to non-professional artists and students while also serving "as a bridge between the DIY and major anchor institutions" that remained (8). Smaller venues also lent

themselves to local and neighborhood oriented participation in the arts, tightening the relationship between artists, art consumers, and these specific places. The art scene went "underground," quite literally to basements in rowhouses at times but also figuratively because consumption of art happened more through whatever social network in which one existed.

Before beginning this project, I used to frequent a small venue called "Charm City Art Space" right on Maryland Avenue in Station North. The top level could barely fit 20 people, so with bodies close together, I'd pay the $3 cover, chat about this and that, and check out the messy, illustrative art, often inspired by urban living and the city's decay, albeit executed in a whimsical and even childlike manner at times. When a punk, folk, or metal band was ready to play later in the night, I'd descend down rickety wooden stairs to a basement that looked decrepit on the best of days. Exposed studs and concrete floors provided a surprisingly warm acoustic tone for whatever band performed - loop pedals and bent circuits, an inexplicably talented violinist played instead beside a man scraping mundane objects, looping the beat, and then both singing harmony in wavering, dissonant, haunting voices. Charm City Art Space is run as a cooperative venture with two levels of membership and an ambitious manifesto for such a small space:

> "To act as a creative outlet for DIY performance, music, and art.
>
> To work as a center for independent thought, constructive discussion, and creative expression.
>
> To thrive as a headquarters for autonomous education and as a resource for community awareness.
>
> To survive as a place to talk and meet new people of like mind in comfort and tranquility.

> To focus our energies as a buffer to filter out negative influences including but not limited to: racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ageism, violence and judgmental fundamentalism.
>
> To provide a space free from drugs and alcohol where all are welcome.
>
> All decision making shall be a collective effort with equal weight given to all."
>
> (Charm City Art Space "Manifesto")

Small venues like this one grew up in the early 2000s, some remaining, some folding. As Station North has grown it has become more formal and institutionalized as relationships have been built between universities, museums, and these smaller venues while Baltimore has experienced a flourishing in the arts sector following the divisions of the 1990s. The resulting venues, murals, and other aspects of the built environment yielding that so-called "eclectic" urban environment do fall under the bracket of DIY urbanism as they are part of Baltimore's ongoing urban morphology. However, they are mainly thought of through DIY art, culture, and music by city residents and participants. More recently, it's hard to label certain DIY-like projects as truly DIY especially when funded by a placemaking-focused Our Town grant by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In these situations, what was formerly understood as an urban DIY tactic (urban murals) is now becoming a planning strategy for attracting residents, and confusion results. (See section on the "Open Walls" Project later in the chapter.)

The DIY art and music venue scene came under threat in 2009 when Mayor Rawlings-Blake threatened to enact a bill (08-0163) in order to strengthen existing bars and restaurants in the city as live entertainment venues. In essence, the bill attempted to exclude DIY activities from the urban economy, marking it as an informal space that was not of benefit to the city at large. *The City Paper* called this bill a money-grabbing "Scene Stealer" that causes unnecessary

confusion and anxiety in Baltimore's otherwise strong arts community by (1) imposing a licensing fee of approximately $1,500 per year, which is unsustainable for small venues; (2) refusing to exempt nonprofits and existing venues; (3) enforcing a "moral character clause allowing venues to be investigated for criminal history; and (4) giving neighborhoods veto power over both proposed and existing venues if 10 complaints occur within 10 city blocks of the venue (Byrne "Scene Stealer"). The bill and its vague language received negative responses in 2009. Bar and restaurant owners (who did not in fact want to be protected by this bill at all) formed a group called Baltimore Live Arts Business Association in cooperation with the Baltimore Live Arts Supporters who view the bill as detrimental to the arts community, particularly its DIY components that are likely to happen in residential rather than commercial areas of the city. By April 2012, the bill was under such heavy revision that it has been completely dropped, with no current updates at present (Giordano, "CB 08-0163").

Previously in the 1990s, there was significant tension between some of Baltimore's larger institutions that have since been resolved. Now, the "frostiness that reigned during the 1990s" has been replaced with new kinds of dialog (Dudley 2010). The creation of the American Visionary Art Museum spurred momentum for non-traditional art forms (and non-traditional artists) while integral power players in the arts[29] worked to build lines of communication between universities, institutions, and community groups. Dudley calls the result "a cultural fringe that feels enfranchised by the establishment, with large and mid-sized institutions actively involved in promoting new work in domains outside their traditional territories" (2010). In the same vein, Baltimore's arts community is reaching across state lines. Executive Director of the Contemporary Museum in Mount Vernon, Irene Hofmann, who is a West Coast native, stated

[29] Such as Doreen Bolger at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Gary Vikan at the Walters Museum, Rebecca Hoffberger at AVAM, and Fred Lazarus at MICA.

when interviewed by the Urbanite's Editor-in-Chief, David Dudley: "I have brought New York curators, L.A. curators to Baltimore and shown them what's here. They're excited about it; it's fresh to them. I'd like to see that as the aspiration—when the rest of the nation starts paying attention to the art world here." (Dudley 2010) And that's how Artscape got started; it is now three decades old, the most attended arts festival in the nation, and it's free. The festival incorporates street vendors, food, performances, and lots of arts and crafts. It's also an annual economic boost for the city. When I attended Artscape in July 2009, I saw art that stood out as environmentally sustainable architecture, art as baked goods, and lots of beer and fried food. Every square foot of the festival was filled with people. Kids were selling cold drinks out of coolers and women were hula-hooping for no other reason than to have some fun.

FIGURE 15 . ARTSCAPE 2009 . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

FIGURE 16 . WOMAN HULA-HOOPING AT ARTSCAPE 2009 . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

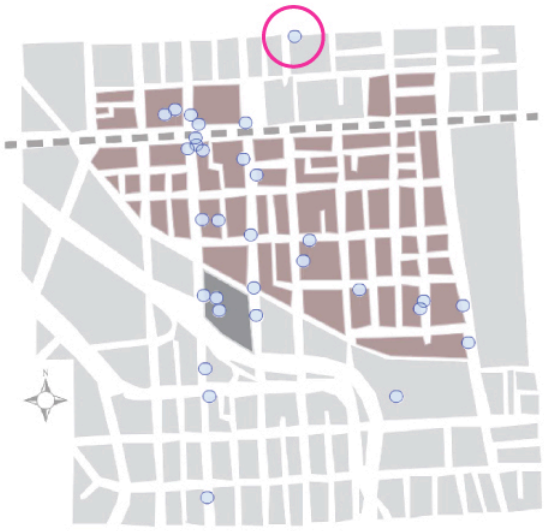

FIGURE 17 . SOUND MAP . NORTHSCAPE SOUND LOCATION

07-2009 Northscape Performance

North of North Ave, a man raps and people serve beer.

As of 2012, Artscape extended itself into Station North, which formerly bordered its edges. But in 2009, Station North was having its own festival beside Artscape, called Northscape (See Fig. 16). I volunteered there, which meant passing out beers to people who came to listen to some bands that were playing. Strangely, two major players in Station North were passing out beers as well - David Bielenberg, then Executive Director of Station North, Inc. and Joe Edwardson, owner of Joe Squared, the most well-known pizza restaurant/live venue in Station North (if not the city). The atmosphere was festive, hot and sunny in the middle of the day in the middle of July. There was no point in trying to have a conversation about the morphology of Station North - there were too many people to serve. And yet negotiating the beer-serving space in the middle of a parking lot packed with people led to a certain camaraderie. I suppose that's the kind of feeling that festivals are supposed to promote, in addition to plenty of profit, that sense of

being-in-a-place-together that yields eventual conversation and a sense of community where one might not otherwise exist.

Baltimore's Design Center Conversations are a another good example albeit in a less huge and messy space where overall agreement as a vision for urban change develops in an atmosphere of safety and commonality that promotes a specific type of creativity - building a consensus around what designs people have in regard to Baltimore. The community around this has a lot in common, in fact. An agreement undergirded this group in the very beginning of its monthly gatherings - that through collaboration, the city can improve through economic viability around the arts and increased profitability for artists – especially through formal channels of money exchange.

Creative Capital: Underdeveloped or Overexploited?

Baltimore Design Conversations, also known as D:center Baltimore, were at first a moving meeting where Baltimore's creatives gathered to discuss... creativity (and urban issues). The group was and is self-described as follows:

> "D:center Baltimore is a broad cross-section of disciplines and individuals invested in improving and encouraging design-in all its iterations-in the Baltimore region. We believe design thinking has the capacity to change the world and that banding together in creative collaboration will greatly improve the quality of urban life." (D:Center Baltimore, 2012)

Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson is a local Baltimore urban critic and writer who is part of the Design Conversations, now turning into an actual location called "D:center Baltimore." The play on

words is something of a postmodern flair, and the name denotes both the “Design Center” nature of the group and its goal of “de-centering” typical modes of thinking about urban space and design by encouraging passageways for alternative thinking through conversations. The 2,000-ft gallery space is being funded by a Downtown Partnership's Operation Storefront grant aimed at supporting “creative uses of vacant commercial space in the city center” (Dickinson “D center @ MAP”). D:center’s mission is to "create a nexus for interdisciplinary design, collaboration, and creative conversations.” As of June 2011, there have been two exhibitions held at the space (evidenced only on http://dcenterbaltimore.tumblr.com/) and the monthly design conversations have continued.

Some of the titles of these conversations include:

“Making Sustainability Visible”

“Start Thinking Small, Baltimore”

“What’s Your Plan” (See Fig X.)

“Waste”

“Sound” (See Fig. X)

and the third conversation, which I attended, “Cultural Containers” (See Fig. X)

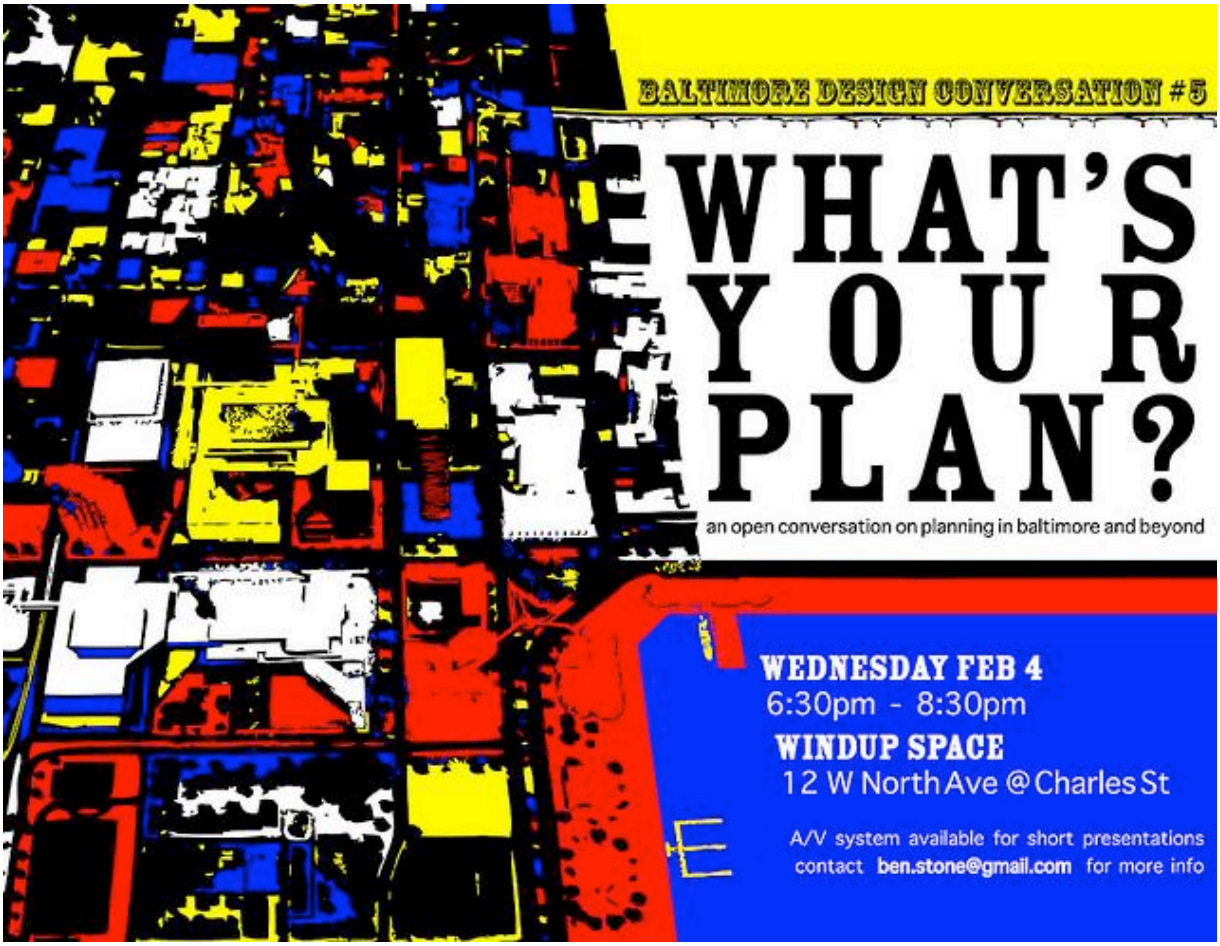

FIGURE 18 . 'WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?' D:CENTER FLYER . DESIGN BY BEN STONE

(http://www.flickr.com/photos/d_center_baltimore/)

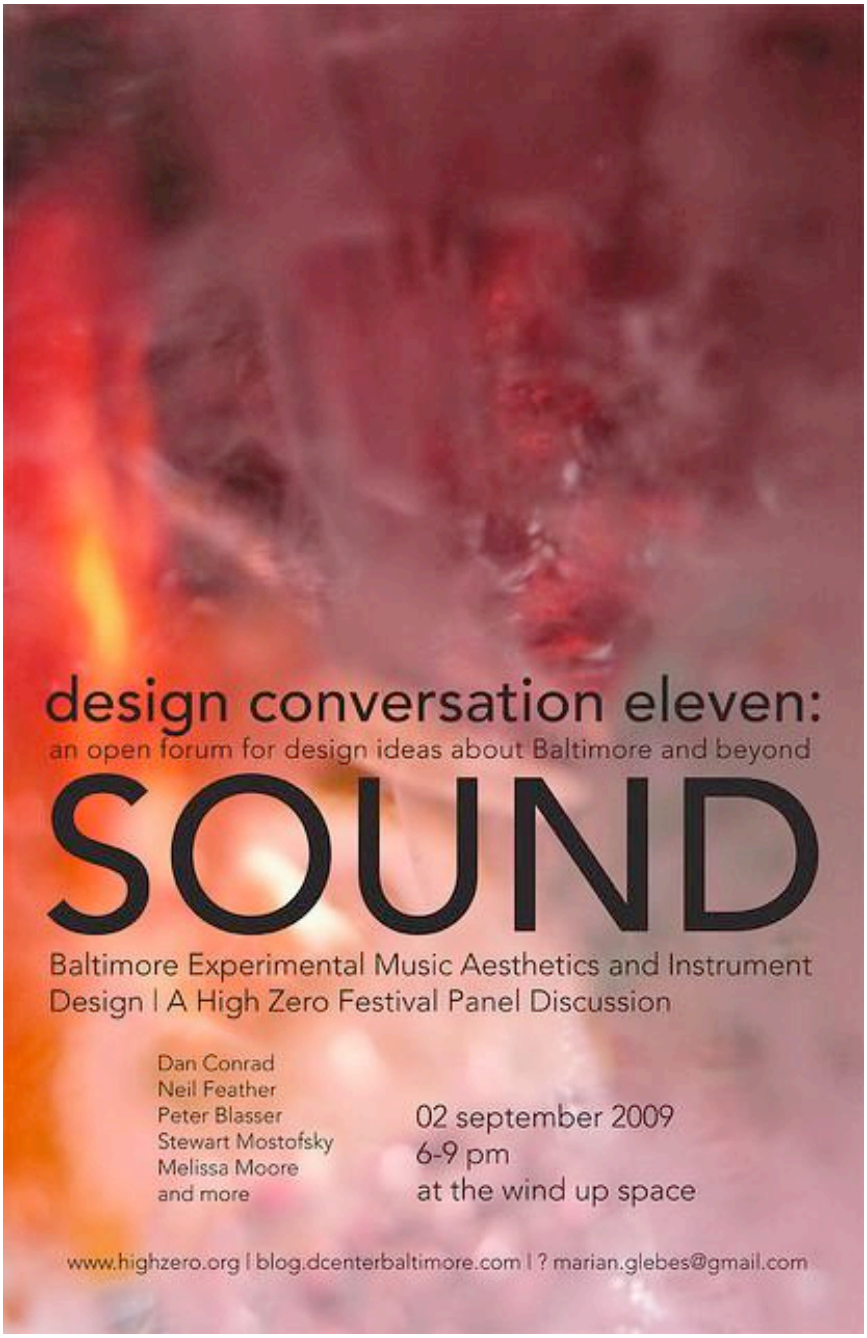

FIGURE 19 . 11TH D:CENTER CONVERSATION: SOUND . DESIGNER UNKNOWN

(http://www.flickr.com/photos/d_center_baltimore/)

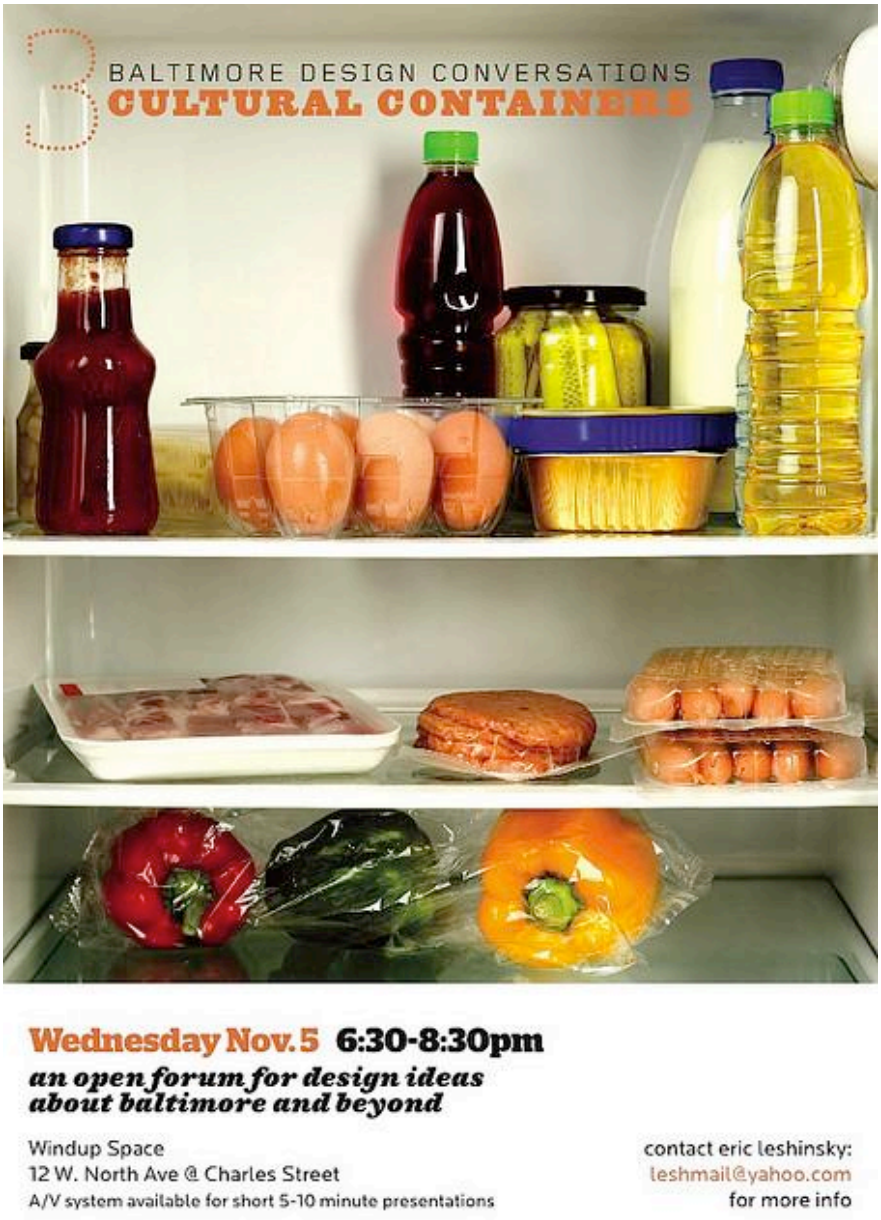

FIGURE 20 . 'CULTURAL CONTAINERS' FLYER . DESIGN BY BENJAMIN KUTIL . SUBJECT OF FIELDWORK

(http://www.flickr.com/photos/d_center_baltimore/)

Cultural Containers: The Third (of nearly 50) Baltimore D:Center Conversations

On November 5th, I went to the third Baltimore Design Center meeting ever held (as of August 2012, there have been over 45), at the Wind-Up Space on North Ave and Charles. The Wind-Up Space was a sleek, polished bar - still is. People who were working to start up a Design Center were meeting to have conversations about design of all sorts in the city - architecture, art, and urban culture. Presenters prepared a number of photographs or slides and spoke for a minute a piece about programs and artistic endeavors that have been started in Baltimore. Five people spoke, all focused on art and architecture, on either revitalizing parts of the city that were historic monuments for art or about the branding of Baltimore, it's DIY culture, and why that makes Baltimore special.

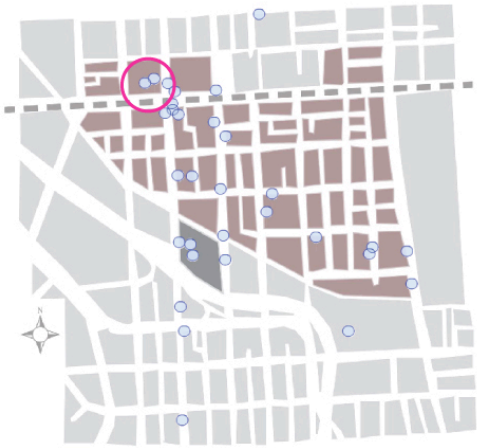

FIGURE 21 . SOUND MAP . WIND-UP SPACE SOUNDS LOCATION . WWW.JKOTTING.COM/SOUNDMAP.HTML

11-2008 Wind-Up Space, Girls Walking Past

Women click their heels and discuss shoes as they walk past the Wind-Up Space.

11-2008 Wind-Up Space, Street Noises

A ringing sound, walking, trains.

It became apparent to me on that night that the DIY culture of Baltimore seems to be centered around middle and upper class white youth, the so-called "creative class," which isn't representative at all of the demographics of the city. Hieu Truong, a friend from college and Harvard-educated planner, pointed out this issue at the end of the meeting. When she noted the approximately 40 white, young people present were not a good representation of the city's demographic, she was greeted with obligatory clapping. But we spoke at length afterwards and both realized that reaching out to neighbors and neighborhoods wasn't really going to solve the problem, which has much deeper roots and can't be designed away.

At this third Design Conversation, Ben Stone (then an employee of the Baltimore Development Corporation, now the successful Executive Director of Station North, Inc.) introduced the theme for the pecha-kucha styled evening – Cultural Containers.

The first presenter showed slides and spoke for about ten minutes about making sustainability visible. The next presenter spoke about shrinking cities. The theme was broad enough so that different people would be able to participate and present. The atmosphere was informal. Ben asked the audience to join a conversation at the end of the night about "what the city is, what it should be, what we want it to be..."

Comments after the talk began to join those present in ideas about working together across disciplines, up until the entire conversation was poached by a woman from the

Cultural Space who had tremendous interest in the presentations and named her connections to each theme. She remarked at length,

> *"I think there are so many possibilities here. The real question is -- we have all these things and how do we connect them... to make for a better cultural community in Baltimore and what would that look like? For myself, I am profoundly humbled by what goes on in the emerging arts community in Baltimore, in alternative spaces, which is incredibly vibrant. It's the reason why I'm happy to live here in Baltimore, why my children in their twenties say to me, 'We thought of moving to New York, but really it's better here.' Is there a way to create greater connectivity among the things you heard tonight, between these things and established cultural entities in the city. You know, I'm really pondering in a space like the BMA which has a 363 seat auditorium, incredible galleries... and we participate with a lot of these connections. We participate in Artscape... What could we do to connect these things?*
>
> *What kind of ways can we all work together to make Baltimore, to build on what Baltimore is – to build more things like this great grand city tour that actually has done more for Baltimore maybe than anything we've done before... and how can you, as people working in alternative spaces, connect with larger organizations like my own, may be a little staunchy or you're not interested because I'm 59, but how could we get something going here?" (unnamed woman, 2008)*

Her first response came from an artist who said:

> *"I'll take whatever I can get. Just putting that out there."*

Another audience member asked:

> *"Is Homewood involved? They cover 40 neighborhoods..."*

The woman replied:

> *"The Central Baltimore Partnership, BMA, Developers are all involved – everyone is so excited... about the vision for making [Station North] more of a focus, a destination for people. How do we get people – not people who are already converted – but the average person in Baltimore who would be supportive of projects you do – who could buy art – how do we get them here? The Central Baltimore Partnership has a big plan for totally revitalizing this whole area."*

I speculated on her question about getting the a certain type of people to come to Station North – the kind who can buy art. What does this kind of person look like in comparison to the "average" person in Baltimore.

Another audience member interjects regarding the CBP's plan:

> *"It's a thirty year plan though."*

The woman replied:

> *"Yeah but a lot of things could happen pretty fast on a person to person basis. What if, like, a group of you who make presentations tonight came to the Central Baltimore Partnership and presented the kinds of things you presented here about revitalizing the center of the city, which Mayor Dixon has prioritized as like the center of the donut that needs to be reconstituted."*

Four years later, Fred Lazarus, President of MICA, was using the same language to describe the same place – apparently Station North was and remains the donut hole that the city and arts boosters want to become the cream-filled center.

A final audience member spoke in passing before Ben closed the evening:

> *"There's a lot of interest in this area, and a lot of talent in this area."*

The subtext of the above statement? The interest should harness the talent. Development should happen around the creative capital located in the neighborhood already. Urban development around creative capital relies on a certain concept of an "arts ecosystem," which is to say, creativity attached to place, steeped in it. I identified David Dudley earlier in this section as the editor-in-chief of Baltimore's *Urbanite* Magazine (and until recently, he was, but now is an Editor-at-large). He consistently authors articles for the magazine reflecting on the city's

development, how it compares to other cities, and, at times, policy issues. He writes of this "arts ecosystem," having interviewed several players in the city's art scene:

> "This is a recurring theme: Cultural leaders talk a lot about the 'arts ecosystem,' the delicate balance of economic conditions, public support, and ineffable cool that keeps rents low, major institutions healthy, audiences in the seats, and energy in the air. Too much gentrification and the artists flee; too little and the scene withers from neglect. . . . Which is why the latest refrain of this current wave of arts boosters might sound a little overfamiliar: The revolution never ends; the cutting edge keeps moving restlessly forward. . . . It's like an Indian burial ground. The bones go on top of the bones.'" (Dudley "State of the Arts")[30]

The discussion of "bones" strikes me as being somewhat morbid, yet it's a metaphor used often by urban developers with relation to arts districts, Ann Corbett included. Deborah Frieden is confident in the bones of Station North, and at the beginning of her NSACED talk, she said even more broadly, "Baltimore is rockin', I think." Nevertheless, she also cautions that arts districts are "incredibly complex, develop over a long period of time, influenced by a number of factors, with drivers, activators, and players who come together in a very dynamic and not always intuitive or plan-able way." (NSACED 2012) A sense of organic growth could be derived from her statement, but lack of predictability cannot be equated with grassroots, bottom-up development, inspired by communities who join to accomplish placemaking. No, arts districts are heavily planned and designed, whether or not the plans are executed or successful.

In all of this complexity of the arts district ecosystem, the artist is situated as a paradox and one of the more unpredictable variables. Is the artist akin to a minority, stereotypically

[30] "Culture, and our views of 'it,' are produced historically, and are actively contested." (Clifford "Introduction", 18)

“starving”? Is the artist starving by choice? A harbinger of gentrification? Tax incentives, low rent for cool housing, and economic promises are ways to ensure that the presence of artists becomes quite predictable over time. Though the initial presence of artists may pre-exist the designation of an arts district, their continued and increased presence is required due to the valuable resource they provide, an essential ingredient to the profitability of an arts district: creative capital, or the labor of art.

Activists or Harbingers?

In arts and culture based urban renewal, the figure of the artist plays a key role, in action, production, and representation of the space. Mele (2000), Kayzar (2008), and Stern and Seifert (2008) question the role of the artist as either “culpable or unwitting.” Kayzar relates the arts and deindustrialization, explaining that the spaces left behind after industrialism ruled cities were useful to artists. Kayzar calls this the "hip factor" and shows how arts and culture are now an important part of downtown revitalization - they draw interest, generate revenue, and attract residents. Kayzar writes, "Co-opting the arts as an economic engine is a relatively new phenomenon though, fostered in part by the activities of the artists." (Kayzar “Redeveloping America's Downtowns”, 439) In order to co-opt and control the arts, cities have adopted several economic tactics. Renovations are made to existing buildings to use as studio space and residences, often at affordable housing rates, and sometimes artists are exempt from state sales and income taxes for their works (as long as that work is sold locally). However, to receive these benefits, the artists must be eligible. Artists must apply and their art must be recognized as art by the state government. Self-advertisement, receptiveness to municipal and state incentives,

and invitation for consumerism are viewed by neighborhood organizers and some theorists as negative qualities embodied in the figure of the artist.

When curiosity, desire, and investment is focused on artists and the space they occupy, displacement of low-income workers and marginalized minority groups can occur, if not spatially than fiscally or in punitive ways. But some artists view themselves and their groups as radical, political movers and shakers who can resist political oppression by attracting attention to social issues. For instance, a group of self-identified hipsters called *Not an Alternative* in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn consciously chose to join in on anti-development protests by contributing visual media, such as puppetry, guerrilla theater, buttons, and posters. Mele views the similar activity of artists in the Lower East Side in the 1980s to be nothing more than “hollow gestures” at acknowledging inequality while claiming innocence. He notes the critical absence of minority, immigrant, and low-income voices in the emerging place identity.

David Pinder is concerned with reasserting art as politically viable and helpful in unsettling understandings of the urban in his article, “Urban Interventions: Art, Politics, and Pedagogy” in which he asserts art as a potential form of dissent that may not be in support of the city's goals (2008). Pinder’s initial questions bring to mind non-representational theory - being able to learn from everyday practices and hidden infrastructure as he draws on Soja's analysis of the reassertion of space in social theory. Pinder's case study of PLATFORM shows how an art-focused group can transform understandings of the urban, by researching and making political statements in an innovative way. Art can also influence theory in three ways that Pinder identifies: developing new strategies for understanding the urban through experimentation and poetic exploration; reconsidering past ways of knowing; and "forg[ing] paths beyond the closures of the present" (734). Art can thus occupy an "interventionist" role in cities in many ways that Mele does not consider.

Art as intervention can take many forms, some rather soulless as Mele points out and some as hopeful as Pinder describes, but in Baltimore art and activism do overlap often. Sine Jensen is a musician and an activist who moved to Baltimore in 2002. Sine and I have known each other since about 2007 and tend to run into each other rather than meet up intentionally - at a friend's house, at various coffee shops, at the City from Below conference, but never on purpose until I asked her to let me interview her. She told me about her early experiences with the city:

> *I grew up in Columbia, and Baltimore was the go-to city since I was a teenager. I moved into West Baltimore first around 2002.*
>
> *At that time, I was in a band and part of the move was into the house of my partner and bandmate. I was in school for Physics at UMBC, and most of my time was occupied by school but I was also doing organizing on campus around student labor in solidarity with workers, many of them from Baltimore City and Arbutus.*
>
> *At that time, our band played at a number of places, there used to be a place called the Carriage House and that was a place for weekly jam sessions. I remember going there every Friday even before I moved into Baltimore to, you know, be around weirdos and play music. There were a lot of house shows at the time, especially at the Yellow House, but it's so long ago. I remember playing at the Barclay house once at 21st and Barclay – a punk house that's been around for at least 10 years. I know it has a long history and there's still punks living there, like one of the organizers of the DIY fest. It was dedicated to putting on hardcore and punk shows, and every once in a while there was a weird*

overlap between folk and punk scenes, so we'd often share the bill with punk bands. We also played and were part of Charm City Art Space in Station North.

It took a little while to register with me [when Station North was registered as a district], although maybe that's because I wasn't living there at the time. It seems like some of the murals are more recent and the revitalization in general seems more recent. (Jensen Personal Interview, 2012)

Though murals might qualify for some as an artistic intervention capable of improving social life (an idea I question later in this chapter), Sine sees the role of artists in Baltimore as often aligned with activism. She describes how the two relate:

It does seem like artists and cultural producers are sometimes politically aware.

I think artists are politically engaged, students from MICA to a varying degree, but artists and cultural producers in Baltimore are at least politically aware....

What I've found in doing activist work in this short time is there's so much segregation between the kind of young, more privileged student engagement and the Baltimore residents who are grassroots organizers. There's also a big racial divide there. That has been pretty stark. A lot of times there's not cross communication between movements or organizations. New organizations pop up and address same issues without cohesion or from a charity, rather than a solidarity, perspective. Not a lot of historical continuity... [a project/organization] will last for a couple years and maybe disappear, perhaps because

of the timeline of students leaving and leadership leaving and changing. Sometimes, newcomers to Baltimore will also organize around issues that grassroots organizers have been working on for years, without following the leadership of those organizers or even being in touch with them.

For example, the All People's Congress are groups that aren't always connected with. The All People's Congress office is on Charles Street above North Ave at 22nd... they're there, close by, but I don't see a lot of overlap between artists and cultural producers and doing political work with that organization. They've done organizing around police brutality in Baltimore and political prisoners.

There are a few examples of organizations that might have some crossover. United Workers also incorporating artists, ex-MICA students, and musicians into some of their organizing. They tend to organize theatrical marches and rallies that can incorporate artists and cultural producers from universities or from other cities. Sometimes, United Workers will engage artists in conceiving of themes or costumes and things like that. But the leadership for the core is comprised of workers originally from Camden Yards, now working to unite Inner Harbor workers.

Post-Occupy, a lot of divisions were crystallized for me. Some were transcended, but many widened or become more visible. Sometimes that happens with surge of organizing or activism activity. I noticed a huge divide between different groups. Of course, there were people and groups who crossed the divide, but the organizing in different areas didn't always manage to do that.... Often, those most marginalized by

the different issues that were addressed by Occupy were not in leadership positions. Sometimes issues were not even incorporated into the framework of Occupy until later if at all because they were seen as part of a different agenda. There were hopeful things, but those divisions are really deep. I don't know what it will take to cross them. When there is communication [between organizations] it comes across as nominal speaking engagements, but not ongoing organizing. (Jensen Personal Interview, 2012)

FIGURE 22 . OCCUPY BALTIMORE FLYER IN STATION NORTH WINDOW . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Seeing these divisions between activist groups, Sine has taken it upon herself to transcend boundaries when she can. Her style of activism fits into her way of seeing the city - as fragmented and broken, but whose problems require participation from all sorts of different groups. She tells me of her struggles to work in the city:

> *I've recently been working with Baltimore Racial Justice Action – I love working with that group. I'm trying to push myself, as an Asian American, to create relationships with primarily Black grassroots organizations in Baltimore. It's been hard because of the dividing lines, which are created from histories of justified distress. So that has been one of my missions for the past couple of years. It's been difficult but fulfilling. (Jensen Personal Interview, 2012)*

Sine is not the only example of an artist in the city who wants to make a difference in how it functions, but she also recognizes that the grassroots elements of the city are up against forces they can't entirely control. And in the meantime, there is a lot of profiteering happening around the idea of creative production. The more the city tries to harness it, the more it seems focused on strategies to bring in new creatives rather than dealing with existing problems or assisting current residents (which Sine also addresses and I describe in the next chapter).

Ann Markusen [31] approaches the existence of artist clusters, intentional and unintentional, in cities from an empirical perspective. She shows in her article titled "Urban development and the politics of a creative class: evidence from a study of artists" that the distribution of artists is based on several factors: residency preferences, local efforts and incentives for cultural initiatives, and employment options (Markusen, 1921). There are three

[31] I use Markusen again later in this chapter in my critique of Richard Florida's idea of "the creative class" and its application in Baltimore.

major categories of artistic space in cities: “artists’ centers, live/work and studio buildings, and smaller performing arts spaces” (Markusen 1921). These spaces can root artists in a place and, therefore, play an active role in urban development and the politics of a creative class. Markusen writes of the relationship between artists and processes of gentrification:

> “[Artists] remain a powerful source of articulated opposition to societal status quo and a major force for innovation. In the built environment of the city, they play multiple roles in stabilizing and upgrading neighborhoods and are sometimes caught up in gentrification.” (Markusen 1922)

It can also be argued, as Markusen does, that many artists live in relative poverty, through which they engage in sweat-equity positions that result in their engagement in local politics. However, she also shows that artists are “overall are more apt to be white than the workforce as a whole, and they have extraordinarily high levels of education as a group” (1930). Additionally, they may not make much money, but often live in high-income households (1930) In general, artists are located more centrally in a given city than other occupations, but Markusen also breaks through some generalizations of artists to show that different types of artists enjoy living in different places. For instance, performing artists have a stronger tendency to live in the inner city than musicians, writers, and visual artists (1930).

Artists may share similar lifestyles, but diverge in preferences, tendencies, and styles. So why do artists, cultural centers, and creative industries tend to cluster in a way that allows municipal governments to latch onto that space as a district? According to Stern and Seifert in “From Creative Economy to Creative Society,” clustering takes place when “specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions” are geographically concentrated (3). These connections are as critical for artists as the collaborations they might build with other artists by clustering. Stern and Seifert also argue that “clusters highlight the social organization

of the creative economy, and it is this socio-economic dimension that is culture's link to neighborhood revitalization" (Stern and Seifert, 3). When people and industries congregate in an area that is identified as somehow "artistic," it is called a "natural" cultural district. The informal aspects of it are appreciated rather than surveilled. Without government involvement, these districts form without tax incentives and investment wrangling from municipal government. However, after a cultural district emerges, it becomes a sector that the state and municipal governments might choose to cultivate through policy, regulation, and investment.

How do artists think about arts districts?

At NSACED, 2012, Barnaby Evans, Executive Artistic Director for the ongoing art installation called WaterFire Providence, described how art can "reinvigorate downtowns." Evans is a very established and successful artist – and in the case of WaterFire, he operates as an arranger. WaterFire is a series of pyres along a river in the heart of Providence, Rhode Island, which serves as a gathering place for visitors and residents to encounter primal elements (water and fire) as well as performances and other cultures. The $600 million spent on surrounding development since 1994 seems to have occurred mainly due to the project's inception, and has in many ways succeeded in reinventing Providence as a destination city. Evans shines with pride as he reports on how WaterFire has become so successful at accomplishing exactly what both artists, arts boosters, and developers want in terms of urban development around the arts.

Evans' inspiration for WaterFire did not come from managing an arts district, but in "co-creating" works with the arts community – seeing the site and audience both as ingredients for making the experience of art work. He draws on early sources of art (again, water and fire) to "animate" urban space and to question the "economic structures of the past 300 years that have siloed the arts in our society and community into a particular space." Additionally, he relies

on the element of surprise to broaden "the lens of what we consider art," which can include both ephemerality and permanence because art deals with "questions of life and death." At this point, I was really enjoying hearing Evans speak and thought he was very insightful, especially in comparing the celebratory and gathering aspects of WaterFire to medieval festivals, which also had political, religious, philosophical, metaphorical, and ephemeral components that sometimes upset political hierarchy through "deliberate disequilibrium realized." But a simple Freudian slip reminded me of what, ultimately, this is all about – as Evans described his interactions with a family during a particularly moving art project with socio-cultural implications, Evans referred to them as "the family that we're marketing" (NSACED 2012). Although he immediately corrected himself, the blunder was made and his talk was revealed as a performance, even if only to me.

In many ways, Evans has reached the pinnacle of what an artist can do in the context of an arts district, to the extent that he is less of an individual artist and more of an arts planner and collaborator these days. However, artists are not always wholesale supporters of arts districts, nor do they always profit from them. Thought they may serve as catalysts for gentrification, the pressure of gentrification may overshoot artists' salaries (especially young artists). Further, artists may not stay in the community and the longtime residents and artists that once were a basis may leave because of economic or social pressures such that the area dries up, artistically speaking, partially or entirely (Clisham et al 23). This can be at times the case in Baltimore, a point I make more forcefully in my concluding chapter.

Cultural Policy Around Creative Capital

City strategies for harnessing creative capital have become an increasingly popular topic in recent years in the fields of geography, urban studies, and planning. Simultaneously, these studies have been heavily criticized on all sides – for lack of theoretical backing or lack of empirical evidence. Some don't take into account that creative capital dwells within varied

conceptions of what art is; the figure of the artist in both society and the economy; and the model of property which allows identifiable clustering to occur. In policy, issues of creativity and capital are normatively thought through the paradigm of "the creative class" as an extant phenomenon or as a valid grouping. Consequently, studies must discern the possibilities of art in relation to urban culture and life from counterproductive marketing and branding strategies. Finally, creativity and art are understood as spatially and temporally related to social justice and the larger political infrastructure of the city.

On a semantic note, studies of creativity and cities have often lacked an adequately developed conception of the overdetermined concepts of creativity, art, and culture, each laden with history upon history of meaning. These terms are not easily defined because as processes they are overdetermined. In other words, notions such as these are not stable and their causal relations to other processes are not easily distinguished. Creativity, art, and culture are tangled up with the movements of capital, social relations, and systems of power. All affect and are affected. Their overdetermination is not an excuse to avoid making the words useful to a written argument. It would be inadequate to write, “Culture is the right tool for urban revival because it flourishes in the new urban reality of the 21st century.” (Seifert and Stern 1) But it is useful to recognize the real relevance of creativity as part of culture, as a kind of misnomer. When an entity or process is described as creative, it doesn’t translate literally as “making things.” Essentially, it means the entity or process changes things. The real relevance to creativity isn't in production, but in knowing what to create (or change) and, therefore, making critical thinking the salient characteristic rather than creativity. Situations, spaces, networks, and periods of time have more to do with the creative/critical output of an individual than their “essential” qualities do, resulting in what Marx calls self-alienation, explored in more depth in the next chapter.

In relation to this conception of creativity, art remains an intentional and marketable product, whether formally or informally. Culture, however is a bit looser, denoting a patterned social network in which creativity exists as the capability for change based on what is already in existence. If you stop classifying people as creative and you start classifying actions, spaces, and times as creative, a more accurate model might exist, but certain questions remain. From these semantic distinctions, several questions can be raised that have not always been present in arguments about creativity in cities. How is the idea of creativity interpreted and used as part of individual and urban identity-making? Why does "creative" clustering and networking happen in cities? What happens next? Gentrification? Political action? Increased or decreased social equality?

Even though such words as "creativity" and "culture" may not be understood in a nuanced way, cultural policy around creative capital nevertheless involves legal classification, tax benefits, incentives for individuals and "creative clusters," and planning for initiatives at a city level, not always at federal level (Grant 73). Investments can be focused on growth, revitalization, or equity through different channels, such as facilities, infrastructure, programs, and grants for individual artists and developers. Markusen is concerned that "much of the urban redevelopment process remains poorly understood and woefully short on evaluative research on outcomes" with a few exceptions. (Markusen 1938) Instead, she sees that a discourse around creativity has developed largely through work of Florida, which has been grasped and grafted onto cultural policies.

The "Creative Class" in Baltimore

Florida's "creative class" is described in his work, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*, encourages cities to "attract and retain" talent by making their city attractive to a specific demographic of people who

“create meaningful new forms” (Florida, 2001). Florida’s newly invented class includes scientists and engineers, professors, poets, writers, artists, performers, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other “opinion-makers.” Florida exemplifies the individuals designing a product that “can be widely made, sold and used; coming up with a theorem or strategy that can be applied in many cases; or composing music that can be performed again and again” (Florida, 2001). City leaders and planners have become excited about attracted these productive, profitable people.

In order to make normative statements about urban development and the ‘creative class,’ Florida neglected the complexity of creativity in cities. Although arts and culture are often used as part of city branding and urban revitalization, these districts (or the introduction of creativity to the city as a whole) cannot be solely responsible for bringing in capital. In fact, there is a paradox inherent in the figures of artists who, in their desire to be known, change, rebel, and acquire capital, can be priced out of their own neighborhoods and cause other low-income residents to be further marginalized as gentrification occurs. Whether culpable or unwitting, artists don’t always have influence over the cultural policies that develop, although they can take advantage of some of the incentives offered. Instead, cultural policies are still informed by simplistic notions of the relationship between creativity, capital, and urban spaces.

Florida has received much criticism for his theory and recommendations to city. Markusen has offered some of the most brutal and insightful critiques of his work. She exemplifies many aspects of a critical theorist that he does not, such as qualifying findings with strong research that *asks the right questions*; she does not approach from extreme bias; and she does not emerge with socially unjust recommendations that lack both insight and foresight. Markusen believes the Florida conflates creativity with high levels of education. She writes, Markusen writes,

> "…the 'creative class' as used by Florida boils down to people in occupations defined by high levels of higher education, and that other claims he makes that high-tech activity is drawn to diverse cities, for instance are unsubstantiated. I argue that talent, skill, and creativity are not synonymous with higher education. (Markusen 1941)

Additionally, there is an issue of scale – by focusing on the city itself, he ignores patterns of distribution within the city and, therefore, all the inequality left undisturbed if not heightened by the focus on "creatives." Markusen is not alone in her criticism of Florida. Krueger and Buckingham wonder why Florida doesn't make mention of "access to resources, the implications of public spaces for resources, and environmental vulnerability remain outside the calculus" (Krueger and Buckingham vii). Finally, they criticize the way Florida recommends cities import talent, but not to develop the skills and prospects of the local population, precisely the issue at hand in Baltimore, echoed in each interview I held but noted specifically by Sine, the artist whose interview I presented earlier in this chapter:

> *A lot of urban development – and Station North is a good example – centers around attracting newcomers... There's more focus on bringing in people with money than there is on focusing on families or opportunities for people in the neighborhood itself. It deepens those inequalities and shifts poor people around to different areas. The term revitalization does not always mean empowering and lifting up the folks already living in that area, instead, it seems like it focuses on bringing new people and possibly displacing those that live there. (Jensen Personal Interview, 2012)*

Former Mayor Martin O'Malley symbolically sealed this goal around creative capital into Baltimore's strategy for urban change in 2003 when he invited Florida to address the city's Cultural Town Hall Meeting. Bret McCabe of the *Baltimore Urbanite* writes of this moment:

> "At the time, Florida had become an urban pied piper for his 2002 book, *The Rise of the Creative Class And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure and Everyday Life*, which argued, with data, that 'creatives'—a demographic that included science and technology professionals as well as artists and designers—can encourage the sort of economic development that drives urban revitalization." ("ART + Public Space" 2012)

Further, a strategic document called "Seeding the Vision: Creative Baltimore" was released in describes Baltimore as a premier center of creativity, ranking 17th among cities with a population of one million or more for Creative Class population, among other rankings ("Seeding the Vision"). The report states that the "tremendous importance of this ranking is understood as Baltimore's immediate access to the most significant economic force of our age: creativity" (*ibid*). The report draws on Florida's three T's of creativity, the creativity index calculable in terms of

> "Talent: or creative share of the workforce, based largely on demographic, educational, and occupational characteristics; Tolerance: or diversity, based on indexes related to immigration, integration, sexual orientation and bohemian culture; Technology: or innovation, measured by patent activity and the high technology share of the economic base." (*ibid*)

The methodology of the report uses the three T's to determine Baltimore's strengths in areas such as "The Gay Index" and "The Bohemian Index" to determine needs for improvement and potential for growth. The report determines in conclusion that Baltimore's "access to the largest reservoir of creative talent in the nation provide grounds for this region to pioneer an

unprecedented economic turnaround," revealing that Creative Baltimore is indeed an entirely economic vision.

Consequently, harnessing/harvesting the spatial creative capital in developing arts districts for economic gain begs the question – whose gain? By pulling the curtain back on languages around arts districts, I argue that revitalizing and placemaking through art does not signify an earnest attempt to solve distress, but operates as a continuance of long-standing exploitation. Development around creative capital is predicated on the losses of other people. Building on suffering, soul food restaurants pop up beneath expensive condos. Murals are pasted over vacant buildings as a carefully crafted invitation to developers. And as doors open in invitation for new, hip residents, those same doors are closed on those who lived there to begin with. The emergence of creativity from a space or the current creativity build on the residues of 'gritty' history is a piling up of insults upon injuries.

When attempts are made to harness creative capital, there are diverging opinions. Some say creative capital is essential to urban economic vitality, but others believe strategies like these put too much pressure put on "culture" to improve the economic travesties of flailing cities with bad planning and worse social policy. Further, I argue that in appropriating creative capital from the informal realm, the city government thereby becomes complicit in unjust differentiation between informal economy types while also coopting artistic endeavors and communities for the sake of capital growth. Since the late 1960s, urban revitalization and development strategies focus heavily on capitalist production and consumption patterns rather than social policies. John Hannigan explores this issues of creative consumption in *Landscapes of Pleasure* by tracing the way consumption happens in urban spaces. He describes the change in the general paradigm of downtown, as well as the specific developments that worked to shape that paradigm. Urban revitalization strategies centered around consumer culture have gradually

narrowed in on a new category of consumer described as "postmodern," characterized by the propensity for "constructing individual identity from multiple images and symbols [and] subverting the market rather than being seduced by it." (Hannigan 67) Hannigan analyzes this mythical, hedonistic creature is analyzed in depth, but the existence of this consumer remains hypothetical. But when cities have imagined it as a kind of person, market, or class, policies and representation emerge as if the postmodern consumer is more real than virtual.

As leadership and technology has changed, so have consumption patterns and social groupings alongside three components of change that need to be addressed in urban planning: the use of the individual consumer to create niche markets; the decline of clumsy, large-scale corporate control over production (and product options); and a decline in the kinds of causal explanations that once held true, such as distance and scale in favor new things (Clarke and Gaile, 1998). Peter Hall observed along these lines that culture is “now seen as the magic substitute for all the lost factories and warehouses, and as a device that will create a new urban image, [making] the city more attractive to mobile capital and mobile professional workers" (640). By way of example, I refer to a recent example (May 2012) of how Station North has been undergoing a change of image to become more attractive to investors through a mural project called *Open Walls – Baltimore*.

Open Walls or Closed Doors? Tagging the Streets for Redevelopment

So how has it come to pass that Station North, PNC Bank, and a subversive street artist named Gaia have joined forces to “bring back the neighborhood.” In a recent *Baltimore Sun* article, reporter Andrea Appleton describes this convergence as a well-funded mural project called Open Walls Baltimore: “Once completed in late May, the project will include more than 20 murals, scattered throughout the arts and entertainment district. It comes with the blessing of the city and was officially launched with great fanfare in March by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-

Blake herself." (Appleton 2012) This highly visible project draws on Gaia's clout as being not just an artist, but on that has most often operated outside of the law – installing paintings and murals wherever he pleases. Appleton also describes him as "a local white street artist … of the black-and-white wheatpaste animals, visible on vacant buildings all over the city" (2012). This is an artist, like so many others in decaying urban areas, who claim space, territory for themselves. Ben Stone, Executive Director of Station North, Inc.,[32] sees it less about claiming space, and more about "sending a message," perhaps that the space is ready to be claimed. This phrase, "sending a message," is similar to words used by Mayor Rawlings-Blake in her recent push to designate Bromo Tower as an arts district, also to "send a message" that the area is open for business. Just what messages are actually being sent? These are messages about territory and territorializing – tagging, claiming that "this is ours now... but it could be yours." The murals are much like the designation process itself – a message to developers. Murals are pasted up in these devastated urban neighborhoods, "often with little effect, and now can be as indicative of urban decay... as the vacant lots they tend to abut." (Appleton 2012)

It seems that Stone and others have identified one of the remaining problems in this particular arts district – vacancies, and determined that by flagging the vacants, enough attention will be attracted to bring in developers while increasing the district's status as an artistic and edgy space for young, hip students and creative workers. Because Open Walls touches both vacant and occupied buildings, the founders of the project are hoping for a different effect. But Stone says that the project is about "activating vacant spaces and vacant

[32] At this juncture, I had deeply hoped for an interview with Ben Stone, who I have met and contacted on occasion. In January of 2011 he agreed to an interview while he was working at Baltimore Development Corporation as a designer focused on Station North, but soon after he left BDC and became Executive Director of Station North, Inc. Since then, he's been a busy man and has not replied to my emails, so my dissertation must be without his perspective even though he is of major influence to its development. It's his job to sell Station North as an idea and push for its ability to bring in residents and capital investment.

buildings in Station North." Activating is a tricky word, or perhaps an empty one. What is being activated? Tourism. In an April 27th article (VOA News), Stone points to the district's existence as a tourist destination, "Penn Station, our main train station, is in the district, so it's an easy area to get to, and this is another reason to come here." The murals are also about activating development. There are plenty of vacant homes in Station North. Artists like Gaia see vacant buildings, unused spaces in the city as their canvas. He says, "The city, for better or for worse, is a canvas, because we have 45,000 abandoned buildings in this metropolitan area. Development can be swift or slow." (Logue 2012)

It's seemingly working - money is being funneled in. By April 17, 2012, construction began on a posh apartment complex. By demolishing the vacants and providing low-income tax credits, some of the city's 45,000 abandoned buildings are being replaced by apartments. Thus, the irony of Gaia's artwork is the thoughtfulness in his previous critiques of Robert Moses, Le Corbusier, and other urban developers "on the very urban areas they irrevocably altered with slum clearance" which is currently being accomplished through new condos, townhouses, and apartments being built (Donohue 2012)[33] I ask, how is Open Walls seeking to accomplish something different? If anything, it depends more on coopting the "cutty streets" rather than wholesale clearing them... the forcefulness of the development is still palpable, and the draw is stronger.[34]

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[33] "The twentysomething artist, who had been palstering his work illegally on vacant properties in the city for several years, last year allowed the Edgar Allen Poe House to sell a raven print of his to raise money for the museum. Through that project and an art show he participated in at the Maryland Institute College of Art, he got to know Will Backstrom, who works in community development for PNC Bank. (Backstrom says he'd been intrigued by Gaia's street art before he ever met the artist.)" (Appleton 2012)

[34] The comments following some of the articles about Open Walls are especially revealing. One reader says "What a waste of money brought to you by big banks! Maybe you should have funded creative education programs to the tune of $100K..."

In one interview, Gaia says, "I like how tough this city is... And it has all these secrets that take a million years to find. All the cutty neighborhoods, all the cutty streets..." (Donahue 2012). The reliance on the "cutty streets" to make art work in city like Baltimore. Artists are capable not only of using the city as a resource, but its deeply etched suffering as a resource, as a medium for artwork.

Comments on the article are incisive:

An anonymous user writes, "Why do these people think that pasting their art all over the city is an improvement? Takes some gall to think your art has to be forced on everyone. I enjoy the city for what it is... And putting crap all on top of it doesn't help. Sorry." (May 3 2012 10:44am)

A response to the critical anonymous comment says: "People like Gaia... are the sort of people that builds communities... If everyone in Baltimore possessed the same civic mindedness of Gaia, Baltimore would have a lot fewer problems." (Wally, May 3 2012 . 6:53pm)

Gaia is very willing to jump through political hoops, even if he paints where he pleases. He was in the midst of applying for an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) when the project came together. As such, Gaia exemplifies a figure of a subversive artist who did not at first enjoy economic benefit alongside fame, but over time attempted at and succeeded in transferring his labor from the informal to formal sector, much to the pleasure of Mayor Rawlings-Blake and Station North, Inc. Our Town grants are centered around

“placemaking,” a term much taken for granted in the world of planning. This type of grant seeks to bind nonprofit arts/cultural organizations and local government for placemaking project around the arts by providing funding for design, cultural planning, and “arts engagement with livability outcome” (Schupbach NSACED 2012). At the NSACED Symposium described earlier, Jason Schupbach, the Design Director for the NEA, described both “Our Town” and its goals for placemaking. I couldn’t help but notice the symbolism of the particular PowerPoint slide he used to introduce “placemaking” – a photograph of a group of white people dancing on the street. Shupbach described the scene as “dancing in “neighborhood where people don’t have access to the arts” (NSACED 2012).

FIGURE 23 . SLIDE IN SCHUPBACH’S PRESENTATION DURING NSACED 2012 . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

The newest in creative placemaking, as Schupbach reported, comes from the ‘Sound of the Community’ report by Ann Markusen. Markusen polled communities, asking “Why are you

attached to a place?" and requesting the top three reasons. She found that the top reasons were not jobs, economy, and schools, but social offerings, openness, and aesthetics (Shupbach 2012). Consequently, the NEA determined that successful creative placemaking:

> "/ has visionary leaders
>
> / tailors to distinct features of place
>
> / mobilizes public will
>
> / attracts private sector buy-in
>
> / has support of local arts and cultural leaders
>
> / builds partnerships across sectors, missions, and levels of government
>
> / has grassroots creative talent support" (NSACED 2012)

These values for placemaking seem to embody my own recommendations for inclusivity. However, NEA Our Town grants, the designation of arts districts, and Open Walls Baltimore are all about place*making*, and they do emphasize making. And placemaking is about property values, such that the city as a whole (not just vacant lots) are treated as a blank canvas – or turned into one through a top-down federally funded strategic placemaking grant that requires an officialized plan. This is typically used as cities attempt to find ways of selling themselves to non-residents who might become residents or tourists.

City Branding and Imaginary Identities

Cities try to sell themselves, or parts of themselves, through a cultural-historic context in order to bring capital investment (Kearns and Philo, 1993). The Lower East Side of New York City is one of the most dramatic examples of US city strategies for branding and marketing a district as being "artistic" and "multicultural." In *Selling the Lower East Side*, Christopher Mele describes

the ways in which various stages of investment and disinvestment have been tied up in representations and branding of the Lower East Side. In Mele's eighth chapter, "Developing the East Village: Eighties Counterculture in the Service of Urban Capital," he explains the development of small pockets of cultural renovation in the midst of urban decay. Previously marginalized, the Lower East Side was slowly repackaged as a haven for artistic middle-class subculture, first in the art world, then in the press, and ultimately, real estate and commercial ads. In the housing market, "flipping" became increasingly popular, but was limited by middle class buyers who were unwilling to reside amidst poverty and drug culture. The development of the arts (and the catalyst of corporate media) aided the representation of marginal culture as hip, gritty, and open for "cultural renaissance" (Mele 226).

Imagined place identity became a strong connecting force between art and urban space; if art was a movement, then the East Village was the scene. Commercial galleries sprouted in the early 1980s, but closed before the end of the decade. Mele analyzes this nearly immediate rise and decline through the paradox of countercultural art that gets paired with cultural industry in a specific place. At first, the Lower East Side's streets and buildings served well as a canvases and platforms for what Mele calls "rebellious" art (Mele 228). By drawing on 'ghetto' and street life, local art appeared to have roots in graffiti and refuse which yielded a sense of authenticity in place. Artists achieved celebrity status by attaching their identity to the Lower East Side.

A less well-known arts and culture district is located in San Diego's East Village. Kayzar shows that, similarly to the Lower East Side, the neighborhood was a "neglected zone of discard" before it came to be represented as a suitable place for growth and investment (136). Since the 1980s, arts and culture had become a part of the landscape, in addition to a large portion of the city's social services and some nightclubs. The East Village remained distinct and cut off from

San Diego's core in some ways, but over 300 artists called it their home by the mid-1990s. This scene grew without incentives from the city, but once the city recognized it as existing as a potential commodity, the East Village became subject to "cultivation," standardization, and redevelopment. Ultimately, the reinvestment was mostly a symbolic gesture aimed at attracting capital.

Urban development strategies such as the NYC's Lower East Side and San Diego's East Village tend to be symbolic, meant to project an image or an identity. Branding therefore serves to attract investment by projecting images of urban vitality and potential for profit to the world. Branding strategies are being consciously developed at the municipal level with the idea of "synergy" in mind. Creating value through synergies happens in three ways that Hannigan identifies: repackaging existing properties and products, forging cross business opportunities, and the creation of new businesses. Most of these opportunities fall under the brand extension model, which makes use of the popularity of one brand by applying it to other products. Some examples of cultural development and branding that Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris point out are New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose. (Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris 353) These strategies are means to attract (and I would argue that they create, contain, and control) the postmodern consumer. Baltimore is no exception.

Baltimore has had a long history of marketing campaigns, particularly as it seeks to redefine itself having lost its potential for growth and survival through industry (Clisham et al 69). The city has no single brand, in part because slogans and concepts are generated by multiple offices – Visit Baltimore and Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA). Some campaigns seem geared towards tourism, particularly by Visit Baltimore who receives revenue from hotel taxes. Slogans created for an outsider audience include "Find Your Happy Place,"

“Charm City, “and “Waterfront Invasion.” In 2009, the slogan was “Nevermore 2009, the 200th Birthday of Edgar Allan Poe.” During Mayor Schaefer’s reign, the slogans were “Baltimore is Best” and “Pink Positive,” during which time curbs were painted pink to promote positive thinking and happiness.

FIGURE 24 . SOUTHWESTERN CORNER OF STATION NORTH WITH VISIBLE POLICE PRESENCE AND BELIEVE BANNER . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

In the early 2000s until 2010, Baltimore’s slogan was “BELIEVE” – plastered on vinyl banners around the city, bold white font on a black background. Stephen Janis has criticized the visual impact of this slogan as a metaphor for race relations in the city, noting that that the uncontrollable blackness encounters the edges of a powerful white organizing factor that vaguely implies (in the imperative) that all it takes for Baltimore to thrive is ... what? Belief? In Janis’ eyes, it’s both an avoidance of effort towards the kind of social investment that might

allow for real change and a walling off of scared, powerful whites who huddle far away from the swarming black masses.

From BELIEVE, the slogan switched in 2010 to SMILE (visually, a round yellow smiley face). In 2010, Baltimore launched a new $500,000 tourism campaign slogan, "Find your happy place" for print, television, radio, and internet. In a critical Baltimore Sun article, Gunts notes that the real goal is to bring visitors from neighboring states to enjoy Baltimore's museums, hotels, restaurants, and events. The events began on Memorial Day 2010, when

> "As part of the unveiling, the agency will seek to set a Guinness World Record by gathering more than 250 members in orange and black ponchos outside the Maryland Science Center in an attempt to create the world's largest human smiley face. If the record is achieved, Visit Baltimore plans to release 19 dozen butterflies into the air." (Gunts "Find Your Happy Place in Baltimore")

Immediately, the irony of such a slogan in a city where homicide and drug use are real problems introduced a spin on the slogan, which became "Find your trigger happy place." One woman interviewed named Marcie Jones Brennan, a Baltimore crime blogger, noted "It sounds like a pain management technique." (*ibid*) "Finding a happy place" is also evocative of other activities than the hoped-for tourism. Happy places can be drug-induced, alcohol-induced, or in other ways transgressive.

On a smaller scale, certain neighborhoods have their own themes and slogans. In 2000, a group called the WestSide Renaissance invented a slogan for the rebirth of the West Side of Baltimore: "The West has Zest." No less than 35 public and private partners were involved in this group whose mission was to market the area back into viability. However, the slogan was seen as "outdated" and "unsophisticated," and there was hope that another rebranding would occur

if the area could attain an arts district - seen as a cure-all for the West Side's financial and cultural ills (Clisham et al 69).

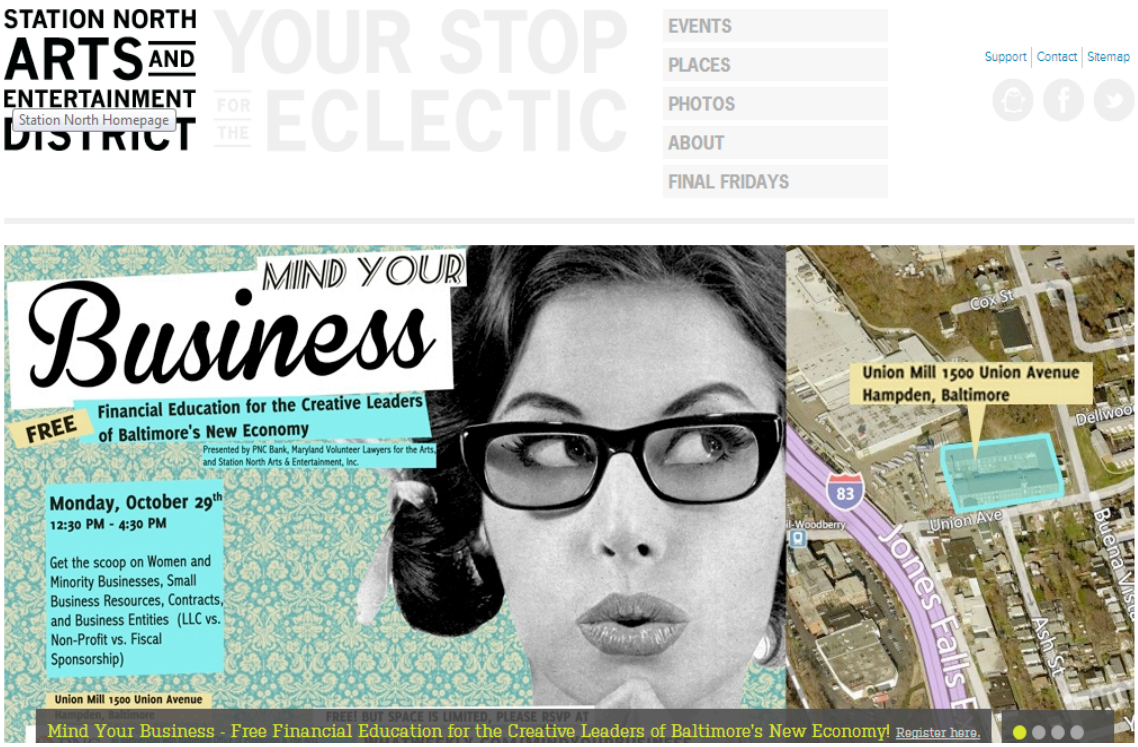

FIGURE 25 . STATION NORTH, INC. HOMEPAGE AND SLIDESHOW IMAGE . ACCESSED 10/23/2012 . STATIONNORTH.ORG

The current Station North slogan is "Your Stop for the Eclectic" (see Fig. above). The word stop was likely chosen to highlight the "train stop" at Penn Station

. "Eclectic" is key to the identity being promoted - something for everyone and quite quirky. The current branding of Station North, which can be seen on the website and in posters around the neighborhood, is highly polished and carefully designed.

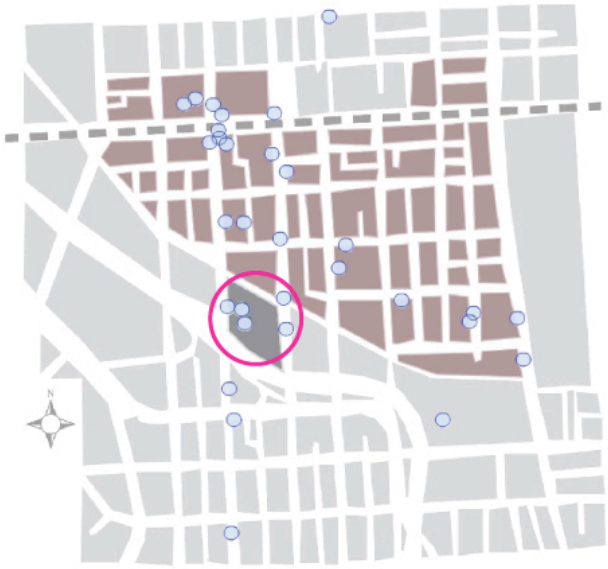

FIGURE 26 . SOUND MAP . PENN STATION SOUNDS LOCATION

10-2011 Amtrak Announcement inside Penn Station

1500 North Charles St.

Gentle saxophone music is interrupted by a woman's prerecorded voice over speakers. She directs passengers on their way to Washington, D.C.'s Union Station to proceed to the track and thanks everyone for choosing Amtrak. Someone rustles a plastic bag. People are moving about and speaking in quiet voices.

10-2011 Baby Crying inside Penn Station

1500 North Charles St.

A young child cries amidst other noises.

10-2011 Singing and Cabs in Front of Penn Station

1500 North Charles St.

A man sings, the revolving door spins, a man with clicking shoes walks to a taxi.

10-2011 Train Passing Penn Station on St. Paul St.

Wheels over rails, cars passing on St. Paul St.

10-2011 Man Shouting outside of Penn Station

1500 North Charles St.

Indeterminate words, or a song, commentary from others, as bus arrives.

Station North, Inc. had built in previous years relationships with neighboring institutions in order to advertise itself. In 2010, graphic design students from MICA partnered with Station North Arts and Entertainment District (in addition to two other entities) to promote Station North through advertisements posted in the Charm City Circulator, a free public transportation method, rather than in a venue. In an article published by MICA, the students' approach and selection process were described:

> "MICA students designed the advertisements after visiting the Station North neighborhood, documenting its characteristic features, generating ideas about its future potential and interviewing riders on the Circulator" (MICA "Students Promote")

The relationship signified by this transaction was a highly economic one, binding the students to the idea of enhancing the districts success by virtue of advertising its characteristics and

aspirations. The ads (visible through the above link) present three very different conceptions of the city, and each ad was approved by David Bielenberg, former director of Station North Arts and Entertainment District. The first has a French outdoor cafe kind of vibe, featuring an illustration of one of Baltimore's famous billboards, at the entrance of Station North by Penn Station. The second ad is a photograph of the Charles Theater, an emblematic structure and symbol of the revitalization of the district, taken at night with a sans serif list of available amenities. The third is a series of bubbles in a 1970s retro style, each containing a word that hints at what people are saying about Station North: "cultural, eclectic, happening, hip, fun, flavorful, accessible, surprising, artistic, and vibrant."

As I've described in earlier chapters, the urban "fix" seems to be working in places and at times, but the places where it's not working are not quite as bounded around the edges as the city would like. They are intermingled and out of control, places of passage and movement that are ripe with betweenness. Conversations about the arts intermingle with nonsensical utterings, bass beats, and wind disturbing tree branches. As these things overlap and intermingle, the lack of adherence to boundaries (of utopian urban planning) can be represented as utter inbetweenness via sound. I'm sure Emily Evitts Dickinson, a famous urban critic published in multiple magazines and journals on the East Coast, didn't have my sound map in mind when she suggested this, but she of all people would know best to acknowledge the need for new ways of thinking about urban space. She writes, "It's high time we challenge our path dependent thinking about cities and strive to connect the dots in new ways." (Dickinson "Baltimore Open City Catalog") New media can yield new ways of thinking by acknowledging the various connections between places, strategies of planning, and everyday tactics of resistance that otherwise go unnoticed.

Sound studies theorists such as Brandon LaBelle are starting to think deeply about how sound relates to the urban (especially tactics of resistance) by, first, connecting sound studies and auditory knowledge with the geographic – in other words, starting to show how space is produced by and in terms of the various senses (Labelle 84). Second, the relationship between sound and geography is a fluid and emotional one which can stimulate knowledge using the body as it is related to space (xxv). Third, by moving beyond noise as heightened levels of decibels signifying disorder, noise and sound can instead be seen as "catalyst[s] for dynamic cultural change" (Eric Wilson cited in LaBelle xxi). And given each of these tenets, LaBelle proposes something dramatic, and similar to that which I propose about sound, dissonance, and resistance:

> "...noise might act as a form of deviation that, in circulating through neighborhoods, can fully aid in the emergence of community. A fugitive sound, noise may push forth as a sort of itinerant figure to spin wildly within the social and, as Michel Serres proposes, rend the system open. For my ear, such fugitive sounds may only stimulate further versions of the domestic by bringing the stranger home." (LaBelle 84)

Rending open a system is indeed a powerful concept, made even more so by bringing the possibility to the level of everyday tactics such as standing on a corner, cutting off traffic, speaking to oneself, ignoring someone else and the sounds and silences these things produce.

FIGURE 27 . MICA STUDENT DESIGN FOR STATION NORTH CAMPAIGN

(MICA Communications "MICA Students Promote Station North")

The posters strike me as somewhat generalized, ready to attract the widest range of people possible while simultaneously excluding those who might prefer to find themselves stuffing dollar bills into a man's thong at Club Choices. The language used by all proponents of Baltimore Arts across various publications tends toward this kind of generalization. Additionally, proponents make consistent use of the "creative class" conceit as popularized by Richard Florida. (See previous section in Chapter, "Cultural Policy Around Creative Capital.") In Station North and Baltimore at large, promoting tourism and redevelopment in the built environment continues to be the highest priority with no attention towards the inequalities already rampant at both levels. Additionally, the branding of arts districts feeds into the city's latest attempts to compose a artsy and tourist friendly version of itself. Experiencing some amount of success and attention, the logic has become, "Why not another arts district?"

How many arts districts does it take to fix a city?

Station North was not the first arts district in the city to be designated. Highlandtown was designated in 2003 and is the largest in Maryland, which includes not just Highlandtown, but also Patterson Park and portions of Canton and Greektown. Unlike Station North, Highlandtown didn't have an established art scene before being designated and hasn't been as supported by the city, such that it is not as prized as a centerpiece for the arts. However, it has a grassroots, community appeal that Station North seems to be missing:

> "The development of Highlandtown has been a slow, organic process. Unlike Station North, Highlandtown is a residence for blue-collar families dating back to the start of the 20th century; the pre-existing conditions that led to Station North's recent renaissance are not there, and this allows art to take a role and shape different than the ones we traditionally recognize. In this community, the arts are a tool for building community, not economy." (Kelley Bell quoted in Clisham et al 16)

As cities like Philadelphia, New York, and now Baltimore begin to enjoy the economic effects of a single arts district, the success of the designation experiment adds political pressure to introduce new art districts in which similar financial and cultural gains can be made. However, the addition of multiple arts districts hasn't always panned out as cities have planned. For instance, Bernstein notes that Pittsburgh has recently started to encounter the problem of competition between arts districts ("Competing Arts Districts" 2010).

Around the same time in 2010, Reverend Al Sharpton announced his support of a black arts and entertainment district in Baltimore and several hundred city residents came out in support as he spoke. Former State Senator Larry Young agreed with Sharpton and claimed to have been working on a similar proposition since the 1980s (around the time when the Baltimore Harbor was undergoing heavy development). Sharpton said,

> "If Baltimore can find a way to develop the harbor, if they can find a way to develop casinos, they can find a way to develop symbols of self respect, and self worth and self regard for the children of Baltimore city. You made deals for the stadium, you made deals for developers. Now let's make a deal for the children of Baltimore." (qtd. from WBAL-TV 2010 news report)

The African-American Arts, Culture and Entertainment Consortium (which has virtually no online presence at this time and may no longer exist) had its eye on eight blocks of real estate near M&T Bank Stadium.

On April 7th, 2010, Baltimore's newest mayor, Stephanie C. Rawlings-Blake, announced proposed plans for a third arts district (in the span of 10 years) to be designated on the west side of Baltimore, and as of June 2012 its designations complete.[35] Tax breaks will be made available to certain business and property owners and the plan is available and describes the districts boundaries as well as eligibility requirements for participation and tax incentives.[36] Baltimore's Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA) is non-profit organization that coordinates various cultural, touristic, and artistic activities in the city. BOPA manages two revitalized buildings in the new arts district – the Bromo-Seltzer Arts Tower, which provides subsidized studio space for artists, and the School 33 Arts Center, which offers exhibition, studio and classroom space for community arts workshops. As such, they will be directly overseeing the success of the Bromo Tower Arts & Entertainment District, much as Station North, Inc. manages Station North's success.

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[35] In addition to Station North, the Highlandtown area of Baltimore was designated as an arts and culture district with accompanying tax incentives and redevelopment in 2003, just 2 years after Station North was established.

[36] Bill Gilmore from the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts who is leading efforts to create this district notes, "That's always been the issue: Who's in and who's out." (Gunts 2010)

The New York times is already reporting on the new arts district. The reporters recommend going at 3 p.m. for some art hopping:

> "Go west to see works by some of Baltimore's best emerging art-makers. A 117-acre swath of downtown's west side is the city's newest state-designated arts district. Open since April, sophiajacob (510 West Franklin Street; sophiajacob.com) has been host to works by the Baltimore artists Christopher LaVoie and Zach Storm and the curatorial project Szechuan Best, which transformed the white-walled gallery into the office of a travel agency catering to vampires. The Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower (21 South Eutaw Street; 443-874-3596; bromoseltzertower.com), the tallest building in the city when it was built in 1911, has been converted to artist studios that open to the public one Saturday a month, usually the first. Call ahead and pay a visit to Nudashank (405 West Franklin Street; 443-415-2139; nudashank.com), an independent artist-run space that provides not only a platform but also a home to many of the city's creative vanguard." (Wilder "36 Hours in Baltimore)

Rawlings-Blake describes the possibility for the west side arts district to become a "cultural hub" and says, "We recognize the value of arts districts in creating viable, sustainable communities." (Gunts 2010) She cites improving quality of life, attracting creative residents, and revitalizing the area with new business and jobs as the ambitions for the project. She and other city officials see the city as a social laboratory, an "ideal incubator and test ground for new ideas about the intersection of art and community in the 21st century." (Gunts 2010) They envision the area becoming a home to "educated, creative, and engaged" people (Gunts 2010). In this rhetoric, the city government has set up a stark contrast between what will be and what exists now in Baltimore's west side. Additionally, they are using "art," broadly defined, as the forerunner of capital trying to remake the inner city. Without reflection on the way arts

districts are being used to gentrify and purify parts of the city, this type of spatial sorting will continue to give force to racial and economic differentiations.

I refer back to Mele and Kayzar with the inauthentic but attractive "hip factor" that draws in the "creative class," or rather, highly educated class, while neglecting and alienating current residents. The continual addition of arts districts, as shown in this chapter, relies on a few specific strategies around cultural policy: (1) Residential transfusion, importing consumers and tourists rather than attending to existing needs; (2) Importing artists rather than augmenting or building on existing creative capacities, such as in Open Walls; and (3) Removing any existing "dangerous or messy" people/buildings/activities in the area, mainly through policing but also cultural pressures. The results are inherently economic, legitimizing and appropriating the informal aspects of arts production in the city, reject and punishing informal economic activities in poor and minority areas of the city through policing and surveillance. Although theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding these processes are not always generalizable from city to city, some patterns do emerge here in Baltimore. As discussed earlier, artists embody a particularly powerful role in establishing place identity, which sometimes feeds into the city's goals for branding and imagining itself through arts and culture districts. When artists and creative industries are introduced in affordable, low-income areas, the surrounding neighborhood does not always stand to benefit. Instead, displacement may occur with the influx of new media representations and elite interests, if not spatially then fiscally, which I describe in the next chapter. Consequently, there is an issue of social justice at stake when considering the development of arts and culture districts.

Stern and Seifert argue that for a neighborhood-based creative economy to succeed, economic opportunity and social inclusion must be an important part of the process. They summarize the current lack of critical thinking and social justice in cultural policy:

> "Public policy promoting the creative economy has two serious flaws: one, a misperception of culture and creativity as a product of individual genius rather than collective activity; and, two, a willingness to tolerate social dislocation in exchange for urban vitality or competitive advantage." (1)

In their brief, they propose a neighborhood-based creative economy with the potential for shared prosperity and social integration (1). Their idea relies on "natural" cultural districts, exemplified by Highlandtown arts district described earlier in this as developing spatially through a network or clustering without much initial government involvement. It also relies on resistance to common flaws of market failure that have become intrinsic to the creative economy and consequently have contributed to social injustice, oppression, and exclusion.[37]

Racial Inequality and Arts Districts:

"A 40 in a paper bag or potentially fried fish or fried chicken from behind bulletproof glass" (Corbett NSACED 2012)

Issues around race are especially troublesome in Baltimore's treatment of creative capital in the urban revitalization context. What doesn't get spoken in the political sphere, what isn't written down or planned by urban developers, can apparently be spoken in certain specific contexts, such as the National Symposium on Arts/Culture/Entertainment Districts (NSACED) at this time when the poor of the city, especially its black poor, flounder to survive, and meanwhile, arts and culture districts are being pumped full of money and energy. They are

[37] They continue "…one, growth of winner-take-all artist and creative-class labor markets; two, proliferation of informal arts, although a source of energy and innovation, also a symptom of the informal economy; and, three, neighborhood displacement of residents and entrepreneurs who have initiated revitalization." (Stern and Seifert 5)

thriving, and new ones are on the table as if they might restore the city economically and socially.

As I sit listening to a talk ambiguously titled "Art, Space, and Community Development," my thoughts escape the goings on of the NSACED symposium and I tune everything out for a moment as I consider the futility of urban development in the face of urban crisis. I come to attention and gasp when I realize what the speaker is saying, feeding her words into my worst suspicions. And people around me are chuckling knowingly.

> *"So a place where you could not get anything but, as I was saying, a 40 in a paper bag or potentially fried fish or fried chicken from behind bulletproof glass, um, as soon as we opened the dance studios, now you could get, for instance, Taylor Gourmet makes sub sandwiches. They import bread from Philadelphia every single morning because they say it's better. They bought this building, renovated the top two floors, the two guys who do it, and they each have their apartments above. And yeah, they have four other location in DC since opening this one on H Street first."*

The speaker, Anne Corbett, is describing the revitalization of H Street in Washington, D.C. First, she says, came the dance studios. Then, the restaurants. Then, the Obamas. This is a story that not only represents pride in gentrification, but also a direct commentary on the racial structure of the area – and desirability of race and racial proclivities for eating. Now, there are subs, sticky rice, and even a trendy soul food restaurant where, as I hinted at, the Obamas eat.

Corbett helped to create H Street in Washington, DC by forging partnerships with the government, developers, and organizations, and from this established the Cultural Development Corporation. The Cultural Development Corporation is now a 14-year-old nonprofit, go-to organization for arts space development in DC, bridging into affordable housing and seeking to integrate arts into mixed-use projects (Corbett 2012). "We make space for art," she says. The organization's mission is to integrate arts into community development, placemaking, and urban revitalization projects. Since they can't make much money leasing to artists, they now "present" visual and performing arts, act as landlord to some spaces, and provide advisory services to other developers. Corbett comments that she knows most of the people in the audience, so all of her stories are going to seem old hat.

> *"We've changed the way people in Washington think about artspace development. That's probably the most important thing a city can accomplish – to get arts development at the table when people are talking about real estate." Corbett is concerned that even as luxury condos and affordable housing are developed, that "the glue, the authenticity and soul of a neighborhood" get left out of the equation. She laughs as she asks, "Where is it that the funky, fun, intelligent people hang out. It's not at Ann Taylor Loft. Although... my suit is from Ann Taylor Loft." (NSACED 2012)*

FIGURE 28 . ANNE CORBETT SPEAKS AT NSACED 2012 . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR.

H Street is now populated with very upscale townhouses with integrated commercial and residential. New building stock sells at $600/sq ft and there's a "cool restaurant on the ground floor that sells collard greens and other soul food." (Corbett 2012). Sterling Tucker, a local Civil Rights activist, is quoted as saying "This was a neighborhood that people were trying to get out of, rapidly trying to get out of. But there were people who saw a future here." Corbett concludes with these words of advice: "Recognize the bones, hold onto as many as you can, and don't let the commercial market take them all."

Wilkins Ave in 2012 is much the same as when I visited in 2008 – it appears to be a bombed out in the way Corbett describes of H Street in Washington, DC. But there may be bones though, with space and housing stock enough to justify the same kind of redevelopment in the face of a crisis as Harvey discussed in his review of the Inner Harbor and its surrounding neighborhoods, which were thought of in the 1960s and

1970s as almost unsalvageable, like Wilkens Ave is likely thought of now. In the name of fixing the city, is it worth further pushing the city's problems (the poor, mainly) out of sight and out of mind? How can an arts & culture district compensate for any of this? Can it fix or compensate for the rest of Baltimore – the forgotten, trashed parts?

Station North represents one of many "supposed" urban resuscitations in the US over the past 10-20 years (Wilson *Cities,* iix). In the meantime, so-called ghettos serve as forgotten and ignored places to "stash and segregate the people and land-uses deemed contaminants to real-estate markets" (ix). While gentrification does represent a reinvestment in the built environment, it also requires virtue to be vindicated over vice (ix) and as such, attempts to relegate pre-existing (and potential) activities and behaviors to another location, if anywhere at all. As such, DIY activities are condoned, even desired and, eventually appropriated whereas equally informal economies that are more prevalent among the black urban poor are punitively measured and excluded as acceptable means of survival. This kind of sculpting, as David Wilson describes in his book *Cities and Race: America's New Black Ghetto*, is political and therefore racial.

The case of Station North, however, is not a simple example of a gentrified neighborhood. In this dissertation, I argue that it is by no means fully gentrified. If anything, it is a "hyped revitalization icon," to borrow Wilson's phrasing, through with the city of Baltimore and its private stakeholders wish to glean support for further restructuring. The restructuring is cultural and economic on the surface, but the incisions made to grasp at straws of cultural improvement and economic revitalization turn into deep wounds. These incisions bleed consequences such as black ghetto marginalization and a pathologically consumptive attitude about urban space and social relations (Wilson *Cities,* 3).

FIGURE 29 . NORTH AVE'S VERSION OF A FRIED CHICKEN STOP . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Conclusion: What the Arts Economy Reveals about Racial Inequality

This chapter presented both a critique of cultural boosterism and a comparison between disparate forms of informal economic activity. The success of any art district, according to the city is not based around the art produced or the culture of the place but instead, it's fiscal improvement and economic potential for profit. The designation aims to magnetize a specific urban space in order to encourage types of work and behavior that fit into the vision for revitalization, attract economic growth, and engage tourists and residents as consumers of products and cultural capital. In this context, I show that the artistic underground is viewed as a positive informal economy around which relationships are built, mainly between powerful political players and the largely white, privileged DIY art movement. This relationship leads directly to changes in urban space and sits in visible contradistinction to the punitive relationship that exists between minority residents of the area who's informal economic activities are viewed as

dangerous and detrimental. So as the city attempts to sell Station North as a clean and safe tourist destination, it cannot afford to attend to matters of social justice and racial equality, preferring to brush those to the side (to the North, as the next chapters describe fully).

V. The Spatio-Racial Fix

This chapter is devoted almost wholly to the political economy of Baltimore around public/private redevelopment and consequences for racial/economic inequality. To evoke the symptomatic neglect and othering processes around urban development, I both compare the city to a body and describe the relationship between human bodies and places. After applying David Harvey's "spatial fix" concept to Baltimore, I trouble its exclusion of the racialized other by describing Baltimore's urban racial political economy (Wilson 2010) and the roots of racial fear in the city, with special attention to Marxian understandings of productivity as a way of valuing human life. As such, bodies and (by extension) places are understood based on productive and nonproductive behavior – which presents a major disjuncture between Bataille and Marx around the lumpenproletariat. I accomplish this argument through ethnographic moments as textual sound bites throughout the later sections of the chapter, linked not only to Station North but also surrounding areas of Charles North and Mt. Vernon which are known in the city as divergent representations of the best and worst neighborhoods - not just in Baltimore, but in the nation. Station North emerges as an interstitial zone of movement and transition, a wished-for buffer that is not quite living up to the top-down Baltimore Development Corporation plan. I emerge with a Bataillean perspective on the dynamics between neighborhoods in Baltimore wherein nonworking poor, working poor, and the so-called "creative class" are contained – or not contained at all.

The city is an addict, searching for its fix.

Think of the city for a moment in these human terms – as a body. In a fight or flight moment, when survival is at stake, the hands grow clammy and cold. These outer edges

of the human anatomy receive decreased blood flow. The body's hinterlands are fearfully cut off from the most valued of resources, that which delivers air, water, nutrients, and healing. Meanwhile, the abdomen, stomach, and heart are engorged. Facing almost certain death, or at least a terrible battle, a dirty fight, the zones of the brain responsible for planning ahead, pausing, and considering consequences are switched off. Aggression at its most basest is prioritized.

Baltimore is shrinking, hemorrhaging money, growing cold and dead in parts. Since the deindustrialization of the 1970s, the city's energy has gone towards its addiction to privately subsidized development. Project after project has failed to deliver a hefty profit (or any profit). Excreting funds, then garnering others from tax incentive programs, too little is left for social services, infrastructural maintenance, poverty alleviation, and support for grassroots community activism. In order to survive, Baltimore needs residents – homeowners, ideally who will pay income and property tax. In order to attract these desirables, the city has put a tourniquet around its most devastated appendages, keeping resources confined to specific areas slated for redevelopment and a high level of safety, called "Empowerment Zones,"[38] *leaving the rest to rot – the outskirts on the East, West, and North sides are akin to lost limbs.*[39] *It's these exact spaces, the leftover ones, that are often described in human terms, as "living beings*

[38] Baltimore was one of six cities chosen for the federal Empowerment Zone program, installed in 1994 and administered by a quasi-public agency called Empower 12 Baltimore Management Corporation (EBMC). Over the course of the next six years, EBMC spent $34 million of the $100 million grant total on three Empowerment Zones in Baltimore: East Baltimore's Inner Harbor East, Fells Point, and areas around Johns Hopkins Medical Center; West Baltimore's Harlem Park, Sandtown-Winchester, Washington Village, and Pigtown; and South Baltimore's Fairfield area. Note that no funds were distributed initially to North Baltimore (Davis and Brocht 10).

[39] "Baltimore's response to the decline of its industrial base has been to focus on the development of office space, retail and housing in the downtown area." (Davis and Brocht 13)

fallen into a state of habitually 'eating' societal resources as uncontrollable engulfers of goods, services, and subsidies." (Wilson Cities *86) As the city fails to deliver life-giving resources to its outermost edges, Station North is in a tense space, literally 'stationed' between the best and worst of it.*

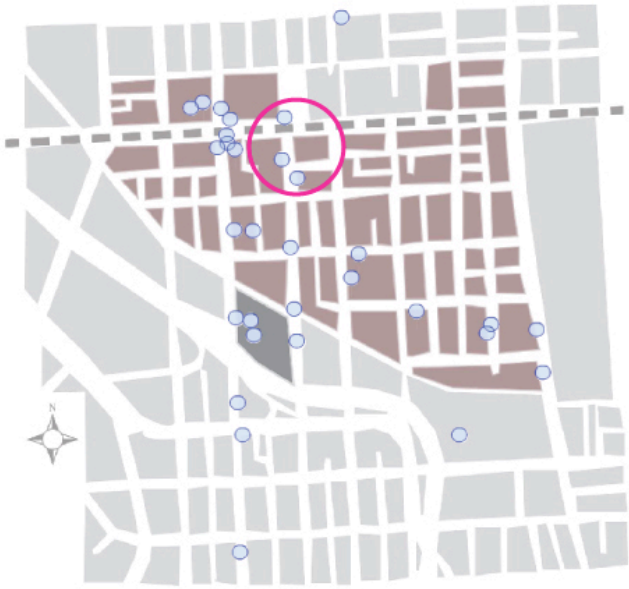

FIGURE 30 . SOUND MAP . SOUNDS FROM THIS SPACE OF TENSION AND, AT TIMES, SILENCE

10-2011 E Trenton St (Alley) off of the 1800 block of North Charles Street

Seeming silence slowly reveals itself to be the soft breath of a machine.

10-2011 1825 North Charles Street, exterior

Nothing is happening, but someone must be walking because coins jangle in a pocket.

As described in an earlier chapter, a "spatial fix," or "spacio-temporal fix," is a concept initiated by David Harvey as a strategy used in a crisis of capital to create new spaces of capital accumulation in order to create new sources of profit. (*NI* 115) To justify the spatial fix in the form of neighborhood redevelopment, the city will cite cultural and safety reasons, or simply city-survival. The inassimilable remainders the spatial fix produces are rather unpredictable and can even turn on the driving forces behind the original proposition. The spatial fix, in other words, might aim for prosperity but in actuality undermine any real social improvement for residents and inhabitants that could lead to long-term social and economic stability. In this chapter, I argue that this concept of a spatial fix, although powerful, does little to explore the intentional "fixes" relating to racial formation imposed on the city through the redevelopment process. The racial fix, which I have bound up with the spatial in the chapter title, is derived from deeply entrenched and consistently renewed patterns of othering through urban development processes in the city. Tangled in this way with the spatial, I argue that racial and cultural fixing are so tied to political economic processes in the urban sphere that the spatial fix has become an addiction, a self-fulfilling prophecy – it has become the city's vehement, unapologetic, and perpetual way of dealing with its highly racialized zones of poverty.

Station North represents the city's attempt at a "spatial fix." But its early plan and ongoing development represent a deeper strategy for an urban fix that is bent on marginalizing the 'unproductive' people and places that the city can't control towards the extreme edges. This inevitably divisive project means that Baltimore's spatial fix is also a deeply racial one, a perspective that David Wilson describes well in his recent work, *Cities and Race*: "The core of the racial economy perspective is a belief that a humanly produced element, race, has intimate ties to politically-infused economies in places." (12) This chapter presents ethnographic

moments that are key in the political economic processes happening in Station North, and in the city at large, as they relate to racialized city residents on its periphery.

In the previous chapter, I harnessed anti-gentrification discourse to deride the missteps of city planning around the creative economy and creative class. I also acknowledge, as does David Wilson (2005), that anti-gentrification discourse has been heretofore ineffective because it has failed to confront the politics of race. I argue that the reverse is also true, that studies of racial formation do not tend to describe how the systematic spatial exclusion of certain bodies supports state power. This is a problem of language used by recent theorists who disconnect spatial and racial exclusionary relationships. For instance, Wilson criticizes Wacquant and others for stripping the phrase 'black ghetto' of its pejorative meanings and associations, which will come under scrutiny later in this chapter (Wilson 2010). Consequently, I carefully treated terminologies about both spatial and racial processes in the theoretical framework chapter and will continue to unpack difficult and controversial language in order to make a larger argument about how racial terminologies are connected in urban morphology. To this point, critical race studies scholars argue that the “othering effect” of racial formation is detrimental to human life, in part through changes in the built environment. Through economic theory, Harvey links the workings of state power to the capitalist push for urban redevelopment. This urban economic theory is tied to scholarship on racial segregation, economic exclusion, and political marginalization assists my ethnographic rendering of Baltimore’s Station North as a complex weaving of spatial, racial, cultural, and economic strategies imposed upon the everyday life of inhabitants.

As development strategies transform the built environment, dualities of safety and violence, production and consumption, exuberance and restraint emerge and are part of the conversation I hold between Bataille and Marx, who understand working and nonworking

sections of a given populace differently. The people associated with these behaviors seen as valueless to the city are labeled the lumpenproletariat or subproletariat, and the argument around their impact on the political economy of a city or society is a point of divergence between the theory of Marx and Bataille. This conversation is applicable to Baltimore's nonworking poor and the way they are understood as being part of the city and (not part of) urban development. After the conversation between Bataille and Marx unfolds, I apply Bataille's emphatically anti-capitalist approach to Baltimore's Charles North (and other areas populated by nonworking poor and identified as hyperghettoized).

The Spatial Fix

FIGURE 31 . DAVID HARVEY SPEAKS AT THE CITY FROM BELOW CONFERENCE ON TOP OF FEDERAL HILL OVERLOOKING THE INNER HARBOR REGARDING URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN BALTIMORE . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

David Harvey is of particular importance to my research in three of his modes of writing and being: (1) as a Marxian theorist and political economist, (2) as an urban geographer who focuses on issues of social justice as they relate to space, and (3) as a former resident of Baltimore who

still talks about the city's development to point out problems with urban political economies around uneven development. In fact, David Harvey's particular attention to the Inner Harbor revitalization of the late 1970s (written in 1981) provides insight into the beginnings of what is still occurring today. David Wilson—whose current work on race, space, and rustbelt cities is also relevant to this project—is also an admirer of Harvey's explanation of development in Baltimore at the time. He writes an excellent summary of what Harvey's work has accomplished,

> "David Harvey (1981) excavated the specifics of this balkanizing years ago. He identified the whirl of structurally driven organizations - Realtors, banks, planning agencies, speculation companies - that routinely build and protect housing and real-estate submarkets. This group, as a collective, partitions urban spaces into islands of submarkets that make accumulation and, indeed, 'hyper-accumulation' possible. Such making and segmentation of cities flow out of planning specifications, allocation of housing credit, distribution of information about housing vacancies, patterns of land speculation, and City Hall edicts. In this context, many iterations of uneven development have unfolded across these rust belt landscapes to produce islands of affluence, middle-class neighborhoods, interstitial buffering zones, swaths of parkland and open space, and tracts of disinvested and deteriorating neighborhoods." (Wilson *Cities* 149)

Wilson's description of "interstitial buffering zones" is applicable to Station North specifically, and to begin the conversation of why a buffering zone might be needed in the context of uneven development, this section outlines both Harvey's idea of the 'spatial fix' and, further, his argument against uneven urban development as it may be applied to the political economic processes occurring even now in Baltimore.

On top of Federal Hill, David Harvey spoke at length about these issues of social justice and urban development, with specific attention to Baltimore's Inner Harbor. I treat the below

transcription as an ethnographic moment because he was not speaking to a crowd of academic Marxians so much as grassroots organizers, union workers, and city residents as part of "The City from Below" conference in 2009, which was decidedly action-oriented and intentionally non-academic. As such, the words he spoke are not part of the repertoire that many Marxian scholars and urban geographers currently have access to. He began by describing early redevelopment in the Inner Harbor before offering a critique of its effects:

> *"And out of this [early redevelopment] came a process which I sort of call 'feeding the downtown monster.'*[40] *What in effect happens is that a wave of investment comes in, and it doesn't pay off, so you have another wave of investment in the hope that it will help the first wave to pay off. . . . [and you] hope that one day you'll have sufficient money coming out of this* ***to be able to fix the rest of Baltimore."*** (Harvey "Speech Overlooking Federal Hill" 2009)[41]

This chapter will delve into the ways city governments function through public and private partnerships that facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment. Drawing on Harvey helps to show how changes to the urban built environment keep capital moving and represent existing social values. In some recent redevelopment projects, cities have facilitated live/work space, new cultural venues, and tax incentives for local businesses. In a neoliberal economy, however, these benefits are not always stable or sustainable as the private market takes charge. The private market has an economically polarizing effect that leads to either gentrification or utter disinvestment. The resulting landscapes, though economically juxtaposed, produce the same social conditions such that in black ghettoized areas around the country, black bodies are

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[40] "Baltimore's massive investment in the Inner Harbor and downtown reveals a recurring history of high costs, low benefits, and a lack of safeguards to ensure that taxpayer investments really pay off in family-wage jobs and an enhanced tax base." (Davis & Bocht 50)

[41] It would perhaps be better for me to title Harvey's live, informal talk: "'This is the landscape that Capital built' - Revisiting 'A View from Federal Hill' 20 years later," but I prefer not to take liberties.

"openly stored and isolated as problematic city contaminants that are in their rightful place." (Wilson *Cities,* 73) In Baltimore, this process of segregation is seen as a necessary and even positive effect of the redevelopment process.

The Urban Racial Political Economy

The struggle to contain and define this segregation is not an all-consuming force; it is a desire, a morality, a way of planning. The political economy of urbanization foments along class and race differentials. Critical race theory, as described in my theoretical framework more fully, supports my argument that race and crime are tied through body and place. Deviance, transgression, and crime emerge through the rules and codes through which behavior and bodies are considered in and out of place. Fears of "out of place" modes of behavior are visible in the boundaries that are set and maintained in the process of territorialization. Because places are bounded socially and politically, it follows that place has no transcendent meaning, or does not come as a pre-packaged being with an essential nature. Instead, place is a "subject of particular discourses of power," much like a human body (Cresswell *Place*. 60). Transgression, therefore, deviates from norms "in reaction to topographies of power." (Cresswell *Place*, 175) This definition of transgression clarifies the ways in which crime shapes fears of certain locations (places *and* bodies). In turn, fear shapes movement and interaction in cities.

Theories of space and place found in Stallybrass, White, Cresswell, and Foucault, for instance, show how bodies and place interact through fear and hope, crime and punishment, and community and social stratification. Thus, the relationship of a human body to a place, or inhabitation, is subject to certain considerations: whether behavior is compatible with the sanctioned meaning of the place, whether the behavior is out of place, or whether the body itself is out of place. The field of geography is positioned to analyze and question these

relationships between bodies and places that are mediated by topographies and discourses of power. By tracing theories of race and crime, I will argue their important relationship to studies performed by geographers and sociologists in marginalized urban spaces – Wacquant in Chicago; Herbert in Seattle; Taylor in Baltimore; Anderson in Pittsburgh; Stallybrass and White in early modern and modern Europe; Gottschalk and Pager in prisons; and Rengert, Massey, and Denton in tracing patterns around the US. This range of cities, activities, and research modes will yield a fertile ground for making connections between race, crime, and space, factors implicated in urban segregation and the production of accompanying representations and anxieties attached to segregated populations —fear.

Racial Fear in Baltimore

In *Breaking Away from Broken Windows*, Taylor describes race as a major factor in the spatial organization of Baltimore. He writes, "Baltimore has always been a city where issues of color played major roles in settlement patterns; business; politics; and, more recently, crime." (68)[42] Like other rustbelt cities, the interaction of race and space in Baltimore is manifest in a condition of 'hypersegregation,' a term originally used by Massey and Denton in *American Apartheid* to describe "extremely disadvantaged African-American communities where residents are segregated on several dimensions and may not see any whites for days on end" (141). Confinement makes easy the task of organizing bodies in space according to race and crime. Partitioning strategies like surveillance, ghettoization, and deconcentration allow disciplinary spaces to develop that may be more or less supervised. The basis of racial distribution happens through expulsion and confinement, occurring as forms of control and discipline in the inner city

[42] Taylor's argument reflects the number of years he spent researching the city, from 1978 to 1995. He performed a variety of interviews with the help of colleagues, then revisited and photographed locations at which the interviews were performed. He revisited blocks multiple times, walking the streets to talk to people at all times of day except when he did not feel safe.

originate in the panoptic surveillance of prisons. Furthermore, police define the symbolic locations thought of as dangerous, even when they are only occupied by petty criminality. This practice molds a kind of place in which bodies are grouped, racialized, presumed to have criminal tendencies. This surveillance practice is like shooting fish in a barrel – restricting creative activity, but leaving the place conveniently open to criminal behavior.

FIGURE 32 . THE CITY PAPER'S 2012: BEST OF BALTIMORE COVER FEATURING LOCAL WHITE YOUTH

(City Paper "2012: Best of Baltimore")

Crime is one of the top two reasons that Baltimoreans see as deterrents to residing within city limits (City Paper "2012 Best of Baltimore"). Fear of crime runs in parallel to other kinds of fear –

of disorder, dirt, filth, obscenity, and disease, existing as "an emotional geography occasioned by threatening experiences." (Susan Smith "Author's Response" 338) Cresswell goes farther to explain how the fears relate to place: Fear of dirt, for example, has to do with what dirt is -- nothing more or less than matter found out of place, and therefore out of order. Filth also transgresses the boundaries of order, resting at the margins of a bounded space, threatening to spread, and, thereby, inducing fear. Disease is a term that also bears the threat of contagion. Disease and blight are understood as spatial transgressions that can be fixed or cured using spatial solutions (Cresswell 41). All of these fears are also beliefs that are delineated by power relations in society, dependent on who defines what is out of place, or rather, what transgressive behavior, then, constitutes the criminal (39).

Violent crime is the most feared occurrence in the city because it relates to personal survival. However, violence in the city has symbolic importance at the individual level. Everyday violence is part of the self-sustaining system of ghettoized areas. Violent behavior fits into a marginalized code of conduct that is outside of the protected code of the state. Violent behavior threatens the state, but it is still a code, a symbolic order that contains meaning and social purpose. In fact, deviant behavior is only deviant in certain locations and times. A classic example is drinking alcohol. If a person has two drinks at night, at a bar, it wouldn't be considered unhealthy by the majority of Americans. However, if a person has two drinks in the morning, the behavior might be considered as a sign of alcoholism. If a person strikes another person in a subway tunnel, it is considered illegal. If a person strikes another person in a boxing ring, it is considered entertainment. Violence is rule-bound and coded according to time, duration, rhythm, and location... and race.

Foucault characterizes the criminalization of bodies according to race as "knowledge of the criminal, one's estimation of him, what is known about the relations between him, his past

and his crime, and what might be expected of him in the future" (*Discipline* 18). Although this sentiment is not quite spoken out loud in Baltimore, and policy isn't worded quite in that way, the situation feels parallel. The Baltimore police incarcerate more people per year than any other city in the United States, approximately 100,000, the majority of whom are black males. African American males have been all but legally confirmed as a criminal group. In addition to the mass criminalization of blacks through drug laws (Websdale 204) in the 1970s, the judicial and media systems in America generated a mugging scare in which black men were portrayed as the main perpetrators. In the 1980s, statistics released by the police divided crime according to race in an attempt to demonstrate the relationship between black people and crime, thus creating a "moral panic" (McConville and Sheperd 75).

In *Watching Police, Watching Communities*, McConville and Sheperd describe the consequences of the fear generated by said moral panic:

> *"It is clear from this that negative representations of black people, 'legitimated' by officially-generated statistics, have fed directly into people's understanding of crime patterns. And it is therefore not surprising that these sentiments are carried over into the concerns of residents – which people they regard as suspicious, which people give them feelings of apprehension, who causes them concern and fear." (76)*

In urban space, certain racial categories are understood as phenotypically grotesque and filthy, smelly and unsightly for the purpose of defining what is beautiful, acceptable, clean, pure, and worthwhile (Stallybrass and White 1986). These restrictions are spatially as well as socially described. When bodies are categorized according to phenotype, linguistic pattern, income level, and moralistic determinants like propensity for crime and excess, there can be no equality. These determinants are immanent to the distribution and valuation of private

property through real estate steering, sub-prime lending, white flight, low-income projects, and so many other material processes that organize bodies in cities.

> *Sitting outside of Penn Station with my mother one day, I pause to glance around - who is there and what are they doing? A few people wait for the bus quietly. It's the middle of a weekday. A young black man begins shouting incoherently to himself, walking around the bus stop and laughing. I feel tension from the scattered people sitting and waiting. Any chatting is silenced and everyone listens out of interest or perhaps to be attuned to any danger. There is no panic, but there is a nervous sense of awareness and watching. Our sense of calm is momentarily interrupted. We are no longer waiting for a bus, but watching and ready. A few moments pass, the shouting continues and everyone seems to acclimate, they resume waiting for the bus.*

The code of violence on Baltimore's streets is intertwined with matters of identity, including race, gender, age, and class. A sense of insecurity that penetrates life in marginalized neighborhoods arises from the expectation of physical violence that "overturns all the parameters of ordinary existence" (Wacquant *UO*, 157). That point is important for Wacquant because he is identifying that violence is an interruption of everyday life and public space because it interrupts the possibility for survival. He describes how daily routines are formed around patterns of violence, movement patterns are shifted spatially and temporally. Windows and doors are barred on shops and houses when an active culture of violence is occurring (157). These visual cues in the built environment attach to images and ideas about race and crime.[43]

[43] Edwardo Portillos describes how this imaging process occurs in his article titled "Latinos, gangs, and drugs", published in *Images of Color, Images of Crime* (2002). Other books relating to the coding of violence include Howard Pinderhughes' Race in the Hood: Conflict and Violence among Urban Youth"

Rethinking crime in terms of place and, especially, segregation allows somewhat of a distancing from the ideological fear of crime, which then opens the door to considering deviance and transgression as potential forms of resistance. Transgression, like excess, surpasses the human boundary of sustenance, but does so in violation of a law, duty, or moral principle. Consequently, acts of transgression are able to unite distinct bodies in a way that affects the political economy and ethics of waste, especially by surpassing the false boundaries of self only to return, changed. Stallybrass and White explain that transgressive behavior is a response to hierarchical order of human bodies or geographic space or the social. They trace early European trends in order to map the ways place, body, identity, and subjectivity are interconnected through transgression. This argument is meant to show how transgression in one domain may have "major consequences in others" (Stallybrass and White 3).

A similar theorization of transgression can be found in the works of Georges Bataille whose vision of excess is violently morbid, gluttonously consumptive, and obsessively erotic, and the three are intertwined as basic luxuries. But for Bataille, there is nothing more humane than these transgressive behaviors precisely because of what they transgress. Similar to Stallybrass and White, Bataille sees these behaviors as pushing outside of the boundaries of the body, capitalist production, Reformation morality, and, most importantly, the limits of the human subject. Bataille states in conversation with his contemporaries that in order to communicate, humans must want to transgress. They must "want this evil, this desecration which, putting the being within themselves at risk, renders them penetrable to one another… Thus, all 'communication' partakes of suicide and crime… In this light, evil appears as a life source!" (Bataille *AS*, 30) In other words, the interaction of individual existences must occur through a climactic and transgressive experience during which boundaries are frayed, at least

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(1997) and Jody Miller's recently published *Getting Played: African American girls, urban inequality and gendered violence* (2008).

momentarily. This journey through the abstract idea of transgression can influence perceptions of human behavior, breaking from traditional views about crime and morality. By breaking with those traditional views, it is also possible to avoid slipping into the mentality of the "most powerful socio-economic groups" that prescribe decent conduct (Stallybrass and White 4) such that socio-economic groups end up entirely pitted against each other "in the immediacy of day-to-day life." (Massey *SPG*, 42)

In "Scrutinizing the Street" (2002), Wacquant identifies the false distinguishing between the "noble working poor" and the "depraved poor." He describes another social scientist's use of the words 'decent' and 'street' as an example of moralistic ethnography. 'Decent' and 'street' lives can legitimately be associated with ideas about hope and fear. 'Decent' is associated with a level of hope and prospect due to a level of power that allows varying extents of control over environmental, social, and political factors, but especially criminal factors. For some, 'street' lives symbolize a certain awareness and fear of crime that is different from 'decent' fear of crime, in which there is less focus on hope as a coded behavior surrounding fear. He argues that in doing ethnographic work, it is important to avoid reifying categories of sameness and, instead, explain how and why people and place become locked into those categories. 'Street' is also inextricable from a sense of the underground and informal economy that is so feared as threatening to the city's economic growth and cultural success.

First Fieldwork

I arrived in Maryland on November 4th, 2008 just a couple of hours before the election results were announced – that Barack Obama won the presidency. I watched it with my mom at home, but had come to Maryland for a different reason -- to do a little early

fieldwork in Baltimore, to go to a newly founded Baltimore Design Center meeting, get opinions from some friends, see some sights.

I didn't grow up in the city. I grew up in a rural area, went to school at University of Maryland – Baltimore County (UMBC), and it was really only after I left that I started to spend much time in Baltimore, grew to think of it as home.

On November 5th, 2008 I went to the third Baltimore Design Center meeting ever held (transcription in previous chapter). The next day, I woke up and got a call from Stephen Janis, a reporter for the Baltimore Examiner, but Stephen's true passion is going to parts of the city that are generally unexplored by the majority of the population. He would later leave the Examiner to start his own online journal and write several hard-hitting, surreal books.

In 2008, Stephen had a particular interest in the disappearances and deaths of female prostitutes in under-served and impoverished areas of the city. He took me to Wilkins Ave in Northeast Baltimore. He didn't give me much warning, but I kind of knew we'd be going to part of the city that wasn't doing well. I assumed it would be a largely black area, and assumed a lot of other things. We got in the car, talked about some of the problems of the city, and I told him about the night at the Design Center – how DIY culture is being adopted by the arts and culture movement as well as development initiatives, representing the precise amount of resistance and rebelliousness that the city will tolerate.

Stephen laughed and shook his head. When you deal with death on a daily basis, two things happen – a black sense of humor about corruption and a disdain for Baltimore's DIY scene.

Part of art-centered urban development in Baltimore includes the Do-It-Yourself, or DIY, movement's ability to lend projects an air of authenticity, as if there's something happening underground that is artistic, scrapped together by honest hands, and beyond the borders of 'normal,' everyday/status quo life. It's a lifestyle. It's a style. It's a way of being. But it's by no means a way to fix the city or even bring in a cash tide that could be funneled later into social services so desperately needed.

What I saw on November 6th, 2008 was representative of the city's fragmented areas of impoverishment, abandonment, and crime – such that I was able to observe some real pressures, tensions, and what each and every day is like for many people there. Blacks aren't the only ones who suffer. In areas like Wilkens Ave it's more of a mixture of black and white people, with a few Korean-owned shops and groceries. I saw streets littered with garbage, buildings falling apart, and not surprisingly, long stretches of foreclosures. The houses that were occupied were in terrible shape. The brick houses were often missing the marble front steps that were once typical of Baltimore's brownstone style and public street life, replaced by concrete ones, or sometimes none at all. The marble was sold off years ago. On Wilkins Ave, there's the longest continuous block of vacant and foreclosed rowhouses in the entire country.

We pulled off the street and parked by a small convenience store called the Busy Bee. Stephen went right up to a woman who was sitting by the front window, greeted her, and asked her if she was ok, said she looked sad. She commented that she had the flu. He proceeded to ask her questions about some women that had gone missing, one of whom had recently been discovered dead, her body found nearby at the marginal edge of an industrial railroad track area. Apparently some other unspoken event had occurred recently, and he asked her to assemble a list of names to give him of people who had gone missing, or people who had disappeared that no one had found, or even really searched for. He later told me how he wanted to not only ensure that the women he was tracking weren't forgotten, but also to cast light on the fact that women are going missing, and that something needs to be done about it.

It's a lot more than that. Stephen wanted to tell the stories of those women and the people who know them, many living in the Wilkens Ave area. So he walks Wilkens Ave, feeling relatively safe, even though he gets hassled sometimes, because he has a press pass that he wears. He wears a black suit and tie as well, not over the top fancy, just enough that people know that he's a professional of some kind. He gives people respect when he talks to them, and he listens. He tells them that he wants to tell their stories. So as we were walking, we moved past the convenience store. He crossed the street, seeing a woman he thought he knew (or said he thought he recognized). She seems uncomfortable and didn't think she knew any of the people he was looking for. But he talked to her for a bit anyway, to make sure he could contact her in the future, but right then he didn't ask too many questions.

We walked a couple of blocks behind some rowhouses, down an alley, and behind these houses where there was an area with weeds, trash, remnants left by people hanging out there. Based on trash alone (glass, needles, condoms), but also according to Stephen, I found out that this area was particularly dangerous at night, although relatively safe during the day, because people would go there to shoot up, have sex, pass out. We kept walking, seeing broken glass, small yards behind rowhouses used for storage of unwanted goods, plastic things that could maybe be used later, and just stuff. We walked to a hill overlooking the railroad tracks – where Stephen has found a lot of junkies, dangerous activities happening, and bodies had been found there as well. Going back to the main street, Stephen explained how these areas were viewed as being wasted, wasteful, the outskirts and no-man's-land, and if any developer saw them, they'd view it as a travesty of development – not just on the surface, but also the unproductive and unacceptable nature of activities happening there – allowed to exist because they aren't seen as preventable or perhaps worth bothering with.

We got a lot of strange looks, but I didn't worry too much while we were there, feeling at ease with Stephen. But he recommended obviously that I not go there myself, and I'm not stupid so I won't. There's also a certain time period that you can walk around for a bit, but don't stay too long for people to start to wonder why you're there. At one point, we walked in a weave between two people yelling at each other. The woman was trying to get five bucks from a guy. She was cursing at him. As we passed, she said, "Sorry for my language, folks." We both laughed.

Stephen sees these areas as completely self-sustaining; there's no real presence of police. People are given citations by police, taken to jail, raped by police – a lot of prostitutes get picked up and put in jail here, but the men who control them are harder to catch. A lot of people sell drugs, or sustain themselves by selling their bodies – the last resort job.

Stephen ran into another woman, and was surprised to see her. He almost didn't recognize her – because she looked really good. She was wearing clean gray sweatpants and a University of Maryland sweatshirt. She had pock-marks on her face and her body showed some of her story, having a truly difficult past. Apparently he'd written an article about her months previous to this meeting, speaking to her while high on heroin. She barely remembered the conversation, but she was changed by reading the published article. She talked about what it was like to be a heroin user. She'd spoken in a really expressive way about it, truthful and honest to the point of being heartbreaking. When he published it, it became famous in her circle of friends, and it motivated her to get clean. On this day, she was 57 days clean, bright-eyed, happy, and moved to see Stephen again. She was happy to show him what she'd accomplished. She has sons who miss her, but she's not going to see them in person even though she talks to them sometimes, for another 30 days because she wants to be 90 days clean before she sees them. She wants to have more confidence that she won't go back to using.

Stephen was happy about this, took lots of pictures of her, but spoke to me afterwards, worried because she was still living in the same area on Wilkins Ave, seeing friends and

surrounded by heroin every day. She might get drawn back into that lifestyle. He hope she stays clean.

Shortly, we saw another girl, in her teens, although she appeared to be older especially in the eyes. She was sitting on a stoop in front of a rowhouse, wearing a dirty pink sweatsuit, old Ravens Starter jacket, and greasy blonde hair and blue eyes, one of which was swollen. When she spoke, there was a little saliva between her lips. I had the impression she was a user, down at the moment. She said she's trying to make some money. She walked up to a car at one point, but no go. We talked about what it was like for girls in the area.

She said although she hadn't grown up there, it was hard. She told us that a lot of girls there got arrested, and she had gotten arrested along with six other girls at one time, and it made life really difficult. She knew that she could get arrested for vice crime, but people who'd been raped multiple times, or been raped by the same man on the same night, and the police wouldn't respond and said their hands were tied. She said she didn't understand why it was a crime anyway – two consenting adults. It's like being in a relationship. Someone takes you out to dinner, it's just not cash – that's the only difference. A momentary spark of humor lit and died in an instance, barely a smile.

At one point, it became clear that we were by no means unsupervised or unobserved. A black man came out of a nearby house and asked what we were doing. Stephen pulled out his press pass and the guy seemed ok with it. The girl was extremely sad, on the brink of tears. She hung around there for a while.

We moved on and talked to another lady who said she was about 61, although she looked to be in her 80s. She was all bundled up and had several surgeries recently, but she's happy to be living in Section 8 housing. As a senior female, she might have the ability to buy the house she's living in now. One day the police came and busted down her door. She was surprised, and as it turns out, they had the wrong house. They meant to go next door. They still haven't replaced her door.

But she wanted to tell her story. She used to use and be a prostitute, and now she's clean and says she's going to DC to take classes because she wants to start her own online business involving animals. She wants to be an inspiration to young girls, which she said repeatedly. Eventually, Stephen and I got back in the car and drove to an area nearby where middle and upper class black residents seem to be living in big beautiful houses, although every so often one is boarded up or burnt out. We drove in a big circle around the area to a wilderness area where trash was dumped, and two different women's bodies have been found there, but he suspects more. He calls it the killing fields.

We drove past Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and back downtown, where everything looks fine and good and glamorous, to an extent. I got a sense today that parts of the city are much too far gone to attempt to start some sort of urban revitalization of any kind. I was trying to make sense of this situation in Baltimore, thinking people don't deserve to live like that there, forgotten and at the outskirts of the city. People there are living in a place that is extremely isolated, that sustains itself in dangerous ways.

Issues around race are especially troublesome here. What doesn't get spoken in the political sphere, what isn't written down or planned by urban developers, can apparently be spoken in certain specific contexts, such as the National Symposium on Arts/Culture/Entertainment Districts (NSACED) where I found myself four years later – on April 4th and 5th, 2012 for urban developers. President Obama is now seeking reelection, but there are no jobs. And I am now in a position to juxtapose what is with what has passed -- economic troubles and the foreclosure crisis while parts of the city receive reinvestment. I grow more incensed as the years pass, as the poor of the nation, especially its black poor, flounder to survive, and meanwhile, arts and culture districts are being pumped full of money and energy. They are thriving, and new ones are on the table as if they might restore the city economically, socially...

Power, Poverty, and Productivity

I have already touched on the ways in which people living outside of the well-maintained parts of the inner city are viewed as waste, and the space as wasted space. In Baltimore, there is little sense of enhancing the well-being of the existing population of the city unless they fit into a specific income bracket. Instead, the focus is around bringing newer, better people who will become permanent residents and restore the city into a functioning urban space. The city strategy is akin to a blood transfusion – getting the bad blood out and pumping in new blood, but it doesn't work that way. Putting immediate profitability over social stability will never "fix" the city.

Profit can be immediately gained via the city's poor residents, mainly in the prison-industrial complex (more people, more crime, more people locked up, more business and jobs around prisons and the judicial system) and gleaning federal and state money to take care of the poor through social services. Thus, profiting off the poor is in part derived from punishing the poor, punishing them for being poor and for partaking in the informal economies prevalent in the spaces in which they reside. In a city like Baltimore, that profit does not dependably go to services for the poor or keeping the poor out of prisons because keeping those systems running provides capital. But this capital gain doesn't provide the city with a long term strategy for thriving, which would require investment in schools, social services, and community development grants.

Instead, community development grants have actually decreased, especially as part of the larger financial collapse in the past two years. Charles Duff, president of a nonprofit group that helped to build the City Arts project in Station North recently spoke to a reporter about how stimulus money was able to "plug" the holes, but now,

> "Baltimore is literally at a crossroads," Duff said. "If the rest of the country will keep us in the game through the next boom, whenever that comes, we'll be OK and we won't need their help anymore. And if they back out and say, 'We're going to leave you to your own devices,' they're going to have to pay for our poverty for the rest of time." (Hopkins "Huge Drop in Funding")

City government is aware that in the long term, to make a profit from taxation, the best source of income is a combination of income and property tax from an increasing base of working middle class professionals who are also willing to reproduce and continue to populate the city. Home ownership is a necessary step towards this survival strategy.

FIGURE 33 . BALTIMORE'S VACANTS TO VALUE HOMEPAGE . ACCESSED 2012

Screenshot of Baltimore Vacants to Value homepage, on which the text beneath "Imagine Baltimore!" says: "While Baltimore's vacant and abandoned building stock is often viewed as a problem, it is also an opportunity. Cleaning up and redeveloping these properties can help raise property values, create community amenities, increase local tax revenue, and attract new residents and businesses. Vacants to Value (V2V) is Mayor Rawlings- Blake's new initiative to do just that. Through V2V, we're getting more of Baltimore's vacant and abandoned properties cleaned up and redeveloped more quickly, efficiently, and economically." (Vacants to Value Homepage)

The city's Vacants to Value initiative (see Fig. 29) is a prime example of how the city is attempting to sell off foreclosed and abandoned houses, preferably to people with a creative vision. They advertise these homes without connecting homeownership to the kinds of services and amenities that sustain residents in the long term. The city is all too willing to turn to the creative class for salvation without a sense of social concern which would lead to efforts to better the lives of current and future residents. The effects of this trend of neglect are varied and unpredictable. The city has not stopped generating debt, continuing to subsidize projects and losing money in the process. The city's persistent crime is not alleviated by surveillance and is aggravated by government corruption. Attempts to improve the education system, homelessness, and other issues are not core concerns of the current administration, which is instead focused on entertainment to attract tourists, like the Grand Prix and the new Bromo Seltzer Arts District. Stephen Janis commented in a recent interview on her tendency to focus on entertainment policies. She was initially interested in entertainment when she was on the council, and sponsored a "nightclub bill to limit noise and facilitate entertainment, but she has since staked her political career on the success of the Grand Prix. She's put herself in a strange position in which her political future is tied up with a road race." Regarding the city's focus on tourists, Stephen illustrates a prime example of how much attracting tourists is prioritized:

> *"This is an obscure thing - Officer Rivieri caught on YouTube berating the skateboarders at the Inner Harbor. He was berating them, through one of them to the ground - it became a national sensation. The trial board recommended a six-day suspension for not filing a report, but the commissioner at the time took the very unusual move of firing him. Now, there are police officers who have shot people, been indicted, brutalized, things that have cost the city millions of dollars, against people who live here. But the*

commissioner decided to fire this guy, which is unusual - they don't fire people and keep things pretty secret, but this officer's big mistake was to screw around with tourists downtown. That's why the murder rate is such a politicized number, crime statistics, why the police department is always coming up with language that's all about preserving the space for tourists who don't live here but who I think city leaders believe are the only economic hope we have, that's worth worrying about." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

In situations like these and within the pressure inherent in certain redeveloped areas, tensions continually play out among city residents, playing on fear of crime paired with fear of racial clashing. In ghettoized places, contradictorily, the reiterated action of being in a place, living in it, sediments the impact of its dereliction on its residents, resulting in disaffect and alienation. This is not social pathology requiring a spatial fix, but rather a way of understanding how a sense of place is in relation to social bodies encountering it. Place is always a new assemblage with valuations that attach and detach at every moment. The modal, contingent aspects of place reveal it as being more slippery than development discourses allow. Materialist thinking also allows us to ask other questions: What then happens to a place when gentrification, clearance, or decay happens? Who or what effects the valuation of place? Who composes it, but also who owns it (or disowns it)? Who gets kicked out? Where can a human go and stay?

Bodies in Place

What does it mean to think of body metonymically as place (such as Anderson's use of 'street'), or place as the bodies that are assembled in or moving through it? These questions can be answered in part through materialist thinking, which is not generally explored by critical race theory except in Arun Saldanha's 2007 book, *Psychadelic White*. In the materialist philosophical tradition, body and place are not simply related concepts. Human bodies are unbound from

enclosures like skin or the idea of individual subject or ego. It is then possible to see how human bodies and places absorb and connect continually in novel ways. In *Psychadelic White*, Saldanha discusses the idea of place as an aleatory assemblage, involving both human and non-human modes. He also explodes the human surface in order to see how humans connect to place. Attributes of place are folded into identity, embodied and lived. This folding and unfolding happens everywhere, in all parts of existence, which is why Saldanha's concept of viscosity becomes so valuable in understanding racialized bodies in places other than Goa.

Further, how are the connections within and outside a particular ghettoized area limited, possible, temporary, persisting, or discontinued -- and how does the porosity of place depend on the way bodies are categorized? Cresswell asks questions discriminately in the chapter titled "The Crucial 'Where' of Graffiti" in *In Place/Out of Place*:

> "The question then is not, 'What does a place (New York) mean?' or 'What is the meaning of a particular action (graffiti)?' Rather the question becomes, 'How do places (and actions in them) get the meanings they do? Who gets to say that certain meanings are appropriate?' And, eventually, 'Whose world is it?'" (61)

Asking questions about who empowers certain meanings and permits certain behaviors reveals important connections between place and conduct that can help unravel racializing and criminalizing discourses. The most criminalized people in Baltimore are a group I call Baltimore's "lumpenproletariat," what some consider the lowest class, below the poor working class, the dangerous non-working black residents of Baltimore. Baltimore's lumpenproletariat is both segregated in place and uncontainable, and this social, moral, and cultural antinomy exposes that logic of racial differentiation to be found amidst redevelopment projects and within the urban 'ghetto.'

The urban 'ghetto' is a spatial imaginary that is complicated by its relationship to ideologies of race and crime. Stallybrass and White trace the emergence of the idea of slum in the 19th century city. It emerged as a geographic space that was seen as different from a suburb; a place where virtue was absent and people were indifferent to cultural institutions like marriage; a place described in literature as one of disorder and disease; a place where occupants are "marginal to the order of production" (Stallybrass and White 127-129). In the slums, all senses were thought to be accosted, mainly because of the density of its lower class inhabitants. Those slum residents were seen in the same way as the buildings, streets, and sidewalks of the slum – as dirty, unclean, wasteful, and spreading. In characterizing the slums as dirty and criminal, "social diseases" were connected with visions of sanitation through police and soap (134). Later in the chapter titled "The Sewer, the Gaze, and the Contaminating Touch," Stallybrass and White note the excitement felt by refined people in gazing on places they were supposed to avoid, like slums and carnivals. The architecture of balconies in 19th century Europe allowed upper class gentry to have their desiring gaze on the lower public bodies and streets that would "contaminate" them if they were to have the slightest contact (Stallybrass and White 136).[44] Conceptions of slums as places of contamination and danger have lasted to the present, still visible in the popular use of "ghetto."

Wacquant, through Massey and Denton, makes thorough use of the word 'hyperghetto' in order to trace the change from communal neighborhood to a new type of social order (but not social *disorder*).[45] A resident of a 'hyperghetto' is quoted as saying, "It's not a neighborhood

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[44] Today in Baltimore, there are bus tours that take interested tourists and suburbians through the city's worst neighborhoods to gaze out the windows on all the foreclosed homes and unfortunate lives of people on the city streets. The same thing happened in New Orleans during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Voyeuristic tourism still exists in the 21st century.

[45] As part of the definition of 'hyperghetto,' Wacquant adopts the term 'subproletarian,' which is associated with the previously evoked writings of Marx, Stallybrass, and Thoburn of the

anymore." (Duncan 1987 qtd. in Wacquant 101). The demoralization accompanying this process led to changes in daily life and subsistence. In the past, the 'communal ghetto' was capable of some level of identity and social networking *because* of its isolation. The hyperghetto does not lack in social organization at all, but is organized against political pressures including economic instability, racism, and political death (50). But as those communal areas were threatened, they became self-sustaining in ways that are often viewed as nonproductive and wasteful by the state -- this is where we begin to explore the wastefulness/usefulness of the lumpenproletariat as seen by capitalists (city government), Marx, and general economists like Bataille.

Bataille vs. Marx: The Lumpenproletariat

Although Bataille and Marx each seek to expose the hidden nature of capitalism and its buried relationalities, the lumpenproletariat is a point of contention between Georges Bataille and Karl Marx in regard to what becomes of human autonomy, utility, and communication. Marx and Bataille both recognize that human communication and intimacy is disrupted by regulatory apparatuses of capitalism through the commodity fetish, division of labor, and hoarding of wealth. Needs are distributed not according to individual, but into groups put into deceptive social relations. In the formation and reproduction of social roles, both Marx and Bataille find hope in forms of human behavior that give rise to resistance, behaviors that constantly push against the seeming necessity of the social and political limits imposed by capital. However, when it comes to the morality that emerges from political economy, especially in terms of non-productive expenditure and transgression, their theories diverge. Marx's unified

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'lumpenproletariat' as well as the 'underclass,' a word that has passed out of favor in recent years. The implication of 'subproletarian' relates to economic and life styles, as well as illegal drug use, relating again to Rengert's work on the geography of illegal drugs.

proletariat is threatened by the heterogeneity and identity deferral of the lumpenproletariat, but necessary to ideals of intimacy, communication, and sovereignty for Bataille. Bataille and Marx are here placed in controversial conversation, as Jean-Jacques Goux, Lawrence Habermas, Peter Stallybrass, and others have also done in order to conceive of the lumpenproletariat and its bearing on the kind of idealized heterogeneity that disrupts capitalism as ideology. This dialogue describes what is becoming of the social reproduction of difference and identity in the proletariat and lumpenproletariat, and what hope there is for intimacy, community, and resistance through non-productive expenditure and transgression.

By negating utility and describing a general economics of surplus, Bataille introduces an ethic of excessive and violent expenditure embodied by the lumpenproletariat (which he does not actually separate from the proletarian whole). Marx identifies the proletariat around a certain ethic of expenditure and potential for collectivity, different from the base lumpenproletariat's depraved existence. The self-estrangement [46] of the hard-working proletariat class can undermine capitalism and, concerned with nothing but excess and transgression, the lumpenproletariat undermine the proletarian production of new identity through "questionable means of support and questionable antecedents." (Marx *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, 46.) For Bataille, self-estrangement of any being is a barrier to sovereignty[47] and intimacy, which are achieved through nonproductive expenditure and transgression that are so characteristic of the lumpenproletariat.

In Bataille's work, the role of sovereignty as an interplay between the self and collective is different only by degree from Marx's concept of regained autonomy through communism.

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[46] Self-estrangement is part of Marx's theory of alienation in which members of the proletariat are distant from the products of their own labor and the process of work, thereby becoming alienated from the self as well.

[47] A human's autonomy of being.

First, it is important to understand how Marx and Bataille each conceive of "surplus," which is crucial to all related concepts of accumulation, sustenance, labor, and expenditure. Bataille broadly conceives of "surplus" as a state of being in which the earth resides. The sun burns itself up as quickly as it can, delivering such energy to earth as cannot ever be fully spent, so humans must devote themselves to expenditure, whether it be glorious or catastrophic. This kind of surplus is a way of understanding the world and the way humans live in relation to energy which gives rise to ethics of accumulation and expenditure. His concept of surplus dovetails with 'excess,' which is a type of human interaction with surplus. In *Capital Vol. I*, surplus is an economic term related to several other descriptors –surplus-value, surplus-labor, surplus-population, and surplus-product. Relative surplus-value is the extra capital reaped from lowering wages without extending hours that can be reinvested in further labor-saving. Surplus-labor is the extra time workers spend in labor beyond required for their own reproduction, thereby producing value equal to their expenditure of labor power. The surplus-population occurs as the need for human labor drops and can be raided and moved around according to the need for capital. Surplus-product, for Marx, is narrower, consisting not only of things meant to be consumed,[48] but also the availability of wealth for accumulation by the capitalist class. By making accumulation possible, capital in the form of surplus-product enables differing levels of wealth.

Surplus and lack therefore derive desire and satisfaction, affecting the ethics of accumulation and expenditure. And in surplus, there is excess, the need for squander. On the other hand, by creating lack, or limits, the capitalist also creates desire. Subsistence is the balance between surplus and lack which Marx prioritizes; but for Bataille, there is always surplus

[48] Marx writes of surplus-value, "Were that the case, the cup of surplus value would be drained to the very dregs, and nothing but simple reproduction would ever take place." (Capital 544)

which must be spent, so accumulation is irrational. Bataille defines accumulation as the situation of

> "a number of wealthy individuals declined to engage in the unproductive expenditures of an ostentatious life-style and employed their available funds for the purchase of means of production. Whence the possibility of an accelerating development and even, as this development occurred, the allocation of a part of the increased resources to nonproductive expenditures." (*AS,* 153)

Bataille's point is twofold. First, accumulation towards purchase of means to production instead of luxury accelerates development. Development at first aids the expansion of capitalism, but development is haunted by limits and, therefore, the necessity of catastrophic expenditure (dumping coffee into the sea because there is less desire for coffee than there is coffee). (*AS,* 22) Second, without the allocation of surplus toward non-productive expenditure, moral restraint and the subsistence ethic dominates, both of which, Bataille argues, repress human intimacy and exuberance. Oppositionally and rather moralistically, Marx writes, "Not only accumulation, but the simple 'conservation of a capital requires a constant effort to resist the temptation of consuming it.'" (*Capital,* 560) In *Bataille's Peak*, Allan Stoekl describes the reverse in Bataille, writing: "In effect, the problem becomes how best to expend rather than how best to envision the consequences of shortage." (33) Bataille's focus on nonproductive expenditure pushes against the plausibility of accumulation and, therefore, away from a restrictive economy towards a "general" one.[49]

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[49] For Jean-Jacques Goux, Bataille's general economy is an exciting prospect: "There is something striking and grandiose about Bataille's attempt to subvert existing political economy, caught within the limits of a utilitarian or calculating rationality, in order to replace it with a "general economics" that would make of unproductive expenditure (sacrifice, luxury, war, games, sumptuary monuments) the most determinant phenomenon of social life. At last a critique of political economy which, while remaining on the decisive terrain of the social circulation of wealth, escapes the confined atmosphere of the bourgeois ethic – so

The consequences of this shift from restrictive to general economics are important to regaining intimacy through communication not dominated by commodity production, as well as the redefinition of luxury.[50] In his model of nonproductive expenditure, as well as luxury and communication, Bataille's theory has bearing on conceptions of class, especially regarding spending and accumulation habits according to class. These habits are inextricable from the ethics of economic expenditure. Stoekl explains, "The logic of conservation, in other words, is inseparable from expenditure: we conserve in order to spend, gloriously, just as the worker (according to Bataille), unlike the bourgeois, works in order to have money to blow." (144) And for Bataille, nonproductive expenditure of the proletariat is essential to class struggle and revolution, as he conceives of it.[51]

Marx sees the increasing moral degradation of the working class into dirty citizens, prostitutes, and street people where Bataille sees transgressive excess, money being blown, and beautiful waste as a form of transgression that does have the capability to unite and further affect the ethics of waste. Where Marx pictures the subsequent moral degradation of the working class as part and parcel of the alienation imposed by the reversal of use and exchange

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often caricatured – the cramped and grayish world of petty calculation, quantifiable profit and industrious activity!" (Goux 206)

[50] Stoekl describes further, "But most of all, in wasting in this way, engaging in this blind travesty of the tendency to expend, we deny any communication with and through the intimate world, the other torn in erotic ecstasy, the movement of celestial bodies, the agony of God." (143) Bataille also offers this clarification of luxury, "A genuine luxury requires the complete contempt for riches, the somber indifference of the individual who refuses work and makes his life on the one hand an infinitely ruined splendor , and on the other, a silent insult to the laborious lie of the rich. Beyond a military exploitation, a religious mystification and a capitalist misappropriation, henceforth no one can rediscover the meaning of wealth, the explosiveness that it heralds, unless it is in the splendor of rags and the somber challenge of indifference. One might say, finally, that the lie destines life's exuberance to revolt." (*AS,* 77)

[51] "For Bataille the workers' experiences of expenditure – that which truly 'liberated' them – was inseparable from the violence of revolution itself, revolution as potlatch, in other words. As he writes in "The Notion of Expenditure," "In historical agitation, the word Revolution dominates the customary confusion and carries with it the promise that answers the unlimited demands of the masses.... Class struggle has only one possible end: the ruin of those who have worked to ruin 'human nature'" (Stoekl 212)

value and the deskilling of the worker, Bataille sees shifting patterns of exchange, glorious and anguish-filled expenditure, and ecstatic revelry of which the bourgeoisie is denied. (This line of thinking is picked up again in the conclusion after relevant ethnography and other data has been outlined with regard to Baltimore and Station North.)

Charles North / Baltimore's Lumpenproletariat

FIGURE 34 . BOHEMIAN COFFEEHOUSE IN STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUTHOR

In my final interview with Stephen Janis at the Bohemian Coffee House in Station North, we were sharing perspectives on the city government, its various foci, and the state of North Ave. We experienced a momentary interruption as a grey-bearded black man in shabby sweatpants abruptly approached the window and pounded on it repeatedly. He paused and began speaking with his reflection, though I couldn't make out the words.

Inside, soothing Cuban jazz played low as a series of artistic-looking white college students filled out the booths, chatting softly, sipping, tapping. A middle-aged black man came in and teased the barista about making his favorite sandwich, a dynamic exchange punctuated by familiarity. After the order was performatively placed, the barista laughed and a few minutes later, the man walked outside with his sandwich.

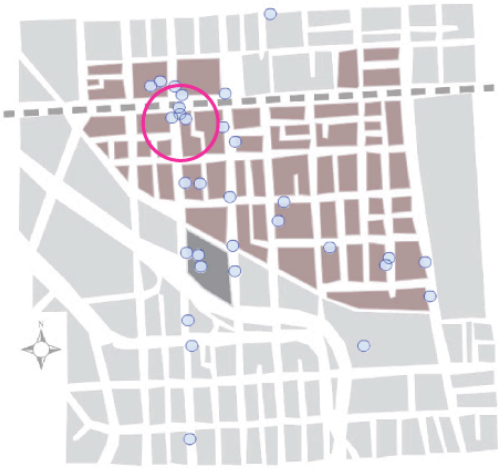


FIGURE 35 . SOUND MAP . NORTH CHARLES ST. SOUNDS LOCATION

10-2011 Soft Sounds at Bohemian Coffee shop

1821 North Charles St.

Haunting music sounds momentarily over speakers, art students chatting.

10-2011 Arts Cafe Gallery at Midday

1816 North Charles St.

People behind the counter laugh, chat, and clap, passing food to a customer.

10-2011 "You Cut Me Off You Dumb Bitch"

Corner of North Ave and Charles St.

A black woman yells at a white woman before the light changes. Keys jingle.

10-2011 Bus Sounds along 1900 block of St. Paul St.

Cars and bus brakes, trash flutters, a bird caws.

09-2012 Walking from inside the Bohemian Coffee shop to outside by the Barbershop

1821 North Charles Street, Baltimore

Soothing music plays softly while people relax inside the coffee shop and the barista prepares a beverage for someone, the soft flow of air speeds into a metal cup. On the street outside, old school dance music plays at a barbershop next to Club Choices.

I stood outside with him and he asked me about my tattoos. I told him about getting them in North Carolina, at the beach.

"That's where the Wright brothers were from," he told me.

"Do you like to come here for lunch a lot?" I asked.

"Yeah."

"Live around here?" I probed.

"No, Reservoir Hill." He pointed to the West.

"I'm thinking about getting some food – where should I go to eat, do you think?" I asked him to interpolate me, in my whiteness, as a female with tattoos and nice clothes – just the type of person he'd be used to encountering at this coffee shop.

He pointed towards Mt. Vernon, the neighborhood just south of Station North, abutting Penn Station. (See Map below)

"There's an Al Fresco place down there. Some good pizza around here too..." He was referring to Joe Squared, nearby.

Joe Squared is a great example of what type of pioneering takes place in Station North, gains notoriety and momentum as a "local" place, and then starts up the next location chain at the Inner Harbor's PowerPlant Live, where the tourists and richer residents go for fun. (City Paper "2012: Best of Baltimore)

“You don’t know any restaurants up there?” I point to North Ave, which is visible from where we sit.

“No... too many transvestites!” He doesn’t crack a smile.

“There’s a methadone clinic there, right?” I ask.

“Lots of drugs. Drug dealers.” He spoke matter-of-factly, without fear, as though the knowing of that geography was enough to keep him away (and safe). “I steer clear of them and they steer clear of me.”

FIGURE 36 . MAP OF STATION NORTH'S POSITION AMONG OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS . CREATED BY AUTHOR

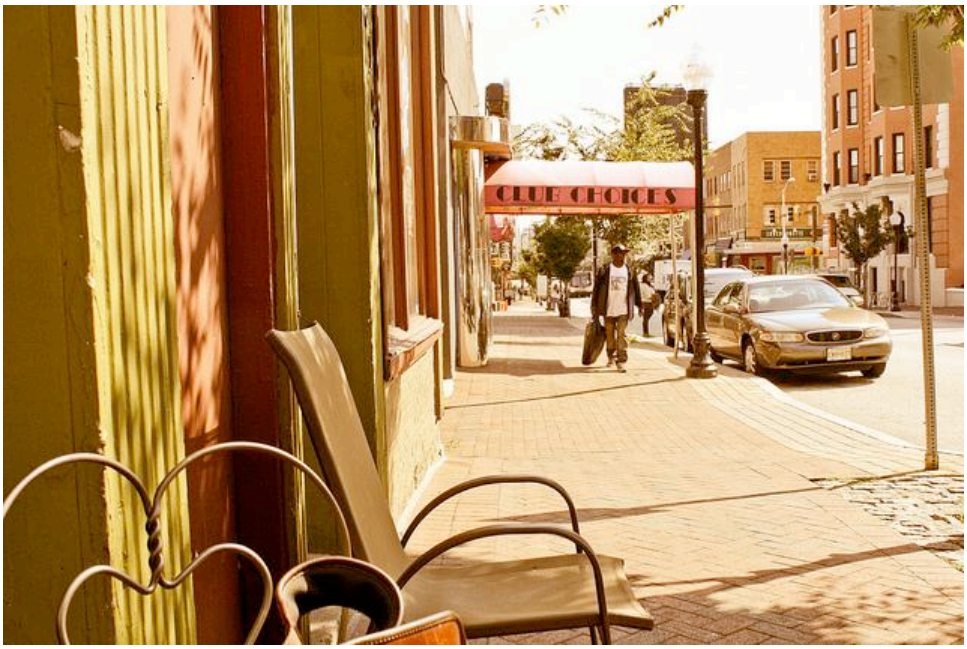


FIGURE 37 . CLUB CHOICES, A WELL-KNOWN DANCE AND MALE STRIP CLUB WHERE VIOLENT CRIMES SOMETIMES OCCUR . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Baltimore's North Ave is a notoriously long stretch of road, once drawing the northern edge of the city, now crossing it from east to west. It once bisected the Charles North neighborhood, but now serves as a dividing line between Charles North and Station North neighborhoods. It is well known to Baltimoreans as a stretch of vacant houses, overgrown yards, and trashed properties, and various forays have been attempted into improving its viability and appearance.

The man I spoke to in September 2012, outside of the Bohemian Coffeehouse, correctly identified North Ave as a significant demarcation of a place of relative safety (a good place to get lunch), Station North, and a place of danger, where violence regularly occurs and where the political power of minority groups is stifled. In the interview I was having with Stephen Janis inside, he spoke extensively about North Ave as a major city problem:

"It's amazing how North Avenue is just transcendent. You can't overcome it. You can't cross it. But then of course there was the murder of the Hopkins student which was an exemplar of why that area's not safe, and I don't blame people, really, for thinking that way. He's walking back from the train station and someone accosts him and stabs him to death over $20. And think about it, you have [major institutions] and still they can overcome it, can't cross it [to develop it or make it safe]. That's racial conflict exteriorized in spaces. I don't think you can find a city that's a better example of that.

"It's fascinating that most of the arts district emphasis thus far has been white-oriented, the way Station North has had to leapfrog over North Avenue, or tried to and has been working on that. And even when you talk to J. Brody with Club Choices and everything, they had to shut that down. It's interesting how Baltimore has a spatial recognition of race that's very acute. I think that's part of what the arts districts are supposed to do, operate as a safe zone. It's very spotty though." (Janis 2012)

I asked him to describe what's outside of Station North, just north of North Ave.

"What is North of North Ave depends on what street you're on. It's a slow evolution. There's the Man Alive methadone clinic, there's lower Goucher up on Charles Street where there's a lot of transsexuals, a gradual sweep upwards towards Hopkins. There are a lot of drug addicts and people living in surprisingly poor conditions. It's a slow build. It's sort of a wash over from Greenmount Avenue. You're not really good till you get to 27th Street... People won't spill over here. Maybe there's just not enough momentum. I think it has to be transformational geography if you're going to make

[Charles North] work. It's too cemented in people's minds, what North Avenue is. I mean how many times have you heard,

'Shooting on North Avenue. Shooting on North Avenue. A man was shot and killed on North Avenue. A man was killed today on North Avenue.'" (Janis 2012)

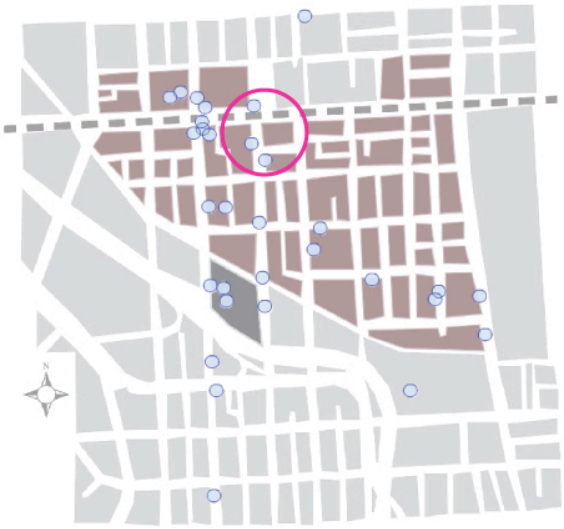


FIGURE 38 . SOUND MAP . NORTH AVE SOUND AREA

10-2011 Grass Lot near North and Charles

The grass is dry, people are chatting nearby.

10-2011 "You Cut Me Off You Dumb Bitch"

Corner of North Ave and Charles St.

A black woman yells at a white woman before the light changes. Keys jingle.

10-2011 Corner of North and St. Paul

People are waiting for a bus. A man asks a woman where she's going and she answers.

The violence there, as well as on some other streets like Wilkens Ave and Greenmount, are well known to people who live in the city, experienced as endemic and historically, continuously violent. Referencing the relevant history of Baltimore in the introductory chapter, I return to the year 1968, which stands as a moment in time in which North Ave became what it is today. Mark R. Brown writes an opinion blog about transportation in Baltimore and relates his experiences of North Ave to its history and its future. He wrote an entry on Oct. 8th, 2010:

> "The impact of the 1968 riots left large parts of North Ave. for dead, though. The gangbangers, drug cartels and other local warlords now use the corridor as a speedway in and out of neighborhoods, and the street is often seen as a divider between good and bad (and bad and bad) neighborhoods." (Brown "North Ave")

Related to what has been argued in this chapter thus far, "good" and "bad" neighborhoods are strongly equated with ideas about "good" and "bad" kinds of people, which turns quickly, if not immediately, into racializing language, thinking, and ultimately, urban planning. Without some awareness of what people living in those "bad" neighborhoods think - of their neighborhoods, the politics around them, and of themselves, then these forays into improvement tend to be piecemeal, small scale, and momentary at best.

In one excursion in September 2009, accompanied by Stephen Janis on a reporting venture, I witnessed a park cleanup day in a "bad" neighborhood a few blocks south of North Ave, west of

Station North, called East Oliver, an area that perpetually undergoes tragedy followed by cleanup, according to residents.

FIGURE 39 . MAP OF EAST OLIVER NEIGHBORHOOD INCLUDING PARK . LOCATION OF FIELDWORK . CREATED BY AUTHOR

FIGURE 40 . BALTIMORE POLICE ASSIST IN EAST OLIVER CLEAN-UP, BUT TO WHAT END SOME RESIDENTS ASK . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Blue September skies complimented the bright pastels being painted on the cruddy concrete walls of a neighborhood playground on Lafayette and Aiken formerly littered

with trash and rampant with drug deals. The cleanup was, in part, a tribute to a respected community member who'd been shot nearby.

Needless to say, local media were present in force. At the event were more police officers than volunteers, and more suited up government officials spraying down the pavement with weed killer than neighborhood residents. Twenty or more residents were, however, watching closely across Lafayette. Kids just out of school were tossing a football with a female police Sergeant who "likes to get to know the kids" before they get into too much trouble.

Councilmen Stokes had nothing but praise and promises for the efforts and for BUILD, Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development, which describes itself as a "broad-based community power organization, rooted in Baltimore's neighborhoods and churches." (BUILD homepage) Although BUILD has received criticism for aiming to upgrade areas of Oliver quickly and force out low income residents, their park cleanup appeared on the surface to be a benevolent sort of gesture - to give kids a better and safer place to play.

For East Oliver residents, it's all about the kids - their education, safety, and activities are paramount to their perception of the neighborhood as a whole. Cleaning up the park is an affair that is closely connected with other issues around protecting children and preventing crime, such as the city's declining recreational centers.

Many residents in East Oliver, including Juanita Walker and Calvin Jones believe that with the decline of recreation center funding and afterschool programs, kids have nowhere to be but the streets. Calvin says that without afterschool programs, "the streets become their parents." Furthermore, Curtis believes "They'd rather house them [juvenile delinquents] than deal with them."

"They don't have a problem building jails," said Calvin Jones, standing on the corner of Lafayette Avenue and Aisquith Street when asked about the efforts to clean up the block.

"This is the only way they know how to deal with kids," he added. "It's just easier to close rec centers."

"All the money was invested into downtown," added Michael Brown as he dragged on a cigarette. "There's nothing left up here."[52]

Long time East Oliver residents see money going into juvenile prisons and other parts of town, like Canton, and feel there is an injustice in spending being perpetrated that has direct effects on local youth.

Tanya (last name omitted) said to me, "I lived here all my life, but I just moved back. I was away for four years." She expressed that rentals to the west of Oliver Rec Center (across Harford) weren't as nice of an area as on the block of the rec center. In fact, rec center and churches in her opinion, as well as home ownership kept the E Lanvale/N

[52] Parts of this ethnographic section are repeated from the article co-written by Stephen Janis and myself published in his online journal, *The Investigative Voice* (Janis and Kotting "The Event").

Spring St block nice. She gestured also east which she thought was a more dangerous area.

When asked why she decided to come back, she said she missed it even though it had changed a lot. When asked where she had been before she moved back, she pointed to the rentals across Harford. It seems that even a block away was another world to her.

Kimberly Cox stood across from the cleanup site, watching disinterestedly. She is in her late 20s/early 30s. She used to live in East Oliver, played at that playground. "In fact, I fell and busted my knee right over there," as she points to concrete platform with large wooden arch.

"It won't be lasting. This isn't the first time. In a couple of weeks, you'll find more trash." She explains without any hope. "What we need is consistency - probably should be cleaned up 2 times a month. Sometimes the inmates come clean [the park], but that's just once a year."

She lived there her whole life and has seen the neighborhood both change and stay the same with her own eyes.

Stephen and I did return to the park two weeks later, as she suggested. Sure enough, we found needles and bottles littering the ground.

FIGURE 41 . LITTER IN PARK TWO WEEKS AFTER CLEAN-UP, SHOWING ENSUING DRUG USE . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Across from the park, I carry on an extensive conversation with Eli Whitener who told me that he wants his story told.

FIGURE 42 . ELI WHITENER, EAST OLIVER RESIDENT . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

He's angry to start with and says, "It's bullcrap. They're cleaning it up because a man got killed, because something happened up the street. Come back in two months. It's not gonna change stuff. For that to happen people need money... If you want to help people

in the community, get them money or teach them how to get money. Everybody feels this way."

The conversation gets derailed while he chats with a friend. The friend checks me out, to make sure I'm with the press and no one suspicious. Eli continues along the same argument,

"After they clean up the damn playground, they're going right back home to their fancy clothes and fancy cars. They're just trying to look good for the cameras.

"A pastor is like a house nigger and we all field niggers. Christian shit is slavery shit. The church is here to get 10% of people's money. I went over there and asked [a well-dressed man] for a dollar, but he said he got no change. Pastors and rappers all house niggers, house niggers is anybody who oppresses and gets rich off their own people."

A self-proclaimed member of the Five-Percent Nation of Gods and Earths, Eli has no interest in or time for local church activities. When asked about East Oliver he said, "This is hell. Hell is the underground, and it's all fiction."

He looked across the street at the park, and commented "What does that all mean? It's about survival. That's why everyone is oppressing each other, telling lies to get money. The only reason the police don't let you sell drugs is because there's no taxes [on drugs]. It's like cat and mouse. The government puts the drugs here, search you and catch you

with things so the system can get their 10%. You trying to survive. They lock you up to get rich. Those people are surviving off poor people.

"Pastor frontin' like he doin' something, but he ain't doin nothin... smilin, ain't helpin nobody. Help them get a job. Look at them [police] screwin' around. Fine, arrest, and prosecute. That's their job. And there's always a police in front of that church.

"In Baltimore, people are trying to protect themselves. But there's no type of love for people on the lower- level. First you need love, which gives understanding, and that leads to peace.

"Self-destruction produces poverty. In the 70s and 80s the whole area was beautiful - flowers, roses, so clean, no trash, no crackheads. Milkman came to the door - I used to love him. It all changed when rap music came out in '88. Words are powerful and manifest through people."

He tells me a rather sad story about the course of his life, his absent father, and failed social support systems that have left him broken in more ways than one. And yet he proclaims,

"I've always been a revolutionary." (Fieldnotes from September 9, 2010)

The expressed desire for change, awareness of where money is being spent in the city, a sense of the cat-and-mouse game between drug dealers and the police, and the lack of social

services for their children - all present as this park cleanup was happening. People who live in the “bad” neighborhoods are by no means oblivious. In fact, they are more aware in many ways of the political processes underlying how money is spent in the city than people who live in “good” neighborhoods, people who don’t have to think about surviving Baltimore on a daily basis.

Without conflating instances of discussion happening in various poor neighborhoods, I present these moments as and where they became available to me by virtue of working with Stephen as I could not always safely access parts of Charles North myself. The spectrum of conversations held with residents in a variety of poor neighborhoods yielded similar results.

People living in the city’s outskirts, whether geographic or social ones, felt valueless, that their only real way of surviving was to make money outside of the city’s economy, within the community through services traded, legal or illegal. As such, Baltimore’s “lumpenproletariat,” the non-working poor, are left to their own devices except for when city officials stand to benefit from a demonstrative park cleanup. Or when the city stands to profit from their illegal economy, through punishment and the prison system. So when Eli accuses the city of planting drugs, whether that is or is not true, he is also correctly describing the way the city uses poor people for profit through systems of incarceration, particularly around drug use, violence, and vice crimes:

> *“The government puts the drugs here, search you and catch you with things so the system can get their 10%. You trying to survive. They lock you up to get rich. Those people are surviving off poor people.” (Whitener 2010)*

Mt. Vernon / The Pride of Baltimore

Harvey on top of Federal Hill in 2009:

"The famous thing that I learned in that housing research, which I did a long time ago back in the 1970s, and at that time I'd only just begun to read people like Marx and Engels, and there's this wonderful line in Engels about the housing questions that says, 'The bourgeoisie has only one way to solve its housing problem – it moves it around.'

"And actually, at that time I kind of remember saying that in a meeting and I remember saying that in a meeting, and someone said, 'My, what a brilliant insight! Where'd you get that from?' and I said, 'Well, I got it from Engels.' and he said, 'Oh, does he work at the Brookings Institution?'" (laughter)

Station North's northern boundary is North Ave, separating the arts district from Charles North, which used to encompass both. Penn Station marks the southern border of Station North, with a famous landmark billboard standing as its entrance.

FIGURE 43 . ICONIC BILLBOARD AT SOUTH ENTRANCE TO STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

FIGURE 44 . CHARM CITY CIRCULATOR AT PENN STATION . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Just south of Penn Station, where Amtrak trains stop, carrying workers and commuters to the northern edge of the inner city, lies Mt. Vernon. Mt. Vernon – the real pride of Baltimore, always considered the best neighborhood in the city and advertising itself as such (FN although this year's resident-voting in the City Paper's Best Of Baltimore edition declared Hampden the new favorite, largely due to the immensely popular Hampdenfest, second only to Artscape in popularity among Baltimoreans) (City Paper "2012: Best of Baltimore"). A local map of Mt. Vernon declares on its front cover, "Mount Vernon is not only the best neighborhood in Baltimore; it is one of the best in the world," citing the Baltimore City Paper. I have a several friends who spent several years living in Mt. Vernon who praise its housing stock, rental options, bars, restaurants, and nightlife, and relative safety in the context of the city. I haunted that neighborhood myself on many nights while writing my master's thesis, drinking microbrews in the basement of the Brewer's Art.

There are those who seek to help Station North gain the same reputation. It's no coincidence that now, after two black nightclubs closed down, Station North is being marketed as a destination for nightlife. In the August/September 2012 edition of Mobtown, a where-to-shop and where-to-be-seen publication designed to assist the young and hip in knowing what-to-consume (per neighborhood, as it is thus themed), a full page was devoted to inviting those same young and hip to consume the area's nightlife.

FIGURE 45 . SOUND MAP . MT. VERNON SOUNDS AREA

09-2012 XS Restaurant in Mount Vernon on Charles Street

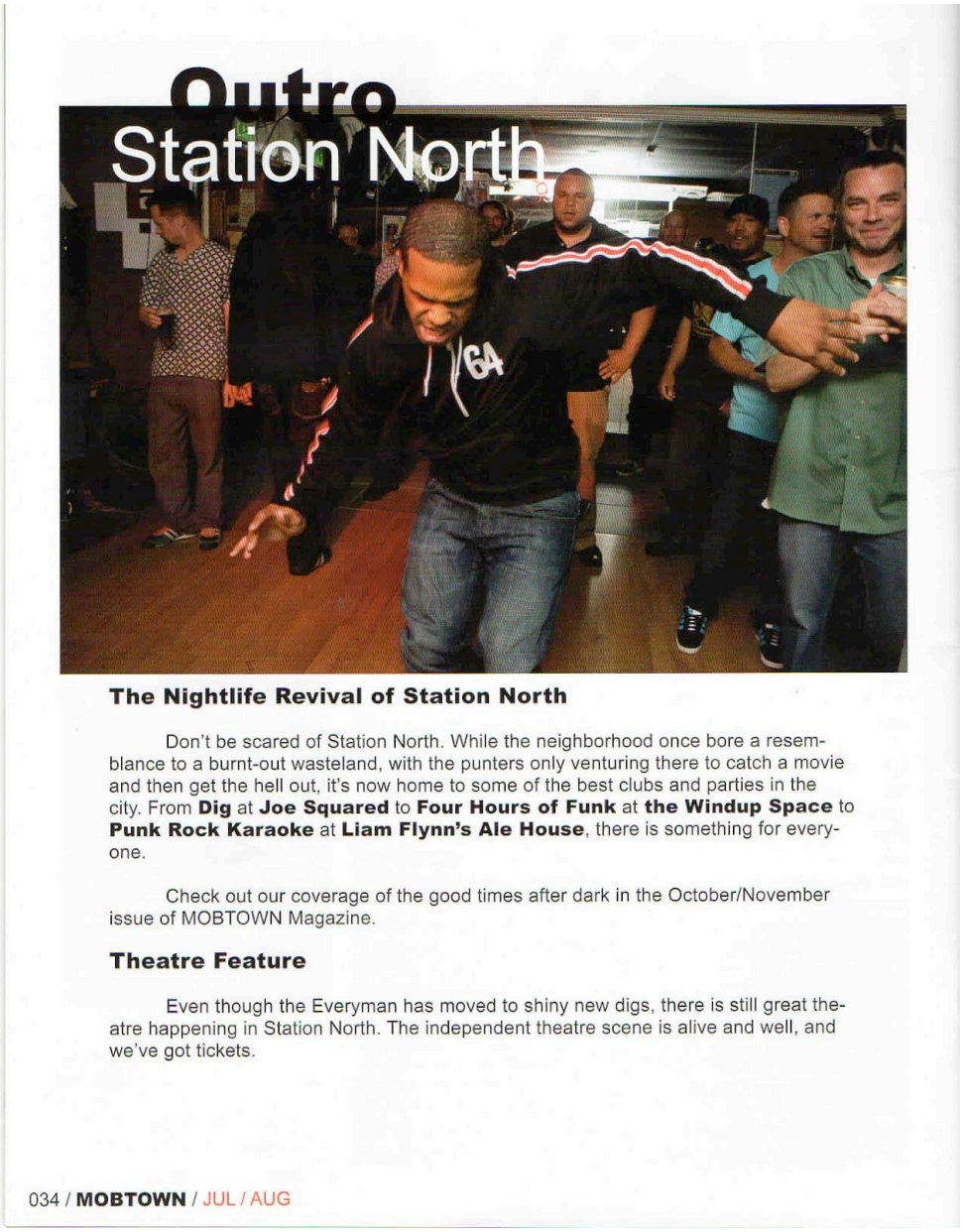
1307 North Charles Street

At XS restaurant, you can hear sounds of line cooks speaking in Spanish and patrons speaking in English while popular music of the 1990s plays gently in the background.

09-2012 Brewers Art in Mount Vernon on Charles Street

1106 North Charles Street

Underground, in the basement of Brewers Art, things aren't nearly so posh as on the first floor. You are sitting in a dark cubbyhole at a table carved over the years by patrons. Two women are sitting at the other table in the tiny room, chatting about personal problems. Silverware and glasses clink in preparation for happy hour.



Outro

Station North

The Nightlife Revival of Station North

Don't be scared of Station North. While the neighborhood once bore a resemblance to a burnt-out wasteland, with the punters only venturing there to catch a movie and then get the hell out, it's now home to some of the best clubs and parties in the city. From **Dig** at **Joe Squared** to **Four Hours of Funk** at **the Windup Space** to **Punk Rock Karaoke** at **Liam Flynn's Ale House**, there is something for everyone.

Check out our coverage of the good times after dark in the October/November issue of MOBTOWN Magazine.

Theatre Feature

Even though the Everyman has moved to shiny new digs, there is still great theatre happening in Station North. The independent theatre scene is alive and well, and we've got tickets.

034 / **MOBTOWN** / JUL / AUG

FIGURE 46 . MOBTOWN MAGAZINE FIRST EDITION'S FINAL PAGE SHOWS YOUNG BLACK MAN DANCING AND LISTS SAFE PLACES TO GO AT NIGHT . AUG/SEP 2012 ISSUE

Station North feature in the new magazine, Mobtown (Aug/Sept 2012 first issue). Mobtown is a moniker for Baltimore, suggesting a history of mob activity and violence. Hence it's quite ironic that this piece is about safe places to go in Station North. Club Choices, well known for a history of violence, is not mentioned.

Putting a young black man on display, dancing, the editors are essentializing the nature of Station North, using his body as a metaphor. “Look,” it implies, “there’s no danger here. He’s only dancing.” Though there are many ways of interpreting the imagery on the page, the wording is clear. Don’t be scared of Station North, followed by a list of places deemed safe to visit at night – *name them.* In the same issue, Mobtown describes “Hoodscape,” a festival clearly populated by white partygoers, if the photographs are any indication, making for a jingoistic portrayal of black urban culture. There is no avoiding the fear attached to a place at night based on its racial composition and associated activities, and marketing strategies quite literally dance around this circumstance through tactics resembling minstrelsy.

I write these critiques while sitting once again in the basement of the Brewer’s Art in Mount Vernon, waiting to meet up with the friends who lived there before they married and moved to Charles Village. I sit and listen to two young professionals, white women who are sharing their mutual, lifelong, unrealized dream of going snowboarding while discussing the excessive wealth of their parents and ungratefulness of their lazy siblings whilst digging into their gourmet rosemary french fries.

Why is Mount Vernon such a success? Why is this where people want to live? One determining factor, the first listed on the Mount Vernon - Belvedere Neighborhood Association website is child-friendliness (“For Children” page). Further, Mt. Vernon’s history stretches back into the 1800s, when it was already a core of wealth and power in the city. In the past decade, basically since Station North was declared an official arts district, Mount Vernon’s real estate values have doubled (MVBA “About” page), which I view as related to Station North’s inception. The neighborhood association’s site goes on to invite new residents to Mount Vernon with the following text:

> "Mount Vernon offers its family residents many wonderful cultural, educational and recreational activities.... Whether you want to immerse yourself in culture, take your children to the playground, relax in the parks, enjoy cuisines from around the world or just unwind after work, Mount Vernon has it all!" (MVBA "Today" page)

Mount Vernon resident, Sine Jensen, whose interview transcription was also used in the Cultural Fix chapter, agrees that the above is generally true and she enjoys living there, and yet...

> *"Mount Vernon is so developed and affluent. I have really enjoyed living here, but every time I cross to work in East Baltimore – every time I cross from East to West across Guilford it's... like a big WOAH. Going from beautiful historic rowhouses and people walking their dogs where there's a vitality and affluence, whereas across Guilford there's a stark difference. Mount Vernon is really interesting. What you've said about Station North as a buffer makes sense to me. It's undergoing so much development all the time. University of Baltimore just built two new dorms, or rather one building and one dorm – so much development in Mt. Vernon all the time. It feels like a bubble. A nice bubble, but a bubble." (Jensen Personal Interview 2012)*

Mount Vernon is where the imported creative class members are supposed to abide and eventually become the salvation for the still shrinking city. Meanwhile, Station North is pinned strategically against Mount Vernon, to protect it and, perhaps, extend it against the likes of North Ave. In a place like Mount Vernon, development remakes the built environment in ways that erase processes of racial formation by changing the economic capital flows in neighborhoods and redefining place. In the process, a bourgeois morality of restraint results in a homogenization of place-based economic enterprises. Especially in the context of an arts

district, this over-sized value of restraint is proffered through disciplinary strategies of obedience and safety, setting up a kind of false modesty in areas where none previously existed. A false binary develops around the imposition of obedience and restraint, because they necessitate a balancing with consumptive exuberance and nonproductive expenditure; and such activities are subsequently viewed as super-deviant and grotesque at worst and marginal at best.

Station North / The Northern Frontier

Station North can be understood as what symbolic anthropologists call a "liminal zone" and what border scholars call, well, a border. It's a porous buffer, not only between two geographically and economically distinct neighborhoods, but the past and present as well. But its porous existence is also an unnatural one. Few fields of scholarship theorize borderlands as well as Latina/o Studies, and a particularly corporeal way of understanding the border comes from Gloria Anzaldua, who writes:

> "The U.S.-Mexican border es una herida abierta where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country - a border culture. Borders are set up to define places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. . . . A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary." (Anzaldua 25).

Border produces differences, it otherizes. It naturalizes and makes difference official unnaturally. Station North is the site through which these distinctions are produced. By serving as the border between Mt. Vernon and Charles North, Station North serves as a border between economies (legal and illegal), volume levels, detritus and wealth, and distinct ways of going about daily life. With the existence of Station North, Mount Vernon is advertised as THE best

neighborhood in the city. With the existence of Station North, North Ave and Charles North become invisible, black, crime ridden, neglected, avoided by some, lived in by some, mourned, and decayed.

The liminality of Station North implies that it exists as a zone of passage. It can't be a sanitized zone, fitting the clean BDC plan, and being interrupted by interactions like the one at the very beginning of this document:

> *"You cut me off, you dumb bitch.*
>
> *You cut me off, you dumb bitch.*
>
> *Suck it.*
>
> *Kiss my ass.*
>
> *Suck my father's black dick.*
>
> *Do that."*

Instead of replicating the (impossible) plan, Station North is a productive zone of difference, racialization, violence, and the poverty/wealth divide. I have used Wacquant's theory of the hyperghetto to show how the once relatively isolated communal ghetto of the 1950s yielded its own resistance against political pressures through a contained kind of social organization. Conceptualized as a border zone, Station North instead reveals the porousness of the current ghettoized area to the north that seeps into daily life near Station North. Bataille would be fascinated and encouraged by the unfolding scene, for instance, at the North Inn Bar & Lounge on the busy intersection of Charles and North, one of the most intense spaces in the area and right near the heart of the arts and cafe scene in Station North. There's often a crowd of people gathered there. There are benches and payphones, and it's a hub where young white artists

don't stand still, but black adults are comfortable relaxing and talking any time of day or night. The corner is the home of Pearson's Florist, North Inn Bar & Lounge, and Solid Rock Free Will Baptist Church. It's not a good spot to be a tourist or to amble through slowly without knowing anyone already there. I don't know what's supposed to happen - where does the tension come from? Surely not an expectation of violence or crime. But there is a tension, nonetheless, and it does have to do with movement, stillness, and skin color.

When I was younger, before I started this project or was even old enough to be in a bar, I was downtown, alone. It was the end of the night. I needed to make a call. I wandered into the North Inn and felt immediately I was in the wrong place. I asked the bartender for change for the payphone anyway, and he gave it to me. Funk was playing on the jukebox and the atmosphere was dim, loud, festive, internal. I was the only young white person in there. Later, I would occasionally hear about a shooting at North Inn or on the street outside and felt the tension again.

Tension or stress in a place like North Inn or Station North in general arises from the many places, their histories and trajectories, that are layered over times of day, fading in and out, dying and being born, rubbing up against each other, at times seductively and at times violently. These worlds are built up around a number of things, they stumble around unpredictably through the people that make them real, and just as I stumbled as a tourist in need of some change, all the places I carried with me started to fracture into little pieces for a moment as the punch-blow of North Inn started to crack their ability to exist there, or my ability to remain there. Katie Stewart writes of all these forces, places, and bodies at odds or in cahoots:

> "It can tell the story of inclusion or exclusion, mainstreaming or marginality. But its widespread power to articulate something stems not from a meaning it harbors inside

> but from its actual circulations through forces and trajectories of all kinds: self-help culture, the power of the drug industry and direct advertising, social indifference, political depression, road rage, or the proliferation of countless intricately detailed little worlds built around major social injuries or inventive forms of recreation or reaction." (Stewart *OA*, 43)

The point is, Station North is not place-made so much as a place-in-the-making. It is an unpredictably dynamic circumstance in which these "countless intricately detailed little worlds" are at play - playing and fighting and ignoring and talking. Its very placeness IS this circumstance of traversal, tension, fragmentation, creation, and forgetting.

For this reason, Station North resembles a frontier - a place of conquest, risky ventures, and experimental expansion. The organizing principle of a "frontier" is one of disorganization and utter unpredictability. A bar that had survived since the 1950s, such as North Inn, could collapse under the strain of racial tension and the imposed removal of nighttime violence, which is in fact what occurred recently. A pizza restaurant that got its start in the same block in the 2000s could become famous statewide and open a second location in the Inner Harbor. A homeless man could shout profanities, ask for money, polish the wheels of a car without asking for money, or die in the street. A rich white woman on her way to eat at that same pizza restaurant midday could be told to suck a black dick. I could step on the sawdust shavings, softly whispering beside the grating of circular saws beside renovated rowhouses destined for Baltimore's young creatives, or I could squish a pile of human feces beneath my feet just across the street while a drunk man looks on from behind chain link in front of a long-abandoned factory. From first to third world in a heartbeat, Stephen describes, viewing this condition as unique to Baltimore's super-fragmented landscape:

"Baltimore has all the elements of a third world nation where poverty and misery are not hard to find and you can see it right here, right next to Johns Hopkins Hospital. The difference between those two worlds, between Monument Street, if you go down it, and the hospital - somehow or another that doesn't get communicated, that street doesn't benefit from anything except for checks cashed, pawn shops, and shoe stores. It's hard to get a front row seat on that in this country."

Why so fragmented, I ask.

"Maybe the city doesn't understand space. Because Baltimore is so different block by block, and people in the city are unconsciously aware, they understand space as a concept, they understand the markings of space. Just because the city puts up a sign doesn't mean that people don't understand that North Ave is a thoroughfare of violence. They understand the markings of that. They still understand the geography here." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

FIGURE 47 . ALLEY, SOURCE OF SOUND . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

Station North as frontier is a place of layering, folds, and knots. This uneven surface hides and reveals many things, with a capacity for complicated arrangements and interactions, in both space and time (Serres 20). Large-scale and even global patterns of investment affect urban change and are no substitute for the immediacy of local narratives. Place has a role in a diversity of situations, and phenomenology can show how it has a particular role in understanding the

multiple identities and textures of place, pointing to its paradoxical qualities that shape its material surfaces. When we have the illusion of experiencing a place as a whole, we must also understand that this perceived potential for experiencing place is what cities latch onto. Without sensing place, a person can scarcely sense their own emplacement. Therein lies a dangerous lack of reflexivity and an ignorance of place's importance to the geographic discipline, which leads to a lack of affectivity in the political sphere.

A place like Station North thus emerges as a palimpsest, or a simultaneously individuated (not-everything) and indeterminate (not-fully-itself) existence with many layers of hidden pasts, stories, memories, and dreams of what the place is and how it can be experienced. Place thus carries exposed and buried, manifest and latent, and forbidden and permitted meanings (de Certeau 105). Buried histories of Charles North are forbidden to exist in the permitted present of Station North. Dislocating portions of a population through increased property taxes or heavy policing can be seen as a gradual burying of aspects of a place. Examining daily being in place, or everyday life, is one way to expose some of the complex, hidden portions of the palimpsest. Sound will enable a kind of non-Euclidean spatial mapping that will better capture some of this than (only) text or (only) images. This heterogeneous, complex, palimpsestual neighborhood exceeds and circumvents the homogenizing process of gentrification proposed by city government and urban developers.

The aesthetic materiality of sound insists on complicity and intersubjectivity and challenges not only the reality of the material object itself, but also the position of the subject involved in its generative production." (Voegelin 36) This kind of listening reveals a world that is dynamic and in process (36). The idea of purposefully encountering sound doesn't necessarily require one to focus on a small object, but can be performed through sensing the audible terrain of ones surroundings (Ihde 115). If, in doing so, you focus on one sound, you are listening

"away" from other sounds, diverting your attention to one but not all (115). If you attempt to listen to all the sounds around you at once, you may become lost or miss the significance of each sound source. If a sound brings into recollection another sound, and therefore some memory of your own past, you may miss the present. If you listen imaginatively, you are exceeding perception and exploring the possible rather than extant (117). There is not a prescribed way of listening, but to listen playfully is to be conscious of the varying possibilities for listening and try them all, perhaps intersubjectively with less reference to the self than normal. Perhaps you may even listen by hearing what is absent, and considering what the silences mean, even in reference to a place, like Baltimore.

The BDC's Plan

Station North has become a destination, a place to spend some time, "your stop for the eclectic." Station North's role in Baltimore's hoped-for revival is as an arts and entertainment district that will attract two kinds of economic development – (1) attracting tourists for sales and hotel tax and (2) attracting homeowners by presenting a welcoming and culturally rich atmosphere of consumption and opportunity (or the consumption of opportunity). How is it working out? It's certainly not going according to the Baltimore Development Corporation's (BDC's) 2008 plan. Stephen doesn't see it working very well at all, questioning the night life, taxation policies, and hotel construction especially:

> *"What's that evidence that Station North is working? I mean, you have that one bar... I don't know, how's the Wind-Up Space doing? That's the biggest place down here, right?*
>
> *"The hotel is a fiasco, losing money, they had to take money out of reserves to meet their bond payment and they're not even close to projections... The city borrowed $300 million*

to build it and it driving down the price of the hotel market. It's a good example of how fiscal maneuvering can have unintended consequences. They want to build another one now. They're addicted to this idea of city-financed development, not economic development as a result of productivity but special exclusionary tax breaks given to already rich people. It's a metaphor of this country as a whole - give rich people more and somehow poor people will get a little of it. But they don't. And it doesn't work." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

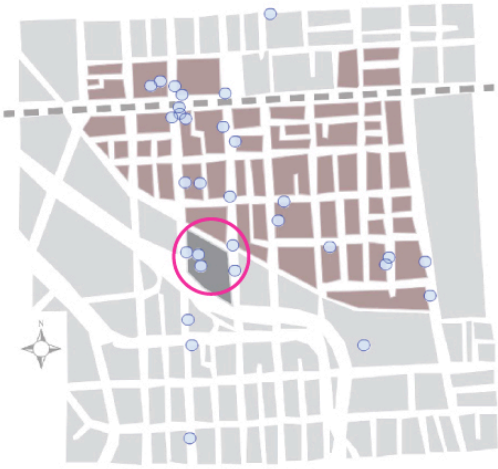


FIGURE 48 . CONSTRUCTION SOUNDS LOCATION

10-2011 Construction along Lanvale near Charles St.

Music from a boombox, hammers on walls.

10-2011 New Hotel Construction Sounds at Mt. Royal and Charles St.

Saws buzz several floors up as cars pass, going south on Charles.

10-2011 Dumpster Being Filled on 1500 Block of Brentwood Ave

Shards of a rowhouse, bricks and drywall, toss from a burnt out window into a metal dumpster.

The original BDC plan for Charles North, which includes Station North, initiates strategies for acquiring 18 properties, building a highrise, improving property value, changing the disposition of the neighborhood, and stimulating markets around entertainment and the arts. Since 2009, the BDC removed the plan from their website, but I have since retained it in my records.

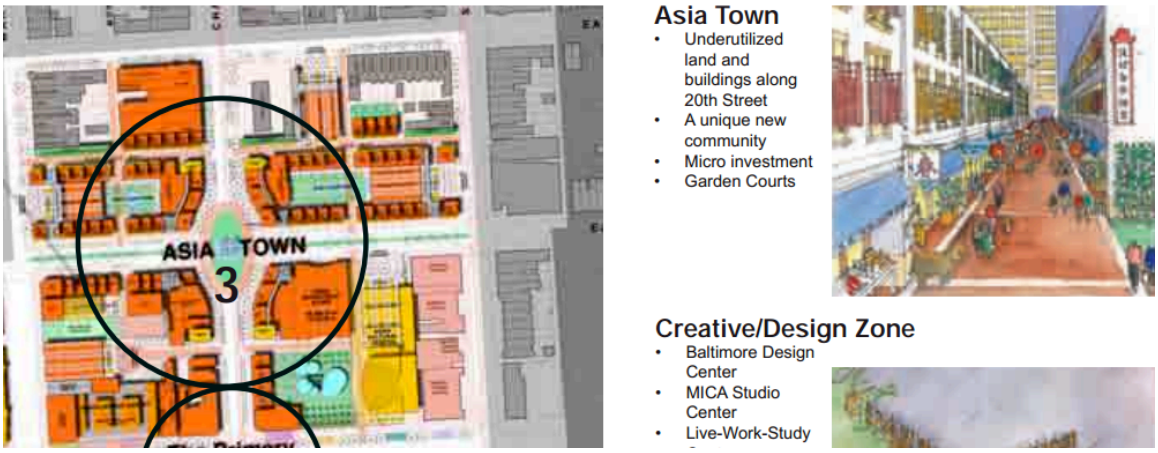


FIGURE 49 . ASIA TOWN PORTION OF CHARLES NORTH VISION PLAN (BDC 2009)

The plan for Charles North/Station North makes clear that Station North is viewed as a blossoming arts area whereas the blocks north of North Ave are "underutilized land" that would be better served by bulldozing and replacing with housing and businesses dubbed "Asia Town" (See Fig 41). Further, the accompanying logic to the plan describes Charles North as "impossible" in a strangely opportunistic way, referencing the Inner Harbor to set the stage.

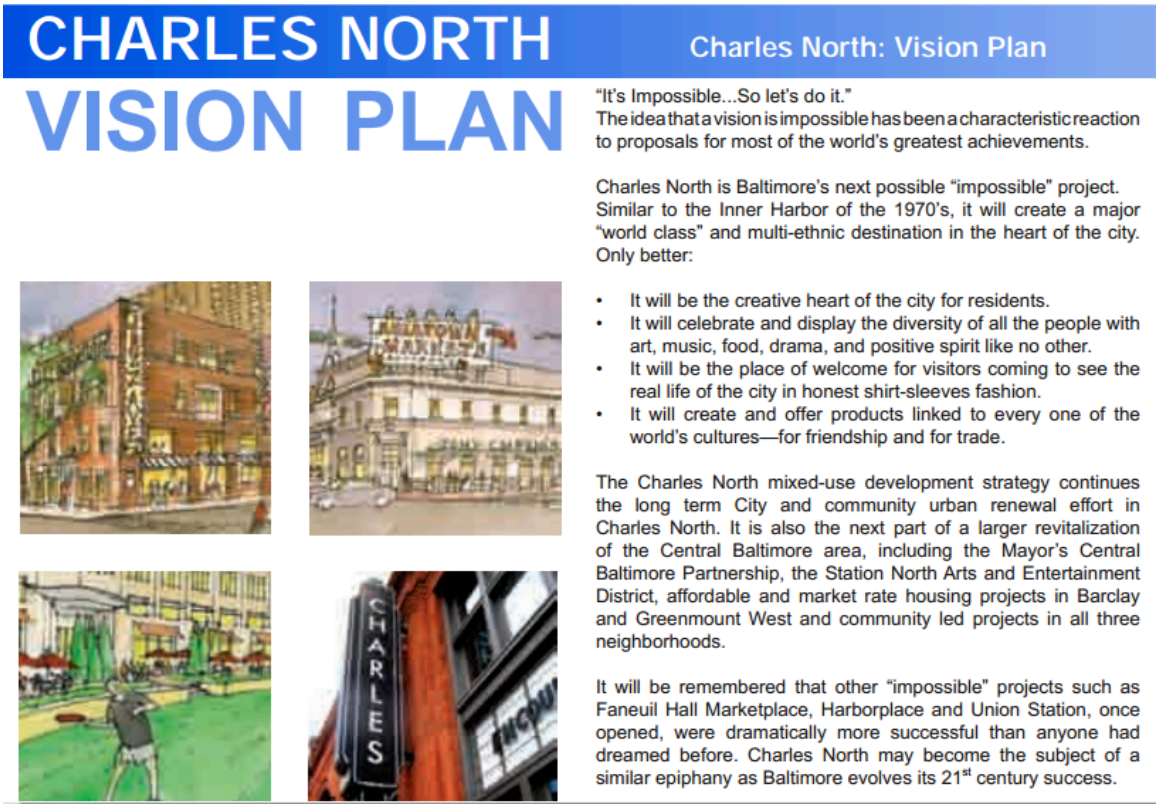


FIGURE 50 . CHARLES NORTH VISION PLAN: "IT'S IMPOSSIBLE... SO LET'S DO IT." (BDC 2009)

This figure reads:

> "Charles North is Baltimore's next possible "impossible" project. Similar to the Inner Harbor of the 1970's, it will create a major "world class" and multi-ethnic destination in the heart of the city. Only better:
>
> - It will be the creative heart of the city for residents.
> - It will celebrate and display the diversity of all the people with art, music, food, drama, and positive spirit like no other.
> - It will be the place of welcome for visitors coming to see the real life of the city in honest shirt-sleeves fashion.

- It will create and offer products linked to every one of the world's cultures—for friendship and for trade."

There are several points made in the above that both qualify for critique via my argument and are descriptive of the processes and desires I am listing as problematic. The first bullet point on this ambitious wishlist seeks to make the district an enticing area for city residents. This is perhaps the least problematic of all of the points above as it, momentarily at least, acknowledges that city residents may have creative interests. However, the subtext based on the entirety of this planning brochure implies that it will be the creative heart of the city for some residents, but probably not all. The celebration of diversity through various activities and a "positive spirit like no other" is in direct contrast to the perception of the area as overtly negative in spirit, a juxtaposition that requires the city to attend to that "negative spirit" and seek remedy. Skipping to the last bullet point, the plan makes clear that economic improvements will yield a multi-ethnic sense of community, a rosey-hued perspective that is, at best, unlikely and, at worst, a flattening of world cultures into ephemera for sale in shop windows

But the third bullet point is by far the most troublesome and revealing: "It will be the place of welcome for visitors coming to see the real life of the city in honest shirt-sleeves fashion." Charles North, as unwelcoming as it is understood to be in 2008, should be transformed entirely into a welcoming place for tourists, and indeed the plan includes a hotel and places to shop. However, there is some idea that visitors will be drawn to this place because of its gritty history and real-city atmosphere. The reference to "honest shirt-sleeves" at once implies a working class background, with reference to "rolling up one's shirt-sleeves" and a sense that the district is under construction, a work in progress. At this crucial juncture, the plan

uses the word “honest” to portray the character of the district as a finished product, carrying a sense of authenticity that will resemble what Baltimore city is - an unpolished, formerly industrial, segregated urban setting from which white people long ago escaped. Consequently, Station North resembles a pioneering zone, affirmed by Stephen in our most recent interview:

> *“Here [in Station North] it’s more like homesteading, pioneering. Are you going to go into that area where you don’t belong and stake a claim? It started with Schaefer with the dollar rowhouse. If you’d agree to stay in it for 10 years, you could have it for a dollar, which was a kind of urban homesteading.” (Janis 2012)*

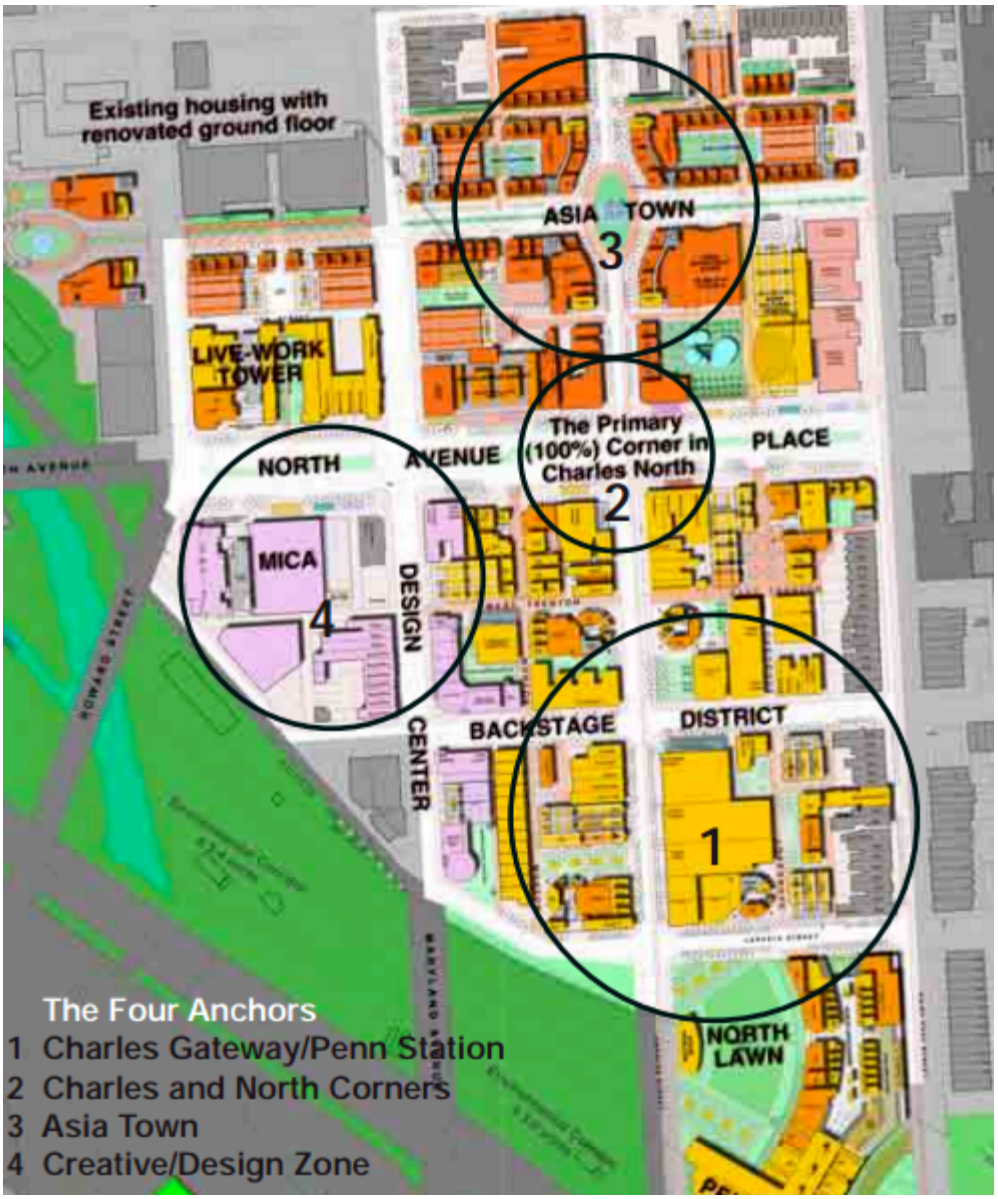


FIGURE 51 . THE FOUR ANCHORS OF STATION NORTH (BDC 2009)

Phases of the plan begin by supporting "the Pioneers," which refers to current businesses and venues (See Fig. 43) and follow with built projects, including live/work towers and Asia Town. The plan seems to have remained in Phase I since being removed from the BDC's website. I imagine it was removed for several reasons, one of which might be that it reads awkwardly, as if the author of the text may not have been a seasoned planner, and I am being generous.

Additionally, the vision may have changed, or even the BDC decided that the plan was "impossible" after all. Current marketing, in contrast, is polished and focused on what Station North is now - an "eclectic stop," but perhaps not yet a place to live (and ignores Charles North entirely). Station North, however, successfully becoming a place of entertainment. The New York Times reported on Station North at 10pm, calling it "Arts and Drafts."

> "Several arts districts have popped up in Baltimore in the past decade. The most successful has been Station North (www.stationnorth.org), the downtown area inhabited by artists, actors and students (and dropouts) from the nearby Maryland Institute College of Art and University of Baltimore. Over the past year, a project called Open Walls (openwallsbaltimore.com) has commissioned works from more than 20 street artists, whose **murals animate the neighborhood's ramshackle elegance.** You can see an art show, hear local sounds or catch a screening at the Metro Gallery (1700 North Charles Street; 410-244-0899; themetrogallery.net) or the Windup Space (12 West North Avenue; 410-244-8855; thewindupspace.com). Yet when it comes to night life, what Baltimore does best is the dive bar. There may be none better than Club Charles (1724 North Charles Street; 410-727-8815), a grimy, kitschy little joint with a masterful jukebox and regulars like the electro-pop ringleader Dan Deacon." (Wilder "36 Hours in Baltimore)

In a sense, then, Station North is broadly understood and experienced as a painted-up, ramshackle neighborhood that has some fun places to visit. It's just not all-encompassing enough to accomplish what the plan suggests, overall, which concentrates on major built elements rather than smaller, pioneering spaces for art, entertainment, live/working, or

activism. Sine Jensen, who has lived in Baltimore since 2002 and witnessed Station North's changes as an artist and activist, describes the redevelopment process:

> *"If you keep walking down North Ave towards Greenmount Cemetery, there's a big distinction between the people visiting [Station North] businesses and the residents there. There's a big contrast between people living on North Ave [and the more tourist-oriented areas].*
>
> *There's a sharp division, but it's not a takeover.*
>
> *I think it's somewhere in between the two extremes because I'm finding that it's not an authoritarian takeover of the area – I haven't seen that happening. I've heard of the 2008 plan of the huge makeover of Station North, but that's not how I've experienced it. But I do think there is a sharp division between surrounding residential areas and Station North. Station North is still sort of a muddy area – it doesn't have strict boundaries and there are still some of the old businesses there." (Jensen Personal Interview 2012)*

Sine is critical, however, of urban redevelopment in general in Baltimore. She sees it happening without taking the opinions of residents into account and for the sole purpose of attracting newcomers.

> *"...often when these urban renewal plans are happening many voices of people who will be affected negatively, low-income people of color residents, are not always at the table or informed.*

A lot of urban development – and Station North is a good example – centers around attracting newcomers... There's more focus on bringing in people with money than there is on focusing on families or opportunities for people in the neighborhood itself. It deepens those inequalities and shifts poor people around to different areas. The term revitalization does not always mean empowering and lifting up the folks already living in that area, instead, it seems like it focuses on bringing new people and possibly displacing those that live there.

At least in Station North that's the case. It's different in Hampden or Highlandtown or historically white areas, but in historically Black areas, racial tensions can be deepened, whereas Hampden is more so white-on-white gentrification. This kind of gentrification increases resentment. It was interesting to see the outrage about the recent murder in Mount Vernon where there was so much outrage and sadness around a murder, justifiably, compared to murders that happen outside of those areas, where the victims are poor people of color and they are not as paid attention to. There's less public outcry. After a murder like the one in Mt. Vernon, there also tends to be increased policing which increases racial tensions and is targeted towards Black people, specifically because of racial profiling. We know that 89% of people in the detention center in Baltimore are black, compared to 64% black population so that's really disproportionate. Racial profiling and increased policing is a problem for people of color. (Jensen Personal Interview 2012)

To Sine's point, Stephen Janis presents compelling evidence:

"Remember, when the ACLU and NAACP settled their lawsuit with the Baltimore Police Department about their illegal arrests, part of the stipulation of the lawsuit was that the police department admitted that they target poor, minority neighborhoods. That was where the bulk of that occurred, which was socially disruptive. The philosophy was "disrupt this space where people are poor, but shelter this space," which I think is interesting because it's a failed policy, failed miserably, but it's never really been discussed in any way." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

Sine points to a problem of development that (1) ignores the needs of residents and (2) aggravates existing racial tensions such as the type of discriminatory policing Stephen describes. For Sine, there is no possibility of discussing urban development without discussing racial inequality, and the same is true for many people living in poor neighborhoods who also see the two as going hand-in-hand. Although these processes of exclusion during the development process are felt, the players and the public/private relationships from which projects arise is not as fully understood by residents, even extremely knowledgeable ones like Sine. There is a sense of a shadow government, major power plays happening without approval, but the private actors involved and uneven tax incentive programs they control are not as well known.

The BDC is a good example of a type of shadow government in that it is a quasi-public entity responsible for Baltimore's development planning and implementation, but is not required to have public hearings in the process. In 2002, a national nonprofit called Good Jobs First[53] published a report titled "Subsidizing the Low Road: Economic Development in

[53] Good Jobs First describes itself as "a national policy resource center for grassroots groups and public officials, promoting corporate and government accountability in economic development and smart growth for working families." (Good Jobs First "About Us")

Baltimore," in which they heavily criticized both BDC's privilege of privacy and its ongoing development projects that depend largely on tax redistribution programs like TIF and PILOT (which I will define shortly). The authors of the report make two relevant recommendations:

> "Cap TIF and PILOT Property-Tax Costs. To control the harm to education and other public services, the city could set a cap of one or two percent of its property tax base that could be captured by either program. This way the city can balance its goals of economic growth and quality service provision."
>
> and
>
> "End the BDC's Privilege of Secrecy. Making the records of the Baltimore Development Corporation subject to Maryland's Public Information Act would be consistent with prevailing norms concerning open records and good government. While records are routinely withheld during active negotiations, once a deal is formally proposed, records of such negotiations are usually public information." (Davis and Brocht 51)

Stephen Janis has been witnessing the effects of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) financing for years. He understands the process, both as a resident and reporter as "fiscal displacement" in areas of redevelopment that puts an unequal burden on residents and part of the reason Baltimore can't seem to grow or even keep its population:

> *"What you could call it is fiscal displacement, because if you're giving property owners huge tax breaks and benefits that you're not affording to middle class neighborhoods,*

those residential neighborhoods have to make up the balance because they require probably the same services that would be required here. So you're disproportionately putting the burden on people who don't live in those [tax incentivized] places... So in a way, you're actually making poor people subsidized services for the rich. They'll argue that no one will move here anyway, but what does that mean, when other cities are growing and Baltimore is one of the few that's still shrinking? They challenged the census, but they're not going to win.

"This city has taken the TIF concept, which has been used in other cities in mostly poor areas and used it to mostly created a tax oasis in wealthy neighborhoods... In any other jurisdiction, the developer would pay part of it. The TIFs are in Belvedere Square, Inner Harbor East, and with tax benefits in an arts district they are creating another tax oasis. It's a way of giving up on the city as a place to live. You're saying that you're not going to live here unless you have some special break, unless you're poor and don't have the option to move.

For some reason Baltimore just doesn't attract people, and I don't know why, well, I know why... (laughs). But without people, who cares?" (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

Stephen laughs with a sense of black humor - that knowing what these problems are doesn't seem to help anyone impact policy. Even a major task force with some of the city's most powerful residents couldn't impact city policy. Following the 2002 report, this task force formed around "Baltimore City's Public/Private Developing Financing Efforts" (cite:). From January until June 2011,they met nine times, mainly to discuss TIF and PILOT financing. In Tax Increment

Financing, state and local governments can borrow from the city's tax pool in order to invest in public improvements and infrastructure by capturing the future incremental real property taxes the associated development projects generate. Payment In Lieu of Taxes "allows private developments to pay a smaller, negotiated, portion of real property taxes for economic development projects located in urban renewal areas" (City of Baltimore "Task Force Report" 2011). The two recommendations made above are intrinsically related to one another in that TIF's and PILOT's are generally initiated by BDC, supported by the Department of Finance. Commonly, TIF's and PILOT's result in reduced revenues distributed towards education, infrastructure, and other public services. Money is funneled into wealthy communities and away from poorer ones. In other words, these tax programs are used as tools by BDC to redistribute wealth in Baltimore.

There is a significant argument to be made here around what that means for a gentrifying area such as Station North. Often, gentrification (as a word) presupposes a kind of displacement of former residents. This is not the case in Station North. In fact, the BDC plan aims not to displace current residents. However, there is a displacement taking place - fiscal displacement through these tax redistribution programs.

In the conclusion of the task force's report, released in October 2011, the authors wrote:

> "The City of Baltimore has many economic development goals. The absence of any stated prioritization of these goals gives the appearance that the process is developer driven and thus reactionary. Additionally, a negative bias regarding the marketability of Baltimore exists, which seems to perpetuate the status quo. For example, comments like 'no one is banging down the door to develop in Baltimore' or 'you take what you can get' promote a sense of passivity." (8)

Due to these continually negative conditions, the task force recommended that Baltimore foster better coordination between the City Economic Development Agencies (HCD and BDC) and the Department of Planning, which seemed to have less power over the trends of development than those agencies. With an awareness of both the problems and atmosphere of public/private development in Baltimore, in November 2011, the task force asked Mayor Rawlings-Blake to put a moratorium on the TIF and PILOT programs, which she immediately denied. Someone should tell her: The spatial fix is a fetish, not a solution. In Stephen's words, "I think part of this is the logic that the city has learned based on the wrong lessons. I don't think tax breaks matter at the Inner Harbor - I think it's somewhat successful, but doesn't work as a template for everything." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

The Sounds of Improvement Alongside Decay

Material/physical improvement represents a hegemonic ideal of consumption while physical decay at the periphery is an improper type of consumption. In both cases, a layer of policy covers over everyday life, enforcing established expectations for behavior. But policy can't cover everything, so certain experiences of place are excluded, ignored, and punished. Examples of marginalized practices include underground economies, destructive crimes, and excessive consumption. What can non-productive expenditure, various forms of urban detritus, and rejected senses of place reveal about the experience of life in the city? How have ethnographers effectively revealed the richness of these experiences? In what space or for whom can there be valuable detritus and valueless redevelopment? How do people relate to different kinds of urban space? How do different people experience gentrified places vs. derelict places?

Ultimately, what is non-productive expenditure? Culture. That which actually falls outside the bounds of capitalism and which capitalism seeks to steal. That which unites otherwise distinct bodies in a slurry of intimacy in the brushing, touching, bleeding, fucking moments of everyday life. Upon the presence of sound, the body takes it in and hears. In fact, the perception of auditory images implies a response. As such, Bergson's concept of "creative evolution" is an apt title for describing (through the perception of sound with relation to the self and memory) the same process that Bataille and Lingis describe through nonproductive expenditure and encounters with "the other." In short, encounters with sound are akin to encounters with "the other," at times one and the same; additionally, the production and hearing of sound is at times an excessive and nonproductive activity, especially when performed playfully for the purpose of relinquishing extant notions of place and imagining new possibilities. Bergson writes in *Time and Free Will* of the possibility for creative evolution in music, not just the verbal:

> "How will the expressive or rather suggestive power of music be explained, if not by admitting that we repeat to ourselves the sounds heard, so as to carry ourselves back into the psychic state out of which they emerged, an original state, which nothing will express, but which something may suggest, viz., the very motion and attitude which the sound imparts to our body?" (44)

Therefore, it's not a far cry by moving beyond verbal language to music that the next step might be to theorize how creative evolution might occur through sound at large. In this section, I describe how this might happen using several works by Henri Bergson.

The shape of sound attacks, decays, sustains, and releases. The ears are affected by amplitude, how loud or soft it is and can only hear certain frequencies. The sound "awakens memory from its torpor," so to speak (*MM* 141). Conscious perception is then overlaid with

auditory memory-images which carry meaning that allow interpretation of the sounds in relation to other sounds, especially words and notes. With memory involved, no word or note is independent, but involved in a continuous correspondence with other auditory memory-images. With the sounds in relation, humans realize the sound is "essential" and are already starting to interpret. This immediate interpretation is part of attentive recognition - an attitude in which the subject represents selectively so that the intensity of perception and density of details actually changes (*MM*, 119, 138-9).

What will you hear, if you focus and listen, play with sounds on a map? A torrent of meanings, practices, and experiences that escape attempts at containment, at definition, and this is no more pronounced than in its immediate geography. Sound documents how these things interrupt urban developing. Sound cracks open the false, created vessel that contains "place" and then seeps through the cracks. Random yelling outside of the train station while people wait for the bus and try not to seem perturbed. A mother shouting at her son to quit walking into the street, cars are coming. The rubbing of broken glass edges on thin rubber soles of Chuck Taylors as a young artist, high on pills, photographs homeless men behind a rusty fence, leaning against an abandoned factory building. The one sick crunch of a dried out husk of a cockroach under my own feet as I walk down what otherwise looks like a brand new brick-laid sidewalk beside some restored rowhomes, its two-dimensional form belying their neat exteriors. The crust of the city sounds like itself, not like what anyone wants it to be. I trust this.

Conclusion: A Fragmentary Border

My fieldwork in Baltimore reveals that a spatial fix is occurring around the desirable traits or forces of power, productivity, and property. City government is aware that in the long term, to make a profit from

taxation, the best source of income is a combination of income and property tax from an increasing base of working middle class professionals who are also willing to reproduce and continue to populate the city. Home ownership is a necessary step towards this survival strategy. In attempts to preserve the quality of home ownership in Mt. Vernon and begin to encourage more around Penn Station, the city uses Station North as a boundary/buffer against Charles North, where crime and vacancy abound. By serving as the border between Mt. Vernon and Charles North, Station North serves as a border between economies (legal and illegal), volume levels, detritus and wealth, and distinct ways of going about daily life. For this reason, Station North resembles a frontier – a place of conquest, risky ventures, and experimental expansion. It does not yet resemble the planned vision for development, and its fragmented landscape can be imagined through focused listening to the sounds that move through the area.

VI. Conclusion: The Poetic City

A poetic city is different from the official city in the same way that a diary is different from a set of instructions. The official city points towards a possible future that often misapprehends the happenings, desires, and experiences of the present while relegating the past into pristine archives. The poetic city is messy and handwritten, embraces the presence of a multitude of bodies and does not seek to organize them in opposition to one another.

The poetic city is also a violent one, tense with confrontations, pregnant with an excess of unprocessed meanings. How does a white woman who is going to meet a friend for lunch respond to being told to suck a big black dick? This is a question produced here, and rather lyrically at that. She stops; she doesn't know how to respond; it's too far outside what she expected to happen. In these sonic moments outside of commoditized social relations, there are terrifying, exciting, sublime, unsafe, and inventive moments that are beyond "value." At its most fundamental human level, this is how social interaction unfolds – that's what it is.[54] But Baltimore is a city of hard boundaries that define its fragmented spaces – what the public sector can take on overlaid with what private developers want to invest in and maintain.

Station North is representative of both the officialized and everyday, poetic city: Station North is an example of what life actually looks and sounds like – but it also raises the question of how the city reacts to that dangerous potential, through policies, regulations, distributions of money, policing, marketing, and all the processes a city follows in attempts to make and unmake places, in attempts to survive. The city and its shadowy private entities like the Baltimore

[54] Some might call it "the Commons" but that is slightly outside the bounds of this project.

Development Corporation (BDC) decide which interactions will be neglected, punished, supported, or institutionalized.

My question is: What can be facilitated from the bottom up, through tactics instead of strategies, through nonproductive expenditure, playful imaginings of urban space using sound, and through the contestation of the self. What would it mean to unfix the city instead of constantly trying to fix it?

What the official city wants to have happen is quite ugly and, if it succeeds, will be devastating. But what's actually been happening here in Station North, by contrast, falls well outside the plan, at least in moments of everyday life, and is quite beautiful – an unfolding of celebration, art, explosions of violence, consumption, a burning off of excess energy that gets channeled into this border zone. It reminds me of how John Waters described Baltimore once, saying "you'll never discover a stranger city with such extreme style" (Wilder "36 Hours in Baltimore).

The Collective Nightmare

In his novelzine, *This Dream Called Death*, Stephen Janis allegorizes these explosions of homicide and art, the inability to dream, and when dreams do happen, they get warped and twisted into harmful policies. In the book, city residents dream about death - violent, scary dreams that leave their bodies in twitching and odd positions before the dreamers awaken, confusing and scared, knowing that they will be punished by having to ration their sleep. Significantly, mainly black citizens are dreaming in this way. As more and more residents have dreams about death, the city government scrambles to control, restrain, and forcefully regulate the situation. And just beneath the fear-mongering surface of corrupt politics, dark secrets lurk -

violence, transgression, and terrifying excess. The suspense builds into hopelessness as the narrator learns he can trust no one. Dreaming about death stands as a metaphor for the kind of nonproductive expenditure, the refusal of labor, and the violent desire that dominant powers in the city seek to contain; dreaming about death is the uncontainable utterance, action, sound, need, burning, glorious, catastrophic, that which appears in Bataille, Lingis, and, here, Janis. I say the novel is allegorical because, coming from Baltimore myself, I see how the congruent story of Balaise is woven carefully around Baltimore, a thin but important veil to allow for a disturbing realization - that the implications of the injustices in the book are, in fact, real. As such, Janis offers a powerful critique of the simplistic justification used in "fixing" the city and the "collective nightmare" of its people (Janis *Dream* 25). Janis writes,

> *"It's called the broken spirit theory," Fran explained. "If you allow the psychological health of a community to deteriorate, than other social ills follow."*
>
> *"The deputy mayor has concluded that certain citizens of Balaise are hopelessly negative, and he intends to fix them."*
>
> *...Fix the minor mental disturbances - the petty depression, the temporary trauma - and the general mental attitude of the population and other social ills will improve too. Criminal behaviors, drug addiction, thievery all decline as citizens change their attitudes, improve their mental health, and in the end, believe. (25)*

Once the city loses sight of social sustainability in favor of political survival, profiteering, or entertainment (to make docile the masses or punish them), it's hard to revert to thinking of

preventative measures such as education, at least from the top down. And while trying to attract outside people as residents, Baltimore is not just forgetting but also attempting to quash the betterment of the lives of people who already live there. In the process, the weight of the city, in its desperate need for funds and homeowners, is born by a disproportionately and historically underprivileged portion of the population – the working poor. Baltimore is shrinking and its financial base can only do the same. Where is the money to be made? With that trend of neglect in place, will the creative class those policies successfully brought in stick around? What goes off the record in conversations about Baltimore? Everyone I spoke to hesitated to talk about the political game being played in Baltimore, a shameful and dangerous set of circumstances. The question arises – how did they [city government] ever think *that* was a good idea? How did they convince themselves that *this* would fix the city? (Whatever this or that might be.) Stephen's answer (about Baltimore, not the fictional Balaise) is:

> *"I think part of this is the logic that the city has learned based on the wrong lessons. I don't think tax breaks matter at the Inner Harbor - I think it's somewhat successful, but doesn't work as a template for everything."*
>
> *So what should the city do, I asked. It was the end of the interview and my research. Time for wildly drawn conclusions or laughter or a small seed of an idea. What he said was totally aligned with Bataille, as I'd come to expect from him.*
>
> *"Let go of the pretense. It would be more fun. It can't really get much more dangerous. Over labor day weekend, 16 people were shot and six were killed. You can't get a lot*

more dangerous than that. And it has little to do with whether you have an art district or not." (Janis Personal Interview 2012)

The fix attempts to capture new capital by bringing in new residents. It's a quick fix and unsustainable over a period of anything more than five years because the city doesn't take care of residents, instead continually adhering to the "fixing" strategies that attracted them there to begin with: tax oases, cheap vacants, shiny new art districts, and the illusion of safety in certain neighborhoods, all laid out over the enticing grime of Baltimore's past. Little do gentrifiers realize that it remains, threatening and uncontainable, in the present. The sickening contradiction is representative of a broken, circular logic of city politics that I can think of no better way to illustrate than through an accidentally ethnographic moment held with friends.

"Is it our job to stick around for the social experiment?"

I have friends who live in Mount Vernon and serve as two examples of just that type of desirable city resident. Both are people of color who are highly educated and spent years participating in the city's planning process. Overall, Baltimore has been successful in attracting young, creative people like this couple who are interested in participating in the city's economy, spending money, enjoying entertainment options, and volunteering on boards committed to improving the city's design.

They are considering a big move, and they have nearly decided not to stay in Baltimore because they want to start a family together. I asked them why they are disinclined to raise kids in the city, anticipating a response about violence and crime. Their concern was less about safety and more about education and daily life. They feel they have contributed a lot to the city

as a whole, from the inside and outside, but haven't seen movement in the right direction overall. They feel like the city is so focused on attracting new residents that it's not able to attend to the needs of the current residents who are hoping for the kind of education that would lead to their children's success.

Baltimore has not only been successful in attracting them to live there, at least for a few years, but also in gaining their care and concern. Both feel slightly guilty for wanting to leave. They'd rather stay and help, but feel disempowered by their knowledge of the city's inner workings and lack of affectivity in making the changes so desperately needed. They ask: "Is it our job to stick around for the social experiment?"

The city's hopelessness when it comes to existing residents pairs with a sense of hope in attracting new ones. The transfusion of residents is not a permanent fix, though, if existing residents begin to feel that contagious hopelessness and decide to move to a different place that cares better for its populace. Only one solution presents itself: investment in services for people who live in all parts of the city.

A Poetic Unfixing

In their recent article, "Radical Geography and its Critical Standpoints: Embracing the Normative," Elizabeth Olson and Andrew Sayer argue that normative thinking "concerns well-being and its preconditions, and difficult though these are to define, discover and create, they are not merely a product of collective wishful thinking, but something we can be more or less mistaken or correct about." (Olson and Sayer 195) Normative thinking allows academic researchers to relate empirical findings to changes in policy and ways of understanding the city,

in this case, a concern for low-income city residents and minority groups who are impoverished, underserved, and marginalized.

However, seeing how politics play out in everyday life is not the same as "naively inventing imaginary political worlds" (Wilson *Cities,* 131). For that reason, the normative part of this project in its conclusion relies heavily on Baltimore itself, only making particular suggestions for urban politics there, but in a way that could be applied through method and approach at a larger scale. In Baltimore, as in many other cities, there are swaths of marginalized land that self-sustain through drugs, alcohol, prostitution, and funeral parlors. In advanced marginalized places, the state has a bounded, territorial way of viewing humans as detritus, decomposing, useless messes just waiting for demolition, cleansing, and making productive. As Eli Whitener told me in our interview, "This is hell. Hell is the underground, and it's all fiction." It's also completely real, and it seems hopeless. By systematically relating theories of race, crime, and space with each other and with real, urban cases, I hope to be part of some ongoing discussion that race is still a word that matters; segregation and exclusion are still extensive and active parts of urban growth and change; and by connecting theory with practice, new thinking can transform the way cities change. Urban segregation is a long supported institutional apparatus that has been difficult to upset. It remains a major roadblock to today's civil rights movement that will continue to haunt efforts to repair this unequal society. Along with essentialized categories of race, criminal behavior, and their spatial counterparts, geographies that attempt to bestow agency on marginalized groups and places must be rethought from within if they are to be disassembled at all.

The way we [academics, planners, designers, artists, people] theorize race, crime, and space is more than a way to interpret those important urban problems. The way we talk about and theorize concepts is in direct relation to the problems themselves. Discourse in social

science connects to political discourse, as exemplified by neoliberal adaptations of W. J. Wilson's theorization of social pathology. Ideologies built from powerful political discourses then affect everyday conduct, common sense, and morality. The values and beliefs that emerge have direct impact on the built environment through changes in development and investment strategies. The way we think, and therefore talk, about race, space, and crime determines who's in and who's out. The core of geographic inquiries in race, crime, and space must be questioned from the start on all fronts – docility and violent intent, greed and poor planning, fearful beliefs and material processes. Without real changes in policy, employment, incarceration, the built environment, and urban organization, people will continue to exist as subjects of a state that allows oppression, exclusion, and death to shape cities and destroy lives.

Instead, ideal progressive strategies can be described as having the goals of inclusion, access, and participation at its core, which can be reached by supporting local cultural production in schools, community centers, and social service centers. Instead of strengthening a new district identity so that investment can be channeled towards divergent development, existing community identity and income should be strengthened. This kind of cultural policy would restrict private developers from making development decisions. Unfortunately, when cities try to control developer decisionmaking, developers may choose to relocate instead. This capitalist state of affairs puts a lot of pressure on cities to have their development goals "coincide with the broader entrepreneurial agenda of enhancing the local tax base or generating consumer spending." (Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris 355) In the face of this pressure, what can government do? Can it integrate everyday life and the needs of poor urban residents into the city as an institution?

Cities must learn and let cultural policy change to reflect the real relevance of creativity in cities, more than developing, building, making things that attract capital. Additionally, cultural

policy should veer away from simplistic notions of creativity that result in social inequality. Individuals and classes of people should not be thought to have essential qualities of creativity. Instead, situations and periods of time can be embedded with creative/critical output. Arts and culture districts can be a positive expression of change in society, but participants must be willing to make change by changing themselves, supported by creative policy that has a social justice agenda instead of the overriding goal of capitalist accumulation or even the possibilities of strong working and middle classes, while leaving the nonworking poor out of consideration. Creativity is indeed about changing things, and knowing what to change, which makes critical thinking the salient characteristic of creativity. And ultimately, transformations of public consciousness and the beginnings of community require what Lingis calls "self-contestation" (Lingis, 1994).

The End of the Line: Bataille's Hope

In *The Community of those who have Nothing in Common*, Alphonso Lingis follows the trail of Bataille's thinking that community can only occur through the intimacy derived from vulnerability of self-contestation rather than self-affirmation. Humans are only man-made to an extent, and that man-made part is defined through symbolic systems of language, ritual, and art for purposes of orientation, communication, and self-control (Lingis *Community*, 9) or perhaps better stated, a rational sense of obedience, which is not necessarily a good thing although it does contribute to the productivity of the worker as part of the capitalist city. In fact, the more that work can become embedded, without interruption, into the thought processes of the worker, and the more unquestioned those thought processes become, the more automatic, depersonalized, and machinized the working process. In an article that also puts Bataille and

Marx in dialog, Habermas concurs: "The sphere of labor has to be bounded by limits which 'banish' the violence of an exuberant nature 'from the ordinary course of affairs'" (year: 96). But in response to the delimited working class, the *other* community grows up and exists in a way that "troubles the rational community, as its double or its shadow," resulting in exposure to the vulnerability that this disobedient other presents (10).

I return to the differences between Bataille and Marx, extensively put in conversation in previous chapters with a final argument here to emphasize the possibilities and necessities raised as part of this research, highlighted in the heterogeneous approach to community held by both Lingis and Bataille. The homogeneous working class is theoretically oppositional in both Marx and Bataille, in that erotic, criminal, and generally marginal behaviors are antagonistically related to productive labor. Any of these behavior patterns can be adopted by any person in any class. So how do some of those behaviors get attached to classes and races in a naturalized way? Partially, class behavior is essentialized through exclusion surrounding the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie makes itself separate in order to maintain its homogeneity and position. In the process, rank and homogeneity are conjoined. As capitalists, the bourgeoisie must behave in certain ways to generate profit and reinvest that profit in further ventures in the hopes of improving their "position" relative to the wealth of other capitalists. Only those with nothing to lose (having too much money or too little to bother saving) have money to blow or inclination to spend, consume, and interact without restraint.[55] The homogeneity of the bourgeoisie is defined by moral restraint as a way to allow "unrestricted play for the bend of the individual capitalist."[56] The moral restraint of the bourgeois has been called the "producer ethic" and

[55] Again, there is the question of luxury, what it is and how it is performed. Bataille defines only three luxuries of nature: eating, death, and sexual reproduction. (AS 33)

[56] The context of the quotation is: "The same bourgeois mind which praises division of labour in the workshop, lifelong annexation of the labourer to a partial operation, and his complete subjection to capital, as being an organization of labour that increases its productiveness – that same bourgeois mind

carries with it the virtues of "frugality, sobriety, and the self-repressing postponement of pleasure in the interests of productive labor." (Bennett 269) The producer ethic accomplishes a certain stimulation of capital by unbridling the "consumer ethic" which values spending, satisfaction of desires, trends and fashion, and general consumption in stark contrast to the 'dignity of labor.' The value of restraint sets up a kind of false modesty, and therefore, a false binary as it necessitates the consumptive exuberance and non-productive expenditure which is then viewed as deviant and grotesque.[57] This classification can only be resolved in his mind by spending oneself without limit, without aim, and without productive intent, surpassing the self through excess and transgression, only to return, changed; this is the repressed human desire that bourgeois capitalism both excludes and envies.

So where do Marx and Bataille find hope in the fragmentation that happens through capital? At some point, the answer lies in the categories of the heterogeneous and homogeneous through which action and change can happen. Bataille develops the heterogeneous as a name for "all those elements that resist assimilation to the bourgeois form of life and to the routines of everyday life, just as they evade the methodical grasp of the sciences." (Habermas 80) The heterogeneous is apparent in moments of bodily shock when homogeneous categories fall apart so that the subject can interact with the world. The concept

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denounces with equal vigour every conscious attempt to socially control and regulate the process of production, as an inroad upon such sacred things as the rights of property, freedom and unrestricted play for the bend of the individual capitalist." (Capital 337)

[57] The bourgeoisie is not aware of this deception, as Bataille describes, "The opposition only concerned (and only affected) the amount of the expenditure. Bourgeois capitalism was opposed to luxury, but only in a feeble and illogical way: Its avarice and its action did not actually reduce luxury, but if one excludes the uncalculated effects, it never departed from laissez-faire." (*AS,* 137) The result of this illogical deception is a "world of confusion" in which men are measured according to mistaken values that are naturalized into rank, class, race, gender, and other stratified categories in which all humans become things through consent and coercion. (AS 138) This process sets up oppositional values of restraint and consumption that also hide the true nature of capitalism, which Bataille explains in *The Accursed Share* (75). Bataille reveals that classification of bodies into categories of wealth and morality are a false and "unattainable" ideal. (136)

is thereby applied to social groups, especially marginalized ones that exceed normal social behavior. Habermas lists those marginalized groups as the "pariahs and the untouchables, the prostitutes or the lumpen-proletariat, the crazies, the rioters and revolutionaries, the poets or the bohemians." (80) There are no uniting factors in Bataille's heterogeneous dissidents except that they behave erotically, ecstatically, and break social boundaries by encountering the material and social world outside of themselves again and again.

In Stallybrass' article, "Marx and Heterogeneity: Thinking the Lumpenproletariat," he argues that Marx makes the distinction between the lumpenproletariat and the proletariat, thereby inventing a separated, scorned, degraded, accursed race. The lumpenproletariat then becomes the other that allows the same, the homogenous, to thrive. For Stallybrass, it is the racialization and pervasiveness of the lumpenproletariat that is both problematic and hopeful. These knaves are supposed as depraved by nature, unavoidably criminal. The deterministic aspect of such a damning description of any grouping of otherwise uncommon bodies is in the decayed recognition that the bourgeoisie lusts after the lumpenproletariat's freedom. As Marx insults the depraved upper class because they fall into non-productive patterns of consumption similar to those of the lumpenproletariat, now these nonproductive bodies are aligned in an uneven relationship of consumption and signification.

Productive and non-productive expenditure are viewed as propensities of classes that relate to violence and intimacy. Revolutionary expenditure and freedom through consumption is linked to abject class in the destruction of utility. Consuming without aim and without profit is a type of sacrifice that severs the tie to "the world of profitable activity." This type of non-productive expenditure is temporal in certain ways. Bataille explains how the destruction of utility disengages from the temporality of the future and all related labor and planning:

> "I submit that madness itself gives a rarefied idea of the free 'subject,' unsubordinated to the 'real' order and occupied only with the present. . . . I can at once, in disorder, make an instantaneous consumption of all that I possess. This useless consumption is what suits me, once my concern for the morrow is removed. And if I thus consume immoderately, I reveal to my fellow beings that which I am intimately: Consumption is the way in which separate beings communicate." (*AS,* 59-59)

By theorizing intimacy and revolution through non-productive expenditure, Bataille again shows us how thinking through surplus instead of lack reveals new solutions to old problems. The reversal of an economic dependence on limits and lack into a whole world (beyond the economy itself) of surplus is not so much in disagreement with Marx as surpassing his logic temporally, factoring in a range of human drives and natural processes that beg us to waste now, not in the future. Bataille's logic is postrevolutionary where Marx's is pre-revolutionary.

I have mediated this conversation between Marx and Bataille in order to lead to this point in which nonproductive expenditure is understood as (1) attached to certain types of bodies and places that are subsequently seen as useless, wasted, wasteful, and criminal such that those same bodies and spaces are open for surveillance and punitive measures. And (2) is related to the informal economy that escapes capitalism and, as such, is viewed as threatening to the economic stability of a city like Baltimore. In terms of informal economies, nonproductive expenditure is deemed illegal and illicit, attached to the black Other in Baltimore that threatens to overwhelm its attempts at "fixing" the urban economy, populus, and culture. In direct juxtaposition, the informal economy that has grown up around DIY culture is attached to young, white city residents who are able to provide the city with the creative capital it desires in order to attract new homeowners and tourist spending. As such, that informal economy is both tolerated and appropriated, valorized as productive expenditure. This disjuncture further divides

Baltimore along the lines of race, class, and ways of living, and so amounts to an ongoing societal fracturing parallel to the individual alienation that occurs due to capitalism itself.

However, the very nature of the problem of societal fracturing and individual alienation has changed. Like Marx, Bataille recognizes the master-slave relationship inherent in capitalism, but different from Marx, suggests that a proletarian revolution is based on very different principles of labor, accumulation, and expenditure. He places great importance on the privileging of excessive, base experiences that the workers sell their labor power to obtain – the same that the bourgeoisie has left behind. The commodity, fetishized, still regulates human relations, but Bataille has a different vision of communication and intimacy that surpasses the commodity. Intimacy occurs not through finding the self by remedying the alienation that occurs because of various antagonisms, but by living outside of the sphere of production and surpassing the boundaries of one's own body. Just as Marx sees a thread of hope and freedom in the interchangeability of the worker turning into a collective, through forced process of alienation, Bataille sees hope in the basic drives of mankind that veer away from production-oriented conception of the social. Those basic drives are violent and exuberant, exposing "the severity of our will" in spontaneous action. Thus, our own sovereignty is made visible in others and we tremble with fear (Bataille *AS,* 34). The community that arises from these "dangerous" heterogeneous encounters is one that has nothing more in common but their paradoxical and simultaneous freedom and subjugation. This same relationship is at play in Baltimore, but does not arise from a fear of revolutionary action so much as a desire to consume the character of depravity, the eclecticism of the city. In gentrified spaces like Station North and the Lower East Side of New York, however, the desire for depravity, grit, and grime is translated into a relationship of spatial and cultural consumption.

The Reclamation of Sovereignty through Self-Contestation

Ways of life, crossings, crashings happen despite planning and display that Station North is utterly porous. The space is ever-haunted by attempts to cover over histories even as a celebratory space is produced anew, moment by moment.

I stand across from the Hess gas station and wait for something to happen. A big black suburban has a trunk full of subwoofer and the bass beat drowns out everything else. The tank is full, the sound fades away, east down North Ave.

I walk down a back alley and hear children laughing. I approach a playground, can't see the children but look through the chain link fence anyway. A Hispanic woman walks around the corner towards the sounds of laughter. She waves and smiles at me, presumably because I am also a young woman. What would she have done if I appeared otherwise?

I pause to sit at a park on the corner, trash in its concrete pockets, trees silent, no birds. Nothing here. What happens here at night?

I hear tiny wheels skidding over wood and the plop of a body hitting pavement, a grunt. This is hidden from me behind a heavily graffitied wall, but I am curious to see who is skateboarding and find a little crack to peek through. What a park! The skateboarder

has left, no one there at midday. Maybe it was his work break. Maybe he's gone for ice or a bandage. I move on.

A woman and man are fighting in their backyard. I try not to listen. I hear them anyway. But the words are angry, blurred, and heavily urban, hard for me to know. I haven't been there, but now I can almost imagine.

FIGURE 52. SOUND MAP . GAS STATION SOUND LOCATION

10-2011 Bass Booming at Gas Station

2025 North Charles St.

Music emerges from the open windows and booming subwoofer of an SUV at the gas station.

There were eight shootings this weekend. There were 16 over Labor Day weekend and six deaths. Crime is up, even though the mayor says otherwise. It's how you measure it. Stephen

Janis thinks crime is a defunct word. It does nothing but continue the same way of thinking about violence and punishment. We need a new way of thinking about things. We need new words. Instead of measuring "crime," we need "a dysfunction quotient, something that measures the despair, thus stimulating new solutions" (Janis Personal Interview 2012). We need new ways of shocking ourselves out of old cycles of thinking because we are trapped in old cycles of punishment and development that reify racial inequality and systems of poverty. The old idea of demolishing and dispersing the "poor" (a vague guise for black and criminal, in the case of Baltimore) is not only ineffectual and oppressive, but overtly hierarchical in its language of "wiping clean" and "starting fresh." It tells people the place is dirty, diseased, depressed… full of death, already almost dead. The idea of sanitizing and revitalizing has remained as a relic of urban renewal and social pathology theories, carried through policing strategies and conceptions of crime. There is danger in the continuation of such strategies and language to solve urban problems.

The ignorance of the dead and dying parts of the city and its people is akin to Lingis' idea of a community forming through self-contestation, mentioned previously in this chapter. In part, one must sense one's surroundings through the body with a willingness to touch and be touched. Self-contestation occurs through encounters with "the other" and through exuberant consumption and catastrophic violence, through leaving the self, unraveling the premises by which one goes about daily life, and returning changed, slightly unbound, and questioning. By having a "surface-sensitivity" using the body, a person's "depth-perception of the other" is enabled, understanding that other as "breathing and sweating" and below the surface full of "glandular functionings, circulatory currents, a specific metabolism," as human with desires, having traveled here and there, having hurdled obstacles, and having fled danger (Lingis *Community*, 23). Our senses allow elaboration and imagination, empathy and more... to feel

momentarily "arrested in [one's] own intentions," to feel too much (28). To feel much more than a worker needs in order to work, and to question the premises by which one goes about living.

What is it about urban development that seeks to seal its productive residents off from self-contestation at all costs? These kinds of behaviors, encounters, speculations do not make for good workers. But for a city that relies, in part, on artists and creative production, how must urban development respond to any associated desires and what kinds of places emerge? What does this mean for an arts/culture/entertainment district? Well, the encounter should be preserved for the consumption of otherness, but the self-contestation part should be avoided in order to circumvent a sniggling sense of disquiet or danger. The preservation of encounters with otherness, or some semblance of it, and simultaneous avoidance of self-contestation might be accomplished by making environmental remnants of otherness available - the inspiration without actual other, the Art without the Homicide. Disciplining bodies or outright removal/disbanding of the other can be enacted through development strategies, such as master planning, taxation, code enforcement, and policing and surveillance, but by leaving the spatial qualities of otherness to be consumed, the bourgeois fascination with the lumpenproletariat is safely allowed.

In the poetic city, and in Baltimore specifically, this strategy of making a facade of otherness cannot actually be accomplished because of the movements of all sorts of people, each enacting their own otherness, but especially the movement of the nonworking lumpenproletariat. They are not contained or boarded off and they do necessitate a leaving-of-and-returning-to the self. As in my ethnographic portrait of Mount Vernon, people are not confronted in the same way by the affirmations of those who are so similar to themselves. And so they must ask themselves, "Where is it safe to go?" which means "Where will I be self-

affirmed and safe from bodily harm?" But Station North, in fact, operates as a place to journey, to encounter purposefully, to be consumed and to consume, but not necessarily in a productive way. Baltimore is a good place for that, which is why bubbling off certain neighborhoods strikes some residents as unnatural, especially when crossing that street and witnessing utter decay and desolation. Such divides are difficult to cross, but the false and imposed structures of racial and economic division made visible, audible, and palpable are unavoidably meaningful. One can count on being appalled. It's impossible to ignore and, at times, terrifyingly sad, as stated in an interview with Baltimore resident, musician, and activist, Sine Jensen.

> *It's not a love/hate relationship [with Baltimore], but the love is at once joyous and sad. What's happening in the city is obviously difficult sometimes, but I'm committed to staying here, maybe because of that.*
>
> *I love Baltimore, but I also think it's a city where there's a lot of despair, poverty... but also a lot of potential. A lot of potential in organizing by the people who live here. There are people who are really committed to staying here and struggling to make this a better place, maybe in spite of all of that [despair, etc.], maybe because of all of that. I don't know. There's a lot of commitment and it's inspiring (to make this a better place). My relationship is always going back and forth, and I feel like I'm not alone in that – I'm lucky to have even the choice to leave Baltimore, which a lot of people don't have. I'm committed to staying here.*
>
> *(Jensen Personal Interview 2012)*

Sine claims that the sadness holds her here, and the desire to transform and be transformed is not unique to her, but is a frustrating yet enlivening condition to which people wish to be exposed throughout the city. As such, the addiction to the spatio-cultural-racial fix on the part of the city is subverted by an addiction of the part of the city's activists who are constantly being changed by the city's zones of devastation, which enable the possibilities for all kinds of contestation to exist. To be addicted to the empowerment that comes as the self changes is to be reliant on encounters with the other. It keeps some people living there by choice. Some people don't have the choice to stay or leave, but are limited and limited again to an ever shrinking set of decisions to make, actions to take, questions to ask.

FIGURE 53 . GAS STATION IN STATION NORTH . PHOTOGRAPH BY AUTHOR

I park the car at the gas station on Charles, pumping it for the drive home. It's the end of the road, though - my last trip to Baltimore for this research. I climb out loosely, tired from a day of final interviews in which I wrapped up strands of thinking with those who

have become or remained friends through the research. I see a black man with a beard walking towards me, smiling, missing his front teeth, he looks into my eyes. His are glistening, the moment is intimate and he speaks softly, lucidly, but his questions are vague, with an existential quality as they seem to be self-directed, not requiring response:

Should I? I don't know, should I? I think I should.

He turns from me and disappears, leaving me no time to speak. So I pump gas. Almost done. Where did he go? I remember there being wads of newspaper in his hand. Sometimes at stoplights in Baltimore, men will scrub at your windshield and then ask for money. But he isn't doing that. I walk around the car and he's hunched over wiping my wheels down. He moves away from the front right hubcap and around to the front left. Tears prick, I get out my wallet. What else can I do? I encourage him to stop and attempt to hand him a little cash. He won't take it at first.

I'm not doing this for money. This is what I do.

To me, the line he is drawing doesn't matter. To me, it seems we're in a state of exchange. His labor is being performed without my consent and he is already cleaning the hubcaps of my car. I insist and he takes the cash. I thank him and assume he's going to walk away, money earned. But he keeps scrubbing my front wheel. I climb into the car, roll down the window and warn him gently that I'm getting ready to leave. He keeps

scrubbing. I start the engine. My heart is beating out of my chest, but I can't identify the string of emotions pulsing through me immediately.

I warn him again, "Sir, I'm about to drive away. Thank you so much. I'm getting ready to leave." He backs away this time, smiles at me again, and I drive away, west down North Ave, and home. I wonder if his question, Should I?*, and his answer,* I think I should*, are his one and only way of claiming some remnant of sovereignty. If his denial of money was to show that he was capable of doing this because it was his choice, his production, his labor, and belonging to him for a singular moment in which he refused payment which signified that he could make that choice too. And after accepting payment, continuing to labor over the wheel to enforce his own decision to be doing that.*

I identify the source of my tears - extreme shame. What in this life has entitled me to this path, writing a dissertation about the kind of suffering I see in Baltimore that I can't even imagine. I can ask my research questions, I can try to answer them, I am privileged to have the questions in the first place. And in the final moment, as a gift, I see the skew, I feel the unevenness of my own existence, of Baltimore, of this man who bent to clean my car, and I hear his question, the only question he claims as his own, and I repeat it here because it's the only story he told me:

Should I?

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