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Different Welfare Regimes, Similar Outcomes? The Impact of Social Policy on Homeless People's Life Courses and Exit Chances in Berlin and Los Angeles

by

Jürgen von Mahs

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ABSTRACT

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DIFFERENT WELFARE REGIMES, SIMILAR OUTCOMES? THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL POLICY ON HOMELESS PEOPLE'S LIFE COURSES AND EXIT CHANCES IN BERLIN AND LOS ANGELES

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The objective of this thesis is to explain why the prevalence and characteristics of homeless people in German cities largely resemble those of U.S. cities and furthermore why the durations of homelessness are even longer in Germany despite Germany's more comprehensive and interventionist welfare state. Specifically, this thesis draws upon original research to examine how public policy affects homeless people's exit chances in Berlin in comparison to existing research on homelessness in Los Angeles. Using ethnographic research methods, this study devises a life course typology based on similarities in the respondents' biographies to provide a nuanced analysis of homeless people's strategies to find employment and housing in Berlin and the ways in which public policy intervention affects such exit strategies. This research indicates that the inability of many homeless people in Berlin to exit homelessness as well as the long durations experienced by successful respondents are primarily due to welfare state deficiencies at the local scale which largely offset many of the comprehensive and interventionist policies at the federal level. Specifically, the local welfare state in Berlin is unable to accommodate life course specific needs and problems in order to assist homeless people in surmounting formidable market barriers which are more pronounced than in Los Angeles' more flexible, less regulated, and more exploitative markets. While the latter finding confirms existing assumptions underlying welfare regime theory about differences between the country's welfare regimes, the study also suggests that "successful" welfare state performance is not only a function of the nature and extent of the corresponding welfare system but rather its ability to flexibly address individual needs and expectations.

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Preface

My interest in comparative social policy analysis grew out of my participation as a Fulbright scholar in a number of research projects examining the impact of urban change on homelessness in Los Angeles. Working with Professors Michael Dear and Jennifer Wolch at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, I saw how economic globalization and neoliberal welfare state restructuring intersect at the urban scale resulting in a massive proliferation of homelessness. I also saw that such societal and institutional processes have a profound effect on homeless people's life circumstances and their ability to overcome homelessness as they find themselves entrapped in impoverished ghetto areas, neglected and excluded by society and the state, and left to their own devices. At the same time, however, I also recognized the tremendous strength, courage, and ingenuity that homeless people apply to deal with adversity and neglect. This latter point in particular has shaped my understanding that any meaningful examination of homelessness must put homeless people and their personal experiences in the centre of analysis.

Upon completing my studies in Los Angeles, I returned to Europe with a clear idea that I would conduct a comparative analysis of policy impacts in Germany, the country that I have lived in for most of my life, and the United States as the topic for my doctoral dissertation. Alarmed by what I had witnessed in the U.S., my main intentions were two-fold. First, I wanted to demonstrate to a U.S. audience that policy alternatives to the rudimentary U.S. social policy approach exist and to use the German welfare state as an example of how a better political approach to homelessness is both possible and doable. Second, I wanted to use the comparison to alert a German audience to the dangers of emulating neoliberal policy reforms in the wake of the political success of U.S. President Clinton's "Welfare Reform" and British Prime Minister Blair's "Third Way."

Yet as I began to conduct research on the nature and extent of homelessness and homeless policy in Germany, I discovered something that truly surprised me – the nature and extent of homelessness in Germany is quite similar to that in the United States despite the fact that Germany has, by any standard, a more comprehensive and generous welfare system. This finding, in turn, caused me to rethink my assumptions about the relationship between public policy intervention and outcomes. This thesis, therefore, tries to explain this rather surprising contradiction of different welfare systems yet similar outcomes in terms of what constitutes successful policy and what factors might mitigate this relationship.

Acknowledgements

Many people have provided me with support during the process of writing this thesis and I am grateful for their efforts. My academic advisors Susan Halford and Traute Meyer above all have been most responsible for the completion of this thesis – without their dedication, insight, unwavering support and patience I would not have been able to complete this thesis under quite unusual circumstances. Thanks also to my reviewers Paul Bridgen and Patricia Kennett and Sue Heath, member of my dissertation committee, for their immensely useful comments and suggestions. I would also like to acknowledge the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation and the German Marshal Fund for providing the funding for this dissertation research.

In Los Angeles, I would like to thank Michael Dear, Laura Pulido, and Jennifer Wolch at the University of Southern California for providing valuable insight and support, Carol Walker and Jacob Aguilar at the Department of Public Social Services for setting up key informant interviews, as well as the numerous people I had a chance to talk to and learn from during my visit in the summer of 1997. In Washington D.C. I would like to acknowledge Barbara Duffield and Michael Stoops at the National Coalition for the Homeless, George Fergusson at the Interagency Council for the Homeless, and Neil Bomberg at the National Association of Counties for helping me with referrals and advice. Moreover, many thanks to Melissa Gilbert, Michelle Massuci, and Dan Tompkins at Temple University, Dennis Culhane at the University of Pennsylvania, Steve Metraux at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, Don Mitchell at Syracuse University, and James Wright at the University of Central Florida for valuable assistance, feedback, and suggestions that helped me to improve this thesis.

In Berlin, I would like to thank my friend Alexander Kühl who provided me with shelter and support during my numerous visits. Thanks to Margit Mayer, Volker Eick, Jens Sambale, and Dominik Veith at the JFK Institute for North America Studies at the Free University for providing me with access to data and for referring me to key informants. I would also like to express gratitude to Klaus Breitfeld, Stefan Schneider, and Uta Sternal for giving me permission and support to conduct research at the facilities they represent. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the numerous people who shared their time and expertise for giving me the opportunity to learn about homelessness and to build the empirical basis for this research. Thanks also to Christian Schubert in Bamberg for his friendship and support with computer related issues.

Most of all, I would like to thank the twenty-eight homeless respondents for their willingness to share their life experiences with me and for their trust. I have gained a lot of respect for each and every one of the people I had a chance to meet and whose lives I had been able to study. I hope I have been able to accurately capture their life stories, struggles, and immense courage under extremely trying circumstances. I hope that they have been able to overcome the predicament of homelessness and to fulfil their personal goals.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife Melissa Gilbert for her love and patience as well as her intellectual support and stimulation. Her insight, wisdom, persistence gave me the necessary strength to carry on and to complete this thesis. Finally, my sons Sam and Ben who were born during the writing of this thesis have given me reason for hope for a better and more just world. It is for their future that I hope that we find a way to end the, in Gandhi's words, greatest injustice of all – poverty – and thus build a inclusive, tolerant, and peaceful future in which all people have a chance to realize their dreams.

List of Abbreviations (with translations)

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children (federal welfare program for impoverished families until 1996, USA)
ALH	Arbeitslosenhilfe (Unemployment Assistance, Germany)
ALG	Arbeitslosengeld (Unemployment Compensation, Germany)
ALP	Active Labour Market Policies
BSHG	Bundessozialhilfegesetz (Federal Social Code, Germany)
BVG	Berliner Verkehrsgemeinschaft (public transportation authority, Berlin, Germany)
DPSS	Department of Public and Social Services (Los Angeles, USA)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (former West-Germany)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (former East-Germany)
GA	General Assistance (local welfare for single adults, USA)
GG	Grundgesetz (Basic Law, German constitution)
GR	General Relief (local welfare program for single Adults, Californian variant of GA)
GROW	General Relief Opportunities to Work (local job training program, Los Angeles)
IT	Information Technology
LACHH	Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness (Los Angeles)
LAHP	Los Angeles Homelessness Project (Los Angeles)
LAHSA	Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (Los Angeles)
POWRA	Personal Opportunity and Work Reconciliation Act (federal welfare reform, USA)
SenVer	Senatsverwaltung (district administration, Berlin, Germany)

SSI	Social Security Supplemental Income (federal welfare program for poor people with disabilities, USA)
SSMIS	Social Service Management Information System
TANF	Temporary Aid for Needy Families (federal welfare program for impoverished families since 1996, USA)
USC	University of Southern California (Los Angles)

Chapter 1

Homelessness and Homeless Policy in Germany and the United States: An Introduction

1.1 Overall Purpose and Overview

> "The most important determinant of [homeless people's] exit potential is the extent of access to coping resources – the extensive set of material, financial, logistical, and emotional resources that allow homeless people to obtain income, shelter, food, and clothing and to maintain their health; and to protect and rebuild their self-esteem and personal identity as valued members of society" (Wolch and Dear, 1993: 39).

One would assume that a welfare state that provides a larger extent of coping resources will be more successful in reducing the extent of existing homelessness as well as the duration of homelessness than a less generous and comprehensive welfare system. Yet, when comparing the numbers and characteristics of homeless people in Germany and the United States, two countries with fundamentally different welfare regimes, we see counterintuitive results. The prevalence of homelessness and the characteristics of the homeless populations are very similar in both nations. Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that the duration of homelessness is longer on average in Germany. These findings come as a surprise because Germany's welfare state is much more comprehensive and generous, and provides significantly more services to poor and homeless people than that of the United States (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1996; Goodin et al., 1999; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Leisering and Leibfried, 1999; Mishra, 1999). While the German welfare state has actually expanded its provisions for homeless people since the late 1980s, the U.S. welfare state has undergone extensive restructuring and multiple rounds of retrenchment since the early 1980s resulting in significantly less services to poor and homeless people.

This apparent contradiction – different policies, yet similar outcomes – poses two overarching questions. First, why does Germany's more comprehensive welfare system fail to assist homeless people to exit homelessness more rapidly? Second, which other factors might explain the apparent inability of Germany's homeless people to overcome homelessness? The primary purpose of this research therefore is to shed light on the discrepancy between different policies and similar outcomes in two welfare regimes in order to further our understanding of the impact of public policy and welfare intervention on homeless people's chances to overcome homelessness. Existing data does not allow us to explain why the outcomes of policy are so similar in both countries despite different

welfare regimes for a number of reasons. First, there are serious deficiencies in the existing administrative non-academic data on homeless people's service utilization at any administrative scale in both countries. Such data tells us how many people use welfare as well as basic demographic information about service users thereby allowing us to sustain the argument that the extent of welfare is greater in Germany, yet there is little information about service use patterns, durations of using specific services, and ultimately outcomes. Second, most recent research in Germany, unlike the U.S., focuses on market barriers to explain long term homelessness and in so doing does not explore the role of either government intervention or personal problems in explaining why homeless people in Germany face difficulties in overcoming homelessness more quickly. Third, most research in Germany, as in the United States, focuses primarily on paths into homelessness and lives under the condition of homelessness among the most visible populations among the homelessness (i.e. street homelessness) and, to a much lesser extent, homeless service users and their long term experiences. Yet, if we want to find out about policy impacts on homeless people's exit chances, we must focus on homeless service users and their experiences over time. The lack of a more dynamic analysis of the impact and outcomes of homeless policy intervention over time is therefore the greatest limitation of research on homelessness in Germany whereas there is more research in the U.S. detailing the process of homelessness including outcomes (for overview, see Koegel, 2004; Wong, 1997). Finally, existing comparative policy research relies on data at the national scale to compare welfare state performance. Yet, both the United States and Germany are federal systems that contain provisions that social policy is a matter of local responsibility. This gives local government considerable autonomy to determine how to organize and fund homeless services and thus results in significant variations across different municipalities.

To address these shortcomings, this thesis focuses on two metropolitan areas within the United States and Germany, Los Angeles and Berlin, to examine the role of public policies on homeless people's attempts to overcome homelessness by analysing both the short- and long-term strategies homeless people use to fulfil their most pressing needs for income and housing during the 1990s. Although both metropolitan areas are significantly different in terms of size, demography, and administration, there are some similarities in terms of the economic and social changes that have affected these metropolitan areas over the past decades resulting in a significant growth of urban poverty and homelessness (Mayer, 1997: 522-540). Moreover, homelessness has been thoroughly

studied in a number of research projects in Los Angeles providing a good empirical basis for comparison with Berlin, where little academic research has been conducted over the past few decades.[1]

Since little information exists on homeless service user's experiences with homeless policy over time in Berlin, it was necessary to collect primary data that accounts for homeless people's distinct experiences with policy over time and thus for outcomes of welfare state intervention. Therefore, this ethnographic study examines the experiences of twenty-eight single homeless adult service users in three different service facilities across Berlin over the course of one year (1998-1999) and compares these empirical findings to existing, primarily quantitative studies on homelessness in Los Angeles. In addition, this study relies on key-informant interviews to more closely examine broader economic and political changes that affect homeless people and homelessness in both Germany and the United States. For this purpose, I conducted forty-one key-informant interviews with policy makers, service providers, and activists in Berlin, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C.

This study makes valuable contributions to a number of research and policy debates related to homelessness, and more broadly, comparative social policy. First, this study contributes to discussions about methods for examining homelessness. In comparing information that is based on dissimilar data – recent qualitative data on Berlin to existing quantitative data on Los Angeles – this study provides insights as to the utility, strength, and weaknesses of different methodologies used to examine homelessness. This research suggests that the ethnographic methodology devised is particularly useful in furthering our understanding of the interrelations among homeless people, institutions, societal contexts and ultimately outcomes over time.

Second, by introducing an agency-based "life course" approach, this study enriches our understanding of how institutional barriers, frictions, and contradictions in policy practice and administration impact homeless people's lives and life-chances in different ways depending on whether and to what extent people had been integrated in the societal mainstream in the past as well as the nature and extent of their social problems.

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[1] Between 1987 and 1993, the Los Angeles Homelessness Project (LAHP) conducted an interdisciplinary study of different aspects of homelessness in Los Angeles, producing 58 working papers as well as 26 publications. This research was summarized in Wolch and Dear's 1993 publication "Malign Neglect: Homelessness in an American City." Furthermore, a longitudinal and quantitative study, the Course of Homelessness Study (1991-1993), provided further information on homeless people's exit chances (for overview, see Koegel, 2004). The only recent academic contributions on homelessness in Berlin were provided by Eick (1996), Neubarth (1997), Schenk (2004), and Schneider (1998). This research does not address the exit chances of homeless people.

This life course approach will help us to understand why some people exit while other do not and thus provide a more nuanced understanding of policy outcomes.

Third, this study contributes to contemporary comparative social policy debates by recasting dominant assumptions in social policy research about what constitutes successful welfare state performance. This research suggests that it is not the extent of intervention that matters, but rather the quality of services at the local scale that affects individual's ability to exit homelessness. A closer examination of the lived experiences of homeless people – in this study differentiated by distinct life course trajectories – reveals that severe qualitative deficits exist in the nature and extent of local service and shelter provision in Berlin, which offset many of the comprehensive policy goals at the national scale and impede homeless people's attempts to find employment and housing. By essentially ignoring the life course specific needs of homeless clients, the local welfare state in Berlin, despite being more comprehensive and generous as suggested by welfare regime theory, performs not much better than the significantly less developed welfare state in Los Angeles. This life course analysis of the limits of welfare intervention in comparative perspective is an important contribution to the underdeveloped field of comparative international homelessness and homeless policy studies.

Finally, a more nuanced understanding of the limitations of public policy approaches to homelessness allows us to devise ways to improve current policy to better prevent homelessness and to reduce its duration. Such reforms would allow us to reduce the social costs of homelessness by stabilizing and ideally improving homeless people's lives, and at the same time, reduce the long-term financial costs of homeless service delivery. This thesis concludes with a series of policy recommendations aimed improve the efficiency of local service provision by making it more responsive to homeless people's life course specific needs and expectations.

1.2. Worlds of Welfare: Welfare Regime Theory and Homeless Policy in Germany and the United States

To facilitate a discussion of the impact of social policy on homeless people's exit chances in such different countries as Germany and the United States, it is necessary to set the parameters that would allow us to undergo a comparison of the national and local institutional frameworks of dealing with the complex societal problem of homelessness. First, I will define homelessness and explain how it is assessed in both countries. Furthermore, I will explain the term "exit from homelessness" within a broader

understanding of homeless policy objectives in such different policy frameworks as that of Germany and the United States. Upon clarification of these important prerequisites for a cross country comparison, I shall situate an analysis of both countries' homeless policy approaches within contemporary comparative social policy debates and welfare regime theory.

Defining Homelessness and Exit from Homelessness in Comparative Perspective

To ensure that the results of this study can be compared to existing studies in Los Angeles, I am using the official definition of "homelessness" developed by the U.S. government. The Stewart B. McKinney Act of 1987, the only comprehensive federal homelessness legislation in the U.S. to date, defines a person as "homeless" who

> "lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence and … has a primary night-time residence that is: (A) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations… (B) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or (C) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings" (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997a).

This definition is broad enough to also encompass contemporary German definitions of "Wohnungslosigkeit" (Specht-Kittler, 2004). Historically, homelessness has been a heavily contested term, especially in West Germany where, after a substantial decrease of homelessness in the aftermath of World War II, the numbers of homeless people had been steadily rising again since the 1970s. While communist East Germany never had a homelessness problem due to the constitutional right to housing, academics, administrators, and activists in West Germany identified exclusionary definitions of homelessness as contributing to increasing homelessness in the 1970s and 1980s alongside increasing unemployment, declining affordable housing, and ensuing poverty (Holtmanspötter, 1983; Rohrman, 1987, for discussion of homelessness in East Germany, see John, 1993; Pape, 1997). These studies demonstrated that exclusionary definitions of single homeless people as "transient" (Ger. Nichtsesshaft) resulted in sub par service and even service refusal. German municipalities that are in charge of actual service provision have since dropped discriminatory definitions and adopted the term "houseless" (wohnungslos) following a recommendation of the German Urban League. This new definition, now commonly used in post-unification Germany identifies any person as houseless who is to be found in one of the three categories described in the U.S. definition.

Therefore, this study will focus on single adult people who do not have a private accommodation of their own, live either on the street, in an institutional setting, or in any other setting not intended for human habitation. I will use the English term "homeless" to refer to such people for the remainder of this study. People who are considered homeless in other definitions including people living in unacceptable housing conditions (overcrowding, lack of sanitation, etc.) and people threatened by homelessness (unemployment, debts., eviction) are not discussed in this thesis (Specht-Kittler, 2004).

Despite significant variations in national approaches to homelessness, the overall goals of homeless policy as illustrated in table 1.1. are similar in most industrialized countries and typically consist of a) preventing homelessness, b) stabilizing homeless people's lives by providing access to immediate and transitional services such as shelter, income, food, job training, health care, and counselling, and c) ultimately assisting homeless people in re-entering the societal mainstream by finding and maintaining regular housing and employment (Busch-Geertsama, 1998; Daly, 1999; Glasser and Bridgman, 1999; Kunstman and Helvie, 1999). These policy objectives, especially with regards to reintegration, correspond with the primary goals of homeless people. Busch-Geertsama's recent survey of housing preferences among homeless people in Germany (2002a) and Burt's national survey in the U.S. (2001) demonstrated convincingly that the vast majority of homeless people identified goals that correspond with "normal" life circumstances. Specifically, finding regular work and housing were the most frequently mentioned goals of homeless people (Busch-Geertsama, 2002a; Burt et al., 2001).

Table 1.1 **Homeless Policy Objectives in Modern Welfare States**

Prevention	Intervention	Reintegration
▪ Housing maintenance (rent arrears, loans, guarantees) ▪ Income maintenance ▪ Decarceration policies ▪ Case management	▪ Emergency services ▪ Shelter provision ▪ Stabilization ▪ Health and mental health counselling ▪ Employment and training ▪ Case management	▪ Housing maintenance ▪ Cash assistance ▪ Employment assistance ▪ Case management

Yet, how and to what extent such personal as well as policy objectives are being met in different countries and how different institutional and societal prerequisites affect the ability of national welfare systems to address homelessness is a matter of great variation. Welfare regime theory – perhaps the most persuasive theoretical framework used in

comparative social policy analyses – suggests that Germany and the United States attempt to meet theses objectives in fundamentally different ways with differing outcomes.

Worlds of Welfare: Liberal, Conservative, and Social Democratic Welfare Regimes

Comparative social policy research traditionally has been concerned with explaining the significant differences between welfare states and their performance (Mishra, 1979; Wilenski; 1956; Titmuss, 1973). The most quoted typology of welfare systems was developed by Esping-Andersen (1990) who proposed the existence of distinct welfare regimes including liberal, conservative, and social democratic types (Alcock, 2001; Abrahamson, 1999; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Jones-Finer, 1999; Kennett, 2001 and 2004; Mabbett and Bolderson, 1999; Pinch, 1997). Welfare regime theory is based on the premise that the most important objective of the modern welfare state is to alleviate social risks including poverty, unemployment, illness, or old age. Since the state is not the only entity involved in providing insurance against social risks, Esping-Andersen also pays attention to how two other insititutions – the market and the family – contribute to the welfare of citizens in different nation states. A welfare regime can therefore be defined as "the combined interdependent way in which welfare is produced and allocated between state, market, and family" (Esping-Andersen, 1999: 34-35). Risk management therefore is a crucial objective of modern welfare states which serve as a buffer against market and family failures by both "defamilializing" (taking risks out of the family) and "decommodifying" (taking risks out of the market) social risks (Esping-Andersen, 1999, 40f).

The specific ways in which the three factors interact in different countries has allowed Esping-Andersen (1990) to propose three distinct clusters of welfare regimes including the liberal, the conservative/corporatist, and the social democratic variants as table 1.2 indicates. The key characteristic of the liberal regime (i.e. USA, Great Britain, Australia) is the primary reliance on the market with rather residual intervention by the state achieving only low levels of decommodification and defamilialization. The social democratic regime (i.e. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, etc.), on the other hand, relies primarily on state intervention and achieves high levels of decommodification and defamilialization. The conservative type (i.e. Germany, France, Italy), finally, relies more heavily on family, has high market entry thresholds which protect the status of citizens inside the labour force, yet compensates by providing medium to high levels of

decommodification and thus social protection for those outside the work force (Esping-Andersen, 1990 and 1996).

Table 1.2 **Markets, State, and Family in Different Welfare Regimes**

	Liberal (i.e. United States)	**Conservative** (i.e. Germany)	**Social Democratic** (i.e. Sweden)
Market	High	Low	Low
State	Low	High	High
Family	Low	Medium	Low
Alternative Concepts	Minimalist/ Residual	Corporatist/ Christian Democratic	Universalist

Although a number of authors have expanded, reformulated, and refined Esping-Andersen's original concept, studies largely confirm its validity especially with regards to the prototypes of each regime type including the USA, Germany, and Sweden (Huber and Stephens, 2001; Goodin et al., 1999; Mishra, 1999).[2] All of the comparative studies provide evidence that Germany's conservative/corporatist welfare regime outperforms the liberal U.S. variant in any category that might indicate successful welfare state performance (Goodin et al., 1999; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Huber and Stevens, 2001; Leisering and Leibfried, 1999: 47-53). Yet, none of the comparative social policy analyses explicitly discuss homeless people's experiences. It is important to find out whether the findings of positive welfare state performance in Germany as compared to the U.S. also apply to homeless policy. In other words, how successful are different welfare regimes when confronted with the multiple social risks implicit in homelessness?

Welfare Regimes and Homelessness Policy: General Considerations

Although there is now significant comparative research on policy impacts on different sub-groups among welfare users (i.e. unemployed, disabled, lone mothers), few comparative welfare state studies explicitly deal with homelessness. This can be attributed to the fact that national data on welfare policy and outcomes usually fail to account for recipient's housing status (Goodin et al., 1999: 104). Furthermore, most comparative

[2] Some of the classifications in Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology have drawn criticism. For instance, putting the UK and Ireland in the same cluster as the United States is questionable considering the still stronger extent of social policy intervention in these countries (Daly, 1999). Similarly, Australia and New Zealand may also not fall into this "liberal" category and have been conceptualized as "wage earner welfare states" elsewhere (Castells and Mitchell, 1993; Huber and Stephens, 2001). Goodin et al. (1999) conceptualize the Netherlands as social democratic, not conservative. Moreover, certain Mediterranean and South American nation states do not fit into any category given that they have traditionally stronger familial and religious ties and have been defined as "rudimentary welfare states" (Leisering and Leibfried, 1999).

studies on homelessness are regionally limited to comparing homelessness and homeless policy either in member states of the European Union (Avramov 1995; Avramov et al., 1999; Edgar et al., 1999), or across different liberal welfare regimes (Daly, 1996; Heilman and Dear, 1988). The only comparative study that examines homelessness across different welfare regimes is Helvie and Kunstman's (1999a) discussion of homelessness and homeless policy in ten nation states, including the U.S., Russia, Germany and a number of other European countries. Yet, the study remains rather descriptive and it does not provide a convincing explanation of the similarities and differences in policy across different welfare regimes as well as outcomes due to problems with the comparability of data (see chapter 9: 229-250).

Despite the lack of research in comparative homeless studies, we can surmise from existing data on homelessness that certain characteristics of specific welfare regimes affect homeless people, their exit chances, and chances to stay domiciled. In this context we find more explicit information on the U.S.' liberal welfare regime and how the interplay of market, state, and family affects homeless people's exit chances as I will describe shortly. In Germany, on the other hand, we have limited information about the impact of public policy on homeless people's exit chances related to regime theory. Although we find data that indicates homeless people's lack of success in the marketplace and severe barriers to re-entering markets, we have literally no understanding of dynamics of homelessness – from start to finish – and how the interrelations among markets, family, and the state affect exit potentials. We would expect, however, that a more interventionist welfare state such as that of Germany should a) prevent homelessness more effectively, b) stabilize homeless people's lives more rapidly, and c) facilitate reintegration more quickly and effectively compared to that of the United States simply because Germany has a much more comprehensive welfare system with significantly more provisions to address homelessness. To examine whether or not this is the case, it is important to review the characteristics of the nation states' responses to homelessness in the context of regime theory and its documented effect on homeless people's chances to exit homelessness.

USA: A Liberal Welfare Regime and its Implications for Homelessness

As would be expected from regime theory, the U.S. places its primary emphasis on its comparably less regulated market and its ability to provide job opportunities to avert poverty and homelessness. Yet, low levels of regulation combined with inadequate welfare provision resulted in a comparably wide income spectrum that is characterized by

increasing socio-economic polarization (Theodore, 2003). Since poor people can – at least in financial terms – rarely rely on kinship networks, the family plays a rather negligible role. In addition, the U.S. welfare state, which has never been comprehensive to begin with, achieves only very low levels of decommodification and defamilialization and thus often fails to protect citizens against market failures and thus the social risk of homelessness (Wolch and Dear, 1993). Because of relatively unproblematic labour market access and ample labour supply, homeless people may exit rather quickly – more than half of the homeless in a national survey exited homeless within six months – yet hardly ever achieve long-term economic integration and stability.

The Market: Postfordism and Socio-Economic Polarization

The primary characteristic of a liberal welfare regime is its comparatively low level of decommodification and much higher reliance on the labour market and self-reliance to alleviate social risks (Esping-Andersen, 1990 and 1996; Gooding et al., 1999; Piven, 2001). The lesser extent of regulation allows for high employment rates and consequently low unemployment (Clarke and Piven, 2001; Piven and Cloward, 1993; Peck, 2003; Theodore, 1998). It is telling that regular work is the most frequently reported source of income mentioned by homeless people in virtually any U.S. survey that assessed homeless people's survival strategies (i.e. Burt et al., 2001; Snow and Anderson, 1993; Wright et al., 1998). Yet, at the same time, the U.S. labour market is characterized by a highly uneven distribution of employment and wages along the lines of gender, race, and geography. First, white suburban communities and gentrified central city areas are more affluent and have much lesser extents of unemployment and poverty than economically deprived urban areas (Dear, 2003; Scott, 2003; Tepper and Simpson, 2003). These geographic inequities are largely due to the effects of economic restructuring as urban areas were particularly hard hit by deindustrialization and thus rarely benefited from simultaneous tertiarization and the proliferations of service sector jobs with high income potentials (Scott, 2003, Tepper and Simpson, 2003; Wolch and Dear, 1993). Second, racial/ethnic minorities who predominantly live in economically deprived areas are much more affected by un- and underemployment than their white counterparts which suggests that the prevailing legacy of racism continues to impede the chances of minorities to escape poverty and the spatial confines of the "ghetto" and thus explains why minorities, especially African Americans, are overrepresented among the homeless (Neubeck and Cazenave, 2001). Third, there is evidence for a feminization of poverty and homelessness,

especially among lone mothers, due to the comparatively much lower wages women and minorities make in the U.S. (Jenkins, 2004). Ultimately, an increasing portion of Americans are defined as poor (14 percent in 1998) despite the fact that most of them are working and despite the fact that the U.S. has enjoyed high economic growth throughout the 1990s (Shippler, 2004).

These three factors combined explain why many homeless people may work or find work easily and use such income to secure housing, yet such work does not necessarily imply socio-economic stability (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999). Income poverty, therefore, becomes a precursor to homelessness as an increasing number of people experience difficulties in being able to afford, and perhaps more importantly, to maintain housing, especially in increasingly expensive urban housing markets (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1997). In this light it is unsurprising that increasing socio-economic polarization and thus pressure to afford and maintain housing as a result of unregulated and exploitative labour markets put tremendous demands on the other dimensions of the welfare regime, the family and the state.

The Family: Social Networks and Poverty

Families with children are particularly affected by poverty and constitute the fastest growing group within the working poor (Shippler, 2004). Increasing housing, child care, and cost of living expenses in conjunction with stagnating or sometimes declining incomes put an increasing burden on families. Increasing indebtedness and poverty among families, in turn, often prohibits the possibility to rely on family members, friends, and other social networks to help out in times of need. Although it is known that poor people rely heavily on kinship and other social networks to attain material, logistical, and emotional support, such support often does not meet financial needs which is a prerequisite to afford housing on one's own (Blau, 1992; Da Costa Nunez, 1996; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998). In terms of homelessness, it is well established that social networks, especially those to family, constitute a major resource and most researchers agree that the lack of such networks and thus social disaffiliation is a major reason for why people become and often remain homelessness. After all, shared housing, either with family or acquaintances is the most frequent exit destination for homeless people and the lack of such networks inevitably complicates the re-entry into the societal mainstream (Rowe and Wolch, 1992; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolch and Dear, 1993; Wolf et al., 2001;

Wright, 1996). At the same time, however, social networks constitute a rather negligible resource for financial support – a prerequisite for independent living in a private accommodation – and therefore homeless people have to rely either on work or on public support to afford housing.

The State: Dismantling, Defunding, and Devolution

The already limited capacity of poor and homeless people to rely on either the market or the family to secure and maintain housing is further reinforced by serious inadequacies in the provision of public welfare. Cuts in public assistance have increased the burden for low income families, especially lone parents, to meet increasingly costly housing expenses (Burt et al., 2001; Clarke and Piven, 2001; Passarro, 1993). The U.S. welfare state has never been comprehensive and has, after two decades of expansion during the 1960s and 1970s, experienced extensive restructuring since the early 1980s. Although the U.S., quite in contrast to popular assumptions, has not witnessed an overall retrenchment of its welfare system as total expenditures have actually risen due to increased spending on health and social security, it has experienced massive cutbacks in a number of programs vital to the economic and residential stability of many U.S. citizens including income and housing support (Clarke and Piven, 1999; Fox-Piven, 2001). At the heart of this selective retrenchment lies the U.S.' principal ideological framework of individualism and limited state interference (Clarke and Piven, 1999; Piven and Cloward, 1993; Mead, 2003). Contradicting the prevalent assessment of academic research, popular and political debates began emphasising a "culture of poverty" and the assertion that poor people, especially single adults, are themselves responsible for their poverty, unwilling to change their situation, dependent on welfare, and thus "undeserving" of help (Katz, 1989; Mead, 1992; Murray, 1982; Torro et al., 2004)

Homeless policy operates precisely within this broader ideological notion of the undeserving poor in that homeless people, especially single homeless adults, are often perceived as responsible for their own situation which might explain why homeless policy has never been integrated into the broader conventional welfare provisions (Torro et al., 2004). Mainstream social programs, especially those providing cash assistance, generally contain no provisions for homeless people.[3] Rather, due to categorical ineligibility (i.e. lack of a mailing address) and other bureaucratic hurdles, few homeless people actually

[3] Income assistance programs include the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) which was restructured in 1996 to Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) and Social Security Supplemental Income (SSI, for people with disabilities), the state administered Unemployment Compensation programs (UC), and the local General Assistance (GA) programs, which provide cash assistance to single adults.

receive public income assistance in the U.S. (Burt et al., 1999: 28; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 124-125). It is commonly understood among researchers and advocates that while few homeless people received public assistance, the retrenchment and privatisation occurring throughout the 1980s and 1990s further increased homelessness since benefit levels declined significantly despite increasing numbers of recipients (Clarke and Piven, 2001: 32-39; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 177-199; Wagner, 1997: 55).

The only federal policies specifically dealing with homelessness are incorporated in the "Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act" of 1987 which, despite providing much needed funding, remains incoherent, fragmented, and severely insufficient (Foscarinis, 1996; NCH, 1997). The McKinney Act allocates federal funds to eight federal agencies which administer twenty-two homeless relief programs. Such programs typically distribute block grants to state and municipal governments which further distribute such funds to service providers competing for grants. Some of these programs are subject to annual re-authorization through Congress and have consequently undergone a series of changes over the years. Although the programmatic emphasis of the McKinney programs has shifted from providing mere emergency assistance to providing comprehensive assistance geared toward exit (see Continuum of Care, HUD, 1998), the problem remains that the annual funds allocated for homeless assistance programs are severely insufficient (Foscarinis, 1996; NCH, 1997). In 1997, 1.3 billion U.S. Dollars have been allocated to fund McKinney programs, which is barely enough to effectively address homelessness in three cities and these numbers have remained relatively unchanged ever since (NCH, 1997: 69). In this way, limited federal funding contributes to the lack of resources at the local scale for providing homeless people with the necessary assistance to transition out of homelessness.

As a result of low and declining benefit levels, many welfare recipients, especially families, cannot pay for rent and consequently become homeless despite welfare receipt (Koegel, Burnam and Baumohl, 1996; NCH, 1997; Wolch and Dear, 1993). In addition, repeated budget cuts for subsidized and publicly assisted housing further exacerbated the situation for poor people since too few subsidized housing units are available to meet the growing demand (Dolbare, 1996; Koegel, 2004; National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1997). In 1998, for instance, the waiting lists for Section 8 housing vouchers were on average over four years nationwide, and eight years in Los Angeles (HUD, 1998; National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1997; Simpson and Tepper, 2003).

Finally, the 1996 "Personal Opportunity and Work Reconciliation Act" (POWRA, commonly known as welfare reform) ended the federal guarantee of cash assistance for poor families and created a block grant to states to create their own programs within the parameters of "workfare" including strict time-limits and work requirements (Peck, 2001; Pinch, 1998; Wolch, 1998).[4] Although welfare reform is celebrated as a major political success since the overall numbers of welfare recipients and unemployment rates declined throughout the late 1990s, a number of research and monitoring projects indicated that homelessness among unsuccessful former welfare recipients is on the rise (Barrera, Erlenbusch, and Vodopic, 1997; Fernandez et al, 2000: 3; Wolch and Sommer, 1998: 23). Furthermore, homeless welfare recipients are negatively affected by work requirements and time limits because the lack of a mailing address forecloses employment and the lack of accompanying services often fails to address homeless people's diverse social problems (NCH, 1997; Wolch, 1998).

In sum, welfare state restructuring, the limited extent of public welfare intervention, and budget cuts in the U.S. are commonly argued to be one major root cause for the rise of homelessness (Glasser and Bridgeman, 1999; Koegel et al., 1996; Wolch and Dear, 1993). Although most homeless people exit homelessness rather quickly often by relying on relatively easily accessible low income work, they rarely achieve long-term economic stability and become entrapped in chronic poverty (Koegel, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wong and Pilavin, 1997; Zlotnick et al., 1999). The limited extent of welfare intervention, low coverage, low benefits, and insufficient shelter further adversely affects homeless people's chances to exit homelessness and poverty for good. The often inevitable result of welfare state deficiencies in conjunction with economic marginality and instability is recurring or cyclical homelessness as I will describe in more detail in chapter 6.

Germany: A Conservative Welfare Regime and its Implications for Homelessness

The conservative German welfare regime enjoys a much more favourable assessment in cross country comparisons as virtually any comparative study described Germany's welfare state's performance as superior compared to that of the U.S. Among the positive features of the German welfare system are higher levels of decommodification and defamilialization, significantly lesser extents of post-transfer poverty, higher extents of

[4] At the heart of this transformation lies the assumption that welfare creates dependency which can only be removed by directing people into work through coercive means (i.e. work requirements, time-limits, for discussion, see Clarke and Piven, 2001: 37-39; Goodin, 1999: 88; Wolch, 1998).

long-term (re)integration, more status maintenance, and more solidarity and consent behind the nation's inclusive welfare system. Most comparative analyses agree that the German conservative/corporatist system achieves a better balance between family, market and the state than that of the U.S. (see Esping Anderson, 1996 and 1999; Gallie and Paugam, 1999; Goodin et al., 1999 and 2001; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Leisering and Leibfried, 1999, Lewis, 1996; Mishra, 1999). In contrast to the United States, Germany's policy approach to homelessness is more comprehensive, integrated into Germany's two-tier welfare system, and remained relatively unchanged over the past decades despite the fact that case-loads increased dramatically after the German Unification in 1990.[5] As a result, homeless people in Germany have specific social rights including the right to income, shelter, food, clothing and basic material needs, and housing maintenance. At the same time, however, the German two-tier system also facilitates and often reproduces an insider-outsider dialectic which finds its origins in the ways in which Germany's social market economy operates (Leisering, 2001).

The Market: Regulation and the Insider/Outsider Dialectic

Compared to the U.S. economy, Germany's economy is much more regulated as the vast majority of the German workforce is participating in the comprehensive social insurance system that allows for high levels of decommodification and defamilialization (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Yet, supporters and critics of the German welfare regime alike agree that the German system, which was built on the notion of near full employment, is facing difficulties in its ability to maintain such a comprehensive and generous system in times of decreasing labour demand and consequently increasing unemployment, especially in the wake of Germany's costly unification in 1991 (Esping-Andersen, 1996; Huber and Stevens, 2001). Over the past two decades, high labour costs have caused an increasing number of companies to downsize and reduce their German work force and/or to shift their production abroad. Economic globalization – in Germany reinforced by European convergence criteria, the relaxation of European labour standards, and the availability of cheap labour in Eastern European member states of the EU – has been identified as the main culprit for outsourcing and thus given rise to demands by employers

[5] In 1998, 3.5 million people received unemployment benefits and 2.9 million received social assistance, which, combined, was 8.1 percent of the total population (Statistisches Bundesamt- Homepage, 1998). The reliance on welfare benefits is particularly high among the elderly and among East German residents many of whom were forced into early retirement, and the growing immigrant populations in central cities (Ginsburg, 1994; Leisering, 2001; Leisering and Leibfried, 1999; Vranken, 1999).

and their powerful lobbies toward labour market flexibilization and welfare state restructuring (Leisering, 2001; Handler, 2003; Huber and Stevens, 2001).

Such drastic economic changes – often associated with postfordist economic restructuring – have resulted in an increasing socio-economic polarization within the German population and resulted in an insider-outsider dualism (Handler, 2003; Leisering, 2001). This implies that those members of the German workforce who do have full-time employment – so called "insiders" – enjoy excellent work standards, relatively high compensation, and comprehensive social protection if affected by social risks such as unemployment, illness, or old age. At the same time, however, an increasing number of Germany's working age population are called "outsiders" because they find themselves unemployed and unable to enter or re-enter the labour market or in part-time employment that is not covered under by social insurance. The poverty of this increasing segment of long-term excluded members of the workforce which includes young people with limited qualifications, immigrants and foreign nationals, women, lone parents, and especially older unemployed persons constitutes a primary underlying root cause for homelessness. In this context, it is not surprising that the German welfare system has drawn substantial criticism for its gender bias as the system was built on the patriarchical notion that the sole male-breadwinner ought to provide for the household (Lewis, 1992; Esping-Andersen, 1999; Huber and Stephens, 2001; and Sainsbury, 1996). The inevitable result of expanding poverty and economic exclusion among particular segments of society is that, as in the U.S., a growing number of people have difficulties affording rental housing which has also become increasingly expensive and scarce in Germany (Busch-Geertsama, 2001). As a consequence of being unable to re-enter the labour market, "outsiders" oftentimes have no other choice than to rely either on the family or the state to make ends meet and to avert the danger of becoming homeless.

The Family: Subsidiarity, Pressure, and Povertization

While "insiders" are integrated into Germany's comprehensive social insurance scheme and enjoy social rights and protection to preserve their socio-economic status (achieving high levels of decommodification and defamilialization), "outsiders" must pass eligibility requirements to receive assistance. One of the main principles of the German conservative welfare regime is the principle of "subsidiarity" which requires potential welfare applicants to provide evidence that they have exceeded any other asset – including familial and shared household resources up to certain locally defined thresholds – before

becoming eligible for welfare (Leisering, 2001). This, in turn, puts pressure on families who often first have to deplete savings and other material assets before receiving public assistance (Leisering, 2001; Lorenz, 1994). Furthermore, increasing indebtedness and poverty among many German families has a similar effect as poverty in the U.S. since people who have always been or have gradually become poor have limited possibilities to obtain support through kinship and other social networks which are likely to be poor themselves. Furthermore, as in the U.S. literature, social isolation and thus a lack of social networks to family and friends is a main reason for why some people become homeless (Busch-Geertsama, 1995; Schneider, 1998; Specht-Kittler, 2000). To avert homelessness, especially if family or other support networks fail, people threatened by homelessness have no other choice than to resort to state.

The State: Dual Welfare System and Integrated Homeless Policy

The German "Social State" (Sozialstaat) plays – by any standard – a much more prominent role in providing poor and homeless people with assistance compared to that of the U.S. Germany's dual social welfare system's foremost objective is to provide income and housing maintenance. The first tier of Germany's welfare state serving the "insiders" is employment-based social insurance which provides unemployment benefits, accident insurance, health care, old age infirmity and pensions to any member of the regular German workforce resulting in quasi-universal coverage for employees and their dependents (Leisering, 2001: 172). Given that unemployment is frequently a precursor to poverty, unemployment insurance administered by the Federal Labour Office[6] is the first pillar of income maintenance and is an important preventive program for poverty and homelessness.[7] In addition to administering income support, the Federal Labour Office provides labour exchange and career advisory services and also funds active labour market programs to help people get reemployed such as vocational training, retraining, and job creation schemes. The existence of such re-integrative programs should allow unemployed homeless people to re-enter the labour market (Leisering, 2001; Deppe,

[6] The Federal Labor Office is controlled by a tripartite board of representatives from unions, employer organizations and public authorities. It maintains state, regional and urban offices to administer its services.
[7] The program, administered by the Federal Labor Office, is designed to prevent poverty in the following manner. The extent of financial aid depends on the amount of previous income and the duration of contribution irrespective of citizenship. In the first year of unemployment, recipients receive 60 percent of their previous income (67 percent for people with dependents), and in the second year, 53 percent of their previous income (57 percent for people with dependents) (see Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung, 1998: 36-47). Compensation, therefore, is designed to maintain status rather than to redistribute income.

2001). If a person fails to become employed after two years of receiving unemployment benefits, responsibility for them shifts to welfare programs.

The second tier of Germany's welfare state is Social Assistance (Ger. Sozialhilfe) based on the Federal Welfare Act (Ger. Bundessozialhilfegesetz, 1961; henceforth BSHG) which provides a number of non-employment based welfare provisions for "outsiders" who face little or no chance in the competitive labour market. Although initially envisioned as a means of last resort to provide temporary assistance, Social Assistance has become increasingly important as the numbers of recipients and expenditures rose dramatically over the past two decades (Kunstman, 1999: 41; Leisering, 2001: 176).

Moreover, federal legislation pertaining to homelessness has been significantly improved since the mid-1980s addressing concerns raised in homeless policy research in West Germany in the 1970s and 1980s. Social Assistance provides a number of programs important to homeless people. First, according to Paragraph 11a BSHG, poor and homeless people are entitled to receive continual public cash assistance and shelter. These provisions are important since they ideally ought to prevent extreme poverty and homelessness, and at the same time, give a right to shelter, should homelessness not be averted. The attempt to prevent extreme poverty and homelessness also finds its expression in a number of additional provisions. Par. 15 BSHG, for instance, includes provisions to use public funds and loans to take over rental debts in order to prevent evictions and homelessness (Kunstman, 1999: 41). Other preventative measures include rent subsidies or the provision of subsidized and public housing.[8]

The Federal Welfare Act also contains specific programs to provide special needs support to people experiencing particular types of hardship, including homelessness (Assistance under Specific Social Circumstances, especially Par. 72 and 93 BSHG). This legislation gives local municipalities the discretion to fund various services for homeless people in terms of homelessness prevention, stabilization, and reintegration, specifically personal assistance, case appropriate shelter, job training and referral, the acquisition and maintenance of conventional housing, and assistance with the creation of social relations and everyday activities (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 2001). To provide such services, local governments are mandated to cooperate with the voluntary or third sector (Par. 10 BSHG, see Kunstman, 1999: 50). The third sector is playing an increasingly important role in

[8] Although Germany contains, compared to many other industrial countries, a fairly small amount of public housing at approximately eight percent of Germany's housing stock, the provision of rent subsidies available to all citizens with low income who pay more than 35 percent of their after tax income on rent, serves a similar purpose (for discussion of Germany's housing system and housing policies, see Busch-Geertsama, 2001 and 1995: 6-23; Kunstman, 1999: 42; Specht-Kittler, 1994: 14-16).

providing direct services to poor and homeless people as over 60 percent of all social services in Germany are provided by non-profit organizations (Grell, 2003: 35; Leisering, 2001: 169-171; Lorenz, 1994: 164). And, unlike the U.S. where actual service provision is almost entirely carried out by parochial and secular non-profit organizations relying heavily on private funding, the German welfare state is mandated to directly fund voluntary and even commercial service and shelter providers.[9] Despite the comparably generous welfare provision, or perhaps because of it, the German system has come under increasing scrutiny lately for simply not being able to address high and increasing unemployment and long-term economic exclusion more effectively.

The German Welfare State in Crisis? Assessing Policy Performance

Given increasing poverty rates, long term unemployment, and welfare rolls, especially in Germany's major cities, the German welfare state has quite clearly come under scrutiny for its presumably poor performance. Debates about the future of the welfare state have become increasingly polarized. Neoliberal strategists, echoing U.S. counterparts, demand increasing market flexibility and privatization to counter the ineffectiveness and costliness of the welfare state that they argue contributes to dependency and laziness (Handler, 2003; Leisering, 2001). Their chief argument is that Germany must flexibilize its system to stay competitive in the global marketplace. Left academics and labour advocates, on the other hand, insist on preserving the basic pillars of the German system and to protect the interests of the highly unionized labour force. They point to Germany's still stellar performance in exports to counter the argument that welfare state restructuring is inevitable to enhance economic productivity in the age of globalization (Deppe, 1999; Häusserman, 1998; Handler, 2003; Huber and Stephens, 2001). As of 1998, the year the study was conducted, few changes had occurred as deliberations on changing the German system were deadlocked.[10]

In contrast to the gloomy assessment of the performance of Germany's welfare system in the public and political debates, however, academic research does not

[9] While almost all homeless service providers in Germany primarily rely on public funds, only forty percent of shelter providers and twenty percent of food providers receive public funds in the U.S. (Burt et al, 1999: 52; Shelter Partnership, 1994: 21).

[10] The election of a SPD/Green coalition government in the fall of 1998, however, shifted the momentum toward neoliberal approaches and resulted in a number of reform packages that fundamentally restructured the German welfare system. Since these reforms have not had an impact on the nature and extent of welfare provision in Germany in 1998, the year the empirical part of this study was conducted, I will elaborate further on these more recent political developments and their potential implications for homelessness and homeless policy in the conclusion of this thesis.

necessarily support the notion that the German welfare state is ineffective. Most academic research – both international and national – indicates that the German welfare system performs relatively well in providing sufficient assistance in helping welfare recipients to fulfil their goals (see Goodin et al., 1999; Leisering and Leibfried, 1999). Using normative, external standards of assessment to compare the performance of the U.S.' liberal, Germany's conservative, and the Netherlands's social democratic welfare systems, Goodin et al. (1999) have demonstrated that the corporatist German welfare state performs significantly better than the liberal U.S. yet not quite as well as the Dutch system in terms of promoting economic efficiency, reducing poverty, and promoting social equality, stability, autonomy, and social integration (for overall results, see Goodin et al., 1999: 240-245 and 253-258). Similarly favourable results are evident in longitudinal internal German studies that assess the effects of welfare on recipient's progress over time (see Leisering and Leibfried, 1999 for overview). Specifically, Leisering and Leibfried's (1999) longitudinal analysis on the effects of Social Assistance on welfare users in Bremen over a ten-year period provides a positive testimony of the effectiveness of the Germany's Social Assistance system. In examining the use of welfare over the life course of welfare recipients, Leisering and Leibfried (1999: 109-143) have shown that German welfare recipients remain on welfare for relatively short periods of time, and for the most part, succeed in overcoming the reason for initial welfare claims. As a result, people had either stabilized or optimized their poverty management and few people became entrenched welfare users (ibid, 123-143). The authors further point out that in so doing, actually fewer German welfare recipients become entrenched than in the U.S. system (ibid, 224f).

The German welfare state therefore lives up to its self-set standard of providing temporary relief in a sufficient manner. Although Leisering and Leibfried (1999) did not explicitly include homeless people into their analysis, they indicated that much of the German research from the 1970s and 1980s that focussed on "social fringe groups" (soziale Randgruppen) and visible poverty such as homelessness tended to "dramatize" the potentially negative aspects of welfare intervention (Leisering and Leibfried, 1999: 196). The question remains, however, if this is really the case. Does the German welfare state perform similarly well if confronted with multiple social risks implicit in homelessness? The German federal policy framework to address poverty and homelessness would give us reason to believe that the German welfare system should be better equipped to address homelessness than that of the United States. Yet, the only way

to find out if this is the case is by examining homeless policy at the local scale where homeless policy is being implemented. A look at the local scale is further warranted since the German political system – as that of the United States – is based on the principle of federalism which gives states and local authorities a great deal of discretion as to how to organize their social welfare bureaucracy and how to fund welfare programs.

1.3 Homeless Policies and Service Provision in Los Angeles and Berlin During the 1990s

To examine homeless policy provisions at the local scale in both nation states, I selected Berlin and in Los Angeles as exemplary case studies that will allow me to demonstrate that local homeless service provision is largely a reflection of the nation's corresponding welfare systems. Yet before looking at the ways in which both municipalities address the complex problem of homelessness, it is first necessary to provide a rationale for comparing such seemingly dissimilar urban areas. Specifically, I will show that despite significant differences in size, population, and governance, both cities have been affected by similar economic and social changes over the past decade which legitimizes a comparison of the two cities, and at the same time, explains why homelessness has risen dramatically in both places.

Comparing Berlin and Los Angeles: Similarities and Differences

Comparing homelessness and homeless policies in Berlin and Los Angeles seems, at first sight, a rather problematic undertaking. Both cities are fundamentally different in terms of their size, spatial structure, demography, and administrative structure. For instance, the Los Angeles Metropolitan area is fragmented into a vast urban conglomerate of five counties, including eighty-one unincorporated cities altogether with over 12 million inhabitants in which the City of Los Angeles City constitutes the biggest municipality with 3.6 million people in 1996. Considering its size and fragmented administrative structure, Los Angeles is almost ungovernable and lacks any sort of metropolitan leadership. Berlin, on the other hand, has, due to its geopolitical confinement during the Cold War, never experienced massive suburbanization, remained compact, and is hierarchically organized. Berlin is administered by a Senate as a federal state with 23 districts (13 since the 2000 district reform). Counting 3.4 million residents, Berlin actually lost population since 1996, whereas Los Angeles continues to grow (Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 6). Berlin is also much less diverse as 17.6 percent of its residents were

"foreign nationals" in 2000, whereas almost 64.2 percent of L.A.'s residents were "ethnic/racial minorities" in 1997 (United Way, 1997: 223; Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 78). Finally, despite the decision to move the German capital to Berlin and the subsequent decision of many corporations and institutions to relocate to Berlin, Berlin unlike L.A., is still not considered a "global city" (for discussion, see Krätke, 2001; Mayer, 1997: 530).

Yet, despite these differences which inevitably complicate a comparison, there are some intriguing similarities between the cities in terms of economic restructuring, increasing poverty, and a significant lack of affordable housing which have been identified as important precursors for the proliferation of homelessness in both places (Mayer, 1997; Wolch and Dear, 1993). Such similarities between Los Angeles and Berlin have in fact generated important comparative urban policy research (Albrecht, 1994; Mayer, 1995 and 1997; Mayer, Sambale, and Veith, 1997; Sträter et al., 1995).

Economic Restructuring

A first similarity between the two cities identified in comparative urban analyses is that Berlin, like Los Angeles, experienced significant economic restructuring due to a loss of federal subsidies and a general shift from manufacturing to service sector employment. This resulted in unprecedented unemployment in Berlin and underemployment in Los Angeles and thus increased poverty among the city's populations (Mayer, 1997: 527-529; Scott, 2002: 164-167; Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 68-69; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 46-64). In Berlin, more than half (56.1 percent) of all manufacturing jobs were lost since Unification in 1990, particularly affecting the Eastern Districts where 79.9 percent of all industrial and manufacturing jobs ceased to exist (Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 41-43). The decline in industrial employment in both Berlin and L.A. was only partially compensated by increasing employment in the emerging service sector resulting in a polarized distribution of income.[11] This trend was further exacerbated by the loss of federal subsidies that affected the economies in both cities.[12] In both Los Angeles and Berlin, this massive loss of middle-income jobs resulted in unprecedented unemployment

[11] New jobs were either created in the high-skill and high-income producer service sector (i.e. banking, finance, insurance, high tech, information) or the low-income consumer service sector (i.e. retail, janitorial, see Mayer, 1997: 527-528; Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 68-69; United Way, 1997: 333).

[12] Prior to Unification, West-Berlin and its isolated economy were heavily subsidized by the West German government and East-Berlin, as the East German capital was the headquarter of many subsidized state-operated enterprises of the GDR. Los Angeles with its emphasis on military and defense industries, in contrast, relied heavily on Department of Defense contracts and grants which diminished after the end of the Cold War (Mayer, 1997: 527; Wolch and Dear, 1993: Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 3).

well above the national average. A key difference however is that, corresponding with welfare regime theory, unemployment rates in Los Angeles (8.2 percent in 1998) are much lower as more people are able to find low wage service sector employment than in Berlin where 17.9 percent of the working age population were unemployed in 1998 (Statistisches Landesamt, 2000; Tepper and Simpson, 2003: 3). Considering the comparably higher extent of unemployment and lower extent of available (low-income) jobs in Berlin, we would have reason to expect that homeless people have a particularly difficult time competing with other job seekers and thereby re-entering the formal economy.

Increasing Poverty

A second similarity between the cities is related to the consequences of these economic changes and their effects on wages which include increasing income polarization, increasing poverty, and the segregation of poor people in central city areas. In 1995, for instance, almost one quarter of L.A. County's residents lived below the federal poverty line, primarily affecting ethnic/racial minorities and single family households in the urban centre (United Way, 1997: 358). Berlin experienced similar trends; 12.8 percent of Berlin's residents had income below fifty percent of the average equivalency income also disproportionately affecting minorities and single family households in Berlin's five central districts (Mayer, 1997: 531-533; Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit, Soziales und Verbraucherschutz, 2002a: 38). Although the disparities between extremely affluent and extremely poor are far less pronounced in Berlin and impoverished centre-city districts do not resemble U.S. "ghetto" areas, it is generally agreed that poverty and socio-economic polarization increased dramatically after the German Unification thereby creating a pre-condition for homelessness (Häußermann, 2001: 61; Mayer, 1995: 537-540; Krätke, 2001: 1796-1797; Veith and Sambale, 1999; for statistical evidence, see Statistisches Landesamt, 2000).

Lack of Affordable Housing

A third structural similarity between Los Angeles and Berlin is that both cities are characterized by a significant lack of affordable housing. While labour market changes and their socio-economic consequences are precursors to homelessness, problems with the supply of affordable housing are ultimately the cause of homelessness, and at the same time, may function as barriers to exiting homelessness (Wolch and Dear, 1993: 42-43). In

both metropolitan areas, there was a significant decline in the extent of available low-income housing (Tepper and Simpson, 2003; Mayer, 1997; Statistisches Landesamt, 2000). In addition to a limited supply of affordable rental housing, rents increased disproportionately to income resulting in an increasingly pronounced "affordability gap" (Mayer, 1997: 525; Häußermann, 2001: 71; Simpson and Tepper, 2003: 2; Baer, 1992; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 65-92; Veith and Sambale, 1999: 44). The combined result of both increasing poverty and the lack of affordable housing is that people are at greater risk of losing their residence and if they do, face particular difficulties in re-entering regular housing markets due to fierce competition among poor people looking for affordable housing.

Ultimately, the similarities in social and economic trends put a tremendous burden on the local welfare state in assisting poor and homeless people to cope with the negative consequences of economic restructuring and its resulting market barriers. In this context, however, we notice significant differences in the manner in which the local welfare state deals with poverty and its most grave expression, homelessness. In the following, I separately describe the local approaches to homelessness arguing that the local responses to homelessness are largely a reflection of the overall national homeless policy frameworks which confirm the assertion that Germany – at every administrative scale – provides significantly more service to poor and homeless people. The more comprehensive welfare system including more programs geared toward reintegration should, in theory at least, offset some of the systemic economic disadvantages "outsiders" in Germany face.

Los Angeles' Residual Social Welfare State: Little Help Now, Less on the Way

In Los Angeles, welfare provision plays a rather negligible role in assisting homeless people to make ends meet and to exit homelessness forcing homeless people to rely primarily on the market to make ends meet (Koegel, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf, 1999, for a more detailed discussion, see chapter 6). Public social services, administered at the county level by the L.A. County's Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), provide few homeless people with direct cash assistance and other social services. Only about 16 percent of all single homeless people received cash assistance in the form of General Relief (GR) and less than four percent received Social Security Supplemental Income (SSI) throughout the 1990s (Burt et al., 2001: 17; Wolch

and Dear, 1993: 242).[13] There is, as Wolch and Dear (1993: 138f) demonstrate, a quite deliberate attempt to discourage the use of broader social welfare programs since such programs simply lack the funding and logistics to provide all potentially eligible claimants with cash assistance.

As a result, other services to homeless people are provided exclusively by voluntary organizations (Lee, Wolch, and Walsh, 1998; Stoner, 1995 and 2002; Shelter Partnership, 1994; Wolch and Dear, 1993). Although the number of service facilities operated by the voluntary sector increased significantly over the years, such social service sector growth has not been able to meet the growing demand (Shelter Partnership, 1994 and 2001). Los Angeles' shelter system, for instance, is hopelessly unprepared to handle the demand for shelter. According to conservative estimates, there is only one shelter-bed available for every five homeless people seeking shelter in Los Angeles and most of these shelters are overcrowded and unsanitary emergency shelters (Shelter Partnership, 1994: 7). Furthermore, there are serious deficits in the accompanying social services provided by shelters which generally fail to provide sufficient health care, job referrals, counselling, and food.

These problems are exacerbated by severe fiscal pressures and serious coordination deficits, which complicate effective service delivery by making it difficult for both service providers and clients to navigate the system. In 1998, for instance, federal funding for all homeless services in Los Angeles County amounted to a mere $45 million (Guth, 1998: 1). The funding crises is further exacerbated by the fact that both city and county governments had stopped providing direct funding to homeless service and shelter providers altogether by 2001 (Stoner, 2002: 223). As a result, individual voluntary service providers have to compete for federal, state, and philanthropic grants in order to be able to ensure service provision. To coordinate the array of services and assist service providers in the acquisition of funding, there are three central coordination agencies. Yet, these agencies have despite great efforts failed to appropriately coordinate service provision.[14]

Although the competition for funds in conjunction with strict eligibility requirements resulted in the creation of innovative and creative service approaches, it is

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[13] GR is a locally administered and funded cash assistance program for single impoverished adults, and SSI is a federally administered cash assistance program for impoverished people with a documented disability.

[14] First, the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA), founded by a Joint Program Administration effort by the City and County of Los Angeles, functions as a link and facilitating agency between federal, state, and local governments. Second, the Shelter Partnership, a non-profit organization, works to increase the effectiveness of shelter provision, data exchange, and fund raising. Finally, the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness (LACEHH) works as an advocacy group researching and informing about homelessness and service coordination.

generally agreed among administrators, advocates, and academics that the extent of services is unprepared to handle the increasing demand for services (Shelter Partnership, 1994; Wolch and Dear, 1993; Stoner, 2002; Tepper, 1993; Simpson and Tepper, 2004). As a result, few homeless people have access to services and most remain unserved and left to rely either on the market or on family and other social networks. This lack of public intervention and the resulting "poverty of public policy" adversely affects homeless people's exit potential since there are neither enough funds nor actual services available to assist homeless people in their attempts to overcome homelessness (Wolch and Dear, 1993: 151).

Table 1.3 **Nature and Extent of Services for Homeless People in Berlin and Los Angeles**

	LOS ANGELES	BERLIN
Characteristics of Local Homeless Service Provision	▪ Conventional welfare – administered by DPSS a the County level – contains no services specifically designed for homeless people ▪ All homeless services are provided by small voluntary organizations, few are associated with larger organizations (i.e. Salvation Army, Catholic Charities) ▪ Most service providers rely on mixed funding, consisting of public (federal, state) and private funds and typically compete for funding	▪ Conventional welfare – administered by the Senate and implemented by 23 district welfare offices – contains specific provisions for homeless people ▪ 80 percent of service providers are voluntary organizations affiliated with the six leading national welfare associations ▪ Services are primarily funded by local revenues, additional funds through welfare associations, membership and donations
Income		
Extent of Coverage	16 percent of homeless people receive welfare	66 percent of homeless people receive welfare
Benefit Levels	£152/month (General Relief)	£203/month (Social Assistance)
Welfare/Rent Ratio	41 percent	144 percent
Housing		
Prevention	None	Eviction prevention, Housing Assistance
Extent of Shelter	Insufficient, primarily emergency	Comprehensive, primarily transitional
Applicant/Shelter Beds	5/1	2/1
Add. Services		
Health Care	Limited public health coverage (only children, veterans covered), limited voluntary coverage	Universal insurance-based health coverage for welfare recipients, additional publicly funded voluntary services
Day Centres	18, spatially concentrated, mixed funding	34, public funding
Food	Food Stamps (public funding), soup kitchens (private funding)	Soup kitchens (public funding)
Clothing	None	Clothing vouchers
Transportation	None	Transportation Subsidies (50% discount)
	Shelter Partnership, 1994; LACEHH, 1997	AK Wohnungsnot, 1996; Neubarth, 1997

Berlin: Comprehensive Service and Shelter Provision

Homeless people in Berlin find a much more differentiated and coordinated network of services as table 1.3 comparing the nature and extent of service provision in Los Angeles and Berlin demonstrates. Based on federal law, homeless people are entitled to receive a number of direct public services as well as additional publicly funded services provided by the third sector (Abgeordentenhaus von Berlin, 1995: 3-7). A greater extent of social rights translates into significantly higher public expenditures and better service coverage in Berlin than in Los Angeles. In 1997, 10,456 homeless people in Berlin, approximately two-thirds of the city's estimated homeless population, received some kind of public service and cash assistance which amounts to public expenditures of approximately £60 million per year. It is noticeable that Berlin – both at the state (Senate) and city (District) level – continues to allocate significantly higher amounts of public funds to welfare compared to Los Angeles despite Berlin's increasingly negative fiscal situation and rising public debt.[15]

Furthermore, in contrast to Los Angeles, homeless people in Berlin are entitled to receive a number of direct benefits and services through conventional welfare provisions in accordance with the previously described two-tiered German welfare system. Homeless people who have lost regular employment prior to becoming homeless are eligible to receive Unemployment Compensation (Ger. Arbeitslosengeld) through one of Berlin's five local labour offices as well as the various referral and training programs such labour offices offer (for an overview of services, see Landesarbeitsamt Berlin, 1998).

Once recipients reach their benefit limit of two years, or if they become homeless while receiving Unemployment Compensation, they are referred to one of Berlin's 23 District Welfare Offices (Sozialamt, 13 since the 2000 district reform), typically the one located in the district of a claimant's last official residence or determined by an alphabetical key for homeless migrants. Such district welfare offices are responsible for administering federal welfare provisions in accordance with the BSHG. Generally, once eligibility is determined, applicants receive monthly welfare cash benefits (Social Assistance) which are granted indefinitely until no longer needed. Although Social Assistance benefits are much lower than Unemployment Compensation, they are certainly more generous than the equivalent General Relief payments in Los Angeles. In addition to receiving cash assistance, welfare applicants in Berlin also receive referrals to a shelter, as

[15] Berlin's overall public welfare expenditures, for instance, increased by forty percent from 1991 to 1999, whereas the City and County of Los Angeles experienced actual cuts and eventually stopped funding homeless assistance programs altogether (Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 28; Stoner, 2002: 223).

well as referrals to health care, food and other social services they may need. Twice-annually recipients are eligible to receive a cash amount for clothing expenditures. Welfare offices also sponsor monthly public transportation passes, available half-price at £15. To maintain eligibility, social assistance recipients without medical impairments must register as unemployed with the local labour offices and be available for job referrals. Should a job be available, recipients are required to take such employment, irrespective of previous employment or job training. Refusing to accept a job referral can lead to benefit reductions of up to 20 percent or a temporary, two-week suspension although not in benefit termination as in the U.S. (Landesarbeitsamt Berlin, 1998).

Greater coverage and higher public expenditures also translates into a more comprehensive shelter provision and thus better client shelter ratios. For instance, 8,687 people in Berlin used the publicly funded shelter system in 1997 (Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1997: 41-43).[16] As a result, the client/ shelter ratio in Berlin (approximately 2/1) is certainly much more favourable than that in Los Angeles (approximately 5/1), again using conservative estimates (Shelter Partnership, 1994:15).

In addition, homeless people may also receive a number of additional services that are provided by voluntary organizations who, in accordance with Par. 72 BSHG, receive public funds for providing such services (SenVer für Soziales, 1995a: 95-120). As a result, more than two-thirds of all homeless services and shelters are operated by publicly funded voluntary and commercial providers. Between the fiscal years of 1993 and 1996, for instance, the number of publicly funded homeless assistance projects increased from 106 to 129 and funding for such services increased by 55 percent from £ 6.6 to10.4 million (Senatsverwaltung für Soziales, 1995a: 119-120). Among the services provided by the third sector are many that are important for homeless people's exit chances, including referral and advice, debt consultation, transitional housing, and specialized individual assistance (according to Par. 72 BSHG).

Berlin also fairs better in providing continuous assistance to homeless people once they exit by providing assistance with housing maintenance. Welfare agencies provide assistance by taking over rental deposits and providing resources for move-in costs and basic appliances. They also provide financial assistance with monthly rental payments through both monthly Social Assistance payments and rent subsidies which over twelve percent of all households in Berlin received in 1998 (SenVer für Gesundheit und Soziales,

[16] Using a very conservative estimate, Berlin has spent a minimum of £35.2 million annually to fund shelters, most of which were provided by commercial and non-profit shelter providers. Shelter providers charge a daily fee that ranges between £ 11 and £26 per day and shelter resident (Abgeordentehaus von Berlin, 1996b).

2002). In this way, public transfers suffice to pay for rents in Berlin as compared to Los Angeles where less than five percent of all residents received some type of housing assistance (HUD, 1999; Simpson and Tepper, 2003). Furthermore, based on provisions in the BSHG, Berlin's welfare administration also has programs that finance assisted living arrangements for homeless people in need of continuous assistance (i.e. people with disabilities, HIV/Aids, or mental health problems).

Berlin's approach to homelessness, however, is not perfect. In a report to Berlin's parliament, the Senate administration self-critically acknowledged a number of problems with Berlin's social policy approach including coordination, and quantitative and qualitative deficits (Abgeordnetenhaus, 1995: 2-3). The same report also indicated that the Senate had introduced new policies to deal with some of these issues. For instance, in 1993 the Senate introduced the "Protected Market Segment" (Geschütztes Marktsegment) which mandates that real estate developers annually allocate 3000 newly developed and rehabilitated housing units to homeless people and in so doing improve homeless people's access to regular housing (Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1996). Another policy measure was the "Central Agency Model" (Fachstellenmodell) which encourages district welfare offices to develop specific homelessness related departments capable of making cross-agency decisions. This policy is geared toward alleviating the coordination deficits that exist between the various public agencies directly and indirectly involved with homelessness related matters (i.e. welfare office, labour office, health care sector, voluntary providers, see Fachstellen AG, 1998).

National and Local Homeless Policies: A Summary

The comparison of national and local social policy approaches to homelessness in Germany and the United States has revealed clearly that the German welfare state provides a much more comprehensive social safety net than that of the United States. In contrast to Los Angeles, Berlin's homeless service infrastructure, despite problems, is much more extensive and transparent, resulting in broader service coverage and more generous benefits. Berlin would easily fulfil the criteria that commonly constitute "successful" welfare state performance as used in comparative social policy debates since it addresses all three homeless policy objectives of the welfare state: prevention, stabilisation, and re-integration. Specifically, more generous cash assistance, social housing policies, rent subsidies, and eviction prevention programs are geared toward preventing homelessness. The provision of continual cash assistance, shelter, clothing,

healthcare, and food help homeless people cope with their immediate problems and stabilize their lives. And advice and referral services, transitional housing provisions, active labour market policies, specialized assistance, and housing subsidies are geared toward re-integrating homeless people into the societal mainstream and keeping them housed.

Given Berlin's greater extent of service intervention, we would consequently have reason to expect that policy outcomes would be better in at least two ways. First, because of continual income assistance, eviction prevention programs, and the Protected Market Segment, there should be a much lesser extent of homelessness. Second, given the greater extent of assistance and service provision, especially transitional and referral services, homeless people in Berlin should have better chances to exit homelessness and overcome market barriers and the duration of homeless should be shorter than in Los Angeles. Yet, when looking at the existing data on the prevalence, characteristics, and duration of homelessness from the mid-1990s, we find different, counterintuitive results.

1.4 Different Policies – Similar Outcomes: The Characteristics of Homelessness in Los Angeles and Berlin

The existing state of information on the nature and extent of homelessness in Los Angeles and Berlin indicates that the numbers and characteristics of each city's homeless populations are very similar, despite the aforementioned differences in homeless policy and service delivery. Perhaps more surprising is the fact that the duration of homelessness among homeless people in Berlin is longer than that in Los Angeles. I begin by discussing the prevalence of homelessness in both places and describe a number of problems that arise in terms of generating accurate data on homelessness which inevitably complicates a comparison.

The Prevalence of Homelessness in Los Angeles and Berlin

Accurately counting the numbers of homeless people in Los Angeles and Berlin is a difficult if not impossible task because of the multiple definitions used as well as a number of methodological problems which include the time-span of homeless counts, geographic variations, as well as the political intention behind a count. As a result, there are significant variations in low and high estimates of the numbers of homeless people in both Berlin and Los Angeles. Existing estimates of the number of homeless people in Berlin reveal that between 4.3 and 14.7 per 1000 residents were homeless in 1996 on

either a daily or quarter-annual basis.[17] In Los Angeles County, between 5.2 and 9.3 per 1000 residents were estimated to be homeless on any given night in 1994, while up to 25 out of 1000 residents had experienced a homeless episode within a two year span (1993-1994).[18] The discrepancies in the estimates of the prevalence of homelessness are the result of a number of methodological problems and consequently have an impact on generating comparable data. We simply lack conclusive, representative, and thus comparable data on the actual extent of homelessness in both countries and cities. Irrespective of the actual extent of homelessness and no matter what problems exist with enumerating homeless people, one thing is clear – homelessness in both cities is a severe problem, the prevalence rates are fairly similar, and homelessness has significantly risen since the late 1980s in both countries and cities. Between 1988 and 1996, the number of officially registered homeless people in Berlin rose by 87.4 percent (Abgeordentenhaus, 1995: 2; Sentatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1996: 47). In Los Angeles, the estimated number of homeless people increased by 43.7 percent between 1988 and 1994 (United Way, 1996: 368).

Demographic Characteristics of the Homeless: Similarities and Differences

The lack of reliable and representative data inevitably translates into significant variations when it comes to determining the actual demographic composition and social problems of the homeless populations in both Berlin and Los Angeles. While data on homeless people's characteristics in Berlin tends to be more consistent yet lacks depth and quality, data on homeless people in Los Angeles can be derived from a number of surveys and thus provides more detailed insights, yet often remains fragmented and inconsistent.[19] Therefore, it is difficult to provide readily comparable data. To overcome such

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[17] The estimates for Berlin come from both official and unofficial sources which indicate that somewhere between 14,500 and 50,000 of Berlin's 3.4 million residents were homeless in 1996. The lower number is based on 10,451 officially registered homeless people who received direct public social services in the second quarter of 1996 (Sentatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1997:47) and an additional estimated 4000 homeless people outside the service sector (most conservative estimates), while the highest available estimate of 50,000 homeless people is quoted in Mayer (1997: 526). For discussion of the prevalence of homelessness in Berlin, see Schneider (1998).

[18] This number is based on an estimate provided by the Shelter Partnership (1995: 8) which indicates that between 43,000 and 77,000 out of L.A. County's 9.2 million residents had been homeless on any given night in 1994. The numbers of homeless people significantly increase when extending the timeframe for counting – in a two year period between 1993 and 1994 up to 236,400 residents had been homeless at one time (United Way, 1996: 368). Such long term estimates do not exist for Berlin.

[19] The inconsistency of L.A.'s data on homelessness is primarily due to a lack of a city/county wide differentiated data on homelessness. The seven existing surveys of homeless people, all of which provide data for the late 1980s and early 1990s (i.e. Burnam, Farr, and Koegel, 1987; Cousineau, 1993; Flaming et al., 1997b; Gallup, 1995; Husick and Wolch, 1990; Shelter Partnership, 1994; Takahashi, Dear and Nealy, 1989), have certain limitations in that they vary in size (i.e. between 134 and 1256 respondents), focus (i.e. specific sub-populations), and geographic area (i.e. downtown versus specific municipalities).

discrepancies in data on homeless people in both cities and to provide some consistency, I have summarized the key characteristics of the homeless populations in Berlin and Los Angeles based on a limited number of representative studies in table 1.4.[20]
In the following, I will use these point-in-time estimates as well as additional sources to provide an overview of the main similarities and differences of the city's homeless populations.

Table 1.4 Selected **Characteristics of Homeless People in Los Angeles and Berlin**

	Los Angeles	Berlin
Point-in-time Prevalence *(per 1000 residents)*		
Lowest Estimate	5.2[3]	4.3[1]
Highest Estimate	9.2[3]	10.3[2]
Increase over Time *(in percent)*	43.7[3] (1988-94)	87.4[1,3] (1988-96)
Gender *(in percent)*		
Male	82.4[1]	86.1[1]
Female	17.6	13.9
Marital Status *(in percent)*		
Single/Divorced	65.4[1]	71.0[1]
Married/Families (w&w/o children)	34.6	29.0
Residence Prior to Homelessness		
Same City	65.0[2]	74.4[1]
Same or Other State	24.0	14.5
Abroad	11.0	9.1
Frequency of Homelessness *(in percent)*		
Chronic/first homeless experience	66.7[1]	71.8[2]
Cyclical/repeated episodes	33.3	28.2
Age *(in percent)*		
18 –27	21.4[1]	24.0[1]
28-40	49.9	36.3
40-65	28.7	39.6
Ethnic Minorities/Foreign Nationals (%)		
Foreign Nationals (Germany)	--	36.3[4]
Ethnic Minorities (USA)	87.3[1]	--
Duration of Homelessness *(in percent)*		
< 1 year	68.9[1]	42.2[1]
> 1 year	31.1	57.8
Sources	[1]Takahashi et al., 1989: 25 [2]Flaming and Drayse., 1997a: A3 [3]United Way, 1997: 368	[1]Sen.GesSoz, 1997: 44 [2]Mayer, 1997: 527 [3]Abgeordentenhaus, 1993: 2 [4]Beratungstelle, 1996: 27

Similarities in the Demographic Composition of Homeless People

The comparison of data reveals that the homeless population in both cities are fairly similar (+/- 10 percent) in terms of gender, marital status, residence prior to

[20] The information on Berlin is based on official Senate data on 9,435 officially registered homeless people in Berlin during the third quarter of 1997 (SenVer für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1997: 44 and 45). Given that the Senate data only provides information on a limited number of variables, the information on Berlin is complemented by the results of a survey of 1,266 clients of a homeless advice and referral center (Beratungsstelle, 1996: 24-31). The data on homeless people in Los Angeles is primarily based on the results of a representative sample of 405 homeless people in downtown Los Angeles provided by the Homelessness Outreach Project in 1989 (HOP, conducted by Takahashi, Dear and Neely, 1989: 26-30). The primary reason for choosing the results of the HOP survey is that it deviates the least from the other surveys on homeless people in Los Angeles and consequently provides a reasonable middle ground.

homelessness, and the frequency of homelessness. These similarities are also found by national studies on homelessness in both countries (for the U.S., see Baumohl et al., 1996; Burt et al., 2001, for Germany, see Specht-Kittler, 2000).

According to the data, the majority of homeless people in both cities and countries are indigenous single males in their prime working age, although homelessness among women, families, and children has risen disproportionately in both places signifying an increasing trend toward a diversification of homelessness. Furthermore, the majority of adult homeless are disproportionately affected by multiple social problems, especially addictions and mental health problems, and are on average homeless for longer periods of time compared to the general homeless population (Dear and Takahashi, 1992; Podschus and Dufeu, 1996; for national accounts, see Baumohl et al., 1996; Burt et al., 1999; Specht-Kittler, 2000).

The table indicates that most homeless people are indigenous having lived in either Los Angeles or Berlin for many years prior to becoming homeless. Assumptions about transiency among homeless people are consequently largely unfounded (Beratungsstelle, 1996: 25; Flaming and Drayse, 1997a: A3; Rahimian et al., 1993: 1323; for national accounts, see Burt et al, 2001; Specht-Kittler, 2000). Moreover, there is some evidence that most homeless people live in impoverished central city areas. In the U.S., 71 percent of the homeless population live in central cities and are usually concentrated in highly segregated inhospitable "ghetto" areas which generally also contain homeless service facilities (Burt et al., 1999: 35). In the Skid Row district in Downtown Los Angeles, for instance, approximately 11,000 homeless people live within a 2 square-mile area (Dear and von Mahs, 1997: 187; see also Wolch and Dear, 1993). In Berlin there is also evidence for a spatial concentration of homeless people in central city areas. Almost half (46.1 percent) of all officially registered homeless people receive welfare benefits in welfare offices in one of the five central city districts in which less than 20 percent of Berlin's population reside (Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1996: 23).

Differences: Ethnicity, Age, and Duration of Homelessness

In addition to these similarities there are also a few notable differences that require further attention. First, the proportion of ethnic/racial minorities among the homeless (in Germany labelled as foreign nationals) is much higher in Los Angeles than in Berlin due to the fact that Los Angeles has a much larger proportion of ethnic minorieties than does Berlin (63 percent compared to 17.6 percent in 1997, see Statistisches Landesamt, 2000:

69; United Way, 1997: 127). Nonetheless, ethnic/racial minorities/foreign nationals are over-represented among the homeless in both places and their share has continuously risen over the past decades. According to data provided by the Beratungsstelle (1996: 24), 36.3 percent of their homeless clients are foreign nationals, whereas estimates of ethnic/racial minorities among the homeless in Los Angeles range between 51 (Flaming and Drayse, 1997a: 2) and 93.3 percent (Cousineau, 1993: 11).

A second noticeable difference is that Berlin's homeless population is generally older affecting significantly more people over forty years of age. This disproportionate share of older homeless people among Berlin's homeless can be explained by the fact that Los Angeles' general population is much younger than Berlin's (see Sentatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 2002; United Way, 1996).

Perhaps the most striking difference in the characteristics of the cities' homeless populations that cannot simply be explained by demographic differences in the city's general populations, is the fact that homeless people in Berlin on average stay homeless for significantly longer periods of time than those in Los Angeles. While nearly two-thirds of homeless people in Berlin remained homeless for longer than one year, less than one third of L.A.'s homeless experienced such long-term homelessness (Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit und Soziales, 1997: 44; Takahashi, Dear, and Nealy, 1989: 25).[21] This finding is further surprising since the data on Berlin actually consists of people who do use the service system whereas data from Los Angeles almost exclusively consists of homeless people outside the service system. The question arises as to why homeless people in Berlin remain homeless for longer periods of time than those in Los Angeles despite a comparably much higher extent of social assistance and service?

1.5 Exit Barriers and the Impact of Public Policy on Homeless People's Exit Potential: Limitations of Current Research

In an attempt to find plausible explanations for this apparent contradiction - different policies, yet similar outcomes - I consulted the existing literature on homelessness and homeless policy in both Germany and the United States. I found that while there is information available on homeless people's experiences with exit in the United States and

[21] Almost all surveys of homeless people in Los Angeles indicated that the duration of homelessness among L.A.'s homeless is shorter than that of homeless people in Berlin (Burnam et al., 1987; Flaming et al., 1997b; Husick and Wolch, 1990; Shelter Partnership, 1994; Takahashi et al., 1989). The only exception is Cousineau's 1993 survey of 134 primarily older male street encampment residents in Downtown Los Angeles which revealed that 65.6 percent of his respondents had been homeless for more than one year at the time of the interview (Cousineau, 1993: 16).

particularly in Los Angeles, few studies in Germany have examined homeless people's attempts to overcome homelessness, and no study to date examined exit from homelessness in comparative perspective.[22] In the following, I demonstrate that we lack a dynamic understanding of how factors associated with welfare regime dimensions of market, state, and family intersect to facilitate, delay, or foreclose exit from homelessness in Germany. Specifically, I describe a number of limitations in the German literature on homelessness including an overemphasis on market exclusion, an underemphasis on both personal vulnerabilities and welfare state deficiencies, and a neglect of homeless service users. Such limitations explain why we lack a better understanding as to why durations of homelessness are longer in Germany despite the country's documentedly more comprehensive welfare system and thus warrant a more nuanced, dynamic, and longitudinal analysis of factors that affect homeless people's individual chances to overcome homelessness more rapidly. This assessment, in turn, allows me to provide a rationale for this thesis and to delineate the main research questions this study seeks to answer.

Overemphasising Market Exclusion

Most contemporary studies on homelessness in Germany (and for that matter in Europe in general) primarily rely on structural explanations espoused in the "social exclusion" literature to explain why people become homeless in the first place and why they may face difficulties with exiting homelessness. Such research sought to challenge earlier assertions that individual behaviours and choices caused homelessness and foreclosed exit, and rather attributes homeless people's lack of success to market failures as a result of economic restructuring processes, which include un- or underemployment, the lack of affordable housing, and failures of broader housing and labour market policies (Avramov et al., 1999: 27-142; Avramov, 1996: 50; Daly, 1999: 319-327; Edgar et al., 1999: 18-21; Kunstman and Helvie, 1999: 229-233; Specht-Kittler, 1994; Vranken, 1999: 337-340; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 1-49).

The previous discussion of market barriers in Berlin, especially with regards to high unemployment and a lack of affordable housing certainly add credence to the argument that such economic factors affect exit chances. Moreover, given the regime specific differences in the extent to which high regulation in Germany results in a lesser

[22] For an overview of the most important studies focussing explicitly on exit from homelessness in the U.S., see Koegel (2004) and Wong (1997). For an overview of the German literature indicating that little research on the topic exists to date, see Schneider (1998).

extent of labour demand and thus higher market entry thresholds, we would have reason to believe that market barriers are more pronounced in Berlin than in Los Angeles.

Yet, while there is no doubt that market barriers affect homeless people's ability to overcome homelessness, there are three reasons why such economic factors alone do not fully explain why homeless people face difficulties in ending homelessness in Germany and in Berlin specifically. Firstly, despite the similarities in economic and social restructuring processes, Berlin does not have the extent of extreme poverty experienced in Los Angeles (Senatsverwaltung für und Verbraucherschutz, 2002a: 38; United Way, 1997: 358). Since extreme poverty is regarded as the most important precursor to homelessness, we would have reason to believe that the extent of homelessness should be significantly smaller in Berlin than in L.A. where many more people live in extreme poverty (Wolch and Dear, 1993; United Way, 1996). This, however, is evidently not the case.

Second, if economic restructuring, resulting unemployment, and housing shortages following Unification were to be primary barriers to exiting homelessness, we would expect that extreme poverty and homelessness would disproportionately have affected residents in former East Germany and in East Berlin since unemployment is higher, income are lower, and rents rose disproportionately to income (for evidence, see Statistisches Landesamt, 2000). Between 1991 and 1999, for instance, housing costs in eastern Berlin rose by 80.7 percent compared to 21.1 percent in the west (Statistisches Landesamt, 2000: 154-155). Yet, post-unification homelessness is rather a West German than an East German phenomenon. Although homelessness in former East Germany is growing at a faster rate than in the west, less than 10 percent of the nation's homeless resided in Eastern Germany as compared to 22 percent of the overall population (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 1996: 3; Busch-Geertsama, 1998). Similarly, over three quarters of homeless people in Berlin were registered in, and had their last official residence prior to becoming homeless in western districts, as compared to sixty percent of the overall population (Abgeordentenhaus, 1995: 5). Moreover, homelessness was already a significant problem in West Berlin prior to Unification as close to 6000 people were registered as homeless in 1988 (Abgeordnetenhaus, 1995: 3). So while Unification and the resulting economic and social consequences undoubtedly contributed to the rise of homelessness and to barriers out of it, homelessness can not be interpreted entirely as a transitional phenomenon resulting from German Unification.

A third reason for why social exclusion arguments alone do not explain homeless people's problem with exiting homelessness is associated with the fact that Berlin's more generous welfare system contains more comprehensive tools to address and overcome market barriers than that of Los Angeles. Significantly higher welfare utilization rates and a much greater extent of intervention in terms preventative, stabilizing, and reintegrative policies in Berlin should have a more positive effect on both preventing poor residents from becoming homeless, and decreasing the duration of homelessness.

The fact that this is not the case raises the overall question of this research as to how welfare policies and specific homeless services address market barriers to facilitate homeless people's exit chances. In other words, how and to what extent do specific homeless policies facilitate market access? Considering that market access is the main goal of homeless people, the main emphasis of the study inevitably rests on a thorough investigation of the interrelation of homeless people's individual characteristics, market access, and public policy. Therefore, the empirical part of the study has to be organized around the overall goal of homeless people to achieve re-entry into the societal mainstream and thus regular housing and labour markets.

Underemphasizing Family, Personal Vulnerabilities, and Behaviours As Barriers to Exit

If market barriers alone do not explain why homeless people face difficulties in overcoming homelessness, it is only logical to ask if and to what extent problems in the context of the welfare regime dimension "family" (i.e. lack of social networks to family, acquaintances, former colleagues, etc.), personal vulnerabilities (mental illness, health problems, substance abuse, social isolation, victimization), as well as potentially questionable behaviours (i.e. overspending and indebtedness, bad choices, "deviant" behaviours etc.) affect homeless people's ability to overcome homelessness. As with structural reasons, we lack conclusive information as to how such personal factors affect homeless people's exit chances in Germany whereas we do have data from the U.S. and Los Angeles which suggests that social isolation, advanced age, long-term marginality, foster care and adverse childhood experiences, previous institutionalization as well as previous bouts with homelessness are statistically significant barriers to exit (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 1998; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999). The relative importance of such factors require special attention to homeless people's distinct life course experiences as it became quite clear from U.S. studies that personal vulnerabilities

borne out of homeless people's distinct biographical experiences not only affect paths into homelessness but also ways out of it. Therefore, it is important to examine how personal characteristics, behaviours, and choices affect the dynamic interrelations among individuals, markets, and the state.

Underemphasising Welfare State Deficiencies and Policy Failures

Since most contemporary debates on homelessness are concerned primarily with economic and social changes following the German Unification, analyses of policy deficiencies as potential exit barriers have become increasingly rare. Most institutional critiques are primarily concerned with coordination deficits and limitations of broader housing policies (Berthold et al., 1998; Busch-Geertsama, 1995 and 2001; Krätke, 1998; Specht-Kittler, 1994). Considering that Germany's welfare system contains ample provisions that should facilitate exit more rapidly, it is important to examine more carefully if there are deficiencies in the local provision of homeless service that contribute to homeless people's difficulties with exiting homelessness.

A more nuanced critical assessment of the effects of policy and potential welfare state deficiencies in Germany is further warranted because there used to be more forceful critiques of Germany's social policy approach to homelessness in West Germany during the 1970s and 1980s when homelessness began to rise despite significantly less unemployment and poverty as compared to today (Albrecht, 1985; Bauer, 1980; Drygala, 1989; Giesbrecht, 1987; Holtmannsspötter, 1980, 1982; Hundhammer, 1979; Preußer, 1993; Schmid, 1990; Strunk, 1988; Ruhstrat, 1991; Vaskovics et al., 1979). Such research indicated that discriminatory definitions in conjunction with serious deficiencies in the nature and extent of specific homeless policy and local service delivery adversely affected homeless people's lives and exit potential. This research led to a number of homeless policy reforms since the late 1980s including the adoption of new, less exclusionary definitions and a substantial expansion of local service provision resulting in the comprehensive policy and service coverage I described earlier in this chapter.

The question arises as to whether such reforms have alleviated all of the policy deficiencies that were reported in earlier research. We simply do not know whether such problems still exist since there is virtually no research that provides us with a longitudinal account of homeless people's experiences with social policy and service delivery and its effects on exit chances. We consequently need a more nuanced understanding of the complex relationships among policies, service provision and homeless people's exit

strategies than was suggested by the earlier analyses which likely underestimated the relationship due to a number of additional shortcomings.

Ignoring Homeless Service Users by Focusing on "Visible" Homelessness

One reason for why we know little about the effects of policy intervention on exit from homelessness is that most research on homelessness in Germany, and for that matter also in the United States, focused almost exclusively on the immediate life circumstances of the most visible groups among the homeless, i.e. street homeless who, for whatever reasons, often do not have access to or deliberately do not use welfare (Cousineau, 1993; Knowles, 2001; Snow and Anderson, 1993; Schneider, 1998; Steinert, 1990; Wolch and Rowe, 1992; Wright, 1997). That U.S. research focussed primarily on visible street homelessness is unsurprising given that less than one fifth of homeless people received either cash assistance or used shelters and other services (Burt et al., 2001; Shelter Partnership, 1994; Wright et al., 1998). In Germany, on the other hand, there should have been more attention to homeless service and shelter users since more than two-thirds of homeless people were estimated to use public social services (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 1996; Specht-Kittler, 2000). The exclusive focus on immediate, visible, and ongoing homelessness forecloses the option of looking at policy outcomes and effects.

Yet, if we want to find out how public policy affects homeless people's exit potential, it is particularly important to examine the experiences of people who actually use services extensively. Such research should help to identify both barriers to service and institutional barriers to exiting homelessness. Therefore, it is important to inquire how homeless people gain access to the welfare state, what services they use, and what effect such service use has on their ability to overcome homelessness. Consequently, I will examine the effects of service intervention on homeless service user's life circumstances while being homeless in order to more clearly understand the impact of policy on their exit strategies, and at the same time, explore how service user's individual problems and behaviours may affect the potential for successful policy and service intervention with regards to exit from homelessness.

Omitting Temporal Dimensions: The Impact of Policy Intervention on Homeless People's Life Course

A final, overarching shortcoming of homeless policy research in Germany is the omission of the temporal dimensions of homeless policy intervention on homeless people's service

utilization and its outcomes. Because of the lack of systematic research in Germany and qualitative deficits in the nature and extent of administrative data on homelessness, we lack an analysis of how policy interventions affect homeless people's life courses over time. Unlike in the U.S. where longitudinal panel data allows us to assess the relative importance of factors that both facilitate or hinder exit, there is no systematic longitudinal data available about homeless people's service and shelter utilization patterns in Germany. Berlin specific administrative data, for instance, gives virtually no clues about service outcomes.[23] Therefore we simply do not know the outcome of social policy interventions on homeless people's housing and employment status or their personal life circumstances once they leave shelters or stop using specific homeless services.

In order to examine the temporal dimensions of homeless people's exit strategies including their long-term objectives, service utilization over time, long-term social relations, as well as outcomes in a comprehensive yet achievable fashion given limited resources, it is necessary to employ a dynamic, qualitative research methodology that tracks homeless people in a limited number of selected service facilities over an extended period of time.

Summary

In sum, examining the impact of welfare policy on homeless people's life chances in Germany and the U.S. from a comparative perspective has allowed us to see that a more generous and comprehensive welfare system alone does not seem to guarantee better outcomes. In other words, while Germany possesses a much more interventionist welfare state than the U.S., the outcomes in terms of prevalence and characteristics of the nation state's corresponding homeless populations are virtually the same, and in the case of the duration of homelessness, even worse in Germany. The main purpose of this study therefore is to shed light on the factors that help to explain this discrepancy between different policies and similar outcomes and to use the basic tenets of welfare regime theory – the interplay between market, family and the state – to examine the following overarching questions: Why is Germany's welfare system so relatively ineffective in decreasing the numbers of homeless people and reducing the duration of homelessness? Which role, positive or negative, does public policy play in homeless people's attempts to overcome homelessness? The key to improving our understanding of the effects of

[23] Existing administrative data in Berlin only consists of quarterly data on prevalence, basic characteristics (gender, age, duration at the time, general location of last residence), and shelter utilization by organizational type (municipal, voluntary, and commercial) at the time of data collection (see quarterly reports by the SenVer für Gesundheit und Soziales).

homeless policy on homeless service users' attempts to overcome homelessness is to examine the relationship from the perspective of homeless people. Therefore, this research contributes to a better understanding of the institutional barriers to homeless people's exit from homelessness by examining the relationships among public policy, service delivery and homeless people's exit strategies. In particular, this study examines the individual experiences of homeless service users with homeless policy paying particular attention to how policy intervention affects homeless people's exit potential over time.

1.6 Contents of Thesis

In Chapter Two, I introduce a "multiperspectival" methodology that primarily relies on the ethnographic research methods of participant observation, case study analysis, and in-depth interviews to assess homeless people's experiences with policy over time. This ethnographic approach is complemented by forty key-informant interviews in Berlin, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. which allow for a more thorough analysis of the changing structural and institutional context of homelessness and homeless policy in Germany and the United States.

In Chapter Three, I introduce the basic characteristics of the twenty-eight respondents, their life courses and paths into homelessness, and their long-term objectives. This discussion reveals the multiplicity of problems homeless people face and also shows that virtually all of the homeless people I met wished to re-enter the societal mainstream and believed that finding employment and housing were the key components of overcoming their current situation. Based on similarities in people's life course experiences, the extent to which they used to be economically and socially integrated into the societal mainstream in the past, as well as the nature and extent of their problems, I devise a grounded five-fold life course typology of homeless people that is used in the subsequent empirical chapters to provide a more nuanced analysis of homeless people's distinct experiences with welfare state intervention over time.

Chapters Four and Five examine the interrelations between public policy, and homeless people's attempts to stabilize their lives through social services and to overcome homelessness by finding employment and housing in Berlin differentiated by life course types. In Chapter Four, I discuss the impact of public policy on homeless people's attempts to find regular employment. I demonstrate that while welfare state intervention

generally had a stabilizing effect on people's immediate material needs, efforts toward economic re-integration remained largely unsuccessful. Ultimately, only a few people were able to find jobs or job training opportunities due to case-based social work intervention. The vast majority who relied on more conventional assisted and unassisted job search strategies, however, remained unsuccessful and on welfare demonstrating that welfare intervention largely failed in surmounting market barriers. As a result of their lack of success, most people decreased their efforts to find work while some older homeless completely gave up hope and decided to wait for early retirement when they would receive pensions. Most of them believed that they did not receive sufficient assistance in making the transition back into regular employment.

In Chapter Five, I discuss the impact of public policy on homeless people's chances to find regular housing by examining their housing/shelter status over time. I demonstrate that the primarily low quality of shelter provision and the debilitating conditions of shelter life had an adverse impact on homeless people's life circumstances and their chances to maintain former social networks, which increased their alienation from the societal mainstream and decreased their exit chances by essentially undercutting the notion of family as one tenant of the welfare regime. Homeless people's negative experiences in shelters forced many to resist shelter and other homeless services and explore alternatives and as a result ventured in and out of the service system. This in turn often foreclosed the opportunity for continuous service intervention and prolonged homelessness. Furthermore, most of the people had difficulties in finding regular housing due to shortages in the supply of affordable housing and discrimination, and were, as with the attempt to find employment, primarily left to their own devices. Ultimately, the results of homeless people's attempts to find housing and employment provide a rather mixed testimony about the overall effectiveness of Berlin's social policy approach to homelessness. One half of the respondents, primarily consisting of respondents with more regular life courses, overcame homelessness with the help of social workers or by sharing housing, yet had often remained homeless for long periods of time with generally negative psychological consequences. The other half of the respondents, however, remained homeless and on welfare including some who gave up and became resigned, some who remained committed toward changing their situation, and some who decided to pursue alternatives to mainstream re-integration. Ultimately, only people who either maintained social networks or who received individualized, case-based assistance were successful

suggesting that the conventional approaches toward re-integration by merely providing referrals do not work for homeless people and the multiple problems they experience.

In Chapter Six, I resume the discussion about the U.S. response to homelessness within the broader parameters of welfare regime theory that I have outlined in this chapter by focussing on homelessness and homeless policy in Los Angeles. To do so, I first develop a preliminary analytical framework that combines existing empirical findings on homeless people's individual attempts to overcome homelessness in Los Angeles with the principal tenets of welfare regime theory including the market, state, and family. This framework allows me to demonstrate that welfare regime theory provides a useful analytical framework for understanding why the vast majority of homeless people in Los Angeles exit homelessness relatively quickly – typically within one year of the onset of homelessness – yet often fail to achieve lasting exit from homelessness largely because of serious inadequacies in the provision of public services to homeless people. This analysis also allows me to demonstrate that while the underlying quantitative methodologies used to examine exit from homelessness in Los Angeles have proven immensely useful in delineating the statistical significance of specific facilitators of exit, they do not necessarily help us to fully comprehend how such factors interact to explain who exits and who does not.

In Chapter Seven, I resituate the empirical findings from Berlin in a broader comparative analysis thereby answering the overarching question as to why Germany's more comprehensive welfare system fails to assist its homeless clients to overcome homelessness more rapidly. At the same time, I demonstrate how the life course approach contributes to comparative social policy debates and welfare regime theory as well as policy reforms geared toward expediting homeless people's exit from homelessness. Specifically, I demonstrate that the empirical findings from Berlin largely confirm the tenets of regime theory in terms of the fundamental characteristics of the German conservative welfare regime in that market entry thresholds are very high in Berlin and thus prevent homeless people's economic reintegration and prolong their homelessness unlike in Los Angeles, where low entry thresholds allow quick economic reintegration at the expense of long-term stability and thus often resulting in chronic poverty and recurring homelessness. At the same time, however, more homeless people in Berlin receive welfare and since benefits are more generous than in L.A., homeless people in Berlin tend to live in somewhat more stable economic circumstances. Yet, whether or not such more comprehensive welfare provision leads to the intended outcome of facilitating

exit depends largely on whether or not people received individualized assistance as well as their life course trajectories. The empirical findings suggest that welfare intervention at the local scale results in highly ambivalent outcomes in that conventional welfare provisions rarely facilitate exit whereas more specialized service and shelter provisions within the realm of specific homeless policies are much more likely to assist clients in overcoming homelessness. This finding requires us to recast dominant assumptions in comparative social policy research as to what constitutes successful policy performance suggesting that successful outcomes are not only a function of social rights and the extent and generosity of welfare benefits but rather are dependent on whether or not local welfare provision succeeds in providing individualized, concerted, and timely assistance by taking homeless people's life course specific problems, needs, and expectations into account. Based on these principle findings, I will conclude this thesis by elaborating on policy changes that have occurred since the conclusion of the empirical part of the thesis and propose a series of policy reforms geared toward facilitating exit from homelessness more rapidly.

Chapter 2

Methods for Examining Homeless People's Experiences in Berlin

2.1. Understanding Homelessness: Developing a Multiperspectival and Dynamic Ethnographic Methodology

To understand the complex and dynamic relationship between public policy and homeless people's exit strategies in Berlin requires exploring individual homeless people's experiences with policy over time by analysing their life courses and paths into homelessness, service utilization patterns and experience, and the outcomes of policy intervention. Doing so, however, requires more than simply focussing on the lived experiences of homeless people since policy implementation and the economic, political, and spatial context in which it exists involves a variety of actors. To account for multiple perspectives, how they evolve and change over time, and how they interact, it is important to develop a dynamic, multi-dimensional methodology. To develop such an approach, I have built upon Snow and Anderson's (1993) concept of a "multiperspectival analysis," the main objective of which the authors describe as follows:

> "To contextualize social activities, issues, and processes involves more than providing a descriptive overview of the encompassing context. It also requires consideration of voices and perspectives of a range of actors of focal concern, of the perspectives and actions of other relevant groups of actors, and of the interaction among all of them" (Snow and Anderson, 1993: 21).

Applying a multiperspectival approach to examine the interrelations between homeless people's lives, homeless policy, and exit from homelessness requires approaching the topic from two principle angles, including the perspective of homeless people (bottom-up) and the perspectives of policy actors and society more broadly (top-down) which combined should provide a comprehensive analysis.

To account for homeless people's personal experiences with policy over time, I rely on the ethnographic research methods of case study analysis, participant observation, and in-depth interviewing. In previous research, ethnographic research methods have yielded invaluable insights to understanding the multiple, interrelated factors that affect homeless people's paths into homelessness and their difficult lives while being homeless.[1]

[1] For an overview of qualitative methods used by researchers of the Los Angeles Homelessness Project, see Koegel, 1988; Rowe and Wolch, 1989; Wolch, 1989. While ethnographic research methods to examine homelessness have been employed by many, a number of studies stand out for their depth, clarity, and ability to persuasively link lived experiences to the broader societal and spatial context. They include

Since the lack of a dynamic, temporal analysis of policy impacts and outcomes is a primary limitation of existing research on homelessness, including ethnographic studies, it is important to develop a dynamic research approach that seeks to understand the ways in which public policy shapes homeless people's life course before, during, and ideally after homelessness. Adopting a dynamic life course perspective, following Leisering and Leibfried's recommendations (1999: Ch. 2), allows for a more thorough understanding of policy impacts over time. Specifically, it is possible to learn about differentiated policy needs as they emerge from homeless people's distinct life course experiences and their paths into homelessness, understand the effects of policy intervention on homeless people's life circumstances throughout their homelessness experience, and find out about policy outcomes, particularly the question as to whether social policy intervention enables people to overcome homelessness and welfare dependence. Adopting a qualitative ethnographic research approach is further necessitated by mere pragmatic considerations as it would have been impossible for me to triangulate such ethnographic research with extensive survey data in the manner of Snow and Anderson (1993) or Wright (1996) because of limited resources.[2]

To account for broader societal changes that determine the social, economic, and political context of homeless people's lives as well as the policies designed to assist them in exiting homelessness, I relied primarily on an extensive collection of existing secondary sources.[3] Given, however, that many aspects of the complex relationship between homeless policy and homeless people's exit chances as well as the broader societal context have remained unexplored in German research, I conducted key-informant interviews with policy makers, administrators, service provider, and advocates in Berlin, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. These interviews provide the perspectives of a range of actors from relevant groups to complement the interviews of homeless people. In sum, I argue that this multiperspectival, dynamic, and ethnographic research methodology provides the necessary ingredients to gain a more nuanced understanding of

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Bauer's (1980) study of life circumstance of homeless people in Marioth and Schneider's (1998) investigation of homeless street people in Berlin, Germany, Knowles' (1999) analysis of mentally ill homeless people, Montreal, Canada, Ruddick's (1996) study of homeless youth in Hollywood, Snow and Anderson's (1993) examination of street people in Austin, USA, and Wright's (1997) analysis of homeless grass roots resistance in Chicago and San Jose, USA. Although none of these studies explicitly has focussed on exit from homelessness, they demonstrate the utility of ethnographic research methods for gaining insights into the lives of homeless people.

[2] While triangulation would have certainly been desirable, the resources necessary to undergo an extensive panel study such as the CHS in Los Angeles far exceeded the personal and financial means that were available to me at the time (for methodological considerations, see Schoeni and Koegel, 1998).

[3] Secondary resources used in this research include previous academic research, governmental documents and reports, and non-governmental reports related to the nature, extent, and consequences of homelessness; the nature and extent of relevant social policy; economic data; and housing and labour market data.

the interrelations among homeless policy, homeless people, and welfare state outcomes and thus allows us to understand why a more interventionist welfare regimes does not necessarily guarantee better outcomes.

2.2. Ethnographic Research Methods

Case Study Analysis: Three Service Projects in Berlin

The first and foremost task of this research project was to determine the locations at which the research ought to be conducted. Given the fact that Berlin's homeless population is very diverse (Abgeordnetenhaus, 1995; BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 1997; Schneider, 1998; Schmid, 1990; Specht-Kittler, 2000), the primary goal was to select case studies that reflect the diversity of the homeless population and their experiences. Moreover, given that I intended to learn about homeless people's experiences with social policy, I focused on homeless people who were using welfare services and were interacting with service providers. In each case study, I had five primary research objectives:

(1) to talk to facility managers and administrators about the particular project, its clients, its operations, and its affiliation with Berlin's homeless service sector;

(2) to explore the immediate built environment to determine if there is community resistance or rejection of clients and facility;

(3) to informally talk to clients/patrons and to observe their behaviours;

(4) to conduct in-depth interviews with selected homeless people in order to examine their past and present service utilization and its effects, as well as other barriers to exit; and

(5) to track respondents over the course of one year to inquire about their progress and experiences.

After visiting a number of homeless service facilities in November and December 1997, including soup-kitchens, emergency shelters, transitional housing projects, and day centres, as well as public and semi-public spaces that were reportedly being frequented by homeless people, I selected three specific case studies for reasons that I will describe next.

Transitional Housing Project "Wohnheim Trachenbergring" (Berlin-Tempelhof)

The first case study is a large-scale transitional housing project Berlin-Tempelhof for 68 homeless men, 28 homeless women, as well as 173 Bosnian war refugees. The large two-winged, three story housing complex is located in Berlin Tempelhof (formerly West Berlin) along the railroad tracks of the commuter line S2 and is surrounded by commercial and industrial properties. Across the street is an upper-middle class residential

community consisting of single-detached family dwellings. The facility is operated by the national welfare organization "Internationaler Bund" and is primarily funded through public revenues.[4]

After visiting the "Wohnheim Trachenbergring" and speaking with facility manager Uta Sternal, I found the housing project a particularly suitable location for conducting research for a number of reasons. The client database revealed that the residents were diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and geographic origin, duration of homelessness, and their previous job qualifications and experience. Since most residents were long-term homeless receiving public cash assistance, they could reflect on their previous experiences with policy and various service and shelter facilities in Berlin. A second reason for choosing the project was its comprehensive service approach which would allow me to assess homeless people's experiences in a presumably better facility. The primary objective of the project is to provide homeless people with an opportunity to stabilize their lives and to receive individualized assistance in their attempts to re-enter the societal mainstream. Therefore, three of the project's nine social workers worked exclusively with the homeless men assisting them in administrative affairs, with referrals, and with housing and job searches. Finally, the residents lived in single-rooms equipped with basic furniture and utilities and had access to cooking and other communal facilities which would allow me to more easily establishing contacts yet also allow for privacy should interviews be arranged.

Considering the potential advantages of this research location, I asked Uta Sternal for permission to temporarily stay at the housing project, to conduct in-depth interviews with the residents, and to obtain access to the facilities client data base. She accepted my proposal under the condition that a room was available, I pay a nominal fee for shelter (DM 15/ £6.20 per day), and that I guarantee the anonymity of the male residents.[5] Given that rooms were available in mid-February, I moved in on February 17, 1998 and stayed at the shelter until March 13, 1998. The close proximity to homeless people while living at the shelter allowed me to get to know potential respondents informally and to create an atmosphere of openness and trust. In this way, I was able to get to know about forty

[4] The Deutscher Bund is a national charitable organization providing social services to a variety of groups, including homeless people, elderly citizens, and more recently also refugees and asylum seekers. The facility's operating budget is primarily generated by per-diem shelter allowances paid for by local welfare offices. In 1998, the project charged DM 30 (£12.5) per client and day. In times of lower occupancy, facility operators rely on additional funds provided by the Deutscher Bund.

[5] I also asked Uta Sternal for permission to interview the female homeless residents but she declined arguing that most female residents had severe problems and oftentimes had traumatic experiences with abuse and violence and therefore should not be subjected to inquiries.

homeless residents and to formally interview seventeen single homeless adult males while living in the shelter, sixteen of whom I was able to track over the course of one year.

Day Centre "Warmer Otto" (Berlin-Tiergarten)

The second case study I selected was the day centre "Warmer Otto," located in Moabit, an impoverished working class neighbourhood in the western central district of Berlin-Tiergarten. The Warmer Otto is a year-round day-centre for poor and homeless citizens providing food and drink, as well as a place to stay during the day when most shelters remain closed. In addition, three part-time social workers assist visitors with a number of tasks including administrative matters, personal problems, referrals, and job and housing searches. Once a week, a doctor and a lawyer visited the facility on a pro-bono basis and provided medical and legal advice and referrals. Moreover, visitors could receive fresh clothes and use the bathroom to change their clothes, wash up and shave. Finally, the social workers also organized social events such as local day trips (hiking, sightseeing, and cinema), holiday parties, and sporting events (soccer and ping-pong tournaments). The facility is a non-profit organization affiliated with a local Lutheran church congregation and was relying primarily on public Senate and District funds as well as additional funds generated by the church congregation. This day centre has a maximum capacity of 55 visitors and is, especially in the winter months, always crowded serving up to 120 visitors per day. The facility had the advantage that it was small enough to allow for general observations, yet large enough to ensure a certain extent of anonymity and privacy while conducting interviews. The clientele was diverse consisting of men and women as well as sheltered and unsheltered homeless people. The majority of visitors, however, were local poor and homeless residents from Moabit. I talked to facility operator Klaus Breitfeld and informed him about my research and he permitted me to conduct interviews if visitors gave their consent. I had an opportunity to talk to a number of visitors, few of which were regular visitors. Still, I managed to get to know four residents well enough to conduct in-depth interviews, among them two homeless women, all of whom I was able to track for one year.

Advocacy Project and Street-Newspaper Agency "Strassenfeger" (Berlin-Friedrichshain)

The third case study I selected is a homeless street newspaper agency as an example of an advocacy/self-help project. Since the ongoing privatisation of homeless service provision reconfigures the task of service provision, it is important to also

examine alternative service providers that work independent of the leading cartel of welfare organizations. The MOB Obdachlose Machen Mobil e.V. is a non-profit organization guided by four overarching objectives. The foremost objective is the production and distribution of the "Strassenfeger," which is one of Berlin's two homeless street newspapers, giving homeless people the opportunity to sell homeless street newspaper for profit.[6] Other objectives include involving homeless people in the agency's management and operations, providing emergency shelter in the agency's editorial office, and giving homeless vendors an opportunity to engage in grass-roots activism.

Dr. Stefan Schneider, Chairman of the" MOB e.V." gave me permission to undergo research at the agency. He provided me with some initial information about street-newspaper vendors which suggested the importance of including this group in the study. First, many vendors sell street newspapers because they either have no access to welfare and shelter or actively choose not to take advantage of public welfare allowing me to explore why this is the case. Second, street-newspaper vendors serve as examples of homeless people who use self-initiative in their attempts to exit homelessness therefore exploring alternatives to welfare. Third, vendors tend to be younger than the average homeless populations yet tend to experience a greater extent of social problems, allowing me to explore the role of supportive social services and the problems with accessing such services.[7] I was able to conduct four in-depth interviews with homeless vendors and through the agency established contact to two unaffiliated homeless women, whom I also interviewed and track over the course of one year.

Although the three selected case studies do not cover all elements of homeless service provision in Berlin, they allowed me to get to know a diverse set of homeless people, both male and female, of different ages, German's and foreign nationals, people with and without physical or mental health problems, people with and without previous economic and social integration, and therefore provided a fairly reasonable cross-section of Berlin's overall single homeless population.

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[6] The general idea behind the concept is that vendors borrow an initial set of newspapers, sell them to the public for DM 2.- and receive a new set of papers after having paid off the first set for DM 1.- per issue and then again sell the new set for DM 2.-. They keep all the profits and the tips.

[7] During my first visit to the newspaper agency, Chairman Schneider indicated that the vendors are characterized by a variety of different social and legal problems – there is a high prevalence of substance abuse, previous incarceration and frequently outstanding warrants, or health problems such as HIV/Aids and severe mental illness among street newspaper vendors.

Participant Observation: Exploring Homeless Spaces and Lives

In each of the three case studies as well as in other homeless service facilities and spaces homeless people tend to congregate, I employed methods of participant observation, a commonly applied tool in ethnographic analyses of homelessness (Girtler, 1980; Knowles, 1999; Rowe and Wolch, 1990 and 1992; Schneider, 1998; Snow and Anderson, 1993; Weber, 1983). The primary purpose of participant observation was to get a better understanding of homeless people's lives and living conditions in service facilities; to get to know people and establish a basis for future interviews; and by learning about "homeless lives" in "homeless spaces," to be able to draw conclusions about exit chances, strategies, and potentials.

There is a broad array of methods and approaches available to "observe and participate" in homeless people's lives and the spaces they occupy, ranging from more formal research in which the observer maintains his/her identity as a researcher to informal ways in which a researcher pretends to be homeless him or herself.[8] While the later approach may have the advantage of receiving unfiltered, presumably more "accurate" results, I reject such an approach as dishonest and patronizing. Rather, I intended to take a middle ground by personally living in a shelter on a temporary basis and thereby attempting to get to know my respondents and their lives and problems up close, yet to maintain my identity as a researcher and to let my respondents know who I am and what I intend to do.[9] In carefully approaching homeless people and giving them an opportunity to get to know me, I was able to establish a basis of trust which allowed me to get an in-depth perspective on homeless people's immediate life circumstances, their personal problems, and the ways in which they receive and perceive public assistance. This deliberate sensitivity in carefully approaching homeless people is born out of the understanding that there are fine lines between observation and voyeurism and participation and intrusion when applying ethnographic research as numerous researchers have critically remarked when discussing the ethical dilemmas of such methods (i.e. Knowles, 1999: 10-16; Rowe and Wolch, 1990: 186; Snow and Anderson, 1993: 34-35;

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[8] In the most commonly used approach, researchers maintain their identity as researchers, regularly venture into spaces that homeless people occupy, informally establish contacts often with the goal of conducting formal interviews, and take detailed field notes of their more subjective personal observations and contacts (for examples, see Knowles, 2000; Rowe and Wolch, 1992; Schmid, 1990; Schneider, 1998; Snow and Anderson, 1993; Weber, 1984). The extreme form of participant observation is that the researcher actually takes on the identity of a homeless person to gain access to homeless people and "insider" knowledge (Girtler, 1980).

[9] This approach is more closely related to Snow and Anderson's (1993: 24) concept of a "buddy-researcher," which is a person who actually participates in the everyday lives of homeless people by joining their daily activities and thereby tries to build personal relationships.

Wright, 1997: 31-38). Yet, despite all my attempts to use caution and sensitivity, the application of such methods has created serious doubts and ethical dilemmas on my part that I will describe in more detail in conclusion of this chapter.

Given that the three research locations are quite different in many respects, I had to tailor my methods of participant observation for each case study. Table 2.1 summarizes the participatory methods applied in each case study.

Table 2.1 **Methods of Participant Observation**

Case Study	Method of Participant of Observation
1. Transitional Housing Project "Wohnheim Trachenbergring"	▪ Living in shelter for four weeks ▪ Casual conversations in individual or group settings ▪ Participating in everyday activities (cooking, eating, drinking beer, watching TV, making music, going grocery shopping, visiting friends and acquaintances in the home district) ▪ Accompanying residents to service agencies and public administration and on job and housing searches ➔ *led to 17 In-Depth Interviews*
2. Day Centre "Warmer Otto"	▪ Visiting facility, eating at the facility, having informal, casual conversations about life and homeless policy ▪ After introducing myself and my intentions, more formal conversations ➔ *led to 5 In-Depth Interviews*
3. Street Newspaper Agency "Strassenfeger"	▪ Attending editorial board and vendor assembly meetings ▪ Participating in agency activities (i.e. public demonstrations, sit-ins, information campaigns) ▪ Accompanying vendors at work and attempting to personally sell newspapers ➔ *led to 6 In-Depth Interviews*

Clearly, the close proximity to homeless people while living in the shelter and receiving daily information allowed for particularly valuable in-depth observations. Yet, the ability to observe behaviours in the day centre or to participate in street-newspaper agency's daily operations also gave me insights to homeless people's daily lives and problems. I recorded all the observations that I made in the three case studies, as well as other relevant observations and personal impressions (i.e. while visiting administrative buildings, other homeless service facilities, or public spaces) in a research diary, which I later systematized in a word-processing file. One of the key purposes of the different observation strategies was to get to know some of the over 120 homeless people I eventually met and informally talked to over the course of my observations well enough

to establish a basis to conduct formal in-depth interviews. The method of in-depth interviewing will be described next.

Exploring Homeless Peoples Lives and Experiences with Policy: In-depth Interviews

Overall, I conducted 35 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with single homeless people in Berlin between February and March 1998, 28 of which I used in this analysis.[10] The decision as to whether or not to include an interview in the analysis depended on whether four main criteria had been met. The first criteria was that I had to be able to first informally meet and talk to my respondents in order to introduce myself and to inform them about this research. A second criteria was that the actual interview covered all the interview topics that I had envisioned especially those related to policy and policy impacts (see table 2.2. below). A third criterion was that I would have the opportunity to meet my respondents again for the purpose of asking follow-up questions or to clarify issues from the interview. Finally, I made an effort to maintain contact through five further visits to Berlin in 1998 and early 1999 in order to find out about the respondents' lives and status over the course of one year. In this way I was able to meet each respondent at least three times and over half of the respondents more than five times over the course of one year.

On average, an interview lasted for 2.5 hours and was typically conducted in a one-on-one, private setting. To start the interview session and to make my respondents at ease, I offered coffee or cigarettes, briefly informed them about the broader topics I wanted to talk to them about, and ensured them that I would treat the information they gave me with confidentiality. I also had each of them choose a pseudonym, which turned out to be quite funny and certainly helped to lighten up the atmosphere. Whenever possible and permitted, I recorded the interviews on tape and later transcribed them in full. In cases where people did not want their responses recorded or in settings in which background noise would not allow for recordings, I took detailed notes which I wrote up and systematized later the same day.

[10] A list of the interviews with homeless people including short biographic sketches can be found in Appendix 2

Tab. 2.2 **Interview Topics and Analysis Criteria**

	Interview Topics		Analysis Criteria
1	Interview Situation		
	Experiences in a: Shelter b: Street-newspaper c: Daycentre		Experiences with a, b or c Social Contacts in a, b or c Opinion about a, b or c
2	Life Course/ Biographic Dimensions		
	2.1	General Information	Date and Place of Birth General Demographics (gender, age, marital status, citizenship) Specific Social Problems (health, mental health, addictions)
	2.2	Socialization and Employment History	Youth and Adolescence (i.e. relation to parents) Education, Job Training, and Employment and Unemployment History Previous Use of Welfare and Previous Institutionalization Residential History (local, regional, and international migratory patterns)
	2.3	Paths to Homelessness	Time and Place of First Homelessness Reasons for Homelessness Type and duration of Homelessness (episodic, cyclical, chronic) Short and Long-term Goals
3	Experience since Homelessness		
	3.1	Material Survival Strategies	Public Cash Assistance (Access and Use) Informal Income Strategies Food, Clothing, and other Material Needs Extent of Public Service Provision
	3.2	Shelters/ Accommodations	Types of Shelters Used/ Opinions Alternative Accommodations Used Continuities/ Discontinuities
	3.2	Life Circumstances	Daily and Periodic Routines, Hobbies, Habits Mobility and Mobility Constraints (local, regional, national) Personal Problems
	3.3	Social Networks	Old Social Networks Outside Homelessness New Social Networks In- and Outside Homelessness The Impact of Policy on Social Networks
	3.4	Experiences with Homeless Policy	Type of Public Assistance/Service Used Health Care and Supportive Services Evaluation of Homeless Service Infrastructure
	3.5	Exit Strategies	Job Search Strategies Housing Search Strategies
	3.6	Experiences with Re-Integrative Policies	Labour Market Policies (Re)Housing Policies Evaluation/Effectiveness of Re-Integrative Policies
4	The Impact Policy Intervention over Time (March 1998 – February 1999)		
	4.1	Status	Housing Status Income and Employment Status Personal Situation
	4.2	Policy Impact over Time	Outcomes: Optimisation/Stabilization/Entrenchment Overall Evaluation of Welfare State Performance Suggestions for Reform

Analysis Criteria

Before conducting the interviews, I first had to come to terms with potential problems in preparing and conducting in-depth interviews. The first problem is associated

with the format of the interview. I had to choose an interview format that is flexible enough to uncover new information, yet standardized enough to allow for comparisons. To avoid that my personal expectations and biases predetermined the outcomes of an interview, I chose a flexible, semi-structured interview format as recommended by Rowe and Wolch (1989) in order to give my respondents as many opportunities as possible to direct the conversation themselves. Should an interview nonetheless get stuck in seemingly irrelevant detail or a respondent was hesitant, the semi-structured format allowed me to resume the question/answer session at any given time.

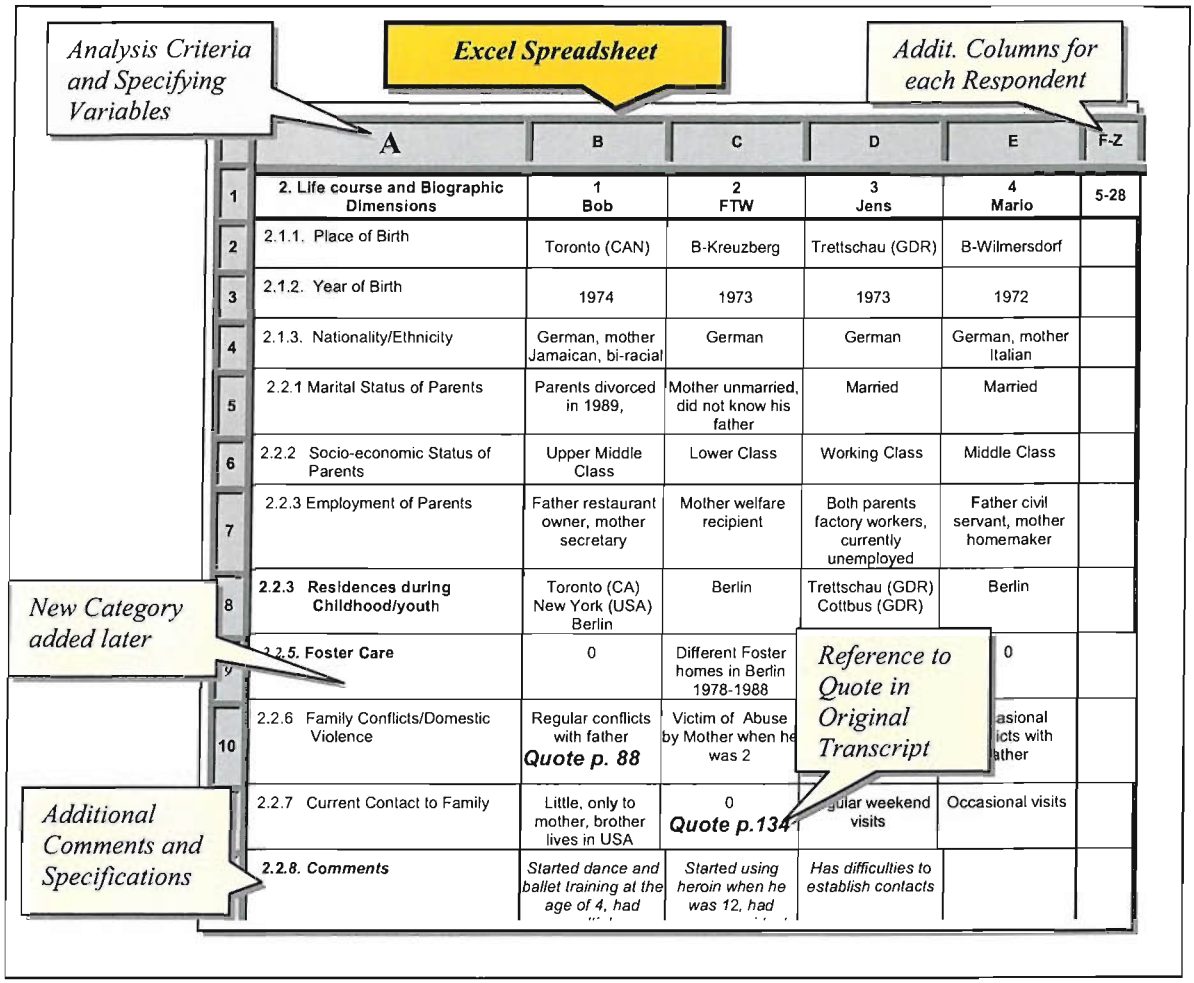
A second problem is concerned with the actual contents and course of the interview. I had to pay attention to translate the rather complex and scientific analysis criteria into easily understandable questions and to avoid academic lingo and complex sentences given that this would have been detrimental to my efforts to create a basis of trust and comfort. Furthermore, I had to account for variations in concentration and attention-spans throughout the actual interview. I took this aspect into consideration when I decided the general outline of the course of the interview, which I have summarized in table 2.2.

Because of my emphasis on maintaining close contact to the respondents, I was able to meet all respondents again for clarifications and follow-up questions. In addition, I visited the three case studies five times throughout 1998 and early 1999 and thereby was able to track all but one respondent over the course of one year after the initial interview. Therefore, I was able to assess whether or not respondents were able to fulfil their goals they identified in the original in-depth interview. During further meetings it was also possible to record respondent's overall opinion on the performance of Berlin's homeless service infrastructure over time.

Data Analysis

After I conducted all of my interviews, I began the process of analysing the data. In order to find commonalities as well as differences between individual experiences, I have systematized the information I had collected. For this purpose, I developed a preliminary list of relevant analysis criteria, which resembled those of table 2.2, in an Excel- spread sheet and devised corresponding variables along the first column of the spread-sheet. Next, I systematically went through each interview to extract information that corresponds with particular criteria and variables. Figure 2.1 includes a small illustrative sample from the extensive data analysis sheet.

Figure 2.1 **Sample from Data Analysis Sheet**



	A	B	C	D	E	F-Z
1	**2. Life course and Biographic Dimensions**	1 **Bob**	2 **FTW**	3 **Jens**	4 **Mario**	5-28
2	2.1.1. Place of Birth	Toronto (CAN)	B-Kreuzberg	Trettschau (GDR)	B-Wilmersdorf	
3	2.1.2. Year of Birth	1974	1973	1973	1972	
4	2.1.3. Nationality/Ethnicity	German, mother Jamaican, bi-racial	German	German	German, mother Italian	
5	2.2.1 Marital Status of Parents	Parents divorced in 1989,	Mother unmarried, did not know his father	Married	Married	
6	2.2.2 Socio-economic Status of Parents	Upper Middle Class	Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	
7	2.2.3 Employment of Parents	Father restaurant owner, mother secretary	Mother welfare recipient	Both parents factory workers, currently unemployed	Father civil servant, mother homemaker	
8	**2.2.3 Residences during Childhood/youth**	Toronto (CA) New York (USA) Berlin	Berlin	Trettschau (GDR) Cottbus (GDR)	Berlin	
9	**2.2.5. Foster Care**	0	Different Foster homes in Berlin 1978-1988		0	
10	2.2.6 Family Conflicts/Domestic Violence	Regular conflicts with father ***Quote p. 88***	Victim of Abuse by Mother when he was 2		asional icts with ather	
	2.2.7 Current Contact to Family	Little, only to mother, brother lives in USA	0 ***Quote p.134***	gular weekend visits	Occasional visits	
	2.2.8. Comments	*Started dance and ballet training at the age of 4, had*	*Started using heroin when he was 12, had*	*Has difficulties to establish contacts*		

Each respondent received his/her own column and I put the respondents in order of their age differentiated by gender and previous residential status (indigenous versus migrants) and eventually sorted people by life course type. Should an interview reveal a new criterion or require me to change variables, I added new rows to include a new dimension or occurrence, and consequently returned to already analysed interviews to look for comparable data. I also marked particularly interesting quotes in the analysis sheet with reference to the page number in the corresponding transcription file. The process of adding new dimensions and returning to previously analysed data continued until all 28 interviews were examined. The result was an extensive Excel spreadsheet that contained 28 columns and 560 rows of qualitative data. This data set allowed me to analyse the interviews as well as to compare it to more representative data. The results from the content analysis are included throughout the remainder of the thesis and provide the primary basis of the empirical analyses on homeless people's attempts to find employment and housing in chapters four and five.

I also repeatedly refer to individual experiences of the respondents by using illustrative original quotes from the interviews, which I have translated as accurately as possible from German into English.[11] Giving my respondents a "voice," is a very important element of this research that allowed me to illustrate my arguments in the context of individual's experiences and highlight homeless people as active agents in their daily lives.[12]

2.3. Exploring the Societal and Institutional Context of Homelessness: Key-Informant Interviews

In addition to the previously described ethnographic research methods, this study also employs key-informant interviews designed to expand our understanding of the broader changes surrounding the apparent contradiction between different policies yet similar outcomes. Since the relationship between social policy and homeless people's exit potential is interrelated, it is, in accordance with Snow and Anderson's conceptualisation of a "multiperspectival" approach, necessary also to examine the perceptions and opinions of a range of actors involved in homeless policy and service provision. Broadening the scope of analytic inquiry is further necessary since there are, as the literature review in Chapter 1demonstrated, a number of unanswered research questions pertaining to the broader structural and institutional context of homelessness and homeless policy. To fill these voids, I relied on key-informant interviews with key-policy makers and other important actors in Berlin, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. between July 1997 and December 1998.

To identify key informants in Berlin, I spent most of 1997 collecting information on homelessness in Berlin and establishing contacts.[13] As a result I was able to formally interview nineteen administrators, politicians, service providers, social workers, housing

[11] To properly translate quotes, I have tried to capture the meaning and mood by using equivalent and colloquial English terms, rather than attempting to literally translate word by word.

[12] For a discussion of the importance of giving homeless people a "voice" and in emphasizing their agency, see Knowles (1999: 10-16).

[13] In the spring of 1997, I established contact with Professor Margit Mayer and her research associates Jens Sambale and Dominik Veith at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North America Studies at the Free University of Berlin who at the time unsuccessfully applied for grants to conduct comparative research on homelessness and urban development in Berlin and Los Angeles. Sambale and Veith gave me access to their extensive literature collection on homelessness in Berlin and helped me to identify and contact key informants on homelessness in Berlin.

experts, private security representatives, and activists.[14] While one purpose of these interviews was to obtain specific information on the informant's particular area of expertise, all respondents were asked about their assessment of exit barriers and policy impacts to see the contrast between the assessments of policy makers and homeless people. In addition, I also asked each key-informant general questions to find out about their perspectives on the broader societal changes pertaining homelessness in Berlin that remained insufficiently explored in the literature on homelessness in Berlin, most notably recent political and administrative changes, anticipated changes due to the planned district reforms, changes in labour and housing markets since Unification, or community attitudes toward the homeless.

In addition to the interviews in Berlin, I also conducted a number of key-informant interviews in the U.S. during the summer of 1997.[15] Although these interviews are less important to address the research questions this thesis seeks to answer, these key-informant interviews allowed me to reflect more accurately on more recent political changes in the U.S. that were not yet addressed in the academic literature at both the national and local level including, for instance, the potential effects of welfare reform and workfare on homeless people. Another important reason for conducting interviews in the U.S. was to update the existing and somewhat dated information on homelessness and homeless policy in Los Angeles. During my research in the U.S., I was able to conduct twelve interviews with policy makers, service providers, and advocates in Los Angeles and ten with federal policy makers and advocates in Washington D.C.

2.4 Limitations of Research Approach

The choice of qualitative, ethnographic research methods inevitably has certain limitations. The most obvious shortcoming is the fact that the limited number of case studies and interviews and the lack of ability to use random sampling techniques can not produce representative, generalizable results, no matter how much attention has been paid to reach a representative cross-section of Berlin's homeless population. Although triangulation would have been desirable, I did not have the necessary resources to conduct large-scale surveys of homeless people. Rather, my research goal is to gain a nuanced

[14] All expert interviews were recorded and transcribed. A list of the expert interviews that I conducted can be found in Appendix 2.

[15] The research in the U.S. was made possible through a grant by the German Marshall Fund. In addition to conducting interviews, I also used the opportunity to collect literature on homelessness in the U.S..

understanding of the complex processes underlying homeless people's experiences rather than to generate replicable, generalizable patterns (Sayer, 1992; Snow and Anderson, 1993: 30-34).

Another limitation I encountered was associated with the close proximity to homeless people. Although the chosen ethnographic approach in the three case studies allowed me, as intended, to successfully overcome initial reservations and to establish close contact to the respondents, the close proximity also created a host of problems. A first problem I encountered was that many of respondents over time began to trust me and turned to me for advice given that they knew that as a researcher I had a good understanding of the policy context and the service infrastructure. Consequently, I occasionally experienced a role change from "scientific observer" to a sort of social worker and advocate. The dilemma is how could you not help out if you know about a better way, if you happen to know a person or agency that could be of use? Although there is a possibility that such intervention on my part might have influenced outcomes, I do not believe that the few instances in which I dispensed advice actually altered the course of events or the ways in which people used or perceived social policy intervention.[16]

Additionally, I experienced concern as to whether the choice of such in-depth qualitative methods is actually legitimate and morally justifiable, particularly with regards to living in the shelter. A few days into my stay at the shelter, I was overcome by serious doubts and I began feeling like an intruder. I realized that I can, under no circumstances, really understand what it means to be homeless, given that I could pack my belongings any day and simply go "home", a luxury that my respondents by definition simply did not have (see also Snow and Anderson, 1993: 25). I also felt that I was exploiting the misfortune of people for my personal advantage, such as getting a dissertation, academic recognition, and hopefully an academic career. No matter how good my intentions (i.e. getting a deeper understanding of homelessness or finding solutions), these moral dilemmas cannot be simply taken away. What actually helped me over this crisis were my respondents themselves. I talked to some of my respondents about my doubts and they actually encouraged me to carry on. Bob told me:

[16] I only know for sure of one area where my inquiries resulted in action among some of the respondents. When I asked respondents whether they received subsidized public transportation vouchers, it turned out that a number of them were not made aware of this service by their respective case workers and as a result amassed quite extensive financial penalties for fare dodging. Surprised and angered that this option existed, I know of four respondents who returned to their welfare offices to receive such passes which, in the long run, might have resulted in less instances of incurred fines for fare dodging and might have therefore saved these respondents a few hundred pounds in fines.

> "Stop it, man. We actually talked about you, you know. We think it's good what you're doing. At least you are trying to see things from our perspectives. The damn' politicians certainly don't. Hey, and besides, if we can help you to get a dissertation out of this, why not? Good for you! (Bob, conversation on Feb. 22)

Yet, keeping these irresolvable dilemmas in mind was a constant reminder of the importance of placing homeless people's experiences at the centre of this analysis. I will now turn to introduce the homeless people who participated in this study.

Chapter 3

Homelessness and the Life Course: Demographic and Biographical Characteristics of Homeless People in Berlin

3.1 Developing a Life Course Typology

In this chapter I introduce the characteristics of the twenty-eight respondents who I interviewed initially between February and April 1998 in Berlin and devise a fivefold typology based on similarities in their life courses up until the time they became homeless. The purpose of developing a grounded life course typology of homeless people is to assess the similarities and differences in homeless people life courses that ultimately led to their descent into homelessness so as to allow for a more differentiated analysis of the interrelations between social policy and homeless people's exit potential. This typology will be used in the following empirical chapters to delineate more clearly how the respondents used the welfare state and what role policy intervention played in assisting them to find both housing and employment, which are goals that virtually all respondents identified for themselves. Moreover, in differentiating clearly policy impacts and outcomes, this typology may assist in developing better analytical tools for future, more extensive research on homelessness and ultimately also serve as a guideline for policy reforms.

While there was great diversity among the life course experiences of the respondents prior to homelessness, it became apparent that there were a number of common experiences that allowed me to identify five principle groups among homeless people. Specifically, I used three primary criteria to devise such groups, including the extent of previous economic and social integration and therefore the extent of self-perceived "normalcy" in homeless people's lives; their pathways into homelessness including when, how, and why people became homeless; and the manner in which specific risk factors including age, migratory status, and pre-existing social problem contributed to the onset of homelessness. Using these criteria, five distinct groups of homeless people emerged, two of which are characterized by self-perceived "regular" and inconspicuous life courses including eight older and four younger homeless people, while three groups have had comparably more "irregular" life course experiences. They include eight "transient" and socially isolated homeless people with unsettled lives, four younger homeless people with "deviant" life courses characterized by chronic marginality and

previous homelessness experiences, substance abuse, violence, and previous incarceration, as well as four people with physical or mental disabilities. Short biographical sketches for each respondent can be found in appendix 2. Before describing these five groups and delineating the challenges such life course experiences pose for social policy intervention, it is first necessary to discuss how the fivefold typology of homeless people was developed.

Economic and Social Integration: Determinants of "Normalcy" in Homeless People's Lives

The extent of previous social and economic integration reveals the extent to which homeless people were either integrated or isolated from the societal mainstream in the past which may have implications for their readiness and preparedness to enter or re-enter both the societal mainstream, and labour and housing markets. Assessing the extent of an as such perceived "normalcy" in people's lives, however, is a highly subjective matter since it is difficult to define variables such as "mainstream" or "normality." In order to examine the extent of homeless people's previous social and economic integration, I have relied primarily on the way the respondents themselves interpreted their lives prior to becoming homeless which revealed that there were different levels of self-perceived normalcy in people's lives.[1] When asked what respondents considered as "normal" and what they generally expected from life, virtually all stated that regular employment and housing, economic security, stable social relationships, and good health would constitute a good, and as they would call it, "normal life." When inquiring as to where such life expectations come from, some of the older and younger homeless people with prior residences in Berlin would state that the inconspicuous lives they had led before becoming homeless were their point of reference.[2] Yet, even those respondents who had never really experienced such "normality" because of chronic marginality, abuse experiences, or unsettled life-styles would express their desire to lead mainstream lives, stating that

[1] I am aware of the problems associated with the subjective nature of terms like "mainstream" or "normal," yet I am deliberately using these terms since the extent of "normalcy" in homeless people's life courses is an important and self-identified component of homeless lives and their identities. Throughout this thesis, I will demonstrate that most homeless people themselves reject the label of homelessness and rather perceive themselves as "normal" repeatedly expressing their desire to return to "normalcy" and the "societal mainstream."

[2] As such perceived "normalcy," however, is not necessarily an ideal category. For instance, if people reported that they used to have "normal" jobs does not automatically imply that people were satisfied with their employment. Similarly, a "normal childhood" or an "uneventful youth" does not necessarily mean that people did not have conflicts or problems during that time in their lives. In other words, self-reported normalcy still remains a subjective category.

cultural values and expectations would inform such a "normality" orientation.[3] To obtain a more systematized account of the extent to which people were integrated into the societal mainstream in the past, I differentiate between economic and social variables as table 3.1 indicates.

Table 3.1 **Extent of Relative Economic and Social Integration**
(Prevalent factors emphasized in boldface)

	Relatively "Regular" Life Courses (N=12)	**Relatively "Irregular" Life Courses** (N=16)	**Total (N=28)**
Demographic Characteristics			
Age (>35years)	**8**	8	**16**
Gender (female)	1	3	**4**
Economic Integration / Human Capital			
Regular Schooling	**12**	**14**	**26**
Regular Job Training	**8**	6	**14**
Continuous Employment (>7yrs)	**7**	5	**12**
Any Receipt of Welfare (prior to Homelessness)	**7**	5	**12**
Previous Poverty/Homelessness	0	**8**	**8**
Social Integration / Social Capital			
Residence in Berlin (> 5yrs)	**11**	6	**17**
Social Networks in Berlin	**9**	3	**12**
Socially Isolated	3	**8**	**11**
Respondents by Name (**females**)	Helmut, Sachse, Kalle, Hanno, Det, Hans, Bernie, Mario, Bob, Markus, Radek, **Maria**	Tobias, Dan, Schlöter, Harri, Matze, Martin, Leo, Jens, Oliver, Sioux, FTW, Paule, Biker, **Marita, Andrea, Monika**	

Specifically, homeless people's previous economic integrations is determined by the level of educational attainment, job training and job experience, as well as life-time experiences of poverty, previous experiences of homelessness, or the receipt of welfare at some point in their lives. Such factors associated with the "human capital" homeless people possess are, according to studies from Los Angeles, important determinants of homeless people's economic integration in the past that impact their readiness to re-enter labour markets, and thereby the ability to either achieve or regain economic self-sufficiency (Burns et al., 2003; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 2001). In this context, it is noticeable that most respondents over thirty-five years of age had regular careers in the past, typically characterized by regular job training and continuous employment in professions providing low to mid-level income. For all of these respondents, the loss of employment typically marked the beginning of a gradual

[3] Such a normality orientation can be ascribed to the fact that every respondent has, to varying degrees, received a primary education and been exposed to media and other sources that would instill normative values on what constitutes "mainstream" values and a fulfilling and productive "normal life."

economic and hence social decline, despite the fact that they received public cash assistance due to their continuous employment in social insurance-based occupations. Most younger respondents, on the other hand, lacked such employment continuity and few had regular job qualifications which have serious implications for attempts to find sustainable employment. Moreover, none of them received public cash assistance at the time they became homeless.

Since economic integration alone does not necessarily imply social integration, it is important also to examine the extent to which people possessed "social capital" in terms of the level of integration or isolation from the societal mainstream, which, again, are factors that had been associated with exit in Los Angeles (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 2001). For this purpose, I asked respondents about the nature and extent of their place-based social networks which constitute an important component of homeless people's social and economic well being and exit potential.[4] I found significant differences between people who had lived in Berlin for many years and thus often had place-based social networks and people who became homeless upon arrival from another place and therefore lacked such networks, tending to be more socially isolated.

Based primarily on whether or not people themselves perceived their lives as regular, I was able to discern a first, principal differentiation between two broad groups of homeless people in terms of the extent of normalcy in their lives before the either gradual or sudden descent into homelessness. Twelve respondents, including four younger and eight older, primarily indigenous homeless people had led rather "regular," inconspicuous and relatively stable lives in the past and typically enjoyed relative economic security and relatively stable social relationships. In contrast, sixteen respondents had comparably more "irregular" life courses and were disproportionately affected by social alienation, social problems, and previous experiences with poverty and homelessness. Considering, however, that there were still significant differences as well as some similarities within these two principal groups, it is necessary to further differentiate these groups by looking at specific risk factors and the ways in which people ultimately descended into homelessness.

[4] It is well established that people who have extensive social networks to family, friends, or acquaintances receive more logistical, material, and emotional support and therefore may have better chances to more rapidly re-enter the societal mainstream than people who lack such networks and are socially isolated. For discussion of the importance of place-based social networks, see Rowe and Wolch (1990 and 1992); Snow and Anderson (1993); and Wolch and Dear (1993).

Developing Five Life Course Types: Risk Factors and Paths into Homelessness

The extent of social and economic integration has already indicated a number of variables that had a considerable impact on whether or not people had lived regular and inconspicuous lives in the past, most notably age and migratory status. In the following, I further differentiate these groups by showing how, when and why people became homeless and how additional risk factors, such as health status or the extent of pre-existing substance abuse problems contributed to the respondent's homelessness. This discussion of pathways into homelessness is important since it describes the temporal dynamic of descent, and at the same time, delineates the complexity of underlying reasons. Furthermore, it is conceivable that the very factors that contributed to the onset of homelessness may serve as barriers to exit thereby posing a severe challenge to welfare intervention. Table 3.2 provides an overview of the existence of risk factors and paths into homeless that suggests the existence of five distinct groups among the homeless people in this study.

A foremost differentiating variable is the age of respondents, which has direct implications for whether or not people had been economically integrated in the past – while most respondents over thirty-five years of age had regular careers and continuous employment histories, most younger respondents lacked such continuity and often adequate job qualifications. A similarly important overarching variable is gender, which deserves more analysis than I was able to achieve in this research.[5] Given, however, that this research only includes four women with significantly different life course experiences, it would be difficult to devise a separate category. Rather, I integrated these four biographies into three of the five life course types, which allowed me to highlight some of the gender specific differences between homeless people's experiences.

[5] The academic literature on homeless women clearly indicates that male and female homeless have different paths into homelessness characterized by different experiences and vulnerabilities (see Passaro, 1996; Rowe und Wolch, 1990; Rosenke, 1995). Such studies describe higher instance of physical and sexual abuse, mental health problems, or instances of housing prostitution, all of which are factors that were actually reflected in the experiences of the four women I interviewed. Because of the nature of the experiences of many homeless women, it was difficult and unethical for me to solicit interviews with women. The four women which I was able to inverview knew from others what I was doing and indicated a willingness to speak with me and to participate in this study.

Table 3.2 **Risk Factors for and Pathways into Homelessness by Life course Type**
(Prevalent Factors – more than half of respondents - emphasized in boldface)

Homeless Life Course Types	**"Regular" Life Courses**		**"Irregular" Life courses**			
	1. Older Homeless with "Regular" Life Courses (N=8)	**2. Younger Homeless with "Regular" Life Courses (N=4)**	**3. Homeless Migrants with "Transient" Life Courses (N=8)**	**4. Homeless with "Deviant" Life Courses (N=4)**	**5. Homeless People with Disabilities and Severe Health Problems (N=4)**	**Total (N=28)**
RISK FACTORS						
Age						
20-35	0	**4**	4	**4**	1	**13**
35-60	**8**	0	4	0	**3**	**15**
Migratory Status						
Indigenous (> 5yrs in Berlin)	**7**	**3**	1	**3**	**3**	**17**
Recent Migrants	1	1	**7**	1	1	**11**
Social Problems						
Foster Care/ Abuse as Child	1	0	3	**4**	1	**8**
Chronic Alcohol Abuse	**5**	0	4	0	1	**10**
Chronic Use of "Hard" Drugs	0	0	1	**4**	0	**2**
Mental Health Problems	3	0	1	2	2	**8**
Physical Health Problems	2	0	4	2	**3**	**11**
PATHS INTO HOMELESSNESS						
Previous Homeless Episodes	0	0	4	**4**	0	**8**
Descent into Homelessness						
Sudden Descent	1	**4**	**5**	**4**	**4**	**18**
Gradual Descent	**7**	0	3	0	0	**10**
Type of Home Loss						
Formal Eviction	4	0	2	1	1	**8**
Personal Decisions/Circumstances	4	**4**	**6**	3	**3**	**20**
Underlying Reasons/Circumstances						
Poverty/Lack of Income	**5**	**4**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**24**
Family Problems/Conflicts	0	**4**	0	2	2	**13**
Alcohol/Substance Abuse	**5**	0	3	**3**	1	**12**
Excessive Debts	**7**	0	2	0	2	**11**
Relocation	0	0	**6**	2	1	**9**
Marital Problems	4	0	0	0	1	**5**
Accident/Traumatic Event	0	0	0	1	2	**3**
Deinstitutionalization	0	0	0	2	1	**3**
Receipt of Cash Assistance	**8**	0	3	0	2	**13**
Respondents by Name (**female**)	Helmut Sachse Kalle Hanno Det Hans Bernie **Maria**	Mario Bob Markus Radek	Tobias Dan Schlöter Harri Matze Martin Leo Jens	Oliver Sioux FTW **Marita**	**Andrea** **Monika** Paule Biker	

In terms of the thirteen people with relatively regular life courses, age, reasons for homelessness, and the role of accompanying risk factors are the main differentiating

variables. The eight older homeless people with regular life courses unanimously had led relatively inconspicuous lives well into their adulthood and consequently had experienced all aspects of a "normal" adult life with all the rewards and challenges it brings. For these eight respondents the loss of employment was a major turning point, setting in motion a seemingly unstoppable gradual social and economic decline that was exacerbated by a number of additionally emerging social problems. In virtually all of these cases, the descent into homelessness was frequently the result of a culmination of problems characterized by numerous unsuccessful attempts to find jobs, increasing indebtedness, breakdown of martial and social relationships, deteriorating mental and physical health, increasing alcohol problems, and, in the case of one woman, domestic violence and abandonment by her partner. For all eight respondents, becoming homeless was a major psychological blow to their sense of self and their self esteem. Each of these respondents had prior, regular insurance-based employment and thus qualified for and received public assistance which did not prevent ensuing homelessness. Since six of these respondents lost their homes as a result of a formally eviction due to rent arrears, existing legal provisions (§15 BSHG) could have been applied to avert an eviction. The primary reason for why such preventative measures failed is that in five of these cases neither the respondents nor their prospective landlords knew about eviction prevention whereas in one case the respective case worker at the welfare office was on vacation and thus processed the case too late.

In contrast, four younger homeless people with regular life courses became homeless in a rather immediate fashion following conflicts rather than a gradual decline. All four have led inconspicuous lives throughout their childhood and most of their teenage years, including regular schooling and relatively unproblematic relationships with their parents. Eventually conflicts arose that resulted either in the parent's decision to throw them out (three cases) or the personal decision to leave, both of which resulted in immediate homelessness. The key difference to the older homeless is that the four younger respondents never really had to look out for themselves or take responsibility for their material well-being. Given their young age and the lack of previous economic integration as a reference point, however, unemployment and homelessness have had less severe psychological consequences. Moreover, since none of them had regular employment in the past, they did not receive unemployment insurance or other types of welfare assistance at the beginning of homelessness.

The other sixteen homeless people that I initially placed in the broader category of relatively irregular lives had different reasons for why and how they became homeless as well as differences in the role pre-existing social problems played in the process. Most of them became homeless rapidly, and except for three older migrants and two people with severe health problems with previous insurance-based employment, none received any form of public assistance at the time they became homeless. In all of these cases, various personal decisions or circumstances caused homelessness suggesting three life course types as table 3.2 indicates.

A first important variable is the respondent's migratory status. The question of whether or not people are indigenous[6] to the place in which homelessness occurred has important ramifications for how people became and experienced homelessness. Migrants typically lacked information about the city and its infrastructure, had no or few local social networks, and consequently were more socially isolated as compared to indigenous people. This fundamental difference prompted me to create a separate category for eight men described as homeless migrants with transient life courses. The reason for describing such life course experiences as "transient" is because most of them had fairly unsettled lives in their past, frequently moving from one place to another, including two people with international pathways which encompass the U.S. and Korea, as well as South Africa respectively. Although migration per se is not an irregular activity in contemporary German society and some of the older migrants had been economically integrated in the sense that they used to have relatively steady income in the past, the nature of their previous employment (i.e. travelling day labour, contract work), the greater extent of prior social isolation, a high prevalence of alcohol problems throughout life, as well as previous experiences with homelessness, led me to address their life-experiences in a separate category.

The remaining two groups among homeless people are delineated by the extent to which a variety of social problems (i.e. alcohol and substance abuse or mental and physical health problems) played a role in their lives and the ways in which they became homeless.[7] While younger homeless, for the most part, tended to be less affected by social problems having been in better physical health and having been significantly less affected

[6] Indigenous homeless are defined as people who had lived in the city for at least four years.

[7] It is well documented that such social problems disproportionately exist among homeless people and the present group of homeless people is no exception (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 1998; Burnam, Baumohl, and Huebner, 1989; Burt et al., 1999; Flaming et al., 1997).

by debilitating alcohol problems,[8] there were four exceptions that caused me to devise a separate category of irregular life courses, namely homeless people with "deviant" life courses. This group includes three younger men and one young woman who have had turbulent lives that were all characterized by childhood abuse and neglect, violence, drug addiction, crime, previous incarceration, as well as chronic marginality and previous homeless episodes. Considering the culmination of social problems, I am deliberately using the term "deviant" to describe their life experiences because they themselves felt alienated and ostracised by mainstream society.

A fifth life course category based on existing social problems includes four homeless people with disabilities, including two women who had been physically or mentally disabled their entire lives, and two men who had acquired either an mental or physical illness in their adult years after having led relatively "normal" lives in the past. I decided to put these four respondents into a separate category simply because disability – yet again in itself a contested label – poses a different challenge to social policy intervention involving different administrative and legal entities. Moreover, unlike most other respondents, the existence of such disabilities limits their possibilities for economic integration.

3.2 Implications of the Life Course on Homeless Policy

The previously devised typology of life course trajectories for homeless policy has a number of implications for intervention. Looking at such potential interactions will inform a more nuanced analysis of the interrelation between homeless people's exit strategies and homeless policy. Although most respondents shared the desire to enter or re-enter the societal mainstream, the previous discussion of similarities and differences in homeless people's life courses revealed that there are different, often interrelated factors and problems that may affect people's readiness for exit, and at the same time, the ability of welfare to intervene in proactive ways. Therefore, the relationship between exit potential and policy will be different for each group since the different life course trajectories and expectations suggest different normative objectives and challenges for the welfare state. Moreover, it is likely that the extent of difficulty for social policy intervention increases

[8] Although most of the twelve younger homeless respondents did not engage in excessive alcohol consumption, nine of them regularly smoked Cannabis. Whether and to what extent such drug consumption might have contributed to homelessness or may impede exit potential is so far a virtually unexamined topic.

with the extent to which people had not experienced social and economic normalcy in the past as well as the severity and complexity of underlying personal social problems. Based on this assumption, I provide the following catalogue of policy challenges for each group in order of presumed difficulty, beginning with the least difficult:

- Younger homeless people with "regular" life courses who were generally less affected by accompanying social problems are likely to pose the least difficult challenge for policy intervention. Their most urgent policy need, besides immediate shelter and income support, was the acquisition of job training in preparation for an independent life in the societal mainstream.
- Older homeless respondents with "regular" life courses, most of whom had been integrated into the mainstream in the past, have shown their ability to live mainstream lives. Considering their previous experiences with welfare intervention, they clearly expected assistance by the welfare state in fulfilling their goal of re-entering the mainstream, especially with regards to job and housing searches. Yet, their age and the complex nature of social and economic problems (i.e. debts, health and alcohol problems) that accompanied their gradual descent into homelessness pose challenges to the welfare state and may consequently complicate chances for exit. Furthermore, some of them have expertise in rather obsolete professions requiring (re)training to be competitive in Berlin's tight labour market.
- Migrants with "transient" life courses, featuring a diverse and socially rather isolated group with little information about the city and its infrastructure, expected assistance with basic integration rather than re-integration into both labour and housing markets. Some younger people in this group may also need job training considering their lack of qualifications and thus competitive disadvantage. Yet, given the fact that many of transient homeless had been out of the mainstream for quite some time and considering the complexity of underlying social problems, their integration will likely be a difficult challenge.
- Similarly complicated may be the provision of services to homeless people with disabilities and severe health problems since a concerted effort between different administrative entities is needed. These people are likely to require some sort of assisted living arrangement or continuous long-term care to accommodate their specific needs. Finding suitable employment, desired by three respondents in this group will also pose a challenge.

- Most problematic, however, appears to be the integration of people with "deviant" life courses because of the extent of adversity these respondents had faced in the past as well as the severity and complexity of their multiple social problems. Moreover, it may be difficult to overcome their reservations and doubts as to be able to trust welfare intervention in assisting them to overcome their problems.

Comparing homeless people's expectations and policy needs to Berlin's pre-existing catalogue of existing social policy instruments that I outlined in chapter one, it appears that most expectations and demands constitute difficult but doable policy objectives. There are policy instruments and services available to address most of the problems homeless people face, ranging from shelter and re-housing policies, job qualification and re-employment policies, to health care policies. Perhaps the most difficult policy challenge that emerges is whether various administrative entities involved in providing assistance with different problems can coordinate services to ensure successful exit from homelessness.

At the same time, however, the respondent's life course experiences also suggest that there are a number of individual problems that may extend beyond the potential of the welfare state to provide assistance and thereby adversely affect individual's exit potentials. The welfare state simply cannot create social networks, solve some of the underlying social and emotional problems, or even impose assistance should it not be wanted. It is consequently important to consider the psychological damage and trauma inflicted by adverse life experiences, the disappointment and frustration that resulted from the lack of success in the past and in some cases even negative previous experiences with welfare state intervention. These are all factors that adversely affected individual's self esteem, motivation, and belief in their abilities. As a result, it is necessary to also consider how psychological and social problems affect homeless people's exit potential and the extent to which welfare intervention might positively or negatively affect the psychological effects of life in the condition of homelessness. Furthermore, some of the individual problems that emerged in the discussion of life courses, particularly alcohol and substance abuse problems, remained largely unacknowledged by the respondents which may also adversely affect exit potentials and the chance for successful policy intervention.[9]

[9] While twelve respondents readily admitted that alcohol or substance abuse problems had played a role in becoming homeless, in family breakups, or even the loss of work, only four respondents stated that seeking assistance in dealing with their substance abuse problems and seeking treatment was a definite goal.

I will now turn to examine the interrelationship between homeless people's exit strategies and homeless policy paying particular attention to the likely differences among the five groups. Virtually all homeless people desired access to regular employment and housing. Considering that the acquisition of regular work and housing also constitute primary homeless policy objectives, I focus the following two chapters on the ways in which homeless people in these different groups use welfare intervention in their attempts to access labour markets in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency (chapter 4) and to re-enter regular housing with the goal to overcome literal homelessness and to stabilize, establish or re-establish social relationships (chapter 5).

Chapter 4:

From Welfare to Work in Berlin: The Impact of Welfare on Material Survival and Finding Employment

4.1. Overview

In this chapter I analyse the effects of social policy on homeless people's immediate and long-term material needs differentiated by the fivefold life course typology I devised in the previous chapter. The primary goal of this chapter is to find out whether welfare state intervention succeeded in assisting homeless people to fulfil their long-term goal of finding employment and thereby achieve economic self-sufficiency, and to interrogate this question from their perspective. For each life course type, I first examine how people gained access to welfare, provide an overview of the services they used, and discuss the short-term effects of welfare intervention on stabilizing homeless people's lives in preparation for exit. Second, I investigate homeless people's long term strategies to find employment and secure economic stability and examine the outcome of such efforts one year after the initial interviews. In looking at both assisted and unassisted job search efforts, I seek to determine how they used the services of the local labour office, how and with what intensity the respondents were engaged in finding work, how such exit strategies changed over time, and the ultimate outcomes of such efforts.

4.2 Homeless People with "Regular" Life courses

Homeless people with regular life courses generally faced few difficulties in accessing the welfare system, particularly older ones who were receiving benefits prior to becoming homeless. Although most of this group reported that their welfare income were insufficient, particularly if people had alcohol problems, few of them had to engage in potentially detrimental or criminalized activities to make ends meet. Rather, most capitalized on their familiarity with the urban infrastructure and existing social networks by either engaging in undocumented wage labour or by securing material support through friends and acquaintances to supplement their welfare income. Yet, despite their connections to, and former experiences with, the mainstream society, few of this group

attained employment. This raises the question of why welfare state intervention is not successful in helping them to achieve reintegration into the labour market.

Older Homeless People with Regular Life Courses

The eight older homeless people all led regular lives prior to becoming homeless and shared a desire to re-enter the societal mainstream. Since all of them were receiving welfare at the time they became homeless, all expected assistance in their quest to re-establish normalcy. Yet, ultimately only two of them managed to find work, whereas the others remained unsuccessful, growing increasingly disillusioned about their futures. They all were aware that their age and strong competition for jobs were the main reasons for their lack of success but also felt that the welfare state more or less abandoned them in their quest to re-enter the formal economy.

Unproblematic Access to the Welfare State

Access to benefits was not difficult for the eight older homeless people with regular life courses since all had already received public cash assistance by the time they became homeless and continued to do so afterwards. Six of them received unemployment compensation which provided them with a disposable monthly income of between DM 800 and 1200 (£ 333-500) per month depending on previous earnings. All of the UC benefit recipients reported that their public income were sufficient to meet their needs. As a result, some of them actually had quite extensive furnishings in their rooms at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring including televisions, coffeemakers, microwaves, or even satellite dishes. After the receipt of UC compensation became time limited in 1997, all of UC benefit recipients saw their eligibility for UC expire at some point during their homelessness requiring them to rely on significantly lower Social Assistance benefits (SA, DM 488/ £ 203). These respondents consequently experienced an unexpected and rather dramatic decrease in disposable monthly income which was, on average, slashed in half. They had to immediately adjust to life with significantly less income and unanimously reported that they had a difficulty making the transition. Helmut, who had lost his eligibility for unemployment compensation six months after I first met him, told me the following in his room at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring:

> "This was quite a change. While I was on unemployment compensation I had a pretty easy time getting by. You saw my room then, yes? I had a VCR, coffeemaker, a microwave oven, even videogames. Now look around, it's all gone except for the TV, which stays, no matter what. I had to sell it all. More or less all during the first month, ehm, because half way through the month I was broke. I'm

> managing better now but still I typically have more month than money left" (Helmut, 37, visit on 11.08.98).

The question arises as to why such benefit levels are insufficient and what did the respondents do to make ends meet?

Alcoholism as a Reason for the Inadequacy of Public Cash Assistance

Whether or not welfare income were deemed sufficient, depended greatly on the extent of pre-existing alcohol problems. The two respondents who reported that their social assistance income were sufficient, Bernie and Maria, did not have alcohol problems.[1] The other six respondents all had alcohol problems in varying stages which in most cases already ensued before becoming homeless. These respondents spent between DM 200 and 550 (£ 83-229) per month on alcohol, which constituted up to half of UC incomes and once such benefits ceased more or less the entire social assistance benefit of DM 488 (£ 203). Moreover, all of them reported that their alcohol consumption had increased throughout their experience with homelessness especially in shelters, which is a problem that I shall address in more detail in Chapter 5. It is noticeable, however, that while all six respondents acknowledged that their alcohol consumption was a problem, only two stated that they had taken steps to address this problem in the past. Kalle had entered a rehabilitation program and managed to stay sober upon completion, and Sachse stated that he had considered treatment, had gone to a few Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and yet had given up quickly since he was unable to stop. The other four alcoholics, on the other hand, stated that they considered their alcohol consumption as one of their lesser problems and asserted that they would be able to stop once they had found employment or housing:

> "The drinking is really my last problem. Look, this is the only joy I have because at least if allows me to forget about my shitty life for a while. Once I have a job and an apartment, I stop in an instant. No problem" (Helmut, 37, personal interview on 23.02.98).

Whether this is true or even feasible, or whether this assumption is a statement of denial is impossible to assess. What did happen to all five respondents who were unable or unwilling to address their alcohol problem is that alcohol induced insufficiency of welfare income would cause them to generate additional income.

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[1] Maria who used to drink throughout her abusive marriage stopped drinking immediately upon entering a domestic violence shelter, whereas Bernie never liked alcohol.

Generating Additional Income

As a result of both increasing alcohol problems and dramatic reductions in benefit levels, five respondents reported that they had to generate additional income using different informal means while one respondent, Hans, would regularly pursue regular, social insurance-based employment twice a week as a day labourer for a construction company.[2] Hans kept all the records of his employment in a safe deposit box in order to be able to make an annual tax declaration and to receive a refund. In so doing, Hans also kept making contributions to his pension fund. The remaining days, Hans would collect daily, sometimes multiple, welfare allowances in the amount DM 18 (£ 7.5) after having a discovered a loophole in existing practices. He deliberately decided against the receipt of monthly benefits and preferred to opt for daily allowances which would allow him to maintain insurance-based employment as a day-labourer without facing benefit reductions and, at the same time, "beating" the welfare system by making multiple daily benefit claims. He explained with a big grin on his face:

> "The cashiers offices [of the welfare offices] are usually open between 9 and 11:30 am. So I'm claiming at different welfare offices that can be reached within that timeframe using public transportation. For example, [the welfare offices of] Wilmersdorf, Kreuzberg, and Neuköln are all located along the U7 [subway line].[*JvM: That really works*?] Of course that works, otherwise I would not tell you" (Hans, 50, personal interview on 09.03.98).[3]

This combination of formal work and social assistance allowed Hans sufficient income and prevented him from relying on other informal survival strategies, often referred to as "black work" such as panhandling, shop-lifting, burglaries, and scavenging that he had performed before he made the current arrangement and which had negative legal ramifications including incarceration for burglary and shop-lifting. Moreover, Hans was satisfied with this arrangement and consequently discontinued looking for other, more permanent employment opportunities.

The other five respondents primarily resorted to two strategies to ensure their material survival and to generate additional income, including shop-lifting and undocumented wage labour. Four people with rather severe alcohol problems, including Helmut, Hanno, Sachse, and Det admitted that they occasionally and rather reluctantly shoplifted to get food or alcohol, typically toward the end of a benefit month when

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[2] Hans essentially relies on the same employers with whom he built a strong reputation as hard working and reliable. He received DM 66 (£ 27.5) in cash per day for his work. His employer would keep an additional DM 24 (£ 10) for taxes and social insurance.

[3] Some key informants (Sigi Deiß, interview on 04.03.98 and Ralf Gruber, interview on 06.03.98) actually confirmed this fraudulent practice of making multiple daily claims as quite common among some homeless street people. Given the improving computerized data exchange between welfare offices, however, this fraudulent practice will soon be made impossible.

welfare income were depleted. One of them, Helmut, was caught once yet managed to make arrangements with the shop-owner to avoid legal charges.[4]

More frequent is the attempt to supplement public assistance income by engaging in undocumented wage labour. Such undocumented, or "grey" work, resembles regular employment yet circumvents the social insurance system and thus any type of regulation in terms of safety or collective bargaining. Such work is likely to be low-paying and temporary. The respondents in this group relied on such employment rather infrequently whereby the intensity of using such strategies depended on the extent of alcoholism as well as, obviously, the availability of such work. In most cases such employment occurred in areas of former employment and expertise, and four respondents used their social networks to former employers or colleagues to find such work. This clearly suggests that these respondents, all of whom had prior regular employment in Berlin capitalize on their familiarity with Berlin's labour market and their existing job skills. Most of the informal work was pursued in the booming sectors of building and construction as well as the restaurant and hotel business, which are business sectors known to hire undocumented workers, especially immigrants (Krätke, 2001; Mayer, 1997).[5]

While the practice of hiring undocumented workers is illegal and exploitative, the opportunity to informally generate additional income was not seen negatively by the respondents. Although all reported that their wages were sub-standard, they appreciated the fact that this income was not being taxed nor did it need to be declared toward the continuous receipt of welfare. Rather, most respondents viewed the opportunity to generate additional income through informal work, on average DM 150 (£ 63) per month for three to five days of work, as a possibility to subsidize their public welfare payments and a chance to stay connected and to maintain their skills. One thing was clear – virtually all respondents who participated in informal wage labour preferred "grey" work over "black" work (i.e. panhandling, recycling, theft, prostitution, etc.) which most of them despised as unworthy and humiliating. Moreover, although this type of employment is illegal and has negative implications for welfare eligibility, none of the respondents who informally worked has been caught. Another reason for the pursuit of undocumented wage

[4] Helmut worked off the fine for shoplifting by helping out in the supermarket's warehouse unloading trucks for two days. The fact that he was formerly a supermarket manager himself helped in persuading the manager to seek an alternative to a fine.

[5] The informal economy constitutes a growing segment of Berlin's economy quite similar to that in Los Angeles. Employers in both cities are deliberately making use of a growing marginalized labor pool and the city's proximity to low income countries and thereby circumvent labor laws and social insurance contributions (Mayer, 1995 and 1997; Krätke, 2001; Sambale and Veith, 1999; Wolch and Dear, 1993).

labour was that these respondents had the remote hope that such employment could translate into long-term, regular employment opportunities.

> "Somewhere one hopes that Schwarzarbeit leads to something permanent and that your boss recognizes that you have the skills and that you work hard. Unfortunately, however, it did not work out yet. But you got to keep on trying" (Kalle, 44, personal interview on 28.02.98).

Job Search Strategies: Assisted Job Searches, Self-Initiative, and Social Work Intervention

In addition to trying to find permanent work through social networks and by working informally, all of the older respondents with regular life courses utilised the established routes of looking for work. Immediately after losing their jobs, all respondents were equally committed to finding employment, primarily relying on the referral services of their local labour office and through self-initiative by looking up job leads in one or more of Berlin's daily newspapers. All of them stated that they went to their respective labour office almost on a daily basis. These efforts are born out of the understanding that only regular employment would allow them to overcome homelessness, to stabilize their life, re-establish and maintain their social networks, and ultimately to re-establish "normalcy." Although all of them perceived welfare as a right they had earned through years of employment and social insurance contributions, none of them was comfortable being an unemployed welfare recipient and all hoped to overcome this dependence rather quickly:

> "I have to admit that I used to view welfare recipients as spongers and I'm telling you that it's a humiliating situation that you find yourself in the same boat with the people you once despised" (Kalle, 44, personal interview on 28.02.98).

This belief intensified the desire of all respondents to find work again quickly in order to normalize their lives.

Yet, by the end of the investigation, only two people, Kalle and Hanno, were successful in finding jobs. While one person, Hans, had discontinued looking for regular employment once he had managed to satisfy his income needs with a combination of documented day-labour and social assistance, the remaining five job seekers were unsuccessful in finding work and consequently remained on welfare. This ongoing lack of success had severe psychological consequences as well as ramifications for the intensity of their job search efforts. In the following sections, I look first at the ways in which Kalle and Hanno were successful in finding work and, second, I describe the effects of the lack of success for the remaining older respondent's job search efforts and emotional well-being.

Kalle and Hanno: Successful Economic Re-integration through Social Work Intervention

Kalle and Hanno were able to find regular employment due to the diligent efforts of social workers and self-initiative. Kalle and Hanno, both residents of the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, received substantial assistance from social workers who managed to help them access temporary full-time employment in the context of one of Berlin's work creation schemes administered by the state labour office. Although social workers typically do not provide job referrals because an entire administrative entity (Labour Office) is exclusively dedicated toward getting people reemployed, the social workers at the project provided assistance after Hanno and Kalle asked them for help with the application process and the complicated formal procedures. Moreover, social workers also succeeded in finding them suitable housing (see chapter 5) which meant that both men no longer needed welfare thereby fulfilling their goals and thus optimising their situation. Ultimately, each received a one-year job contract in their area of expertise which provided them with a monthly pre-tax income of DM 1,800 (£ 750) and social-insurance contributions. Both Hanno and Kalle were grateful for the social worker's intervention and appreciated the individualized assistance, the willingness to listen, and a flexibility to assist with a variety of problems and needs. Kalle explained:

> "They [three social workers in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring] are wonderful. They'll do anything for you. They are not patronizing, they listen and treat you like a human being. At the welfare office, I always feel like a number, not a person" (Kalle, 44, personal interview on 28.02.98).

Kalle and Hanno's experience clearly demonstrates that active labour market programs, accessed through assistance provided by social workers, can be successful even in cases of long-term unemployment since both men had been unemployed for over three years. There is, however, no guarantee that this success will last since both jobs are based on one-year temporary work contracts with no guarantee of renewal. Yet, even if both men fail to renew their work contracts or find other suitable employment, they will re-qualify for unemployment compensation which provides higher benefits.

Unsuccessful Outcomes and its Consequences

The other five job seekers, on the other hand, remained unsuccessful in finding work. This lack of success had ramifications for both the extent and intensity of job search efforts and the psychological and emotional well-being of the respondents.

Three respondents, including Helmut, Maria, and Det, had more or less given up hope in finding jobs and haphazardly proceeded to pursue job searches mainly to fulfil the

job search requirements imposed by the local welfare administration. Two of them, Helmut and Det, ultimately managed to obtain a medical exemption from job search requirements which they perceived to be, as Helmut put it, "rubber stamping." Another reason for obtaining such exemptions was that both men were, unlike the other job searchers in this group, unwilling to accept referrals for jobs they perceived as unworthy. This is what Helmut, visibly angry, said when he was mandated to take a job as a communal street sweeper:

> "Listen, I am not going to have those assholes give me a five-fifty [£ 3.10] an hour job as a street sweeper just to get me off the books. I have worked hard all my life and I have some dignity left and I do deserve some respect, you know? They give me a decent job and I'll prove that I'm worth it. But sweeping streets for a hunger salary? Never! And than they treat you as work shy because you are reluctant to take that kind of job. Should I be thankful? Kiss my ass! So I went to my doctor and had him write me a note that I can't take that job because of health reasons. That was the end of it. But I continue to look on my own terms" (Helmut, 37, personal interview on 28.02.98).

The other two respondents, Sachse and Bernie, continued looking for work with a similar and consistent intensity as at the beginning of their unemployment despite the discouraging lack of success. Still, even they were at the brink of giving up as Sachse's quote exemplifies.

> "It really makes me sick, man! I'm trying, I really do, yet it's all in vain. I go there [labour office] almost every day, I study the newspapers. I call them up, and nothing. I've been doing this now for almost three years and nothing. You have no idea how this feels. Sometimes I say to myself fuck it. Why even bother?" (Sachse, 35, personal interview on 17.02.98)

The psychological price for the lack of success was high since all respondents, including the ones who were ultimately successful, became increasingly disillusioned and discouraged with each rejection they experienced. Virtually all began to internalise feelings of being a "loser" as their sense of self-worth and self-respect diminished. Consequently, their sense of shame increased as did their desire to self-isolate and abandon their social networks to non-homeless people (see chapter 5). Their continuously unsuccessful efforts to find employment took a toll on their self-esteem and with the increasing duration of unemployment and increasing age most respondents became increasingly anxious and disillusioned about their chances to ever find employment and henceforth a normal life again. In this light, it is actually not surprising that the desire to drown their frustration in alcohol increased significantly among four respondents. Although one could argue that alcoholism may be responsible for the lack of success, it was still noticeable that even people without alcohol problems such as Maria and

especially Bernie who remained diligently committed to finding employment remained unsuccessful.

As to reasons for their lack of success, these older respondents were rather quick to put blame on both structural barriers to employment as well as institutional failures. Virtually all older respondents were painfully aware that their age, Berlin's high and increasing unemployment, and the gaps in their resumes were barriers to re-entering the formal economy. They all realized that they have a hard time competing with more adequately prepared unemployed people with better qualifications and more recent job experience. Moreover, many respondents who held regular employment in the past had job experience in declining industrial sectors such as manufacturing, or building and construction. The awareness of such barriers consequently re-enforced their lingering anxiety and contributed to the fact that at least some older respondents gave up and resorted to alcohol.

It was also apparent that all other respondents felt that a lack of service, referral, and advice at the labour offices as well as a lack of concern on the part of case workers in the welfare administration is, at least in part, to blame for the lack of success. Virtually all older respondents felt that they were, more or less, "abandoned" (im Stich gelassen) by the welfare state and felt that the state essentially gave up on them. Det, a former East German police officer and member of the Socialist party, gives a political explanation:

> "You ask about the Social State? Please, what Social State? How about 'Administration State'? Because that is what they're ultimately doing. They don't help us, they are administering us. There is no need for us in the capitalist elbow society and the computer age [...] the little worker is disposable, irrelevant. I'm telling you, I can finally use my old Marxist training - We are the industrial reserve army. You know what that is? Needed when the economy does well, redundant otherwise. Good old Karl was right" (Det, 49, personal interview on 6.03.98).

The experiences of the eight respondents further suggest that the local welfare state is obviously not using existing labour market programs (i.e. active labour market policies) effectively. Yet the fact that such active labour market policies can actually be instrumental in ensuring access to jobs and income and thus exit from homelessness has been clearly demonstrated in Kalle and Hanno's experiences. Assisted by social workers, they managed to substantially improve their situation. The fact that such potentially successful policies are not used in a more comprehensive fashion can only be explained that the local labour administration simply lacks both financial and logistical resources to provide more unemployed people with subsidized employment, especially homeless ones who may be stigmatised as either untrustworthy or problematic.

Younger Homeless People with Regular Life Courses

The experiences of the four younger homeless people with regular life courses were significantly different from that of the older homeless people with regular life courses. First, none of them had received welfare at the time they became homeless and as a result, experienced a time gap between the onset of homelessness and the receipt of welfare. This gap was primarily caused by pride and the fact that all were able initially to rely on social networks to receive both shelter and material support. Once they accessed the welfare state, three respondents received cash assistance while one respondent, Radek, only used shelter services since he received income through his apprenticeship. While all of them acknowledged that they needed job training, only two managed to either enter or complete job training. The main reason for the lack of success besides a general lack of job training opportunities was a lack of orientation and advice. Considering their young age and that they did not have previous work experience, the lack of a job had less severe psychological consequences compared to the older respondents.

Access to and Use of the Welfare State

Since younger respondents lacked both sufficient job qualifications and experience yet had lived in the relative shelter of their parental homes before becoming homeless, none had received public assistance at the time they became homeless. While one of them, Radek, did not need income support because he received income from his employer in the context of his apprenticeship, the three remaining respondents immediately lacked any steady financial and material support. Still, all three experienced a time gap between the onset of homelessness and the receipt of public assistance. All three reported that their reluctance to seek assistance was due to pride. Mario explains:

> „Initially I did not want to apply for public assistance, because actually, I was ashamed to go to the welfare office and to say I'm homeless, have no food, no idea where I should stay... I felt stupid cause I'm not the type of guy who begs for money or else. I don't like to do that, you know" (Mario, 26, personal interview on 22.02.98)?

In the meantime, all three relied on their extensive network of friends and acquaintances which provided both shelter (see chapter five) and material support. In addition, all three occasionally resorted to informal survival strategies to generate income. Markus occasionally panhandled, Bob and Mario would occasionally work informally in bars, and Bob, a trained dancer, would give break dance performances on the street. Moreover, all overdrew their checking accounts until they reached their credit limit. Once

having exhausted these options, all three rather reluctantly contacted their respective welfare offices and were immediately determined eligible for social assistance.

All three reported, however, that social welfare payments did not meet their needs. The discrepancy between benefit extent and individual need, however, was generally not as pronounced as with older respondents since none of them had severe alcohol problems and their fairly regular cannabis consumption was generally less cost intensive. To make up for the difference between public income support and actual living expenditures, all three would occasionally rely on additional informal survival strategies, typically toward the end of a benefit month once benefits were exhausted, by either acquiring material support from their social networks, by informally working in bars, or by panhandling. The use of such strategies, however, was greatly reduced by the availability of welfare and none of them reported of any negative ramifications.[6]

Lack of Success in finding Jobs and Apprenticeships: Bob and Markus

All younger welfare recipients generally acknowledged that the lack of job training was the main obstacle to finding jobs. As a result, all of them regularly consulted their respective labour office to find apprenticeships, yet had failed to find a slot. In addition, I also noticed that all of them were rather indecisive as to what they wanted to do and lacked orientation, guidance, as well as motivation which prevented them from taking more active steps toward furthering their qualifications. Bob explained:

> "Well, sometimes I need a kick in the butt... I admit that I am sometimes lazy and can't get off my ass. I don't know what suits me and nobody helps me figure it out. Perhaps I should go back to dancing but that has no future. Maybe hotel business, but here I had all kinds of shitty experiences. Or perhaps do social work. See, I like to help people. Man, I just don't know" (Bob, 24, personal interview on 26.02.98).

Moreover, they remarked that the current situation is not that bad and viewed public income support and their stay at the shelter as a viable short-term alternative. Markus went a step further:

> "Hey, this here is good enough for me, at least for now. It's actually better than living at my parents because nobody tells me what to do. Free housing and cash, you can't beat that. Don't get me wrong though. I do want a job and a regular life but for now it's OK" (Markus, 21, personal interview on 12.03.98).

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[6] While Markus, Mario, and Bob reported that they had been repeatedly asked to leave the area by police officers when panhandling or performing in public spaces before receiving welfare, none reported of such incidences afterwards.

By the end of the investigation, neither Bob nor Markus had found a job, an apprenticeship, or any other job training opportunity despite having sought assistance by social workers in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring. Still, both remained upbeat and optimistic about their future and were, compared to the older respondents, much less concerned. Bob said:

> "I'm not worried about all that. Listen, most of my buddies still live with their parents and have not begun working yet. I'm still young, you know? If I were older, however, this would be a different story. If I look at the older guys [shelter residents] here, I can somehow understand that they are worried shitless and drink all day" (Bob, 24, personal interview on 26.02.98).

Relative Success: Mario and Radek

The other two respondents, Radek and Mario were more successful since Radek, who had not claimed income support had successfully completed his apprenticeship in January 2000 and began to look actively for work and Mario began his military service in May 1998. In Mario's case, his indecisiveness was surmounted when he received his conscription for military service to commence in May, 1998. Mario seized the opportunity and enlisted in the German Army for four years to receive non-commissioned officer's training hoping to parlay his military training into a long-term job in the booming private security industry.[7] As a result, he proceeded to only haphazardly pursue job and housing searches mainly to fulfil the job search requirements to maintain full benefit eligibility. He could therefore be regarded as a subjective bridger using welfare in a temporary fashion while waiting for his military service to commence (Leisering and Leibfried, 1999: 91f).

In the end, welfare state intervention, other than stabilizing the younger homeless' immediate life-circumstances, had no meaningful positive long-term impacts since the success of both Mario and Radek was unrelated to welfare.

4.3 Homeless People with "Irregular" Life Courses

Compared to people with regular life courses, homeless people with more irregular life courses had significantly different, yet similarly unsuccessful experiences. Since most were fairly unfamiliar with Berlin's economic infrastructure and lacked social networks in

[7] I also asked the other ten younger male respondents whether they considered military employment – only one person, Jens, was interested in volunteering yet had not received his conscription yet, whereas three respondents (Bob, Marty, and Oliver) already underwent their military service, four did or are planning on objecting (Sioux, Matze, Markus and Radek), and two are excempted for medical reasons (FTW and Tobias).

the city, they had to rely more often on informal, "black" survival strategies to supplement insufficient welfare income. As a result, they were more prone to experience displacement and persecution for performing such strategies with, in some cases, negative implications for exit. These conditions aggravated the already difficult conditions faced by the former group including barriers to Berlin's formal economy, institutional failures, as well as individual problems. Consequently, all but one person with more irregular life course remained unsuccessful in accessing the formal economy. Only Harri managed to find employment through his engagement with the street-newspaper agency which provided him, as well as three other respondents, with a satisfactory and rewarding alternative path that would add new meaning and economic stability to their lives. Since the sale of street-newspapers is generally sanctioned and criminalized, however, all vendors experienced punitive policies that may jeopardize their newly found stability due to long-term legal implications. Therefore I will address the experiences of vendors as a distinct group after describing the experiences of people with transient life courses, deviant life courses, and people with disabilities.

Homeless Migrants with "Transient" Life Courses

In some ways, the experiences of the eight homeless migrants with transient life courses resembled the experiences of the respondents in the previously discussed two groups. Older migrants like Harri, Dan, Schlöter, and Leo all had job qualifications and previous job experiences, yet faced difficulties in accessing Berlin's formal economy in a similar fashion to older homeless people with regular life courses. Younger migrants including Jens, Matze, Marty, and Tobias lacked job training and experience. What all migrants shared, however, was a lack of familiarity with Berlin's formal economy and its social and institutional infrastructure, a lack of social networks in the city, and obstacles in accessing the local welfare state because of bureaucratic hurdles and ultimately insufficient assistance in finding employment or job training opportunities.

Access Barriers due to Bureaucratic Hurdles

Except for Schlöter and Leo who both had worked and lived in Berlin before becoming homeless and consequently had, similarly to the older homeless with regular life courses, continuous welfare benefit receipt,[8] the other six respondents experienced time-gaps between their arrival in Berlin and the receipt of welfare. The primary reason

[8] Since they had only worked continuously for less than one year, both would qualify and receive social assistance, not unemployment compensation.

for the time-gap was that most of these respondents were not able to quickly provide all the required documentation after having contacted the local welfare administration almost immediately upon arrival in Berlin. Many did not bring all of the required documents from their last residence or had lost documents, particularly if they had been previously homeless like Harri or Matze or had immigrated from a different country like Dan or Tobias. Moreover, additional paperwork ensued since welfare offices would verify information with authorities in the previous place of residence, a task that would not be necessary for people with prior residence in Berlin. As a result, transient welfare applicants typically experienced a longer time gap between the application for service and benefit receipt than people who had their last official residence in Berlin. In three cases, it took up to four weeks until eligibility was finally determined. Some respondents even suspected that there might be some intentional harassment. Leo explains:

> "I'm telling you, they are doing this intentionally. When I first went there [social welfare office], she [case worker] gave me a list of things I needed to get. So I did that and it took me a while because I had to first contact my brother in Rostock to send me the stuff [to a friend's place]. So I went there again. Now this stupid cow [case worker] told me that something else was missing. So, I left and took care of it. And then the third time the same shit. I was close to loosing my temper" (Leo, 32, personal interview on 06.03.98).

Despite the wait, however, respondents were not left without assistance. During the time people waited to have their eligibility determined, they were temporarily issued a daily cash allowance (DM 18/ £ 7.5 per day in 1998) and referred to an emergency shelter until they were able to produce all the required documentation to satisfy the eligibility requirements. Despite of all the bureaucratic hurdles, all eight migrants, including Dan as a U.S. citizen, became eligible to receive welfare benefits.

Once having accessed the local welfare state, the eight migrants took different approaches as to how they secured short term survival, how they used the welfare state, and whether and how they attempted to enter Berlin's labour market. These differences largely depended on age, substance abuse patterns, job qualifications, and the availability of alternatives.

Dan, Schlöter, and Leo: Older Migrants between Hope and Resignation

Schlöter, Dan and Leo resembled the older homeless with regular life courses in that they had sufficient job qualifications and relatively stable income in the past despite their unsettled lives and discontinuous employment histories. All three came to Berlin with the intention of starting over and securing regular, sustainable long-term employment

in an attempt to "settle down". There were, however, differences in whether they had received benefits at the time they became homeless. Schlöter and Leo were at first successful in finding work in construction in Berlin where they had worked for approximately one year. Therefore they were able to receive Social Assistance prior to becoming homeless. Despite bureaucratic hurdles, they continued receiving welfare after they lost their homes. Dan, on the other hand, lacked experience with the German welfare system and as a non-national did not know about nor expect to be eligible for benefits. Upon arrival in Berlin from Seoul, South Korea, he first lived off savings he had generated in Korea and relied solely on unassisted job search efforts studying newspaper adds to find work as a teacher or translator without claiming income assistance. Once he had depleted his savings and became homeless, he learned about social assistance eligibility from an acquaintance, and after a two-month delay due to bureaucratic hurdles, began receiving social assistance.

One factor, however, that adversely affected all three men were their addiction problems which consumed much of their resources and energy - Dan and Schlöter were alcohol dependent, while Leo was addicted to gambling. Since becoming homeless all three had attempted to overcome their addictions with varying degrees of success. Schlöter sought public assistance with his alcohol problem and entered a rehabilitation clinic where he stayed for four weeks. Yet he began drinking again two weeks after his release into the same homeless environment (see chapter 5). Dan contacted the Berlin chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous and regularly attended their meetings. As a result, he was able to keep his alcohol consumption within limits. Leo, finally, successfully tackled his addiction to gambling by deliberately staying away from places with slot machines.

The addiction problems inevitably had ramifications for whether or not welfare income was sufficient. Leo and Schlöter would rely on additional informal survival strategies to supplement their income, while Dan would proceed in a different fashion. At the beginning of a benefit month, Dan would buy a large stack of beer from his welfare income and store it in his room at the shelter. He would then ration his supplies so that they would last for a month. Schlöter, on the other hand, would supplement his income through undocumented wage labour using his existing contact to a former employer.

> "Every now and then I would call Harold [name changed] to find out whether he has something for me. Harold was my former boss, you know. Unfortunately, his business isn't doing so well, especially in the winter, and so he doesn't have anything permanent. On occasions he would give me some temporary work if he has a shortage or deadline. At least a little money. Harold told me, however, that I'd be the first he would hire if the business is doing better. You know, I might be

> a drunk, but I am a damn good painter and I never missed a day of work" (Schlöter, 52, personal interview on 06.03.98).

Over the course of the year, Schlöter's hopes to regain regular employment through either his former employer or through referrals by the labour office remained unfulfilled. He became increasingly disillusioned about his chances to find regular employment and anxious about his future:

> "Getting old is taking a toll on me. I am afraid of the future. I'm a fifty-two year old transient day labourer with no meaningful social insurance contributions and therefore likely a low pension. My body is not working so well anymore and the alcohol is a drain. I can't sleep at night unless I'm loaded [with alcohol]. I have problems in the morning, my concentration span is small, and I'm irritable. I'm telling you, this is not good. Not good at all" (Schlöter, 52, personal interview on 03.03.98).

He continued drinking heavily, subsidizing his welfare income with occasional undocumented work as a painter.

Leo relied on a variety of informal survival strategies including soliciting public donations and participating in a theatre project for homeless people. He had numerous encounters with the police while panhandling and had been asked to move which temporarily disrupted his flow of income. In addition, he would also rely heavily on other services for the homeless such as day centres and soup kitchens primarily to satisfy his needs for food. His reliance on informal survival strategies decreased once he stopped gambling although he would still use homeless services extensively. Throughout the years, he also attempted to find work through assisted job search efforts by the labour office and self-initiative. After numerous unsuccessful attempts he eventually gave up searching for work in Berlin and decided to move to relatives in Hamburg hoping to establish a temporary base from which to find work again.

Jens: Younger Migrant with Lack of Orientation and Guidance

In contrast to the older migrants, Jens lacked job qualifications and experience. In addition, he was extremely shy and lacked any self-confidence which resulted in indecisiveness and a propensity to substance abuse. As a result, his public assistance income was insufficient and he had to rely on alternative informal survival strategies to generate income including panhandling for which he had been displaced numerous times by the police and, at least occasionally, selling cannabis to other homeless people. Although he was diligently working to find jobs or job-training opportunities by going to the labour office at least three times a week and studying the classified adds in the newspaper daily, he remained unsuccessful. He felt that he did not receive enough

assistance in getting access to the labour market or guidance as to how to approach employers.

> "They [labour office] sometimes give me referrals but when I get there [potential employer] I hardly get a word out. I guess I'm not very good at presenting myself, am I? It is discouraging but I don't know how I can get over it" (Jens, 27, personal interview on 25.02.98).

Jens' lack of success suggests that the common approach to connect job seekers to the labour market does not necessarily work for homeless people with low self-esteem and defeatist attitudes. Since he is unable to articulate his needs and problems, case worker's regular approach of just providing referrals did not work for him.

Tobias: Subjective Bridger using Homeless Services Extensively

Tobias who viewed his time in Berlin as temporary, planning to return to South Africa to resume his pottery business, used Berlin's homeless service infrastructure for the mere purpose of dealing with his long-standing orthopaedic problems and his addiction to pain-killers. Unlike the other migrants, he had no intention of finding work, and given his health problems, immediately managed to obtain an exemption from providing job search efforts. Moreover, Tobias was the only migrant who was able to live off his welfare income since he did not have an expensive addiction problem (he received prescriptions for pain killers from his physician). He did so by utilizing Berlin's homeless service infrastructure extensively including eating exclusively at soup kitchens and day centres. Because of this, he was actually able to set aside money each month which he put into a savings account in order to be able to buy a plane ticket should he receive a visa to re-enter South Africa. By the end of the investigation, he was able to save DM 2,000 (£ 833) which is enough to purchase a one-way plane ticket to Johannesburg, but he had not managed to obtain a visa.

Homeless People with "Deviant" Life Courses

The four younger homeless people with deviant life courses, perhaps not unexpectedly, remained unsuccessful in finding regular employment. The primary reason for this lack of success among these respondents is a severe lack of orientation and, to use Leisering and Leibfried's terminology, a time-perspective. This lack of a time perspective is primarily born out of the irregularity, discontinuities, and disappointments resulting from their instable and unsettled lives. All four respondents had, at some point in their lives, contact with the welfare state and had used services, yet never had any continuity. All four

had always encountered bureaucratic hurdles and patronizing attitudes by case workers which created a rather distrustful stance toward welfare. Ultimately, their young lives resembled, as Struck (1988: 81) calls it, a roller-coaster in and out of the welfare system, in and out of the criminal justices system, in and out of the labour market, in and out of the informal economy, and in and out of crime and drug abuse. The fact that they all had to survive from day to day since early childhood and always had to look out for themselves essentially foreclosed the possibility to look beyond tomorrow which is a mindset that transcended into their homelessness experience. Yet, considering this finding, it is perhaps even more remarkable that one of them, FTW, found at least a job training opportunity and one, Sioux, managed to find a new purpose in life by joining the street newspaper agency (see next section).

Marita: Heroin, Hopelessness, and Stagnation

Marita's battle with heroin addiction continued throughout the year of this investigation which essentially prohibited her from taking any long-term steps toward normalization, completing school and acquiring job training, or finding a regular job. Although Marita had been claiming Social Assistance on and off since the age of fourteen, public cash assistance constitutes only a fragment of her actual income needs. Her monthly welfare benefits of DM 488 (£ 203) were, more or less, used up within two days since she had to generate up to DM 300 (£ 125) per day to finance her addiction. Criminal activities, most notably daily prostitution, drug dealing, shop-lifting, and panhandling remained her only avenues to finance her addiction. Consequently, she had numerous encounters with police and private security, had been fined and incarcerated many times, and amassed a considerable criminal record, which in of itself functions as a major barrier to employment. Welfare state intervention has been a constant, accompanying factor in her life, yet, despite all efforts remained futile:

> "Look, they [service providers] can't help me. My life consists of six letters, H-E-R-O-I-N. I'm stuck. I've tried therapy, I tried to stop cold turkey, I tried methadone, but that didn't do it for me, nothing worked and I've always remained on the street. I am aware that only I can change that but so far I couldn't. They can't help me. [Laughs] I've talked to more social workers than there are trees in the Grunewald [local forest]. They try to put you into programs but that won't work" (Marita, 19, personal interview on 28.04.98).

Unless she finds a way to end her heroin addiction, there is in her eyes simply no hope that the she would ever be able to re-enter the formal economy.

Oliver: Between Disillusionment, Self-reliance and Hope

Similarly to Marita, Oliver too remained unsuccessful despite the fact that he had more specific future-oriented goals, did not have an addiction problem, and had used the welfare system in a more continuous fashion. As was Marita, he was fairly realistic in his assessment about his future chances and the ability of welfare to help him believing that in the end it was his initiative that would make a difference. Oliver explained:

> "If you look at my life, no parents, no love, no qualifications, my heroin addiction, you see it's all shit. You ask how the welfare state impacted my life? Foster care, jail, social workers who always tell you what to do and never listen to what you need, the assholes at the labour office who don't even try to find you a job... Hey, what do you expect? I set my expectations low. I have no reason to trust them. In the end, it's up to me, me alone" (Oliver, 26, personal interview on 10.03.98).

Because of his mistrust, Oliver believed that the key to transitioning into the mainstream would be to further his skills and to acquire job training. At the same time, however, Oliver knew that he needed assistance in the process and consequently worked with the labour office on finding job training opportunities and with social workers at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring to write applications. Yet, as most of the other younger respondents, he remained unsuccessful in finding an employer willing to hire a new apprentice. He suspected that the fact that he had a criminal record was yet another reason for why he was treated badly in the labour office and for why he had not been able to find a job training opportunity. At the end of the investigation, however, he still maintained some cautious optimism and was even contemplating leaving Germany and going to Spain to find work in the tourist industry and in this way to work toward his long-term dream of eventually opening a bistro there.

FTW: Unexpected Success despite Mistrust and Subversion

Since his latest release from prison in 1996 which started his current homelessness episode, there have been a few changes that gave FTW some reason for optimism. First of all, due to the efforts of his parole officer, he began receiving public income assistance continuously for the first time in his life which reduced his reliance on informal and especially criminal survival strategies. To pay for the difference between welfare benefits and actual living expenses (including regular alcohol and cannabis consumption), he informally worked in a bar on a weekly basis and occasionally helped out in a motorcycle repair shop, both of which were activities that he actually enjoyed doing. After having mentioned his activities to a social worker at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, she had the idea that it might be possible to channel his interest in motorcycles into a job training

opportunity by negotiating with his employer at the repair shop and the local labour office to acquire funding. This effort paid off and FTW entered a one-year, publicly funded job qualification program that would earn him the title of "motorcycle assistant mechanic." FTW told me that he really enjoys his training and stated that this finally might give him a chance to do something with his life.

Homeless People with Disabilities

The four homeless people with disabilities had, similarly to people with deviant life courses, quite varied experiences with the welfare state regarding both short- and long-term strategies. Generally, it is possible to draw two different pictures for the two male and the two female respondents based on two primary factors, including previous employment and welfare state experiences and the nature and extent of the underlying disabilities or health problems.

Paule and Biker: From Normalcy to Welfare Dependence

Given that Paule and Biker both had relatively regular life courses in the sense that both had prior steady and well-paying employment, both had been married, and lived relatively inconspicuous lives until a culmination of events caused homelessness, their experiences largely resembled those of older homeless men with regular life courses described earlier in this chapter. Both men had received unemployment compensation at the time they became homeless yet, over time, lost their eligibility for UC benefits and had to rely on significantly lower social assistance benefits. Furthermore, since both had received welfare in a continuous fashion, they did receive the continuous medical attention they needed and reported of no problems with accessing the health sector - Biker had five reconstructive surgeries over the course of nine years, whereas Paule was able to receive treatment and medication for his mental illness. All medical treatment and procedures were covered by the welfare state.

The nature of their health problems, however, had implications for whether or not they pursued job searches. Due to the severity of his injury as a result of a motorcycle accident in 1989, Biker was unable to work in his field and consequently received an exemption from having to provide work search efforts. Although he would like to work, he feels that he has no chance to do so:

> "Just look at the news, man! There are over four million unemployed people in Germany. I'm thirty-eight, crippled, and hadn't held a job for over ten years! Do I

> have to say more? I have no illusion that I will ever get a job again" (Biker, 38, personal interview on 08.03.98).

Paule, on the other hand, continued to look for work despite his mental illness and his alcohol problems. Similar to the older homeless with regular life courses, he primarily relied on assisted job search efforts and self-initiative to look for work, yet, due to his lack of success, grew increasingly disillusioned about his ability to ever find work again. This defeatism consequently also resulted in the fact that his efforts and initiative decreased over time and hit a low-point by the time the investigation was concluded. He felt that he was abandoned by the welfare state despite the fact that he had always complied with the regulations and having diligently worked toward finding a job. Paule has, more or less, given up and only haphazardly continues his efforts to find employment mainly to fulfil his job search obligations to maintain full benefit eligibility.

Another difference between the two men was noticeable in the extent to which both men used additional survival strategies and other services for the homeless. Paule utilized a wide variety of homeless service facilities such as soup kitchens and day centres since he was unable to fully live off his welfare income because of his alcohol consumption. He also had to do so because he lacked contacts to pursue undocumented work and because he was, due to pride, unwilling to engage in shadow work. Biker, on the other hand, did not have a serious alcohol problem and was therefore able to live off with his welfare income and was able to avoid the homeless service facilities he despised.

Andrea and Monika: Long-term Neglect and Quick Access

The two women, on the other hand, experienced significant delays between the beginning of homelessness and the receipt for welfare. Once having accessed Berlin's welfare system, however, both rather quickly received the services they needed.

Andrea who is mentally impaired and became homeless after her mother and guardian died failed to access the welfare system because of her unawareness of benefit eligibility which caused her, undetected by the welfare system, to wander the streets of Berlin using informal survival strategies such as scavenging, soliciting donations, and sleeping rough. On two occasions, Andrea was approached by older men who took her in on the premise of helping her just to sexually abuse her until she escaped back onto the streets.

Monika who is visually impaired and became homeless after leaving her emotionally abusive parents and consequently moved to Hamburg, on the other hand, remained outside welfare services for eight years working as a prostitute to make ends

meet. She was, more or less, kept in a state of involuntary servitude in the shady confines of Hamburg's red-light district where her pimps capitalized on the fact that her visual impairment limited her options and mobility. Any attempts on her part to contact authorities and to seek help remained futile which she attributed to negative, discriminatory attitudes by authorities toward prostitutes.

> "For the judges, the police, even the social workers, pros are the scum of the earth. They view you as a worthless slut who brought this predicament onto herself by deliberate choice. As if it was fun to get fucked by the johns... Over all these years, I did not meet even one person willing to help me out of this mess. I was stuck" (Monica, 34, personal interview 08.03.98).

In Hamburg, she once filed a lawsuit against her pimp, yet the case was dismissed and Monika faced severe repercussions by her pimps who first brutally raped her and then, in front of her, viciously killed a similarly defiant prostitute to set an example. This intimidation worked and she never contacted public authorities including welfare again until the day she managed to escape by taking a train to Berlin. To this day she suffers from post-traumatic stress syndrome from this and other traumatic events she had endured during her experiences with prostitution, including fifteen brutal rapes by pimps or customers.

The experiences of these two women are clear evidence of failed outreach. The fact that a visibly mentally disabled older women would walk Berlin's central city streets without being detected or the fact that a blind woman was being held in captivity and rather punished than being helped are testimonies of public neglect. Once the women established contact to Berlin's social service administration through a referral by a third person, their adverse situations were rather quickly resolved in a relatively non-bureaucratic fashion and both women quickly found access to case-appropriate housing as I will detail in the following chapter. Given the nature of their disabilities, however, finding employment per se was not an immediate objective although Monika intended to further her education and training to become a professional social worker. By the end of the investigation, however, she did not manage to access formal job training yet proceeded to become involved in volunteer work at the Strassenfeger and the Treberhilfe which gave her a sense of purpose and something to do.

Alternatives to Economic Reintegration: Homeless Street-Newspaper Vendors between Self-Initiative, Welfare, and Punitive Policy

Three of the homeless migrants with "transient" life courses, Harri, Matze and Marty, as well as one of the people with "deviant" life courses, Sioux, relatively soon upon arrival

to Berlin, discovered the possibility of selling street-newspapers which not only allowed them to subsidize their welfare income but also provided them with an alternative to mainstream reintegration. The combined income of sales and welfare provided them with a modest yet satisfactory base for living and in the case of one vendor, Harri, even a regular job. Yet despite the positive impact that the sale of street-newspapers in conjunction with welfare had on vendor's lives, this new found stability was seriously jeopardized since all respondents, and street-newspaper vendors in general, experience displacement and persecution almost on a daily basis.

Selling Street-Newspapers in the Context of Receiving Welfare

The four vendors all had received some type of public cash assistance in the past and immediately contacted the local welfare administration upon arrival in Berlin. After surmounting some bureaucratic obstacles that were commonly experienced by migrants, they began receiving Social Assistance benefits. Since their welfare income was insufficient due to alcohol problems, they proceeded to supplement them by informal means (i.e. panhandling). All three met street-newspaper vendors while doing so and learned about the possibility of selling street newspapers. All four respondents consequently contacted the agency and began selling the Strassenfeger,[9] yet withheld this information from the welfare agency in order to avoid potential reductions in their benefits. The combined income from both welfare and selling street newspapers allowed for higher monthly income compared to most other respondents as the sale of newspapers can be quite lucrative depending on individual skill, intensity of selling, and seasonal variations. [10] As a result, none of the four respondents had to rely on other informal survival strategies to generate income. For Harri, Sioux, and Matze, all of whom had been homeless for many years in other German cities in the past, selling street-newspapers was

[9] Marty started out his vending career by working for the "MOTZ," the other of two major street-newspaper agencies in Berlin. He eventually left the Motz and joined the "Strassenfeger."

[10] Income potential depends largely on the intensity with which people engage in their sales activities which is largely a function of how much money people must generate. Heroin addicts who constitute a third of all vendors, for example, must generate up to DM 300 (£ 125) per day to sustain their addictions and thus inevitably work longer and harder than people who need to generate a few hundred Deutsch Marks to subsidize, let's say, a low pension. On average, vendors sell 30 papers per day making between DM 40 (£17) and 50 (£21) per day including tips. Sioux, in particular, was able to generate above average income selling street-newspapers using his approachable personality, charm, and rhetorical skills effectively. He regularly sells forty newspapers per day (typically in four hours) and also is the unofficial record holder among vendors after he once sold 260 newspapers in one day right before Christmas. That day, he earned close to DM 400 (£167) including tips. The latter indicates that there are seasonal variations in selling newspapers as all respondents confirmed that sales in the winter (when people are more sympathetic) are more profitable than in the summer.

a departure from previous shadow work oriented survival strategies including panhandling, scavenging, shop-lifting, drug dealing (Sioux), or selling blood.

Positive Effects beyond Income: Adding Meaning in Life

Not only did the sale of street-newspapers provide the respondents with much needed income, it also had a positive, encouraging effect on the respondent's lives - all four respondents considered their sales activity as regular work and took pride in their role as advocates for the homeless. All four became active in the newspaper agency and began to participate in the organization's vendor assembly and in PR activities organized by the Strassenfeger. Harri eventually became the Strassenfeger's head of distribution and logistics supporting his work through newspaper sales and regular social assistance. Sioux, a very charismatic person, became the elected representative of the vendors on the Strassenfeger's governing board and thus an avid defender of his colleagues' interests. It became quite clear that all four respondents enjoyed and appreciated their activism. Considering the new meaning in life that the sale and activism provided for the respondents, it is not surprising that their initiative to enter the regular workforce and to live a "mainstream" life diminished as they found opportunities that gave them a sense of purpose, pride, and, at the same time, sufficient material support. Sioux explained:

> "I am a vendor, a social worker, an activist, a friend, and a partner, all in one person. Not bad for a former convict, huh? My life is going in the right direction. I may not have a car or a fancy apartment, but I have enough to get by and I am doing something that is important. I am informing the public, I am a messenger for other less fortunate people in Germany. And believe me, there are many" (Sioux, 31, personal interview on 08.03.98).

Gaining Formal Employment through Activism: Harri's Example

Another positive impact of street-newspaper sales is that one of the respondents, Harri, to his own surprise, managed to parlay his work at the Strassenfeger into a one-year, publicly financed job using a new clause in one of Berlin's active job creation programs.[11] Jutta Welle, a social worker employed at the project, was instrumental in helping Harri with his application and with the ensuing extensive paperwork. This new job provided him with a regular income, social insurance contributions, and should an extension of his work contract not be achieved after one year, at least the possibility of

[11] The 1996 revision of local labour market program administered by the Berlin-Brandenburg's State Labour Office contains new work creation schemes in the context of existing active labour market programs (Maßnahmen zur produktiven Arbeitsförderung, §§ 249 and 242 AFG) designed to provide long-term unemployed persons with temporary employment with voluntary social organizations (see SenVer für Arbeit, Berufliche Bildung und Frauen, 1996: 45-49).

collecting nominally higher unemployment compensation. Harri's example demonstrates that despite all the aforementioned rigidity and inflexibility of the overly bureaucratic German welfare system, positive and particularly creative interventions are possible if social workers in collaboration with their clients are given the tools to effectively work the system. Nonetheless, Harri was the only migrant, and for that matter, the only homeless person with a more irregular life course who was able to find regular, albeit time-limited employment.

Adverse Effects: The Displacement and Criminalization of Street-newspaper Sales

The selling of street newspapers, albeit providing relatively good income, also had negative ramifications quite similar to other informal strategies in that it is an activity that is prohibited in many places, particularly semi-public spaces such as the premises of Berlin's public transportation authority or the German Railroad. Yet, in order to sell their merchandize, street-newspaper vendors need spaces with high pedestrian flows and turnover which is one reason why most vendors attempt to sell on trains or in train stations. All newspaper vendors reported numerous encounters with security forces. Matze reported that he had a series of confrontations with private security guards of the department store where he sold his newspapers but managed to find a modus vivendi by complying with the manager of the department store's suggestion that he may sell a few yards away from the main entrance. Such a compromise has not yet been found in the ongoing confrontation between newspaper vendors and the security forces and management of Berlin's public transportation authorities. Every newspaper vendor selling on public transportation has reported multiple confrontations with security forces who forced them to leave the premises and over half, including Sioux and Marty, received an indefinite ban from using public transportation. Repeated circumvention can result in a charge of a "disturbance of domestic peace violation" which carries financial penalties and in the case of defendants who are unable to pay the fines, incarceration. A number of vendors, although none in my sample, were awaiting legal procedures and some are currently in jail (Stefan Schneider, Chairman of MOB e.V., Interview on 27.04.98).

Despite these negative experiences, none of the respondents felt discouraged from pursuing this type of strategy – on the contrary – all four respondents, their colleagues, and the newspaper management see this standoff as an opportunity to gain publicity and to show the public how homeless people are mistreated in post-unification Berlin. All four respondents indicated awareness that it is their citizenship rights that are under attack:

> "Of course I know that my constitutional rights are stepped upon. After all, I learned in school that the human dignity is untouchable and people have the freedom of self-expression. But whom will the judge believe? Me, the bum, or them, the police officers? You make the call! And this is precisely why we have to [*starts singing a Bob Marley tune*] get up, stand up, stand up for your rights! (Martin, 32, Interview on 06.03.98)

Although the price for such defiance can be devastating since the respondents know that a criminal record works against their ability to find employment, they felt they have nothing to lose since they feel that they don't stand a chance in the regular labour market anyway. Additionally, this study supports their perception that the general public is actually on their side. According to a random public opinion survey that I conducted among 178 passengers on trains of the BVG, all but two people disapproved of the BVG's practice of displacing and persecuting street newspaper vendors.[12] This finding has important political implications, as there seems to be a significant discrepancy between what politicians and security experts believe to be public opinion and on which they base restrictive and punitive practices, and what the public really seems to think about homeless people.[13] Since such persecution often has devastating long-term consequences on people's life chances and is likely to be illegal and unconstitutional, it is imperative that the political will to change the situation is formed.[14]

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[12] Between 8.12.1998-and 12.12.1998, I conducted an authorized random public opinion sample among 178 passengers of Berlin's subway system. Virtually all surveyed people had seen homeless vendors before and over half reported meeting them more than once a week. Almost two-thirds (61.7 percent) reported of good or friendly conduct of the vendors while only 8 people (4.4 percent), primarily elderly women, reported that vendors behaved inappropriately. The remainder reported of mixed experiences often disliking the pitying approach some vendors took. Still, an overwhelming majority of surveyed passengers (87.7 percent) thought that the concept of selling street newspapers was a good or very good idea and appreciated the vendor's self-initiative, hard work, and creativity. All but two people, two female senior citizens with bad experiences, disapproved of the BVG's practice of persecuting homeless street-newspaper vendors in public transportation.

[13] According to Ingo Tederan, spokesperson of the BVG security services, the BVG continues the practice of disallowing the sale of street newspapers on its premises for two reasons. First, the BVG does not want to set precedence for other types of commercial activity on its premises as passengers would likely not appreciate being solicited by commercial vendors while using public transportation, and second, the BVG asserts that passengers disapprove of the specific sale of street-newspaper (interview on 09.12.98).

[14] There are an increasing number of testimonies and legal challenges that prove that the selective enforcement of public order and safety laws, anti-panhandling ordinances, as well as certain house rules in public transportation facilties are in violation of principal civil and constitutional rights (Hammel, 1998a-d and 1997; Hecker, 1998).

4.4 The Impact of Public Policy on Finding Employment: A Summary

This account of homeless people's experiences with public policy in their attempts to enter the formal economy, differentiated by life course trajectories, has provided a primarily negative testimony about the effectiveness of Berlin's public policy approach. Other than stabilizing people's lives by providing much needed income which, among other things, decreased the necessity to rely on informal survival strategies, or providing people with health services - all positive outcomes - welfare intervention has done little to facilitate economic re-integration. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the overall outcomes of the efforts of the twenty-four job seekers whose status was known at the end of the investigation indicating that ultimately only three respondents managed to find jobs and three furthered their job qualifications. The other respondents all remained unemployed and on welfare whereby six people continued looking for work, seven gave up, and four people found satisfactory alternatives. These overall results in terms of homeless people's attempts to gain access to the formal economy are discouraging to say the least. In conclusion of this chapter, I will summarize who was and was not successful and why.

Table 4.1 **Overall Outcomes of Job-Search Efforts**

Outcomes	Older Homeless "Regular" Life Courses (N=8)	Younger Homeless "Regular" Life courses (N=4)	Homeless with "Transient" Life courses (N=8)	Homeless with "Deviant" Life courses (N=4)	Homeless People with Disabilities (N=4)	Total
Successful						**6**
Regular Employment (1-year work contracts)	Kalle Hanno		Harri			**3**
Entered Military		Mario				**1**
Entered/Completed Job Training		Radek		FTW		**2**
Unsuccessful						**18**
Welfare/Still Searching	Sachse Bernie	Bob Markus	Jens Dan	Oliver		**7**
Welfare/Gave Up or Bridging	Helmut Det Maria		Schlöter Tobias	Marita	Paule	**7**
Primarily Relying on Alternative Strategies	Hans		Matze Marty	Sioux		**4**
Moved (status unknown)			Leo			1
Not Searching					Andrea Monika Biker	3

Ingredients of Success: Active Labour Market Policies and Social Work

Of the six respondents who either successfully found employment or job training opportunities, four were able to do so primarily because social workers in specific homeless service facilities facilitated access to existing labour market programs whereas the others relied on either self-initiative or chance. The three respondents who gained access to one-year subsidized employment opportunities all possessed the skills and experience necessary to perform these jobs and gratefully acknowledged that if it was not for the diligent efforts of their social workers they would have remained unsuccessful in accessing the labour market programs. FTW's example indicates that social work intervention can be successful even in rather difficult cases if social workers mediate between the local labour administration and employers. Yet, the fact that seventeen of the twenty-three job seekers, including almost all people with more irregular life courses, remained unsuccessful suggests that the local welfare state, especially the local labour offices that are responsible for re-employment, has largely failed in its objective to facilitate economic reintegration.

Unsuccessful Cases between Personal Problems, Market Barriers, and Welfare State Failures

While the reasons for success pointed to positive welfare state intervention, the reasons for homeless people's lack of success and long durations of unemployment are varied. The perhaps most significant reason why the respondents faced such difficulties are associated with the situation of Berlin's labour market which was characterized by wide-spread unemployment and a lack of job training opportunities as I described in chapter one. Nonetheless, the fact that such lack of success occurred despite the fact that an entire bureaucratic entity (labour offices) is dedicated to re-employment and the fact that active labour market policies exist yet are obviously rarely used bodes poorly for its effectiveness. Rather, this analysis points to specific welfare state failures which interact with people's distinct life course trajectories.

- Older homeless people with regular life courses possessed human capital and had, at least initially, a very strong desire to find work. They relied intensively on both assisted and unassisted job searches to re-access the formal economy. Yet they failed largely because mainstream referrals simply did not work for this older clientele and the competition they experienced as stigmatized job seekers. The ensuing lack of success had devastating personal consequences reinforcing defeatism and the tendency to resort to alcohol causing some of them to literally give up, believing that the welfare state had more or less abandoned them.

- Younger homeless people with regular life courses, on the other hand, were much less negatively affected by their apparent lack of success as they did not feel the same urgency to find work and job training as older people simply because they lacked a reference point to prior integration into the formal economy. Although three of them relied on job referrals by the labour office, none materialized. This lack of success had comparably less severe psychological consequences because the younger respondents were more likely to be content with the present situation and their efforts were consequently not as intensive as those of older homeless people.

- Homeless people with transient life courses' primary problem was their utter lack of familiarity with the local institutional and economic infrastructure and their social isolation which added to a host of other problems which resemble those of the above mentioned groups depending on people's age. This lack of social affiliation constrained options and caused most respondents in this group to focus on daily survival rather than long-term planning, and more specifically, to resort to informal, often unsanctioned means to make ends meet. Respondents in this group were aware of their competitive disadvantage which caused some of them to actively explore alternatives to mainstream reintegration (i.e. selling street-newspapers). Although all eight respondents sought referrals by the labour office to either employment (older migrants) or job training opportunities (younger migrants), none of them with the exception of Harri managed to find employment.

- The final group, homeless people with deviant life courses, remained unsuccessful because of the cumulative effect of a lack of human capital, severe social problems, an utter mistrust of the public sector in particular and society in general, and conversely substandard service provisions by case workers in the labour offices. This mistrust reinforced the ineffectiveness of the welfare system to provide a concerted effort to deal with complex interrelated problems. Still, the fact that one of them, FTW, experienced some success by entering a job training program upon intervention by a social worker indicates that positive outcomes are possible even if the odds are stacked grossly against homeless people with more deviant life courses.

Yet, before we can draw a more complete picture of the impact of welfare state intervention on homeless people's exit potential, it is first necessary to examine whether or not service intervention ultimately succeeded in assisting homeless people in fulfilling their foremost goal – finding regular housing and exiting homelessness.

Chapter 5

From Shelter to Housing in Berlin: The Impact of Policy on Homeless People's Residential Status over Time

5.1 Overview

In this chapter, I examine the effects of social policy on homeless people's strategies to access housing and thereby to overcome homelessness. The primary purpose of this chapter is to find out how welfare state intervention affected homeless people's chances to achieve their goal of finding and maintaining regular housing and to interrogate the role of public policy in this process from the perspective of homeless people. I use the five-fold life course typology to provide a more nuanced analysis of how the nature of exit strategies – assisted or unassisted by the welfare state – impacts the duration of homelessness, and homeless people's success and failure in finding and maintaining housing. Within the broader categories of regular and irregular life courses, I pay particular attention to the impact of welfare state intervention and homeless service and shelter provision on homeless people's immediate life circumstances and their long term chances of finding housing and overcoming homelessness. To examine whether welfare intervention stabilized homeless people's lives in preparation for exit, I closely monitored the respondent's utilization of Berlin's three-fold shelter system,[1] their experiences in such facilities, as well as the effects of shelter life on their daily lives, social networks, behaviours, and choices.[2] To examine the impact of social policy on homeless people's re-integration in terms of access to affordable and suitable housing, I analyse homeless people's exit strategies, how such strategies vary over time, and the role that welfare state intervention played in the process. In this way, we obtain a more nuanced understanding of interrelations among homeless people's life courses, their distinct problems and needs, welfare state intervention, and ultimately housing outcomes and thus get a step closer to understanding the reasons why German homeless people stay homeless for long periods of time despite a comparably more comprehensive welfare system than that of the U.S.

[1] Berlin's shelter system consists of three principal types of publicly funded shelter operated by different entities – municipal shelters operated by the district welfare offices, commercial shelters by private for-profit providers, and shelters provided by the voluntary or non-profit organizations.

[2] Although seventeen respondents lived in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, a mid-level transitional shelter that unlike most other shelters in Berlin provided in-house social services, at the time of the interview, twelve of them had lived in one or more other shelter types before and therefore could offer a comparative perspective of their experiences.

5.2 Homeless People with Regular Life Courses

Homeless people with regular life courses had significantly more success in finding housing than with their attempts to find work. Ultimately, nine of the twelve homeless people in this category, including all of the younger ones, succeeded in finding regular accommodations. In the following, I describe first the experiences of the four younger homeless people who exited relatively quickly without much assistance, then those of five older homeless who exited after prolonged homeless experiences with the help of social workers, and finally the experiences of three respondents who remained living in shelters, alcohol dependent, and having more or less given up. Within the discussion of older homeless respondent's paths I further detail how life in shelters adversely affected the respondent's life circumstances, their social networks, and their overall stance toward the welfare system with serious consequences for their preparedness for exit in that such adverse shelter experiences contributed to prolonging their homelessness.

Rapid Exit: The Experiences of Four Younger Homeless People

The four younger homeless people with regular life courses were the most successful among the five life course groups. All four younger respondents exited within seventeen months of the onset of homelessness, faster than any other group, and were able to find housing on their own terms. Bob and Markus moved in with acquaintances sharing flats, Radek found a regular one-bedroom apartment through the referral of a friend who informed him that a unit became available in his apartment building, and Mario began living at a military base. So while the respondents did not need public assistance in finding housing since they were able to maintain social networks or to rely on self-initiative, they benefited from welfare state intervention in that it provided them with immediate shelter as well as financial assistance that allowed them to maintain housing once they were able to access it.

One positive effect of welfare state intervention on younger homeless people with regular life courses was that it stabilized their immediate life circumstances after they had become homeless and had exhausted their initial shelter options of living at friends and acquaintance's places. For the four men, life in the shelter was a pragmatic interim solution that allowed them to either bridge their time in anticipation of a new life-situation (Radek and Mario) or to await the opportunity to share housing with acquaintances (Markus and Bob). Although all four respondents were initially reluctant to seek public

assistance and shelter because of pride, they eventually did and all were immediately referred to shelters. While Mario and Radek were initially referred to the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, a mid-level shelter with single rooms and in-house social services (see chapter 2.2), where they stayed until the end of their homelessness, Bob and Markus were first admitted to low-quality commercial shelters in western Berlin. Both Bob and Markus reported of terrible conditions, returned to their case workers within two weeks and asked to be relocated, and also rather by chance, achieved entry into the Wohnheim Trachenbergring. Upon entry into the mid-level transitional housing project, all four younger men created new social networks to homeless peers to receive material and logistical support. [3] Mario explains:

> „So, from my perspective things here work well, because I get along with the people and everybody helps everybody and if somebody has no money, people help you out and as soon as you get money again, you just pay back. Same with food and so on. People help each other out. I think it's a good sense of community here" (Mario, 22, Interview on 22.02.98).

In addition, many of the younger homeless sought advice from older, more experienced homeless like Biker and Kalle who willingly shared their experience with authorities and provided valuable advice. Bob explained:

> "These [social networks] are not only compulsory contacts, there is a little bit more behind it somehow. I already met people who stood by me and who told me about all the tricks, show me the possibilities, and I don't mean people who work here, I'm talking about people who've been living here for a while" (Bob, 24, Interview on 26.02.98).

At the same time as these respondents created peer networks to ensure survival, they also attempted to preserve their social networks to non-homeless people. All four would regularly leave the shelter to visit friends and socialize. Although the frequency of such contacts diminished slightly over time, none experienced a drastic decline of outside contacts which can be attributed to the fact that the younger respondents were not particularly concerned or ashamed about their situation.[4]

In the end, life in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring had relatively positive ramifications for the young respondents as they perceived living in the shelter as an

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[3] While living in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, I experienced an astonishing sense of solidarity and mutual obligations among the homeless residents, irrespective of their life course experiences. People shared resources, cooked together, and most importantly borrowed and lent money from and to each other. Usually if people ran out of money toward the end of the benefit month, somebody would lend them cash, which was generally promptly paid back once people received their next welfare payment. By participating in this reciprocal system, they ensured their trustworthiness and received support, once it was needed. Although most people had lost money in the past, this system of reciprocity seemed to work.

[4] The only instance where I noticed that shame would affect social networks of the four younger homeless men was with regards to creating and maintaining intimate relationships despite the fact that all four had girlfriends in the past.

opportunistic temporary solution which allowed them to maintain a positive outlook on life. Such a rather positive attitude was also evident in the ways in which people interacted with each other which reminded me of life in a student dormitory more so than what I would have expected from life in a homeless shelter. Since life in the shelter was viewed as relatively positive, the intensity of seeking regular housing was not as pronounced as among many of the other respondents. As a matter of fact, two respondents, Mario and Radek, did not even look for housing at all since both were anticipating a particular event (Radek the end of his apprenticeship, Mario the commencement of his military service) and therefore viewed and used the shelter as an opportune interim housing solution. Bob and Markus, on the other hand, did occasionally look up housing ads in the local newspapers yet proceeded in a rather relaxed and haphazard fashion stating that they would actually prefer to eventually share a flat with friends for cost-saving purposes and thus waited until the opportunity presented itself.

Once the respondents accessed their new housing, welfare state intervention had another important positive effect in that it essentially allowed them to maintain such new housing.[5] Specifically, Bob and Markus used their Social Assistance income to contribute to rental payments they would share with their new roommates, whereas Radek used income from Unemployment Compensation he received after he completed his apprenticeship and declared himself unemployed. Since his unemployment benefits were below the social assistance threshold, he also qualified for and received a public housing subsidy (Wohngeld).[6]

Ultimately, a carefree attitude, a pragmatic adaptation to shelter life, and the ability to maintain social networks to non-homeless people were all factors that contributed to the relatively quick exit from homelessness compared to most other respondents. Moreover, these experiences indicate that access to housing opportunities, both formal and informal, is less difficult as long as people still have contacts and networks and if they do not have debilitating personal or substance abuse problems. The fact that their social networks were still intact and that they were less negatively affected by shame and deliberate self-isolation was helpful to the respondents to maintain a "mainstream" orientation and a life outside homelessness. At the same time, however, some of the underlying problems that caused their homelessness remained largely

[5] Mario did not need any public assistance once he entered the military because he was provided with free housing in the military barracks and received good compensation (DM 2,330/ £ 958 per month before taxes) as a non-commissioned officer in training.

[6] Radek used savings he generated during his apprenticeship for a security deposit. Bob and Markus told me that their roommates took care of the security deposit.

unresolved – Bob and Markus both failed to find apprenticeships and Radek had not yet found a job as an industrial mechanic and therefore these three men continue living in precarious economic circumstances.

The Experiences of Older Homeless: Exit Delayed or Denied

Of the eight older respondents with regular life courses, five successfully exited homelessness typically after prolonged durations of homelessness. Yet, their experiences differed from those of younger successful respondents in many ways. Unlike the younger respondents, successful exit in this group was unrelated to personal initiative as, except for one person, none was successful in finding housing on their own terms. This is despite the fact that older homeless respondents invested more time searching because they were more alarmed by the negative circumstances of life in shelters. For them, life in shelters had different consequences compared to the younger respondents in that it reinforced a sense of shame and thus the decision to self-isolate causing all of them to lose valuable social networks to non-homeless people. In addition, life in shelters exacerbated alcohol problems and caused a rather distrustful stance toward using homeless services. The reluctance to seek help in specific homeless service facilities caused older respondents to rely primarily on conventional unassisted housing searches such as housing ads which, unfortunately, remained entirely unsuccessful. By the time older respondents sought assistance from social workers, considerable time had gone by and, because of the adverse effects of shelter life substantial damage had been done. Although five respondents ultimately succeeded in finding housing once receiving social work intervention, three people had given up and continued to live, alcohol dependent, in shelters.

The Adverse Effects of Shelter Life on Exit

While life in shelters had few negative ramifications for younger homeless people, it did so for all older respondents with regular life courses who all had stayed at one or more shelter facilities in the past. For them, irrespective of whether or not they were ultimately successful, life in shelters was a stark and in many ways shocking departure from the pervious residential stability offered by a "home" and a "Kiez," which is a term indigenous Berliners use to describe their strong affiliation with a local neighbourhood.[7] All older respondents used to have place-based social networks and consequently wished

[7] Helmut, Kalle, Hanno, Det, Hans, and Maria identified an affiliation with a Kiez which were places where they had lived for extended periods of time and where they worked, shopped, and had, more or less all their social networks. Bernie, who recently migrated to Berlin, inevitably lacked social networks in the city yet had rather extensive social networks in his hometown Dortmund.

to resume the regularity, stability, and safety of regular homes. For them, homelessness was a break in that continuity and a significant psychological blow to their self-esteem. Moreover, facing the immediate adjustment to living in conditions previously unimagined, people saw their most daunting expectations become a reality. This adjustment was perceived by them as particularly drastic considering that all of the older respondents with regular life courses had their first shelter experience in low-level emergency, commercial, or communal shelters before five of them by chance arrived at mid-level shelters.[8] They unanimously reported of terrible social and hygienic conditions in low-level shelters which had three overarching negative effects on their immediate life circumstances as well as their readiness and preparedness for exit:

(a) The Destruction of Social Networks: First, the negative experiences in shelters and the trauma inflicted by living in unacceptable conditions inevitably took a toll on those respondents who had pre-existing social networks to non-homeless people in Berlin as such important social ties diminished with the increasing duration of homelessness. Living in a shelter was viewed as a humiliating circumstance and re-enforced the sense of shame indigenous people felt about being homeless and dependent on welfare and publicly sponsored accommodations. As a result, those respondents would rather self-isolate and discontinue contacting family or acquaintances than having to concede living under such circumstances. Helmut, who used to have an active social life and whose entire extended family lives in Berlin, answered my question as to whether he still has contacts to family, neighbours, and former work colleagues:

> "No. Couldn't go to them. You somehow have to maintain a little bit of self respect. What will they think? That also reflects on the rest of my family. You don't want to destroy that reputation. It would be embarrassing" (Helmut, 37, interview on 23.02.98).

In addition to self-isolation, another reason for the loss of social networks over time was that some respondents experienced outright social rejection by people they used to consider friends once they became homeless. Kalle's experience is a good example:

> "When I lost my apartment, I first went to Bernhard [his next door neighbour, name changed] whom I knew for many years and I considered a friend. Well, it took a lot of will power to knock on his door and you know what? He opened the door, without a word handed me a DM 50 bill, and shut the door again. Can you imagine how I felt (Kalle, 44, Interview on 28.02.98)?

[8] Helmut, Kalle, Sachse, Det, and Hanno were eventually referred to the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, whereas Maria was immediately referred to a domestic violence shelter offering in-house social services after becoming homeless.

Ultimately, few friendships and contacts to family members or acquaintances remained intact over time and none of the family conflicts that often contributed to the onset of homelessness were resolved. So while social networks to non-homeless people diminished, the older respondents, like the younger ones, began developing new pragmatic networks to peers. Yet, while such networks were important and valued in that they provided much needed material, emotional, and logistical short-term support, they were ultimately less important for homeless people's long-term exit strategies.

(b) Exacerbation of Alcohol Abuse Problems: One reason why such peer networks were less important for exit and at the same time a second major consequence of life in shelters was that it either exacerbated pre-existing or created new problems with alcohol abuse. The close proximity to other homeless people with similar negative life-experiences, peer pressure, boredom, and the lack of privacy in shelters had increased people's use of alcohol. There is also a correlation with the quality of shelters and alcohol consumption, as previous research has indicated.[9] Virtually every respondent who had experiences in low-quality communal and commercial shelters reported that he consumed more alcohol in such spaces, given that alcohol was always available and present. Having to share rooms with alcoholics and the constant availability of alcohol "invited" even non- or moderate users such as Sachse and Hanno to drink more.

> "Man, this was terrible! You have to share a tiny room with three guys you don't know. Their misery is contagious and it's no wonder that you start drinking. And you have no privacy, your stuff gets stolen, and it stinks" (Hanno, 36, interview on 06.03.98).

People living in mid-level shelters with single rooms, on the other hand, reported of less collective alcohol consumption, given that people were able to retreat into their personal rooms. Nonetheless, even here collective alcohol consumption among older respondents was still widespread and often excessive although not as bad as in low-level shelters. People clearly drink for a variety of reasons, most notably to cope with stress, anxieties, shame, and boredom. When people are not busy spending time in welfare offices, searching for work and housing, or performing informal survival strategies, all of which cost a considerable amount of time and energy, homeless people's lives are boring and in the case of shelter residents often characterized by either endless TV watching or by congregating in groups drinking and nostalgically reminiscing about the "good old days." The problem is that homeless people simply lack the resources to spend their "free time"

[9] The fact that homeless people's life situations in low quality shelter settings deteriorated was confirmed by a number of authors in Germany including Bauer (1990), Giesbrecht, (1987) Schmid (1990), and Schneider (1998).

in meaningful ways. Ultimately only two people, Kalle and Maria took active steps toward dealing with their addiction problems.

(c) Destruction of Trust in Public Intervention: Finally, the negative experiences in dilapidated low-level shelters, typically the first types of homeless service facilities the respondents had encountered, had a negative and deterring effect on the older respondents causing a rather ambivalent stance toward the welfare state. Such negative experiences then translated into a reluctance to seek help in specific service facilities for the homeless as people simply expected similarly negative experiences and quality. Hidden behind such resistance is the utter fear of further social decline and at least an attempt to maintain some self respect by distancing oneself from people deemed even further down in the social hierarchy. "I haven't sunk that low yet" was a sentence that I heard quite frequently among members in this group when I asked them if they had used other homeless service facilities.

Another consequence of such negative first impressions is that four older respondents decided to completely avoid shelter facilities and tried sleeping rough as an alternative. Yet, except for Hans who continued living on the streets for altogether nine years, all of them found out rather quickly that such resistance caused its own host of problems.[10] Some of them remarked that they had essentially ventured from bad to worse since they lacked experience and were unaccustomed to sleeping rough, in dealing with cold nights, or in how to find appropriate sleeping places. Det reported:

> "I had no idea how cold it could get at night during the summer. I froze my ass off on that park bench. So I drank a bottle of Schnapps to stay warm and to be able to get some sleep. Once I finally fell asleep, two guys came over, knocked me over the head and took my wallet. Woke up the next morning bleeding, no money, no I.D., nothing, and on top of that with the worst hangover. God, that was the worst day of my life" (Det, interview on 06.03.98).

Det's experience, which he shared with four other respondents in this group, highlights the danger of sleeping rough. Moreover, three people reported that they were woken up and told to move on by the police or private security while sleeping rough. Considering these negative experiences with informal sleeping arrangements, all but one respondent (Hans) reluctantly contacted their welfare office again, typically within a few weeks, in order to get readmitted into a regular shelter. Yet, rather than receiving better alternatives two of them were re-admitted into a shelter that was no better than the first

[10] Hans was clearly an exception as he continued to resist shelters and to primarily rely on informal sleeping strategies for nine years. Over these years, he had acquired an astonishing repertoire of survival strategies, yet, with increasing age and declining health he eventually decided to reconnect with the service and shelter system in the hope of settling down and resuming regular housing.

one, typically a greater distance from their last residence which, in turn contributed to the aforementioned destruction of place-based social networks. Their relocation into similarly unfavourable shelter facilities essentially replicated the same cycle until the respondents finally, and rather by chance, were admitted to the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, a mid-level transitional shelter facility which was unanimously viewed as much better and from where three of the four people exited.

In the end, such counterproductive shelter allocation practices not only had adverse and deterring effects on people's life circumstances, it ultimately contributed to needlessly prolonging homelessness. Moreover, by the time people finally entered a more favourable shelter facility considerable damage had been done in that all had developed a rather distrustful stance toward the welfare state in general and the homeless shelter and service system in particular. Ultimately, such ambivalence toward using homeless services on part of the older homeless respondents may have foreclosed the possibility for dedicated social workers to intervene earlier and in more proactive ways thereby reducing the duration of homelessness. After all, the only way five of the eight older respondents were ultimately able to find housing again was because of efforts by social workers in specific homeless service facilities, not because of the use of conventional approaches such as searching advertisements in newspapers.

Unsuccessful Conventional Exit Strategies

Unlike the younger respondents who were rather content living in shelters, the negative experiences in shelters caused most of the older respondents to increase their efforts to find housing. Given, however, that unlike with job searches there is no particular bureaucratic entity involved with housing referrals, homeless people have to rely on one or more of three housing search strategies, including the conventional ways of finding housing by searching newspaper ads, using social networks, or seeking help in specific homeless service facilities with referral capabilities. Considering that older homeless respondents are isolated because they had lost their social networks over time and given that they tended to resist homeless service facilities because of the aforementioned deterring conditions they had encountered there, they inevitably had to use the classified sections of the daily newspapers. Yet, none of the older respondents were able to access housing this way despite the fact that most had made occasional contacts with prospective land-lords and were interviewed by them.

To find housing opportunities and to establish contacts with land-lords, all respondents would regularly consult the rental sections of one or more of Berlin's four daily newspapers.[11] Once locating a potential housing opportunity, they would use pay-phones to inquire about an offer, usually receiving a negative response. Yet, should a prospective land-lord be interested, respondents would arrange for a meeting and either walk or use public transportation to get there. Once there, however, they usually learned that the apartment had already been taken as soon as they gave more information about themselves which inevitably included public welfare as a source of income and the local welfare office as the grantor of the mandatory two-month security deposit which homeless people due to their economic marginality simply cannot pay themselves.[12] In many of these cases, respondents experienced "housing discrimination" when seemingly interested landlords denied a prospective homeless tenant as soon as they found out that the potential tenant was a welfare recipient without a fixed residence or a shelter address.[13]

By the time of the interviews and throughout the year of the investigation, none of these conventional housing search efforts among the older respondents were successful despite diligent efforts, again increasing the respondent's frustration and defeatism. Sachse's experience is a good example. One day I met Sachse who was visibly frustrated and disappointed in the stairwell of the Wohnheim Trachenbergring. When I asked him what is wrong, he replied:

> "Oh well, just another one of these shitty days. This morning I first went to the labour office. Like always, nothing. Then I saw this ad in the paper and talked to that landlord in Steglitz over the phone and it all sounded very promising and we arranged to meet at three o'clock. So I walked all the way over there [four kilometres]. And again, blah, blah, I'm so sorry, blah, blah. I guess he found out that I'm on welfare. Do you have any idea how often I hear that shit? I need a beer. Wanna come" (Sachse, informal conversation on 23.02.98)?

Sachse's response shows how the rejection he experienced translated into defeatism, depression, and ultimately into the desire to drown the frustration in alcohol. Sachse's experience is by no means unique as all older respondents with regular life courses, and for that matter, any respondent looking for housing through conventional, formal means reported of very similar discouraging experiences. In this light, it is not at

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[11] The other, more contemporary and rapid way of seeking housing and job options by using the Internet was simply not an option for the homeless respondents since only three younger respondents (Markus, Radek, and Bob) were computer literate and since homeless people generally lacked access to computers as few places offered public access computers in Berlin in 1998.

[12] Having to reveal where monthly rental payments and especially the sources for the rental deposit come from, foreclose the possibility to "lie" on an application.

[13] That homeless people are discriminated against and easily stereotyped as potentially "untrustworthy" and thus have little chance to acquire an apartment if other people apply is well known (for discussion, see Busch-Geertsama, 1995 and 2002).

all surprising that the intensity with which people engaged in housing searches actually diminished slightly over time.

Social Work as Facilitator of Exit: The Experiences of Five Older Respondents

The question arises as to how five respondents among the eight older homeless with regular life courses nonetheless found housing despite the fact that conventional search strategies proved futile and that their lives had taken a turn for the worse on so many different levels. The answer is, simply put, case-management and diligent efforts of social workers in specific homeless service facilities. After the respondent's initial reservations to consider even speaking to social workers were overcome through a rather patient, non-intrusive approach on the part of social workers, all five successful respondents received assistance in finding a place, establishing contact to landlords, contract negotiations, securing public funds for a rental deposit, and for arranging for long-term financial assistance to maintain housing.[14]

For two residents of the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, the situation has consequently improved significantly as they not only found housing but also employment as I indicated in the previous chapter. The social workers employed at the facility played a pivotal role in assisting the two men with finding both jobs and housing. Kalle moved into a one-bedroom apartment in his old Kiez in Steglitz (former West Berlin) and was satisfied with his new living and work arrangements and revived some of his old contacts, although he told me that he missed his friends in the shelter and the status as advisor he had built there. Hanno was issued a place in an assisted living project in Eastern Berlin where he had his own apartment and receives regular visits by district social workers who assist him in bureaucratic and financial matters which were the problems that caused his homelessness. These two cases are evidence for successful welfare state intervention in that both men had, using Leisering and Leibfried's (1999: 123-143) terminology, "optimized" their situation.

The other three older respondents, however, remained on welfare yet secured housing and in so doing also improved their situation. One of them, Sachse, found housing unrelated to welfare intervention since he met a woman in a bar, became

[14] Every social worker I talked to was aware that a foremost objective was to carefully establish a basis for dialogue and trust being well aware that many homeless have had negative experiences with the welfare system. Once communication had been established, social workers would be able to capitalize on their extensive, often university-based training and their job experience and utilize their knowledge of the complex service infrastructure and their extensive contacts to case workers at various welfare agencies. (information based on key informant interviews with social workers Klaus Breitfeld, Sigi Deiss, Jurgen Demmer, Ralf Gruber, and Uta Sternal).

romantically involved, and moved into her apartment shortly after. The last thing I heard was that they were set to get married in 1999. The other two, however, overcame homelessness because of welfare state intervention as voluntary and public service entities apparently cooperated well to ensure access to case appropriate housing. Maria received a great deal of assistance by social workers in a domestic violence shelter who worked with the local social welfare office in Tiergarten to arrange for and coordinate case appropriate services. She is now living in a one-bedroom apartment, has received debt-consultation and public assistance to cover the security deposit and rental payments, finalized her divorce, and stopped drinking. Hans, finally, has received substantial assistance by social workers in the day centre Warmer Otto who managed to find him a one-bedroom apartment in Berlin Lichtenberg. His success and also the success of his social worker is remarkable since he moved into his first regular accommodation in sixteen years. His example suggests that success is possible even in cases where people had been living outside the mainstream for very long periods of time.

Unsuccessful Exit: The Experiences of Three Older Homeless

Unfortunately, however, not all homeless people with regular life courses were successful. Three respondents, Det, Helmut, and Bernie, remained unsuccessful and continued living in the same shelters in which I interviewed them one year earlier. All three had used conventional strategies to find housing opportunities and have for reasons identical to those mentioned above remained unsuccessful.

Bernie, for one, remained unsuccessful in finding both housing and employment despite his diligent efforts and continued living by alternating between different emergency shelters to save money and to ensure that his welfare income remained with his family. Yet despite his commitment to eventually bring his family to Berlin, his wife divorced him which was a significant blow to him. Still, he remained hopeful that once securing a job and housing, his two teenage sons would come and live with him in Berlin. Although this hope sustained him and prevented him from giving up, he had become increasingly anxious and doubtful about his future prospects.

The other two unsuccessful respondents, Helmut and Det on the other hand, ultimately became resigned to their situation. They both largely discontinued pursuing job and housing searches, and continued living frustrated and alcohol dependent in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring. Both men's initially high desire and diligent efforts to find housing gradually deteriorated over time and with lack of success. Moreover, both men's

previously extensive social networks in their Kiez disappeared, their marital problems remained unresolved, and both continued living lonely, bored, and disillusioned at the shelter where their already pre-existing alcohol problems had actually worsened over the year. Helmut who was outspoken, lively, and actually optimistic about his future when I first met him was a shadow of himself - the last time I met him, he was too drunk to recognize me and, once he did, actually indicated that he is considering to commit suicide. One reason why both these men experienced a more dramatic decline compared to the other older homeless respondents is that both of them had comparably higher standing in society in the past. As a police officer (Det) and as a manager in a super market chain (Helmut), both men had solid middle class income and thus status in their extensive social circles. Both men expressed that the rapid decline in social standing in conjunction with their failed marriages was extremely depressing and humiliating which added to mounting anxieties with regards to their future causing them to drink excessively on a daily basis.

Ultimately, the culmination of both men's personal problems, the extent of their addiction problems, and the apparently insurmountable defeatism were so strong that not even careful social work intervention could reach them - Det and Helmut both told me that they had discontinued seeking help from the social workers at the Wohnheim and that they declined approaches by social workers believing that they could not help them anyway. Rather, both men independently stated that with their lack of success and as such perceived futility of any job or housing search effort they changed their strategy and that they decided to wait for early retirement rather than continuing "wasting more time for nothing," as Det had put it. While in Det's case retirement was relatively near (5 years) and because of more than 30 years of contributions likely to result in a generous pension, Helmut still had seventeen years ahead of him and with the prospect of a comparably much lower pension.

5.3 Homeless People with Irregular Life courses

Compared to homeless people with regular life courses, homeless people with more irregular life courses were much less successful in finding regular housing and thereby in overcoming literal homelessness which in conjunction with failure in accessing labour markets suggests that hardly any person with an irregular life course succeeded in reaching their goals. Only six of the fifteen respondents whose exit status was ultimately

known were successful in finding suitable accommodations and only one of them also found a job.[15] Among the successful respondents were two street-newspaper vendors who overcame homelessness on their own initiative as well as three of the four people with disabilities and one person with a deviant life course who had received substantial assistance by social workers in finding case-appropriate housing. The remaining nine respondents, including all but one of the transient homeless migrants, continued living either in the same or in worse shelter facilities. While five of them reported that their personal life circumstances deteriorated and their substance abuse problems increased dramatically in such places making even social work intervention unlikely to be able assist them, the remaining four unsuccessful respondents were relatively content with their situation hoping that life in shelters were temporary and thus did not need public intervention other than programs designed to stabilize their lives (i.e. income, shelter, medical treatment). Considering that there is some overlap between members in the different life course categories, I proceed by addressing the respondents' experiences differentiated by whether or not they were successful and whether and to what extent welfare intervention played a role. I begin with unsuccessful cases where welfare intervention hindered rather than facilitated exit.

Unsuccessful Exit and Personal Deterioration: Five Respondents

Five respondents failed to achieve exit from homelessness and at the same time experienced a serious deterioration of their immediate life circumstances, their quality of life, and their outlook for the future. Within this group were three older men including two migrants (Dan and Schlöter) and one man with a disability (Paule), as well as two younger people including Jens, a migrant, and Marita, a younger woman with a deviant life course. In addition to being unsuccessful in their attempts to get settled and to find social and economic stability, the four male respondents ended up in even worse shelter settings than at the time of the initial interviews. Marita's situation could not get any worse as she continued living on the streets battling her heroin addiction.

Can't get it together: Two unsuccessful younger respondents

Two younger respondents, Marita and Jens, continued being unable to solve some of their major social problems, drug addiction and social isolation respectively and thus remained unsuccessful. Marita continued her heroin addiction and lived primarily on the

[15] Leo's ultimate residential status remained unknown since he had moved to Hamburg in December 1998 where he planned to temporarily live with a distant relative. I lost contact with him once he moved.

streets. Since she typically works at night prostituting herself between 9pm and 4am at Berlin's notorious Kurfürstenstrasse, she did not need a night-time accommodation. She typically sleeps during the day in a variety of places including public spaces, service facilities for heroin addicts, cafes, or public transportation facilities. In the past, she has also squatted or shared flats with other heroin addicts. Asked whether she ever used homeless shelters or other publicly sponsored youth housing facilities before, she replied that she has done so only while in drug rehabilitation yet had difficulties adjusting and abiding by the strict rules irrespective of the quality of the shelter. She attributes her failure to stay in such settings for extended periods of time to her negative experiences in foster homes, jails, and drug rehabilitation programs causing her to be highly suspicious of any type of institutional accommodation. By the end of the investigation, however, she was hopeful that a new romance might bring improvements and residential stability. She told me that she found a new boyfriend who is supporting her financially which relieves some of the pressure of having to prostitute herself daily. Given, however, that her new boyfriend is still married albeit talking about divorce, her residential situation remains unstable. She hopes, however, that once his divorce comes through they can move together and that with a new residential and social stability she would be able to overcome her addiction. Whether this is realistic remains to be seen.

Jens also remained unsuccessful despite the fact that he had continued to diligently look for housing and work ever since he moved to Berlin relying primarily on conventional strategies. In the meantime he had primarily negative experiences in a variety of settings including squatter communities, the street, and low-quality shelter facilities. In all of these places he had, due to his lack of social skills, problems fitting in and always moved to find a better, more accepting place. He finally found such a place when moving into the Wohnheim Trachenbergring where he established contact to younger residents who at least tolerated him. Yet, he still longed for a regular home and continued to look. In September 1998, a possibility emerged and he made arrangements with an acquaintance with whom he intended to share a flat. After having moved out of the Wohnheim, however, his acquaintance backed out and Jens returned to his respective case worker at the welfare office who had issued him a space in a commercial low-quality shelter in Eastern Berlin. There his situation got worse and his old problems with being unable to make friends re-emerged. He continued living lonely and bored in shelters numbing his pain with fairly regular alcohol and cannabis consumption.

Down and Out: Unsuccessful Older Respondents

Schlöter, Dan, and Paule's experiences mirror those of unsuccessful older homeless people with regular life courses in a lot of ways since all three were adversely affected by homelessness and living in shelters. Although these three men did not experience the same negative consequences to local social networks since they either did not have them (i.e. migrants Schlöter and Dan) or were already fairly isolated (Paule), they suffered in that their substance abuse problems increased, their health failed, their outlook on life and life prospects diminished, and their view of the welfare system became increasingly negative. All three clearly viewed living in a shelter – irrespective of its quality - as the low-point in their lives finding it humiliating having to abide by house rules and having to live in proximity to people they viewed as inferior to them. As a result, they would rather isolate themselves from the other shelter residents although Schlöter and Paule occasionally sought contact for the mere pragmatic purpose of getting alcohol should their resources run out. To them, the nature of their social contacts to other homeless was merely pragmatic and solely related to alcohol consumption:

> „This is a compulsive group environment here, you simply need to get along with people, you understand? Out of necessity you go over to one [fellow resident], because, as I said before, people drink" (Schlöter, 56, Interview on 26.02.98 in Wohnheim Trachenbergring).

Although all three would make use of the social workers in the shelter and appreciated their effort, they still felt that the assistance they received was not enough to ensure entry or re-entry into the formal economy and into residential stability. Moreover, all three made a conscious effort to avoid service facilities for the homeless because of negative experiences and fear of even further social decline:

> „I tell you honestly, I stay away [from soup kitchens]. I'd rather not eat because I can't stand the misery. I once looked into one of these things, eh, that was the Warmer Otto in Moabit, and I saw those guys and I said to myself, no way! So I left though I didn't get anything to eat, not even coffee. Um, I simply can't put myself in that situation, because once you land there it's a short step till' you die in a dumpster. I've had it" (Schlöter, 56, Interview on 26.02.98).

Their humiliating and degrading experiences in the shelter would then re-enforce their anxiety about their futures causing them to continue to resort to alcohol. Schlöter eventually realized, however, that his alcohol problems were self-defeating and decided to undergo treatment relying on the Wohnheim Trachenbergring's social workers to find him a therapy slot in Brandenburg where he successfully underwent treatment for three weeks. Upon release, he contacted his respective welfare office to receive help in finding housing, yet his case worker referred him to a commercial shelter in western Berlin. There

he began drinking again within two weeks which he attributed to the close proximity to other drinkers and the temptation of having alcohol readily available. Having been released into the same milieu that had aggravated his longstanding alcohol problems to begin with was clearly a disservice that had just wasted positive intervention and a costly therapy. When I met him again later that year, he was clearly depressed and angry with his case worker:

> "...and I had specifically asked him [case worker], actually I begged him, not to send me to a shelter. He just said that he can't get me anything else right now and that I should just wait until he finds me something else. So I waited. I'm actually surprised that I lasted that long, Jürgen! I had to share this room with three guys and they drank every night. And then one night, I was really down, I just couldn't resist. Three weeks of therapy and two weeks sobriety for nothing just because these idiots [welfare administration] actually believe they do you a favour by putting you into a fucking shelter! [Sighs] I tell you, I don't know how much longer I can take it" (Schlöter, 56, informal conversation on 16.09.98).

A turn for the worse was also noticeable in the two other older shelter residents Paule and Dan. Dan's experience as homeless person in Berlin abruptly ended in August 1998 when he was, against his will, deported and sent back to the U.S. due to overstaying his visa. He sent me a letter indicating that he was living in a homeless shelter in Pittsburgh writing that "This is a terrible place. The Wohnheim in Berlin was luxurious by comparison" (Dan, letter from 23.11.1998). After some initial bureaucratic hurdles he began receiving welfare (General Assistance) and was hoping to find work as a substitute teacher. Since he lacked a teaching accreditation, he was taking a course at a local community college. Although this indicates that he continues hope and takes active steps toward recovery, he remained depressed, dissatisfied, and bitter.

Paule, a mentally ill man, did not receive the necessary assistance to fulfil his goal to re-establish residential stability. Not only did Paule remain homeless and on welfare, but after a bout with Tuberculosis and four week quarantine he had to move into a much less favourable commercial shelter. His personal situation further deteriorated after his mother and only remaining connection to the mainstream died and he drank more heavily than ever before. He clearly felt betrayed by life, God, and society. He was disappointed and disillusioned by his lack of success despite the fact that he had at all times complied with the regulations and precisely done what was asked of him:

> "I have always done what they wanted [starts crying] and where am I now? Here" (Paule, interview on 22.02.98).

Paule became truly entrenched in the welfare system, resigned and frustrated, and in utter despair. His hopes to find work again and establish some of the stability of the

past diminished, reinforcing a defeatist and pessimistic attitude. The last time I saw him, he was devastated and was seriously contemplating suicide to end his misery. He had already attempted suicide once and would not be the first homeless person to attempt to end his life.[16]

Unsuccessful Exit, yet Stabilization: Four Younger Respondents

The lack of success in finding housing and jobs did not necessarily result in such terrible personal consequences. Four respondents including three comparably younger migrants (Martin, Matze, and Tobias), as well as one younger person with a deviant life course (FTW) remained unsuccessful in finding regular homes, yet such lack of success had less severe personal consequences as all four men were relatively content with their present situation which included using homeless shelters and occasionally other homeless services for pragmatic and as such perceived temporary reasons.

Pragmatic Adaptation to Shelters: Tobias and FTW

Residential re-integration was a rather secondary goal for Tobias, a migrant, and FTW, a young man with a deviant life course as both viewed their stays at shelters and the use of welfare as opportune means to bridge time.[17] Tobias, who continued hoping to be able to return to South Africa yet was waiting for a visa, used shelters, public cash assistance, public health care, and specific homeless services (i.e. soup kitchens and day centres) in a rather pragmatic fashion and viewed welfare as an expedient way of dealing with his long standing health problems and for saving money for a plane ticket. After all, he did not consider himself "homeless" since he had a "home" and a boyfriend in South Africa. After a negative experience in a low-quality shelter and homophobic attitudes by roommates caused him to seek admission into a better facility, he was referred to the Wohnheim Trachenbergring where he stayed for the remainder of the investigation.[18] He stated that he was very satisfied there and that the single room and the basic amenities he

[16] Throughout the year of my investigation, one resident in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring who I did not know committed suicide and another one, Barney a close friend of Det, Hanno, and Helmut, died prematurely and unexpectedly of liver failure at the age of 49. These two deaths of popular residents sent shockwaves through the shelter as many of the older respondents received a reminder of their own mortality. For weeks following these deaths there was a particularly depressed mood among the shelter residents.

[17] Leo's experience was similar in that he, too, pragmatically adapted to the shelter and service system in anticipation of moving to another city. Although I do not know what finally happened to him, his experiences with Berlin's service system were quite similar to Tobias and FTW's.

[18] Tobias was initially referred to a commercial shelter in East Berlin where he had to share a room and rather immediately had confrontations with his roommates once they found out that he was gay. He stated that he had encountered a good deal of homophobia among homeless people in various facilities but that he did not care: "First of all, I can defend myself. Second, I'm not here to make friends" (Tobias, Interview on 09.03.98).

was provided with was actually all he needed. The fact that social workers at the facility were, at the time, working toward finding him a slot in an assisted living facility for homeless people with HIV/Aids was a welcome but ultimately in his view not even necessary step.

FTW, finally, had a similar position as Tobias in that he too viewed his stay at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring as a very opportune and practical housing solution that actually caused him to not even look for regular housing despite his long-term goal to eventually find housing:

> "I don't need more, really. If it were up to me, I could stay here, at least for now, I don't care. I don't have to pay rent. OK, there's a curfew but if I miss it I just stay up all night. Hey, done that all my life, you know" (FTW, interview on 7.03.1998)?

In his case the fact helped that he never really had a "regular" home and therefore lacked a point of comparison. For him the Wohnheim Trachenbergring was in many ways a better accommodation than anything he had experienced over the years including jail, foster homes, drug houses, and the streets.

Personal Improvement despite Shelter Life: Two Street-newspaper Vendors

The other two respondents who did not mind using shelters and were not negatively affected by shelter life were two of the migrant street-newspaper vendors. Matze and Marty deliberately continued using emergency shelters during the winter and sleeping rough over the summer. Both did, however, avoid large emergency shelters or low-quality transitional housing projects which were places in which both had had very negative experiences in the past. Rather, Marty stayed at the emergency shelter provided by the street newspaper where he knew his fellow residents and thus experienced at least some comfort and security, whereas Matze established a regular shelter routine alternating between different emergency shelters provided by church congregations on a rotational basis during the winter months. As someone without alcohol problems he did not mind the strict entry requirements.[19] He also developed new social networks to both fellow shelter residents following similar routines and congregation members volunteering at the shelters. During the summer months, he preferred sleeping rough in parks capitalizing on

[19] Since there is a documented lack of emergency shelters during the winter (900 beds total in 1998), a number of church congregations operate so called "night cafes" (Nachtcafes) by opening church facilities to homeless people in the winter and, in addition, often dispersing food to patrons. In contrast to the large communal and voluntary emergency shelters, most night cafes have stringent entry requirements denying entry to people who are intoxicated, extremely disheveled, or have animals with them.

his past experiences alternating between regular sleeping spots, and using a bicycle for transportation.

While pursuing such emergency shelter options, both men continued collecting welfare and selling newspapers. As I have detailed in the previous chapter, they were very satisfied with this arrangement. Although both men continued expressing their desire to eventually find housing and to use the combined income of sales and welfare to finance such housing, they felt a lesser sense of urgency in getting this goal accomplished quickly than other homeless people, especially older ones who have had residential stability in the past. More important to these respondents was to continue their advocacy in the context of the newspaper agency which made their residential and material personal goals rather secondary.

Successful Exit Unrelated to Welfare: Two Newspaper Vendors

The other two street-newspaper vendors, Harri and Sioux, were even more successful than their two previously discussed colleagues in that they found satisfactory housing solutions on their own terms and without assistance.

Harri, the only migrant to obtain employment, had found a rather unusual and alternative housing solution which marked a significant departure from years living a life as a street homeless. Before coming to Berlin he had spent many years on the streets in cities of the Ruhr conurbation deliberately avoiding shelters and homeless service facilities. He explained:

> „I've always been avoiding the shelters. My goodness, there you are really going down. Because the guys there are always drunk and besides, they incapacitate you in the shelters" (Harri, 48, Interview on 12.03.98).

For the first few months in Berlin, Harri would continue his established practice of sleeping rough and as an experienced street homeless, had no difficulties adjusting to life on the streets in Berlin. During this time, he met members of informal homeless trailer communities and decided to pursue this option.[20] Through the combined income he generated by collecting welfare and selling street-newspapers, he was able to purchase a defunct construction trailer in 1997 for DM 100 (£42) which he moved to an already established trailer community in Berlin-Karow in Berlin's eastern suburbs. Over time, he

[20] Trailer Communities (Ger. Wagenburgen) are informal, alternative, and self-governing encampments consisting of defunct construction trailers, large tents, and other make-shift accommodations. Before Unification, numerous trailer communities were formed in the western no-mans land along the Berlin Wall. After Unification and with immediate appreciation of real estate values most encampments were either dismantled or were forced to move, yet failed to relocate since fierce community resistance prevented relocations. By 1998, only four trailer communities remained. For discussion, see Sambale and Veith (1998).

fixed up his trailer and converted it into a functional space linked to all the basic utilities (water, electricity, telephone). He stated that he is very satisfied with this living arrangement and values the sense of community the homeless residents of the community have created. He clearly enjoys his alternative life-style, appreciates being mobile and not having to pay for rent and prefers this to regular rental housing.

Sioux also found housing yet in a much more conventional sense. Sioux initially had also used the emergency shelter in the editorial office of the Strassenfeger, yet moved out once he started an intimate relationship with Monika and proceeded to live in her apartment in an assisted living facility for visually impaired people for a year (see next section). After they ended their relationship in the fall of 1998, he moved into a regular one-bedroom apartment in Berlin-Kreuzberg which he found through a newspaper advertisement. He was the only respondent in the entire sample who found housing in such a manner. To do so, he used savings generated through the combined income of sales and welfare for a security deposit. The fact that he had come up with his own down-payment as well as his demeanour and social skills helped in negotiating with the new landlord and to avert an immediately unfavourable impression as homeless welfare recipient. Moreover, since he is comparatively more successful than his colleagues in generating regular and consistent income through sales, he is also able to afford rent during the summer months when sales generally are lower.

Ultimately, street-newspaper vendors – irrespective of whether or not they secured housing – fared much better than other respondents within the broader category of homeless people with "irregular" life courses. Not only did selling provide them with much needed income support (see chapter 4), it also created a sense of community among some of the vendors who received a sense of purpose from their activity as messengers for the homeless. Moreover, the possibility to advance within the organization, as Harri and Sioux's careers in the agency demonstrate, give other vendors a goal and a chance to overcome the limited time-frame of homeless short-term survival. All this clearly indicates that homeless street-newspaper vendor's goals have shifted from mainstream re-integration toward alternative life-styles as homeless activists which provided them with new meaning and purpose in life, new and valued social networks to other vendors and activists, and thereby new social and economic stability.

Successful Exit in the Context of Welfare: Four Respondents

In addition to the two vendors, four respondents were successful in finding case appropriate housing yet owed this success primarily to welfare state intervention. Among them were three homeless people with disabilities of whom two women (Monika and Andrea) gained access to case-appropriate assisted housing facilities while one person (Biker), gained access to regular rental housing. The fourth successful respondent was Oliver, a younger man with a deviant life course who also obtained regular rental housing. In all of these cases social work intervention played a crucial role. It did, however, take significant amounts of time – in Biker and Monika's cases over nine years each – to get this stabilization and normalization of the life course accomplished and life under the condition of nearly unassisted homelessness, took a toll on the respondents both physically and psychologically.

Case Appropriate Housing after Long-Term Neglect: Monika and Andrea

The two homeless women with life-long disabilities, Monika and Andrea, gained access to living facilities that accommodate their specific health needs. Monika began living in an assisted living facility for visually impaired people and Andrea moved into a supervised group home for mentally disabled adult women. In both cases, however, it took an extended period of time to set a rapid, concerted, and ultimately successful public intervention into motion. Monika experienced long-term exclusion and deprivation when living quasi homeless in brothels of Hamburg's red-light district for nine years whereas Andrea had lived on the streets of Berlin for almost one year virtually undetected by the welfare state (see chapter 4 for discussion). The fact that both women remained unassisted for such long periods of time is clear evidence of failed outreach. Once they established contact to the local welfare state in Berlin, in both cases upon intervention by a third person, assistance was immediately granted and the residential problems were resolved quickly and unbureacratically. In both cases the different administrative entities including social welfare, public housing, health, and voluntary organizations cooperated well to ensure unproblematic access to assisted housing facilities.

In Andrea's case, another homeless woman approached her, took her to a day centre in which social workers immediately took action referring her to Tiergarten's social welfare agency where a case worker arranged for income support and appropriate housing. Moreover, after some legal difficulties, the case worker was able to assign a

social worker guardianship to manage Andrea's inheritance.[21] In the end, the local welfare state had, after a one-year delay, positively intervened to ensure Andrea's financial security and economic well being and providing her with residential stability. She is now living in a supervised group home for six mentally disabled adult women in Berlin-Charlottenburg and stated that she is very satisfied and happy with the new arrangements. For Andrea, who was more or less entirely sheltered by her mother, living with other people and being able to establish social contacts on her own terms offered new and exciting possibilities.

In Monika's case, a referral by a friend ultimately led to constructive welfare state intervention and economic and social stability. After she had left Hamburg and returned to Berlin, she contacted a former teacher of hers who took her in, persuaded her to contact the local welfare office where a case worker immediately took action granting her income assistance and a referral to a state-of-the-art assisted housing facility for visually impaired people in Berlin-Steglitz.[22] At the project, she was able to get to know people and to establish regular routines which included her activities as a volunteer in a number of grassroots service organizations, including the Strassenfeger, where she provides help and advice to homeless women with traumatic experiences. At a vendor assembly meeting, Monika eventually met Sioux and both started a relationship which was highly valued by both since they finally found love and consolation after having had traumatizing and negative experiences in relationships in the past. Although the relationship ended after one year which was a big disappointment for Monika, it still meant a lot to her and for her emotional recovery. After her nine-year odyssey of violence, exploitation, and homelessness, she finally found social and economic stability, meaning in her life, and was beginning to trust people again.

Regular Rental Housing after Social Work Intervention: Oliver and Biker

Social work intervention was also important in the case of Biker who is physically disabled and Oliver who had a deviant life course in that social workers assisted these two men in finding and maintaining regular rental housing. Specifically, Biker relied on social workers in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring to assist him in finding a one-bedroom

[21] Her case worker found out that here mother had actually made arrangements in her will and had, over the years, accumulated savings. Unfortunately, however, Andrea was, at the time of her mother's unexpected passing unaware of any of these arrangements and the person who was supposed to assume guardianship over Andrea in case of her mother's death had never been notified.

[22] Monika deliberately did not contact her parents who still live in Berlin just a few blocks from where she lives now. She does not wish to ever see them again and believes that her parents had made no attempt to find her once she disappeared ten years ago.

apartment in Berlin Kreuzberg, his first steady accommodation in nine years. Biker had primarily lived in cars and mini-vans for nine years after he had very negative experiences in communal shelters immediately upon release from the hospital following his severe motorcycle accident in 1989. He explained:

> "Sure. I would call these shelters "lice pensions" in the literal sense of the word. A car, even the street is more comfortable than that. I can understand that nobody wants to stay there" (Biker, interview on 09.03.98).

Once his last car was impounded due to not having paid parking violation tickets over the years, he had no choice but to seek readmission into a shelter, this time the Wohnheim Trachenbergring. There he found more favourable conditions than he expected and began developing a close relationship with the social workers. The social workers, in turn, assisted him in finding housing, undergoing contract negotiations, securing a publicly financed down-payment, and accessing housing subsidies which in combination with his welfare income allow him to maintain rental payments. Unlike the two women, however, Biker remained relatively isolated maintaining contact to only two of his previous neighbours in the shelter, FTW and Sachse. His family and severe financial problems remained unresolved and thus two of his long-term goals, establishing contact to his daughter and opening a tattoo-studio remained unfulfilled.

Oliver, a young man with a deviant life course, was ultimately also successful in finding regular rental housing. Like Biker, he relied on the help by social workers at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring who managed to help him obtain access to a one-bedroom apartment in Berlin-Lichtenberg. Considering that his new apartment was in relative proximity to his former neighbourhood, Oliver was able to revive contact to some of his siblings and former friends. He told me that his situation had improved and that he continues to look for job-training opportunities now in a much more coordinated and systematic fashion (i.e. by using the internet) considering that he has a stable home-base again.[23] Although he still remained somewhat mistrustful of the welfare system, he acknowledged that for once he had a good and helpful experience.

[23] Prior to living at the Wohnheim Trachenbergring, Oliver had lived in two other low-level shelter facilities and had, analogous to most other respondents, extremely negative experiences there.

5.4 The Impact of Public Policy on Finding Housing: A Summary

The life course experiences of the twenty-eight respondents have clearly demonstrated that more people were successful in finding housing than in finding employment as table 5.1 indicates. It is noticeable, however, that twelve out of the fifteen people who succeeded in finding suitable housing were people with more regular life courses or people with disabilities who once accessing the welfare state received help rather quickly. Conversely, only one out of seven migrants whose housing status was known found housing. Moreover, four respondents ended up in comparably worse shelter arrangements. Except for younger people and street-newspaper vendors who were content with their situation and saw shelter life as an opportune interim solution, all other unsuccessful respondents, especially older ones, reported that their personal situation got worse over the course of the year.

Table 5.1 **Housing Status by Life course Experience One Year after the Initial Interviews** (duration of homelessness at exit or end of investigation in months)

Housing Status	**Older Homeless "Regular" Life Courses** (N=8)	**Younger Homeless "Regular" Life Courses** (N=4)	**Homeless with "Transient" Life Courses** (N=8)	**Homeless with "Deviant" Life Courses** (N=4)	**Homeless People with Disabilities** (N=4)	**TOTAL**
Successful Cases (exit primarily due to welfare state intervention in **boldface**)						**15**
Regular Rental Housing	**Kalle** (32) **Hans** (276) **Maria** (5)	Radek (12)		**Oliver** (18) Sioux (12)	**Biker** (118)	7
Shared Housing	Sachse (32)	Bob (17) Markus (12)				3
Assisted Housing Facility	**Hanno** (42)				**Monika** (108) **Andrea** (12)	3
Other		Mario (10)	**Harri** (120)			2
Unsuccessful Cases (serious defeatism and substance abuse problems in **boldface**)						**12**
Wohnheim Trachenberg-ring (same shelter)	**Det** (>32) **Helmut** (>30)		Tobias (>11)	**FTW** (>36)		4
Emergency Shelters	Bernie (>16)		Martin (>30) Matze (>132)			3
Low-Level Shelter (worse shelter)			**Jens** (>36) **Schlöter** (>36) **Dan** (>12)		**Paule** (>48)	4
Street				**Marita**(>60)		1
Unknown			Leo (>31)			1

These results demonstrate that welfare state intervention had quite mixed results in terms of respondent's residential status. For one, the evidence clearly shows that case-

based social work intervention has yet again played a crucial role in ensuring people's success. Nine of the fifteen successful respondents (indicated in boldface in the table) received substantial assistance by social workers. The remaining seven primarily younger respondents relied on self-initiative and often social networks to find housing opportunities. Moreover two of the successful as well as two of the unsuccessful yet not necessarily negatively affected respondents were street-newspaper vendors which demonstrates that goals can change and that there are viable alternatives to mainstream reintegration based on activism.

Another positive effect of welfare provision on housing outcomes in Berlin was that those people who managed to exit homelessness all remained domiciled throughout the remainder of the investigation. I am also happy to report that at least six respondents with whom I maintained contact well beyond the examination period remained stably housed (Harri, Sioux, Biker, Kalle, Radek, and Monika). The fact that the respondents who exited continued to receive monthly welfare payments which include costs for basic utilities and heating, qualified for rental assistance (Wohngeld), and received funds for security deposits is a testimony that Germany's more comprehensive welfare system has stabilizing long-term effects.

While welfare state intervention undeniably had positive consequences, it also had negative effects which help to explain the lack of success among twelve respondents, and at the same time, the long durations of homelessness among most respondents. A primary institutional problem that either delayed or foreclosed exit was associated with the extent and quality of information about, and referrals to, housing opportunities. Unlike the case of job referrals, where an entire bureaucratic and legal entity is involved with (re)employment, no one such centralized housing agency exists. Rather, homeless people are expected to either use conventional formal search strategies (i.e. housing ads in newspapers) or to seek specific homeless services that provide referrals. Given the deterring first experiences people had with homeless service facilities (i.e. low level shelters) many homeless did not even consider seeking assistance and rather relied on conventional approaches or social networks. Yet, except for younger homeless people with regular life courses who found housing by sharing flats with acquaintances, social networks played an unimportant role as most respondents saw their social networks diminish over time. Conventional formal approaches, the second option, were similarly futile as the respondents often experienced rejection and discrimination resulting in the fact that only one respondent, Sioux, found housing in that manner. By the time people

sought the alternative of establishing contact to social workers in homeless service facilities, considerable time had elapsed. In this way the much more promising way of case-based social work intervention was provided in much delayed fashion and after considerable personal damage had occurred.

The reason why such personal damage occurred was in large part related to the quality of shelter provision. The majority of Berlin's shelters in 1998 were communal or commercial low-level shelters which clearly had negative effects on homeless people's exit potentials, particularly older respondents with regular life courses and other people who used to have some sort of residential stability in the past and thus a point of reference. First, life in shelters had a detrimental effect on indigenous homeless people's social networks to people outside homelessness since the dismal living conditions in conjunction with shame often re-enforced the desire among indigenous homeless people with pre-existing social networks to self-isolate. Second, the proximity to other people with defeatist attitudes and alcohol problems increased people's own consumption of alcohol. Finally, shelter facilities had a deterring effect on many homeless people who in shock about the conditions they found often stayed away from shelters and other homeless service facilities. This in turn limited the chances for positive welfare intervention, caused people to focus on short-term survival, and, as a result, prolonged homelessness.

At the same time, however, it also became apparent that life in shelters does not have to have negative consequences as it can be a welcome and opportune housing solution if life goals change (i.e. street-newspaper vendors), if people anticipate a life-changing event and therefore "subjectively bridge" their time (i.e. a planned move, career change), or if they never had a point of comparison and thus found a shelter setting rather agreeable. Such a sense of content, however, was only achieved in mid- or high-level shelters (i.e. Wohnheim Trachenbergring; domestic violence shelter), not low-level shelters. None of the respondents who ever stayed in low-quality municipal or commercial shelters had anything positive to report of such places and nobody was able to exit homelessness from there.

Still, the fact that some respondents were relatively content with their situation should not distract form the fact that public policy and especially sub-standard shelter provision had more often negative than positive effects on homeless people's exit potentials. Successful public policy intervention with regards to finding housing and exiting homelessness occurs all too often too late and substandard service and particularly shelter provision in the meantime had made matters worse by negatively affecting

homeless people's immediate life circumstances and thus preparedness for exit. How such problems are experienced and what consequences such policy failures have on homeless people and their exit chances, however, largely depended on homeless people's life courses and thereby particularly the extent to which people used to be integrated into the societal mainstream.

Equipped with this new understanding of how homeless people's life courses, their distinct social problems, and public policy intervention intersect in Berlin, we are now prepared to re-enter the comparative discussion and answer the questions as to why a more comprehensive welfare system such as that of Germany is not necessarily performing better than a less generous, more restrictive system as that of the United States.

Chapter 6

The Liberal Welfare Regime: Exit from Homelessness in Los Angeles

6.1 Overview

Before being able to fully answer the overarching question as to why the characteristics of homelessness are similar in both Germany and the United States and why the duration of homelessness is even longer in Germany, it is necessary to get a more in-depth understanding as to why and how homeless people in Los Angeles exit homelessness. In this chapter, I resume the discussion of the U.S. response to homelessness within the broader framework of welfare regime theory that I introduced in chapter one by focussing on homelessness and homeless policy in Los Angeles. I first develop a preliminary analytical framework that places the existing empirical findings on homeless people's individual attempts to overcome homelessness in Los Angeles within the principal tenets of welfare regime theory including the market, state, and family. In so doing, I demonstrate that welfare regime theory provides a useful analytical framework for understanding that the vast majority of homeless people in Los Angeles exit homelessness relatively quickly, typically within a year of the onset of homelessness, due to relatively easy market access, yet they most often fail to achieve lasting exit from homelessness largely due to serious inadequacies in the provision of public services to homeless people. This analysis also illustrates that while the underlying quantitative methodologies used to examine exit from homelessness in Los Angeles have proven immensely useful in delineating the statistical significance of specific facilitators of exit, they do not necessarily help us to fully comprehend how such factors interact to explain who exits and who does not. As such, it suggests that an analysis based on qualitative data is needed to more clearly explain who succeeds and who fails to exit as well as the effects of welfare state interventions on outcomes.

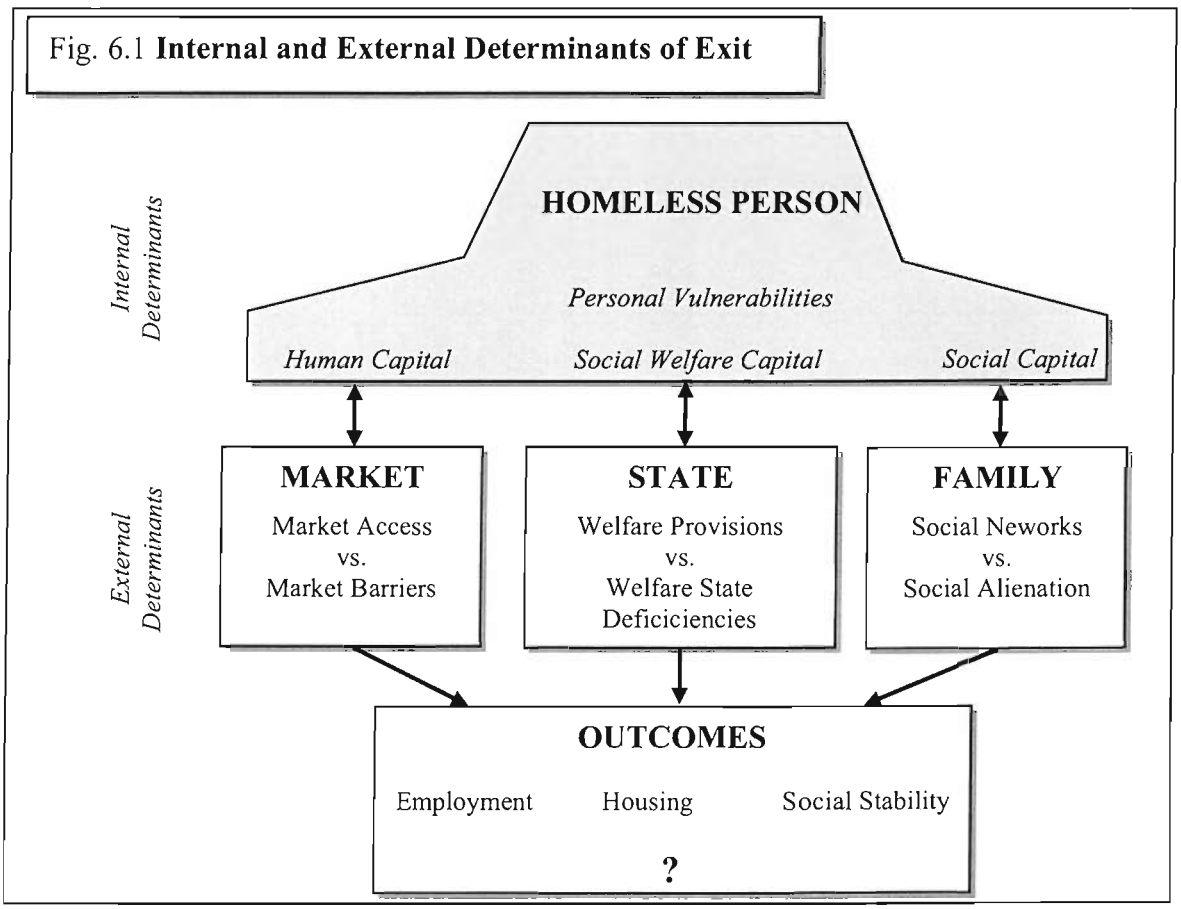
6.2 Exit from Homelessness in Los Angeles in the Context of Welfare Regime Theory

To demonstrate how welfare regime theory provides a useful analytical tool to understand exit from homelessness in the Untied States, I begin by providing a theoretical framework that combines existing findings on exit from homelessness in Los Angeles with welfare

regime theory. In order to do so, I primarily rely on existing data on exit from homelessness in Los Angeles that is derived from a variety of sources, including panel studies such as the Course of Homelessness Study (CHS, Koegel, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Sullivan et al., 2000), longitudinal labour market analyses (Burns et al., 2003, 2004), cross sectional studies (Hussick and Wolch, 1989), government data (Burns et al., 2003), and evaluations (De Verteuil et al., 2002; Shelter Partnership, 2001).[1]

According to these studies, homeless people's exit chances are primarily associated with three principal personal dimensions that intersect with the broader structural and institutional context in which homeless people operate (see figure 6.1).

Fig. 6.1 **Internal and External Determinants of Exit**



Homeless people's exit chances consequently depend on both internal (individual homeless people) and external (institutional and structural context in which homeless people operate) factors that, over time, may or may not lead to exit from homelessness in terms of finding regular housing, employment, and thus achieving social stability. The internal determinants depict individual homeless people's distinct characteristics as they

[1] These findings on exit from homelessness in Los Angeles have been complemented by particularly insightful panel data from the Study of Alameda County Homeless (STAR) which includes Oakland and other cities in the eastern California Bay Area which revealed very similar results (Wright, 1997; Zlotnick et al., 1999; Wong et al., 1998).

may either help or hinder exit based on Wright's (1996) typology of exit determinants including personal vulnerabilities (i.e. gender, race, age, or social problems including substance abuse, mental illness), human capital (i.e. education, job skills and experience), social capital (i.e. existence of social networks, extent of social integration), and social welfare capital (i.e. awareness of, access to, and use of welfare services). The extent to which such personal factors matter in facilitating exit, in turn, depends on the institutional and structural context in which homeless people operate, including local housing and labour markets, homeless service provision, and the local social networks homeless people may or may not possess (Wright, 1996). Although these specific internal and external determinants have not been explicitly linked to welfare regime theory in existing studies, they broadly correspond with the three dimensions of a welfare regime that are commonly used in comparative social policy analyses including the market, the state, and the family (for an explanation, see chapter 1.2).

The common finding of U.S. studies investigating exit from homelessness is that homeless people in the U.S. rely primarily on the market, and given the U.S.' relatively unregulated local economies, typically find employment and housing relatively quickly depending on the human and social capital that they possess. According to the Course of Homelessness Study, 72 percent of the 520 respondents in the longitudinal sample exited homelessness within 14 months and remained stably housed for at least 30 days (Koegel, 2004: 16).[2] At the same time, however, few of the respondents remained housed as 72 percent of the initially successful respondents became homeless again after having stayed housed for at least 30 days, and 50 percent became homeless again at least twice within the 14 months following the initial interviews (Koegel, 2004: 17; Wong, 1997: 63). This finding clearly supports the notion that few homeless in Los Angeles achieve lasting exit from homelessness and therefore remain in extreme poverty often cycling in and out of homelessness. To find out why so few people achieved lasting exit from homelessness, I will now review existing research in the context of personal vulnerabilities and the three overarching parameters of welfare regime theory – the family, market and state.

Personal Vulnerabilities, Problems, and Choices

One of the most prevalent assumptions as to why homeless people face difficulties with exit from homelessness pertains to personal vulnerabilities, problems, and choices that

[2] The exit rates reported in the STAR study were similar as 70 percent of the 564 respondents had exited homelessness within the 12 months following the initial interviews (Wright, 1995: 154-156). The average duration of homelessness at exit was 178 days (ibid, 109).

often have contributed to the onset of homelessness in the first place including adverse childhood experiences, socialization deficits, social isolation, poor health, substance abuse, and mental health problems (Daly, 1996; Katz, 1989; Link et al., 1996; Dear, 1992; von Mahs, 1996). Conversely, the lack of such personal problems is frequently assumed to be helpful in facilitating rapid exit.

The focus on personal factors and behavioural explanations has its origins in the broader philosophical and political attitude toward poverty which is often perceived as a matter of personal failure and deviant behaviours especially with regards to able-bodied males who are expected to be self-reliant and working (Murray, 1982; Mead, 1992, 2001 and 2004, for critique, see Clark and Piven, 2001; Piven and Cloward, 1996). Although some of the individual and behavioural factors have been confirmed to be statistically significant barriers to exit in longitudinal studies from L.A. (i.e. advanced age, poor health, adverse childhood experiences, previous incarceration), other factors, perhaps surprisingly, are not statistically significant barriers to exit (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 296; Wolf et al., 2001; Wright, 1996). In contrast to public perception, highly stigmatized substance abusers and mentally ill homeless people in L.A. tend to exit faster than people without such problems. This is in largely because they more often build pragmatic social networks to other people with similar problems and/or because as specifically designated "target populations" they are able to obtain more specialized services provided by non-profit organizations than other subpopulations among the homeless as I describe later in this chapter (Sullivan et al., 2000; Wolf et al., 2001; Wright et al., 1998; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999).

While substance abuse and mental illness are not necessarily related to difficulties with exit, all longitudinal studies concur that other personal factors including the actual course and duration of homelessness, previous experiences with homelessness and poverty, adverse life experiences (i.e. foster care, victimization), social isolation, or the lack of self efficacy constitute statistically significant barriers to exit (Burns et al., 2003; Koegel, 2994; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 2001; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999). In other words, the longer people remain homeless, the more isolated they are and the more problematic their lives have been, the more likely it is that they will develop social problems and the more difficult it is to overcome homelessness and to maintain stable housing (Wright, 1996).

The Family: The Effect of Social Networks on Exit

Within the broader discussion of personal vulnerabilities, the loss of social networks to non-homeless people and social isolation – factors that can be associated with the welfare regime dimension "family" – have surfaced as a particularly serious barrier to exit chances. This is because shared accommodations and other lodgings accessed through local social networks (i.e. family, friends, acquaintances) are the most frequent exit destination of people who manage to overcome homelessness (Conley, 1996; Hussick and Wolch, 1990: 22; Wolf, 1999: 393; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999). Merryl Edelstein, a Senior Planner for the City of Los Angeles, has a similar assessment. She states,

> "The increasing social isolation that homeless individuals experience is, in my opinion, the most important obstacle to overcoming homelessness. This is clearly a problem where public intervention simply cannot do much" (interview on 18.09.97 in Los Angeles).

Therefore, the demise of such networks to family and friends over time is proven to decrease exit chances. New social networks to homeless peers, which frequently replace old non-homeless networks, may be important for immediate survival such as sharing resources and information, yet they are less important for exit from homelessness as peer networks rarely provide housing, long-term financial support, and economic stability (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 297; Snow and Anderson, 1993).[3]

While success or failure at maintaining social networks is important for homeless people's ability to share housing, social networks are less important as a source of the financial support necessary to access and maintain housing – while 32.7 percent of the CHS respondents had received financial support from family and friends in the month prior to the examination, such support was rather negligible in real financial terms averaging only $80 per month (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 299-300). Rather, financial support is secured primarily through earned income and institutional resources (Burns et al., 2003; Schoeni and Baumohl, 1998; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999).

The Market: Easy Access, Persistent Poverty, Recurring Homelessness

Since the market plays the single most important role in ensuring citizen's welfare in a liberal welfare regime, it is important to find out how fast and to what extent single homeless people find employment in Los Angeles and whether or not such income is

[3] And even if peer networks result in shared housing arrangements, as with the case of substance abusers, such shared housing is, considering the marginality of homeless people in absence of stable income, rarely stable and lasting (Bennett, 1999; Conley, 1996; Epel et al., 1999; Rowe and Wolch, 1990; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 297; Snow and Anderson, 1993).

sufficient to ensure economic stability. Furthermore, considering that regular employment and thus self initiative are assumed to be keys to overcoming homelessness in particular and poverty in general, it is important to determine whether and to what extent formal employment facilitates exit.[4]

Existing analyses suggest that access to regular work is, indeed, a main facilitator of exit in Los Angeles. There is evidence from longitudinal studies that three quarters of homeless people who exited homelessness did so primarily by generating income through regular work (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 299-300; Wright, 1996: 97). According to a survey among homeless job seekers, forty percent managed to find jobs within one year and used such income to pay for housing (Burns et al., 2003: 37-39; Einbinder et al., 1995: 2). The primary reason for such rapid exit is access to low-income work which is readily available in L.A.'s comparatively unregulated labour market (Burns et al., 2003: 50; Schoeni and Baumohl, 1998; Tepper and Simpson, 2003). Yet, advociates and research studies alike point out that low income work does not result in economic security. As Bob Erlenbush, Director of LA Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness, states:

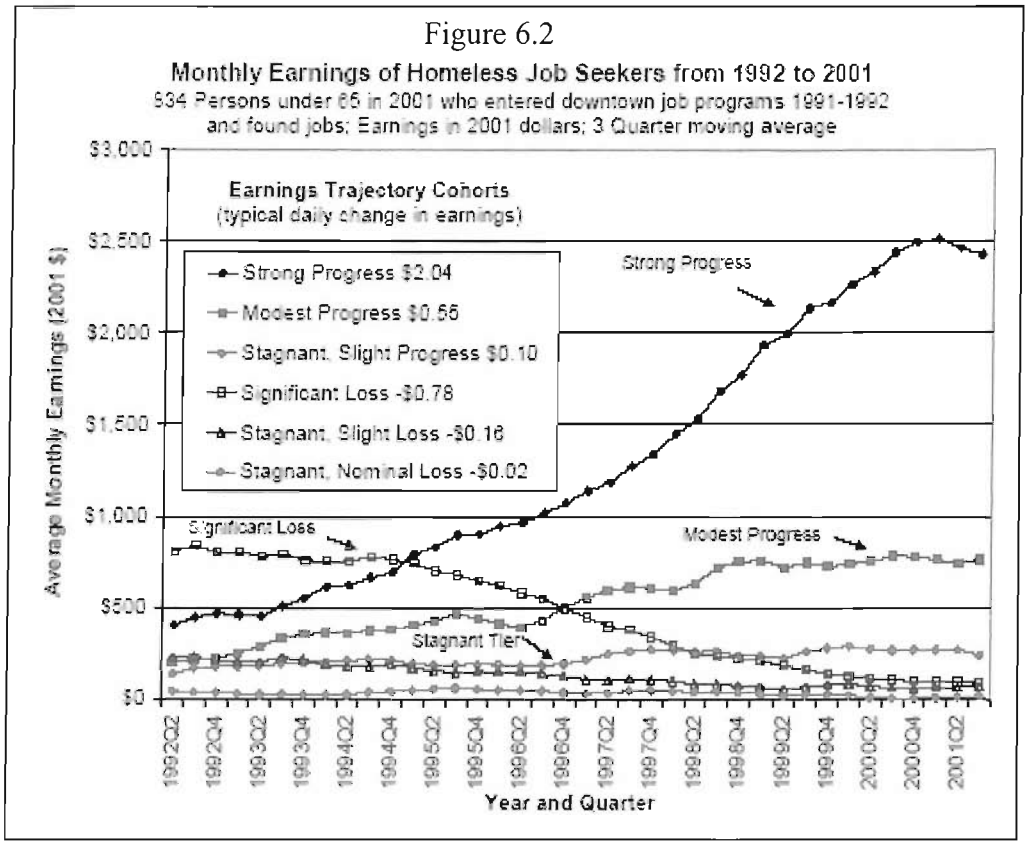
> "Sure, homeless people may find jobs rather easily but they don't find long-term economic stability. You have to keep in mind that L.A.'s economy is ruthlessly exploitative, particularly with regards to the low income service sector" (interview on 23.09.1997 in Los Angeles).

Erlenbush's assessment holds up against existing longitudinal labour market data that reveals that few homeless people overcome homelessness for good chiefly because they become entrapped in the low-income, low-security, and low-gratifying formal labour market or the informal economy (Burns et al., 2004: 49-52; Einbinder et al., 1995; Flaming et al., 1995; Flaming and Drayse, 1997a and b; Hardin, 1997; LACEHH, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Tepper, 2003; Wolch and Sommer, 1998). Using the data from a longitudinal study of homeless job seekers in downtown Los Angeles over nine years (1992-2001), Burns et al. (2004: 57-62) demonstrated that only one-sixth of the 834 successful homeless job seekers made strong progress, found living wage jobs, overcame homelessness and escaped poverty, and significantly improved their socio-economic

[4] The claim that formal employment facilitates exit is supported by many studies on homelessness (Avramov, 1999; Daly, 1999; Burns et al., 2003; Elgar et al., 1999; Kraetke, 1998; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 2001).

circumstances (see figure 6.2, Burns et al., 2004: 57).

Figure 6.2



Burns et al., 2004: 57

Eighty percent of all successful job seekers, on the other hand, experienced either marginal socio-economic improvements, stagnation, or even further decline (ibid, 57-62). The primary reason for this stagnation is that most jobs are unstable, temporary, and provide very little income – the average hourly wage of a job a homeless person was able to find was $6.61 in 1992 whereas an hourly wage of $11 is needed to afford a studio apartment under fair market conditions (i.e. spending less than 35 percent of income on rent, ibid, 49-50). Therefore most newly found housing arrangements are overcrowded, shared accommodations that are easily lost should one roommate lose his/her job again and thus become unable to contribute to rental payments (Burns et al., 2004: 50). The ultimate result is recurrent, or cyclical homelessness as almost three quarters of the homeless who exited became homeless again (Koegel, 2004; Wolf et al., 2001; Wolch and Dear, 1993). What this data does not reveal, however, is who precisely finds living wage jobs and how such success relates to other exit factors, and conversely, who fails to secure lasting employment and what consequences such failure might have on homeless people, their use of exit strategies, and their overall life chances.

Considering that newly found jobs rarely provide living wages and social networks rarely provide important financial resources, homeless people often turn to the local welfare state as another potential source of support. Yet, turning to institutional sources of support for assistance in overcoming homelessness is not necessarily working either as homeless people's experiences with the local welfare state in Los Angeles expose.

The State: The Limited Role of Welfare in Exit

Since regular wages and other income obtained through informal means (i.e. shadow work, social networks) are insufficient to maintain regular rental housing, welfare assistance becomes an important pillar of material and logistical assistance. Virtually all longitudinal studies have pointed out that welfare intervention can have positive impacts on facilitating exit from homelessness yet most often does not because of a series of problems that impede a more effective and comprehensive provision of service to poor and homeless people (Koegel, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Wolf et al., 2001; Wright, 1996; Zlotnick et al., 1999).

Positive Interventions: Specialized Assistance

One of the few positive features of homeless service provision in Los Angeles is that there are progressive service providers within L.A.'s growing non-profit sector that provide innovative service with the goal of facilitating exit. The reason for the existence of innovative services is that non-governmental homeless service providers in the U.S., unlike those in Germany (see chapter 7), must provide evidence for their effectiveness in order to successfully compete for limited governmental, philanthropic, and private funding. To receive public funding in the context of the federal "McKinney Act" for instance, local service providers must provide evidence that their service approach meets the requirements of a "Continuum of Care" and thus program components that encompass stabilizing and reintegrative provisions (The Continuum of Care, 1996).[5] As a result there are a number of the non-governmental services available in Los Angeles and elsewhere that are actually very successful in providing their homeless clients with case appropriate

[5] The "Continuum of Care" approach embraced by the federal government is the result of years of research and advocacy that has persuaded administrators to move away from merely providing emergency assistance toward a more long-term, reintegrative approach (Foscarinis, 1996; NCH, 1997; The Continuum of Care, 1996).

assistance in their quest to exit homelessness.[6] Having to compete for funding and being constantly evaluated also results in the fact that service providers are forced to distinguish themselves from other service providers. Therefore, many service providers have built progressive programmatic emphases and/or specialize in assisting specific "target populations." This, in turn, explains why certain sub-populations among the homeless including some highly stigmatized ones (i.e. substance abusers, people with mental illness, people with HIV/Aids, etc.) find a broader range of service than homeless people without such problems.

Yet, while there are innovative, primarily specialized homeless services with good track records in Los Angeles, there is ultimately neither enough funding nor service supply to deal with the increasing demand for stabilizing and reintegrative service by homeless people. As Bob Erlenbusch, Director LACEHH succinctly expressed:

> "There is a tremendous gap between provision and need. The last ten years have indicated minor improvements but overall give little reason for optimism. We have the ideas but not the resources to implement them" (interview on 23.08.97).

Rather, service provision for homeless people without distinguishable problems is seriously limited for a number of reasons that are associated with the broader limitations of the liberal welfare regime which find their origin in the broader idealogical context that differes significantly from that of other welfare regimes.

Welfare State Deficiencies and Their Underlying Ideological Causes

Virtually all studies on homelessness in Los Angeles, and for that matter nationwide, point out that here are serious institutional problems that prevent homeless people from receiving adequate social services to assist exit (Burns et al., 2003, 2004; deVerteuil, 2003, 2004; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998; Shelter Partnership, 1994 and 2001; Tepper, 2003; Wolch and Dear, 1993). Such welfare state deficiencies correspond to the limitations of state interventions in liberal welfare regimes that I described in chapter 1 which find their origins in the prevalent philosophy of individualism and market liberalism (Mead, 1992; Murray, 1982). Political economist argue that this philosophy has foreclosed the possibility of a strong, organized labour movement with the political clout to develop a more inclusive welfare state at any scale – federal, state, local – in the past (Clark and Piven, 2001, Piven and Cloward, 1996). Research on the welfare state from

[6] This assessment was supported by numerous key informants in Los Angeles including Harold Addams and Maya Dunne (LAHSA), Ruth Schwarz (Shelter Partnership), and Bob Erlenbush,(LACEHH) who confirmed that some service providers employ effective strategies to assist homeless people with exit from homelessness.

critical race and feminist theoretical perspectives has further demonstrated that the limited extent of the welfare state and the "blame the victim" analysis of poverty is rooted in racism and sexism (Gordon, 1995; Mink, 2002; Neubeck, 1997; Passarro, 1994, Quadagno, 1994; Schram et al., 2003).

Homeless policy then is precisely a function of the limited nature of the welfare state as well as the overall cultural and political attitude toward welfare and poverty. As a result it is not surprising that homeless people's individual attempts to overcome homelessness by relying on public assistance are complicated by a number of institutional problems. Ruth Schwarz, Director of the Shelter Partnership, describes the main problems of L.A.'s response to homelessness:

> "The service infrastructure is incomprehensive and fragmented and there are way too few resources to address the problem. We [Shelter Partnership] are attempting to fill the void by offering assistance to service providers and by attempting to improve their performance and inter-agency communications. Although we made strides within the limits of our financial restraints, we still have a long way to go" (interview on 11.09.1997 in Los Angeles).

This assessment is confirmed by numerous studies that support the notion that welfare state deficiencies adversely affect homeless people and often exacerbate personal vulnerabilities, delay exit from homelessness, make it more difficult to maintain housing and employment, and foreclose the possibility of attaining economic stability in the long run, particularly in the context of homelessness among single adults (Conley, 1996: 32; Epel et al., 1999: 392; Hussick and Wolch, 1990: 24; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 302; Shelter Partnership, 1994: 52-53; Tepper, 2003: 64; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 20-29). Among the most severe welfare state deficiencies experienced by homeless people are the following.

Bureaucratic Disenfranchisement and "Deservingness"

Single homeless adults in Los Angeles and elsewhere are, in line with broader cultural and political attitudes, deemed "undeserving" and thus already experience fewer and lower quality services, greater access barriers, deliberate service refusal, bureaucratic disenfranchisement, and much lower benefit levels compared to homeless families and special needs populations which consequently affects exit chances (Burns et al., 2003; Burt et al., 2001; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 301; Shelter Partnership, 1994; Wolf et al.,

1999; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 269; Wright, 1996; 203).[7] As Ted Hayes, Director of Justiceville Homeless USA, an innovative grassroots organization, points out:

> "Single adults, many of whom have kids, constitute a particularly vulnerable and underserved group among the homeless. Rebuilding self-esteem and offering choices are not the strong suit of the local welfare system" (interview on 25.09.1997 in Los Angeles).

Categorical ineligibility and other definitional measures contribute to low service coverage which is a problem that is further exacerbated by a lack of coordination as well as discontinuity of service provision. Homeless people report that once having accessed homeless services, they get lost in a maze of regulations and potential service options resulting in service gaps, disruptions and discontinuities (Shelter Partnership, 1994: 13; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 124-125). Even people with adequate writing and communication skills find it hard to navigate the social service system as Arthur Jones, a homeless activist and former law professor explained:

> "I used to be a law professor and I'm literate and detail oriented but it is very hard to deal with the bureaucracy. Paper work, procedural requirements, all kinds of hassle, you name it. And homeless people typically don't have that kind of stuff on them, now do they?" (interview on 25.09.97 in Los Angeles).

To maintain eligibility, homeless people are deliberately kept in motion and coerced into time intensive, involuntary mobility which does little to assist their quest for exit (Wolch and Dear, 1993: 268). A failure to meet any of the complicated eligibility requirements, including a failure to provide evidence of job search efforts, showing up for case re-evaluations, or any refusal to accept work may result in benefit reductions or even benefit termination (Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 300; Shelter Partnership, 2001: 7; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 138-144; see also Conley, 1996: 32-33). Robert Chaffee, a high-ranking county welfare official, explained: "The welfare application process... was designed to be rough. It is designed quite frankly to be exclusionary" (quoted in Blasi, 1987: 596). Such irregular and disrupted welfare and service receipt is consequently responsible for why some people become homeless, and once they are homeless, cannot access or maintain social services and housing.[8]

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[7] Although families and special needs populations also often encounter severe barriers to accessing welfare and other social programs and may face discontinuities in the receipt of welfare, it is quite clear that welfare intervention is much more likely to play a positive role in facilitating exit among families and homeless people with special needs (Burns et al., 2003; Shelter Partnership, 2001; Wolch and Dear, 1993; Wright, 1996).

[8] Burns et al. (2003: 17) documented that 7 percent of all of L.A.'s homeless became homeless in the first place after GR benefit termination and thus a drop in income while Schoeni and Koegel (1998: 301) suspect that time limits contribute to recurring homelessness.

Insufficient Benefit Levels, Work Requirements, and Criminalization

A second problem that homeless people experience is that even if they are able to attain benefits, income assistance is too low and time-limited which negatively affect their ability to access, afford, and maintain housing. Longitudinal studies have shown that the actual benefit level is a major determinant of whether recipients manage to exit and stay out of homelessness. Compared to comparatively more generous federal income assistance programs for people with disabilities (SSI, £320/month) and poor families (CALWorks, £360/month), the time limited local income assistance program for single adults provides benefits (GR, £167/month) that constitute only a fraction of rental costs (£ 320/month for a studio apartment, for discussion see Burns et al., 2004b: 40; Shelter Partnership, 2001: 5; Schoeni and Koegel, 1998: 299; Wright, 1996: 235). As a result of such low benefit levels and discontinuities due to time limits (6 months per year), most single homeless people simply lack the continuous income necessary to access and maintain housing (Tepper, 1993: 63).[9] In addition, the extent and regularity of welfare receipt also has implications for prospective landlord's decisions about accepting tenants on welfare – recipients of CALWorks and SSI are more likely to be accepted than are GR recipients given that land-lords know that GR is time limited and insufficient (Wright, 1996; Wolf et al., 2001).

It is therefore not surprising that homeless people receiving benefits resort to informal means and often illegal and criminalized survival strategies to make ends meet (Mitchell, 2003; NLCHP 1999). Captain Bonneau from the Los Angeles Police Department explains:

> "Many of them [homeless people] have no choice but to resort to illegal methods. We know that and we do not harass them on purpose as many [advocates, academics, media] often claim. But we need to adhere to our public mandate and our orders in order to serve and protect other community members as well. The shop keepers on Broadway simply do not want panhandlers bothering their patrons, it's bad for business. Plain and simple. Let me ask you, do you feel comfortable getting cash at an ATM if a homeless guy is standing behind you? It is not that easy" (interview on 22.09.1997 in Los Angeles).

Inadequate Shelter Provision and Containment

A third problem pertains to inadequate shelter provision and the containment of homeless people and their services in urban areas that offer few chances for improvement. It is well documented that homeless service facilities, shelters, and homeless service users

[9] The STAR data confirms this finding revealing that GR does not have a statistically significant impact on exit compared to welfare programs with higher benefit levels (Wright, 1996: 233)

in Los Angeles are contained primarily in extremely impoverished urban quarters that offer little chance for improvement (deVerteuil, 2003: 368; Lee, Wolch, and Walsh, 1995; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 167-176). Arthur Jones, a homeless activist, explains:

> "Being stuck in Downtown with no real possibilities to get out [to where the jobs are] limits your chances to find sustainable and well paying jobs. You can't plan ahead, no mater how much you are on top of things" (interview on 25.09.97 in Los Angeles).

In addition, severe public transportation constraints further limit homeless people's access to urban spaces that offer better housing and job opportunities outside the impoverished urban centre resulting in a "spatial mismatch" between the location of shelter, services, and places where homeless are permitted to exist and the location of better housing and job opportunities (Rahimian, Koegel, and Wolch, 1992: 1324; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 93-111; 266). Such entrapment is further reinforced by punitive policy, exclusionary zoning policy, and community attitudes designed to keep the homeless out of specific, especially upscale or commercial, urban areas which are precisely the kinds of places that homeless people need to perform informal survival strategies (i.e. panhandling) to subsidize insufficient wages and/or public income support (Dear, 1992; Dear and von Mahs, 1995; Wolch and Dear, 1993: 268-272).

Lack of Referrals and Job Training

Fourth, homeless people experience a number of problems in the context of receiving services geared toward accessing the local labour market in order to find and maintain well paying living wage jobs (Shelter Partnership, 1994: 46-47; Burns et al., 2003: 52; Tepper, 1993: 62). Very few homeless welfare recipients gain access to educational or vocational (re)training and if so, only if they are categorized as "employable" and thus eligible to participate in employment programs such as General Relief Opportunities to Work (GROW, see Burns et al., 2003:11; DeVerteuil et al., 2002: 239-241; Shelter Partnership, 2001: 2; Shelter Partnership, 1994: 46-47; Tepper, 2003: 60-64).[10] Younger homeless people with more recent job experience and higher educational attainment (i.e. employable) are therefore more likely to access re-integrative labour market programs and subsequently to obtain employment with higher income than older homeless people with lower educational attainment and/or prolonged homeless

[10] GROW is based on a 'work-first' model in which participant's job readiness is being assessed and if people are determined eligible receive three weeks of job training. An evaluation of GROW showed that most participants did not receive enough assistance to overcome a myriad of employment barriers including lack of transportation, training, or job availability resulting in only a 20 percent job placement rate (Tepper, 2003: 62-63)

experiences (i.e. "unemployable," see Burns et al., 2003: 42-43; Shelter Partnership, 2001: 9; Wright, 1996: 132). Such older "unemployable" homeless are more likely to receive very modest monthly income benefits of $221 (£165) which is simply not enough to ensure permanent housing and a decent standard of living.

Lack of Subsidized Housing

A final and particularly severe obstacle to overcoming homelessness is associated with homeless people's difficulties with finding and maintaining affordable housing and the lack of assistance in doing so (Burns et al., 2003: 52; Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center, 2004; Koegel, 2004: 16-21, Shelter Partnership, 1994: 58-62). Although it is known that homeless people who access some sort of subsidized housing are much more likely to stay domiciled than homeless people without rental assistance, homeless people often fail to obtain such housing because of limited availability, discouragingly long waiting lists, and complicated bureaucratic procedures to qualify for subsidized housing (Rog and Holupka, 1999; Shinn et al. 1998; for overview, see Koegel, 2004: 17). It is well known that Los Angeles has a very limited extent of either public or subsidized housing and is, compared to other U.S. cities, even more affected by a general lack of affordable rental housing (Institute for the Study of Homelessness and Poverty at the Weingart Center, 2004). According to a study by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, more than 400,000 residents in Los Angeles had incomes below 50 percent of the area median and pay over half their income for rent or live in severely substandard housing (U.S. Dept. HUD, 2000). Ultimately, homeless people's inability to find affordable housing is, considering their inconsistent and low income, the single most important reason why many homeless people remain unable to maintain newly found housing, remain constantly threatened by recurring homelessness, and thus often cycle in and out of homelessness.

The Poverty of Public Policy: No End in Sight?

It is clear that welfare state deficiencies in Los Angeles exacerbate the various obstacles that homeless people face. The "poverty of public policy" that Wolch and Dear (1993: 151-176) so adequately described over a decade ago is in large part still responsible for why homeless people find themselves, more often than not, abandoned by the local welfare state and reliant on a brutally exploitative urban labour market that simply fails to provide homeless people with the economic resources to successfully overcome poverty

and homelessness for good. Although research has demonstrated that welfare intervention could potentially play a very important role in facilitating exit and although there are innovative homeless services with good track records in Los Angeles, there is ultimately simply not enough service supply to deal with the increasing demand for stabilizing and reintegrative service by homeless people. The lack of public commitment and resources in conjunction with seriously inadequate service supply is consequently responsible for the fact that homelessness in Los Angeles will continue to be a significant social problem in the future.

6.3 Limitations of U.S. Studies on Exit from Homelessness

The previous discussion of homeless people's attempts to overcome homelessness in Los Angeles has confirmed the expectations of welfare regime theory as to the limitations of the liberal welfare regime and its response to homelessness. Furthermore, it has provided us with answers as to which factors determine exit from homelessness and why most homeless people succeed in overcoming literal homelessness relatively quickly - typically within a year. Existing statistical analyses revealed that rapid exit is primarily a function of relatively easy access to the local labour market and/or the ability to rely on social networks, and to a lesser extent proactive public welfare intervention. At the same time, however, it is clear that such rapid exit is rarely lasting as most formerly homeless people cycle back into homelessness because few of the newly found jobs provide living wages that allow for maintaining regular rental payments. In this way, the lack of public intervention does ultimately hurt homeless people who find themselves increasingly abandoned and fending for themselves.

Yet despite the valuable insights the quantitative studies from Los Angeles have provided as to the statistical significance of particular variables in either facilitating or hindering exit, the studies fail to provide a clear understanding as to who ultimate succeeds and why or how particular factors intersect over time to facilitate or hinder exit. In other words, the existing quantitative data fails to grasp the dynamic nature of homelessness and homeless exit as a process and how it is ultimately experienced by homeless people.

Ethnographic research in the United States, which has the potential to provide such answers, does not do so because almost all ethnographic studies examine the descent into homelessness and/or daily life as a homeless person, not exit from homelessness (i.e.

Conley, 1996; Desjarlais, 1996; Epel et al., 1999; Rowe and Wolch, 1990; Snow and Anderson, 1993). To my knowledge, the only ethnographic study that explicitly deals with exit from homelessness is provided by Bennett (1999). Yet this analysis falls short of providing satisfactory explanations as it only includes the experiences of eleven homeless people in a Washington D.C. shelter whose exit strategies have been superficially summarized in ten pages with very little elaboration on institutional or structural contexts (ibid, 60-70). Other ethnographic studies on homelessness typically do not track their respondents for extended periods of time nor until they exit and therefore simply can not provide sufficient information on exit strategies or ultimate outcomes from the perspective of homeless people and their distinct life courses. Such studies do indicate, however, that homelessness is a process that with increasing durations leads to a downward spiral with devastating psychological consequences over time in that it decreases self esteem and self-efficacy, causes social alienation and often self-isolation, and contributes to the loss of a time perspective (Bennett, 1999; Conley, 1996; Epel et al., 1999; Rowe and Wolch, 1990; Snow and Anderson, 1993). Yet, how such a downward spiral affects overall exit chances, and specifically who may or may not be adversely affected by it, remains unknown.

This omission in qualitative research on homelessness in the United States is unfortunate since, as the Berlin study demonstrated clearly, more qualitative and longitudinal research leads to particularly valuable insights into dynamic interrelation of factors affecting exit from homelessness. A comparison of the Los Angeles and Berlin studies will demonstrate why a qualitative analysis of the impact of welfare state intervention on homeless people's exit chances allows us to answer the question as to why there is a contradiction between different policies yet similar outcomes.

7. The Conservative Welfare Regime: A Comparative Analysis of Exit from Homelessness in Berlin

7.1 Overview

This study started with the question of why the supposedly more generous welfare state of Germany appears less successful at responding to homelessness than the presumably less developed U.S. welfare state. In this concluding chapter, I demonstrate that a comparison of existing research in Los Angeles to the empirical findings from Berlin largely confirms the primary arguments of welfare regime theory as to how the market, family, and state are configured differently in both countries. Homeless people in Los Angeles rely more heavily on the market to facilitate exit while homeless people in Berlin rely more heavily on the state. Yet, the resulting assumption that a conservative welfare regime such as Germany that offers more generous welfare provisions will have greater success in facilitating exit from homelessness compared to a liberal welfare regime is not warranted. It is not that the market succeeds better than the state at responding to homelessness. After all, while homeless people in Los Angeles do exit homelessness more quicky, they cycle back into homelessness quickly as well. Rather, the assumption that a more generous welfare state will be more successful than a comparatively less generous welfare state is false because the parameters used to evaluate social protection are incomplete.

The ethnographic research on homeless people's experiences of social welfare intervention and its impact on exit in Berlin reveals that traditional determinants of successful welfare state performance such as the existence of social rights, and the extent and generosity of benefits remain important but insufficient. Berlin's welfare system, despite being much more comprehensive than that of Los Angeles, produced rather contradictory outcomes in that conventional welfare services often failed whereas more specialized types of assistance that took homeless people's life course specific needs and expectations into account were much more likely to facilitate exit. This suggests that comparative social policy analyses must pay more attention to processes occurring at the local and individual scales, as well as the agency of welfare recipients to fully assess the effectiveness of a welfare system. This requires the use of qualitative research methods that could ideally be triangulated with quantitative data. Based on these findings, I conclude the thesis by devising a number of policy reforms geared toward facilitating and

expediting exit from homelessness taking into account more recent changes to the German welfare state.

7.2 Implications of Homeless Life Courses in Berlin for Welfare Regime Theory

In the following, I describe how the interplay of family, market, and state affects homeless people's exit chances in Berlin depending on their life course trajectories. I then compare these findings to the research on homeless people's exit in Los Angeles. This will allow me to answer the overall question as to why homeless people in Berlin stay homeless for longer periods of time than do homeless people in Los Angeles as well as to determine what impact welfare intervention had on homeless people's exit chances. I argue that while this comparison confirms the main findings of comparative social policy analyses about differences between the conservative German and the liberal United States' welfare regime, welfare regime theory needs refinement to more accurately reflect homeless people's agency and processes occurring at the urban scale. In this context, I also demonstrate that the ethnographic research methods used to assess homeless people's life course specific experiences in Berlin proved to be more insightful for understanding the effects of welfare state intervention on exit chances than the quantitative research methods that informed our understanding of exit chances in Los Angeles.

The Family: Life Course Differences and Decreasing Importance over Time

With regards to family, the first tenet of a welfare regime, there are similarities between homeless people's experiences in Berlin and Los Angeles. There is evidence that a lack of social networks and the resulting social isolation adversely affect the exit chances of many homeless people in Berlin and Los Angeles in a similar manner. It is also evident that prolonged homelessness works against one's chances to rely on family and other social networks to overcome homelessness in both places. Yet, while the U.S. literature tells us little about how such factors interact, the life course typology used in Berlin revealed that there are significant differences between homeless people depending on their life courses and the extent of previous social integration. Specifically, homeless people with more "regular" life courses and often extensive social networks in the city are more likely to capitalize on such networks to secure support, and in some cases even to find informal, temporary job opportunities (i.e. with former employers) and housing (i.e. by sharing flats with acquaintances). In contrast, people with more "irregular" life

courses, especially homeless people with "transient" life courses and thus often no social networks in the city lacked such important resources which clearly contributed to prolonging their homelessness.

Yet, whether or not people with regular life courses were able to sustain such social networks depended largely on three interrelated factors including the type of living situation, pride, and the length of homelessness as I described in chapter 5. The fact that many respondents perceived homelessness and having to live in shelters as humiliating caused some respondents, especially older respondents with "regular" life courses, to self-isolate rather than to seek assistance from family and friends. In addition, prolonged experiences with homelessness contribute to the fact that social networks to non-homeless people diminish over time. And the length of homelessness is largely a function of whether people found jobs and/or adequate public assistance. With regards to the first option, finding employment, welfare regime-specific differences play a major role as to why homeless people in Berlin stay homeless for longer periods of time than those in Los Angeles.

The Market: Reinforcing Homeless People's Outsider Status

Perhaps the most striking difference in the experiences of homeless people in Berlin and Los Angeles and thus the most persuasive tenet of welfare regime theory for explaining the principal differences between the German and the U.S.' welfare regime with regards to exiting homelessness is related to the role of the market, especially the labour market. While employment is, despite the inadequacy of income and instability of jobs, an important facilitator of exit in Los Angeles as two out of five job seekers (40 percent) found employment, it was much less important for exit in Berlin where only four out of the twenty-two job seekers (18 percent) found employment which was not even in the private sector. Furthermore, the extent to which homeless people in Berlin possessed human capital did not matter as even people with "regular" life courses and thus often extensive job experience and adequate training remained largely unsuccessful. As I have shown in chapter 4, homeless people's chances to re-enter the formal economy through the established conventional ways of finding jobs are highly limited no matter how hard they try. The fact that none of the respondents re-entered the formal economy on their own impulse is a testimony for the impermeability of rigid labour markets for "outsiders." As a particularly good example of "outsiders," homeless people who are highly stigmatized, disenfranchised, and often have multiple social problems, have little chances

to access the formal economy leaving them no other choice but to rely on welfare if they wish to avoid living literally on the streets.

Yet, whether or not the lack of success in the market place has had negative ramifications for homeless people and their exit chances depended, once again, on the life course. Younger respondents and respondents with more "irregular" life course trajectories had never previously experienced economic integration nor economic self-sufficiency and thus were less affected by their lack of success in psychological terms. Older homeless respondents, however, who had previously been economically integrated and for whom work had been an integral part of their lives and identity suffered tremendously. They knew all too well that their long term chances for re-entering the formal economy are severely limited given the high unemployment rates in Berlin and the competition with other, often younger and better prepared job seekers. Therefore, they had particularly high hopes for the local welfare state to help in facilitating exit from homelessness and a rapid reintegration into the formal economy. The fact that such expectations remained for the most part unsatisfied is evidence that welfare state intervention was only partially successful in helping homeless people to realize their goals.

The Contradictory Roles of the State: Conventional versus Specialized Service Provision

The lack of success in the labour market and the decreasing importance of family over time consequently prompted homeless respondents in Berlin to rely much more heavily on the local welfare state than those in Los Angeles. They were able to capitalize on the fact that they have social rights, and by any standard, enjoy access to a much more comprehensive set of public services. Yet, their experiences with the local welfare system resulted in a great deal of ambivalence toward the state. Although virtually all respondents experienced relatively easy access to Berlin's comprehensive welfare system ensuring income support, shelter, clothing vouchers, health care, and other necessary services – all of which are typically identified as determinants of successful welfare state performance in the comparative social policy literature – few respondents felt that the nature and extent of welfare provision sufficiently met their needs. Furthermore, whether or not people were satisfied with the performance of the local welfare system depended on two primary factors – the type of service they received and their life course trajectory – and thus the very expectations they had for the welfare state. Simply stated, conventional types of

welfare intervention provided by the local welfare administration (i.e. labour and welfare offices) may have had stabilizing effects on most respondents yet rarely provided opportunities for exit in large part because case workers disregarded homeless people's life course specific needs and expectations. More specialized assistance, provided by social workers in specific homeless service facilities, which accounted for homeless people's life course based needs and expectations, on the other hand, turned out to be much more likely to facilitate exit.

The Impact of Conventional Welfare Services on Exit Chances

When examining the overall performance of the conventional welfare system in terms of facilitating exit in Berlin, I found that none of the respondents were able to find a job or housing solely on the basis of advice from and/or referrals by case workers in either a local labour office (Arbeitsamt) or a social welfare office (Sozialamt). Considering this rather dismal performance, it is not surprising that more than three quarters of the respondents in Berlin expressed grave dissatisfaction with conventional welfare services despite the fact that all gained access to the local welfare system and the broad range of services it provides. Perhaps surprisingly, however, homeless people in Berlin referred to some of the same problems of welfare state intervention that are found in Los Angeles. Among the most severe institutional barriers and welfare state deficiencies reported by homeless people in Berlin are the following:

- *Insufficient Benefit Levels*: Although cash assistance benefits in Berlin are higher than in Los Angeles, they barely satisfy homeless people's financial needs, especially if people have substance abuse problems. Yet, even people without substance abuse problems reported difficulties making ends meet. One consequence of insufficient benefit levels is that homeless people in Berlin, especially those with "irregular" life courses and thus no social networks in the city, have no other choice than to perform informal survival strategies to secure income which are, as in Los Angeles, met with persecution, penalties, and if unable to pay fines for such misdemeanour charges, incarceration.[1]
- *Bureaucratic Fragmentation:* Virtually all respondents in Berlin reported that once having accessed the welfare state, they get lost in a labyrinth of regulations and potential service options resulting in service gaps, disruptions and

[1] The increasing criminalization and persecution of homeless people, their survival strategies, and also their mere presence in public spaces has generated considerable research in Germany (Eick, 1996; Hecker, 1998) and the U.S. (Mitchell, 2003; NLCHH, 1999).

discontinuities. Many respondents in Berlin further reported of unfriendly and patronizing treatment by case workers in welfare and labour offices often believing that case workers stereotyped them as unworthy of assistance and did not even try to help them.

- *Shelter Conditions and Warehousing*: A third problem pertains to inadequate shelter provision and the containment of homeless people in low quality communal or commercial shelters. Such warehousing had devastating personal consequences on homeless people's life circumstances, their social networks, and their addiction problems and thus created as rather distrustful stance toward homeless service provision.[2]
- *Insufficient Referrals to Job and Housing Opportunities*: Most homeless people in Berlin reported of problems in receiving adequate assistance with attempts to access local housing and labour markets. It is telling that none of the respondents who consulted with case workers at either the labour or welfare offices found jobs or housing that way. Moreover, few homeless welfare recipients gained access to educational or vocational (re)training leaving them unprepared to compete with other, non-homeless job seekers.

Yet, whether or not people were satisfied with the types of services the formal welfare state provided depended in large part on the respondents' life courses. For instance, while younger respondents, especially those with "regular" and "transient" life courses, were rather content with the financial and housing assistance they had received, older respondents hardly ever felt that the extent of cash assistance and shelter sufficiently met their needs and expectations. Such discontent was particularly noticeable among older respondents with "regular" life courses, people with "disabilities," and older migrants who used to lead "mainstream" lives in the past and thus could compare their current situation with the stability and economic security they had experienced prior to becoming homeless. These respondents in particular felt literally abandoned by the local welfare state and unanimously stated that they would have expected more and better assistance in dealing with their current predicament.

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[2] This problem mirrors problems reported in Los Angeles (Wolch and Dear, 1993; Wolch, Rahimian and Koegel, 1993) except for the fact that the containment of service and shelter facilities in impoverished areas - which also exists in Berlin as the vast majority of service facilities is located in impoverished center city areas - has less severe consequences because Berlin's excellent and comprehensive public transportation system allows relatively easy access to even the most remote areas in Berlin. A spatial mismatch between the location of shelter and work opportunities that has been identified in Los Angeles is therefore less of a problem for homeless people in Berlin.

These service deficiencies notwithstanding, it is still important to emphasize that because of social rights and a more comprehensive social safety net, homeless people in Berlin are not left completely fending for themselves. This, in turn allows homeless people in Berlin to live in somewhat more stable economic and social circumstances compared to many homeless people in Los Angeles. Receiving income support, health care, and shelter (irrespective of how terrible) prevented them from being literally roofless on the streets and thus from sharing the fate of many U.S. homeless who are living literally on the street in extremely hazardous circumstances. Another noticeable difference to Los Angeles and thus the U.S. welfare system is that once people manage to exit homelessness, they have a better chance to stay domiciled simply because there are better and more comprehensive welfare provisions that allow people to remain in regular accommodations.[3] None of the fifteen respondents who exited became homeless again within the examination period and and all had stayed domiciled for more than thirty days. Furthermore, the six respondents whose housing status I was able to determine beyond the examination period stayed stably housed. This suggests that a more comprehensive welfare provision based on social rights is a more promising framework to promote stability than that of the U.S.'s welfare system where impoverished people simply lack such continuous assistance and thus remain constantly threatened by recurring homelessness often cycling in and out of homelessness.

The Impact of Specialized Homeless Services and Social Work on Exit Chances

Another particularly important argument in support of the notion that the German system performs better than that of the United States' system despite the aforementioned deficiencies is the fact that legal provisions exist that allow the local welfare administration to fund and support specialized homeless services provided by the third sector. The experiences of the respondents in Berlin with specific homeless service providers suggest clearly that more individualized assistance provided by social workers in the context of each of the three case studies was instrumental in facilitating exit. All respondents who received such individualized support appreciated the efforts by their social workers who were extremely helpful in providing a range of services instrumental to stabilizing homeless people's lives, and in many instances, to exiting homelessness.

[3] For further evidence that rehousing leads to more long term stability, see Busch-Geertsama's (2002b) summary report on the effectiveness of rehousing policies in Hanover, Germany, Dublin, Ireland, and Milano, Italy which suggested clearly that homeless people, once achieving access to housing, are likely to maintain their new housing.

Nine of the fifteen respondents who ultimately exited did so after they consulted with social workers who assisted them with searching for housing, establishing contact to landlords, and arranging for public assistance with move in costs and rental payments. In four cases, social work intervention even helped respondents in gaining access to subsidized job and job training opportunities. The key to such success is that these social workers, unlike the overworked case workers in conventional welfare agencies, had both the expertise and experience to help their clients by accommodating their life course specific needs and by taking them seriously in an attempt to collaboratively work on solutions. The fact that such publicly sponsored individualized assistance is available is testimony to the fact that rigid market structures can be softened and complicating personal problems can be effectively addressed if homeless people's agency is taking into consideration.

A major failing of the German system is that such individualized, more proactive intervention was all too often provided rather late and after considerable personal damage had occurred. By the time people finally found potentially helpful and dedicated service providers, homeless people had developed a rather distrustful stance toward the local welfare state making it difficult for social workers to overcome the understandable mistrust that many homeless people had developed over time. Rather, considering the negative experiences most respondents had in low-quality shelters, typically the first types of homeless services they had encountered, few respondents would even consider seeking assistance in specialized homeless service facilities. Furthermore, the experiences in low quality shelters cause people to spiral deeper into despair and hopelessness which inevitably increases the durations of homelessness and public expenditures.

Reasons for the Contradictory Outcomes of Local Welfare Provision in Berlin

The foregoing elaborations on the contradictory outcomes of local welfare provision in Berlin raise a number of questions including why are conventional welfare approaches so ineffective in dealing with homelessness, and why are successful practices not implemented more frequently and sooner? The prerequisite for answering these questions is an understanding of the underlying administrative problems caused primarily by fiscal constraints and over-bureaucratization which are also evident in Los Angeles. An understanding of these problems is a prerequisite for devising ways to improve the current response to homelessness in Berlin specifically and in Germany's conservative welfare regime more generally.

Over-bureacratization and Administrative Constraints

Over-bureaucratization clearly is the result of the fact that various agencies are involved in addressing the multiple social problems homeless people experience which lead to coordination deficits and the fact that "the left hand does not know what the right hand does," as most respondents and key informants pointed out. At the time the empirical part of this study was conducted, the Senate administration's proposal to create specific Central Agencies (Fachstellen) to overcome such bureaucratic constraints and to give case workers in local welfare offices the tools to make cross agency decisions had not been implemented (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1995 and 1999). More recent administrative changes in Berlin, however, including a reduction of the number of districts and the renaming of Social Welfare offices into Citizen Bureaus (Bürgerbüros) in 2000, as well as some changes inherent in more recent federal welfare reforms (i.e. the 2005 Hartz IV laws, for discussion see section 7.3), may help local welfare offices be more efficient and responsive.

Fiscal Constraints, Cost-Containment, and Mismanagement

The second overarching problem, fiscal constraints, presents a particularly severe problem as Berlin, similarly to Los Angeles, continues to be constantly at the brink of bankruptcy which is causing administrators to contain costs when- and wherever possible. Cost-containment measures are in large part responsible for the aforementioned welfare state deficiencies of insufficient benefit levels, inadequate shelter provision, and the fact that the local welfare administration is hopelessly understaffed, underfunded, and overworked and thus often unable to devote the necessary attention to its clients. The undifferentiated utilization of existing policy instruments has often exacerbated rather than helped ameliorate homeless people's problems. While some of the fiscal problems are unlikely to be solved under the current financial situation (i.e. benefit levels will unlikely be increased), other problems caused by fiscal constraints can be relatively easily solved without necessarily causing increases in public expenditures.

One example of short-sighted cost containment includes the recent goal of Berlin's Senate to save up to £ 267.000 per year in homeless service programs alone starting in 2004. The administration has begun cutting transportation subsidies as well as the programme that takes over rental security deposits and move in costs (AK Wohnungsnot, 2004: 1; Linde, 2002: 3). The latter would be particularly short-sighted considering that

homeless people lack the funds to generate any kind of deposit which would substantially decrease their chances to access regular rental housing.

The perhaps most blatant example of mismanagement is the practice of warehousing homeless people in substandard, low quality municipal and commercial shelters which constituted over two-thirds of all shelter facilities in Berlin in the late 1990s. As chapter 5 demonstrated clearly, life in such places has devastating effects on homeless people, their social networks, and their overall trust into the welfare system, especially for older people and those who had more "regular" life courses. Such substandard shelter provision not only increased the durations of homelessness in that none of the respondents was able to exit from such places, it was also expensive in real financial terms and thus a drain on valuable public resources.

Tab. 7.1 **Housing and Shelter Costs in Berlin**

	Percentage of all Shelters		Daily Costs (in GB £)	Monthly Costs (in GB £)	Annual Costs (in GB £)
	1998	2001			
Rental Apartment (studio apartment under fair market rent)			6	187	2,250
Emergency Shelter	15	20	10	313	3,750
Low Level Shelter	65	40	10-17	313-500	3,750-6,000
Mid level shelter	15	35	12.5	375	4,500
High level shelter	5	5	26	875	10,500

Table 7.1 compares the cost of different housing options in Berlin. It clearly demonstrates that publicly financed regular rental housing is, by far, the most cost efficient as well as dignified housing solution. If (re)access to regular housing cannot be arranged immediately, mid level shelters such as the Wohnheim Trachenbergring often cost less than inefficient low quality shelters yet have much higher success rates as almost two-thirds of the respondents who resided in the Wohnheim Trachenbergring exited within 6 months as compared to no one residing in low level shelters. It is astounding that local welfare offices spent between £10 and £17 per day to keep homeless people in low quality shelters. Commercial providers receive considerable profits as they can earn between £15.000 and £24.000 per multiple occupancy room and year without providing any additional social services (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin, 1996b: 1). This is, to put it mildly, a case of ruthless exploitation that is ultimately prolonging homelessness and therefore a serious disservice to homeless people.

When looking for the reasons as to why Berlin's social administration maintained this counterproductive practice of warehousing homeless people in low-level shelters, I noticed that virtually all administrators at both the Senate and District level were aware of both the social and financial costs of current shelter allocation practices, yet felt powerless to change such practices. Helga Burkert, Head of the Senate Administration for Health and Social Service's department for homeless affairs explained:

> "You have to understand that our hands are tied. We are legally required to provide shelter yet we do neither have the resources nor the infrastructure to provide better shelter opportunities. We know that some shelter providers abuse this predicament and make profits on the backs of the homeless but we momentarily have no other choice than to fund them since we must provide shelter. See, we would like to make better use of paragraph 72 [of the BSHG allowing specialized shelters], yet we don't have the financial means" (interview on 24.04.98).

Fortunately, Berlin's social welfare administration has, aided by the fact that the numbers of officially registered homeless people have decreased since the late 1990s, begun to change shelter allocation practices in favour of mid-level shelters which is most certainly a step in the direction of assisting homeless people to exit more rapidly (SenVer Gesundheit, Soziales und Verbraucherschutz, 2002b).

Using Ethnographic Research to Reconceptualizing "Successful" Welfare State Performance

The broader finding about different welfare regimes yet similarly negative outcomes has important implications for what constitutes "successful" welfare state performance. Furthermore, this research suggests that a consideration of life course differences may assist in developing better variables to measure policy outcomes. At first sight, the Berlin study, as does the L.A. research, confirms the initial finding that the German welfare system is more generous and comprehensive than that of the U.S. considering that all respondents gained access, and began receiving a broad range of services. An in-depth analysis of homeless welfare recipient's life courses and experiences with welfare intervention (a gap in the L.A. research), however, revealed that the greater access to and extent of welfare did not necessarily translate into better exit outcomes. On the contrary, the foregoing analysis demonstrated clearly that homeless people in Berlin experience a host of institutional barriers that exacerbate rather than improve their chances to overcome homelessness even among people who eventually exited.

To fully comprehend the effectiveness of a system, I argue that we need a longitudinal, qualitative assessment of welfare state performance at the local scale and

from the perspective of people who are using it that ultimately accounts for the fact that not all people have the same experiences. The life course typology has very clearly demonstrated that what works for some may not work for others, or what some see as extremely constraining and detrimental to their life chances (i.e. low quality shelter provision) may provide opportune temporary solutions for others. The point is that we need a more nuanced and differentiated account of individual needs, and whether or not such needs are being met, to assess if social policy is successful in meeting both client's expectations and its self-set standards.

The life course typology that was developed through the use of qualitatitive, ethnographic research methods provides a heuristic device to evaluate welfare state performance from the vantage point of individual needs generating more differentiated, longitudinal data than the quantitative panel data used in Los Angeles was able to produce. The use of qualitative research methods, however, has certain disadvantages since the scope of the present study is limited in terms of the variables that are likely to interact to form distinct groups. For example, the experiences of many known subgroups among the homeless, particularly with regards to gender, ethnicity/race, and family status, are almost entirely omitted in this study and thus require more consideration and research. Moreover, it is possible that further, more extensive research may necessitate revising or, more likely, extending the typology to account for the full spectrum of potential life course occurrences among homeless people. How we can generate more representative data beyond the narrow scope of this present research and how such data can subsequently be used to inform policy practices will be discussed in the context of ways to improve policy practice in light of more recent policy changes in Germany.

7.3. Germany at the Crossroads: Changes in Homelessness and Homeless Policy since 1999

Since the conclusion of the empirical part of this thesis in 1999, a number of changes have occurred including a dramatic decrease in the numbers of homeless people in Berlin, and more generally in Germany, as well as a number of changes to the German welfare system which may herald a step toward a more neoliberal social policy approach. In the following, I first describe why homelessness has decreased yet why such positive trends are not necessarily lasting as homelessness is projected to increase again in the near future. Second, I discuss a number of significant changes to the German welfare system

that have been undertaken by the federal government to combat Germany's persistent and growing unemployment in the context of the so called "Hartz Laws." I provide a preliminary analysis of these changes to demonstrate that such welfare state restructuring might have both positive and negative implications for homeless people. Ultimately, however, it is too early to say if the new changes which became effective in 2005 will help or hurt homeless people and whether or not the new changes herald steps toward the emulation of neoliberal practice in Germany.

Decreasing Numbers of Homeless People since 1998: A Lasting Trend?

One particularly encouraging recent development is that the number of homeless people has decreased by almost one-third both nationwide and in Berlin since 1997 (Busch-Geertsama, 2004a; SenVer Gesundheit und Soziales, 2002b). This very positive development has been associated with the rather cyclical nature of the housing market and thus a general relaxation in local private rental markets since the mid 1990s (Bush-Geertsama, 2001 and 2004b). This decrease has been further linked to a substantial increase in housing construction as well as the positive effects of social housing and other policies. Specifically, reintegrative homeless policies as well as the better utilization of eviction prevention programmes to take over rent arrears in accordance with the BSHG have been associated with the decrease in homelessness (Busch-Geertsama, 2004b: 7; Gerull, 2003). Other indications of successful housing policies include local programmes such as Berlin's "Protected Market Segment" aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing for homeless people (Linde, 2002; SenVer Gesundheit, Soziales und Verbraucherschutz, 2002a). Since the program's inception in 1993, more than 9000 housing units have been made available to poor and homeless households (Linde, 2002: 2).[4] In combination, such measures have lifted some of the pressures on the demand for affordable housing and thus decreased the numbers of homeless people (Busch-Geertsama, 2001 and 2004b).

Despite this positive news, however, there is reason to caution against an overly optimistic reading of recent trends. Most local and federal advocacy organizations, for instance, warn that homelessness will likely increase again in the near future. One reason

[4] Although the 9,149 newly designated housing units are well shy of the 14,700 units initially envisioned to be made available, and given that many of the newly designated units are either substandard or miss the actual size requirements (i.e. most housing units made available are four- or five person household units whereas most demand are for more marketable single person households), it could still be argued that this infusion with affordable housing contributed to the overall decrease in the numbers of homeless people in Berlin, especially among families (Linde, 2002: 2-4).

is that up to 1.5 million of Germany's public housing units are going to be converted into regular rental housing because contractual arrangements between building owners and municipalities are due to expire over the next few years (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 2004; Busch-Geertsama, 2004b; Linde, 2003). Moreover, ongoing demographic changes (i.e. more single people, increasing divorce rates, etc.) continue to put pressure on smaller size rental housing units (Busch Geertsama, 1998; Edgar et al., 2003: 12; Linde, 2002: 3). In addition, Germany continues to be plagued by low economic productivity, high and persistent unemployment, and increasing poverty, all of which are precursors to homelessness.

The "Hartz Reforms:" Between Neoliberalism and Preserving the German Corporatist Welfare Regime

Increasing public dissatisfaction with the dwindling performance of the German economy has led to the election of a Social Democratic/Green coalition government in 1998 after 16 years of conservative governance. Soon after taking office, Chancellor Schröder delivered on his campaign promise to move the Social Democratic Party (SPD) to the political centre and to restructure the German "Social State" to combat unemployment and to increase economic productivity and growth. To do so, Schröder asked Peter Hartz, former chairman of the Volkswagen AG, to head a commission to examine the current performance of the German welfare system and to make suggestions for reform. The Hartz Commission subsequently produced a series of recommendations designed to spur employment and economic productivity that were embodied in the government programme "Agenda 2010" which includes four new bodies of laws entitled "Laws for Modernized Service in the Labour Market," commonly referred to as the "Hartz I-IV" laws (Busch-Geertsama, 2004: 306; Stumberger, 2005: 14-16). Although the Hartz Laws do not address homelessness per se, they contain provisions that will affect welfare provision for homeless people including cash assistance, subsidized housing, and labour market referrals. The most sweeping, and in many ways most contested, new provisions are inherent in "Hartz IV" which became effective in January 2005. Hartz IV fundamentally restructures the manner in which the welfare state deals with long-term unemployment by consolidating Social Assistance and Unemployment Benefits into one set of unemployment benefits (Arbeitslosengeld II) now solely administered by local welfare offices. The new provisions also introduce elements of workfare and coercion in a similar manner as previous welfare reforms in liberal welfare regimes such as the U.S.

and Great Britain. Poor people who used to be ineligible for unemployment compensation including people who cannot work or are over 65 years old are now entitled to Basic Support (Grundsicherung) which largely reflects the former version of Social Assistance (for discussion see BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe, 2004; Busch-Geertsama, 2004 a and b; Klammer and Leiber, 2004; Stumberger, 2005; Urban, 2003 and 2004, Wohlfahrt, 2003).

Although it is be too early to fully comment on the potential implications of the new reforms for homeless people, I argue that some of the new legal provision herald positive steps whereas other new provisions are rather problematic and thus may need further revision and refinement. Specifically, I will show that while changes in service philosophy and funding practices are laudable, other provisions including more "neoliberal" approaches including work requirements and other coercive measures are likely to be problematic for homeless people.

Positive Changes: Service Philosophy, Case Management, and Federal Funding

The individualization of service provision inherent in the Hartz IV laws is an advantageous step with the potential to assist homeless people more effectively, irrespective of their life courses. Addressed as clients, welfare recipients collaborate with case managers on the development of a service plan geared toward a more responsive assessment of service needs including income, housing, health care, job training, and job and housing referrals. If one thing emerged clearly from the Berlin study, it is that case based interventions by social workers proved much more likely to be successful than conventional welfare provisions. The fact that such individualized assistance is now available immediately upon contact with the formal welfare system is likely to help homeless people.

A second positive feature of the new laws is that Arbeitslosengeld II which combines Social Assistance for employable recipients with Unemployment Compensation into one coherent income assistance program at approximately the level of former Social Assistance is now primarily funded by the federal government and thus lifts a significant financial burden from the cash-strapped municipalities which used to exclusively fund Social Assistance (Busch-Geertsama, 2004: 308; Stumberger, 2005).

Finally, the new regulations do not undermine local authorities' ability to fund voluntary services and shelter providers (Busch-Geertsama, 2004: 3015). The existing Par. 72 of the BSHG is still in effect giving local municipalities the legal ability to

continue to fund innovative social services for "people in need under specific circumstances" including the homeless.

Negative Developments: Case Loads, Workfare, and Coercion

In addition to the proactive and certainly worthwhile policy changes, there are a number of changes that are likely to reinforce some of the detrimental past practices and create new problems. A first problem that will likely continue to impede proactive, case-based assistance is that the envisioned initial case load of 150 clients per case manager is conceivably too high for case managers to devote the necessary attention to their clients (Stumberger, 2005: 82). High case loads, in turn, might result in the same old practice of merely administering, not helping homeless people. It may also lead case managers to devote the limited available resources to presumably more "deserving" and less problem stricken welfare recipients.

Second, the German dilemma of over-bureaucraticzation is likely to continue to obstruct effective reforms. Although aimed at making the welfare system more transparent, the new regulations are very complex and the new guidelines to determine welfare eligibility and to establish benefit levels are confusing. This will continue to pose particularly severe problems for people with "irregular" life courses who already faced difficulties in complying with regulations and paper work.

Third, the new Arbeitslosengeld II will effectively decrease benefit levels for many clients who used to receive Unemployment Compensation prior to 2005. The experiences of homeless people with regular life courses who saw their eligibility for nominally higher UC benefits expire show that such immediate reductions in cash benefits cause tremendous hardship and may require some homeless to resort to "informal" survival strategies to make ends meet putting them at risk of experiencing persecution.

A fourth problem pertains to work requirements and thus more coercive regulations inherent in the principle of "promoting and demanding' (fördern und fordern, see Busch-Geertsama, 2004b: 309ff). Such coercive practices may not work for homeless people depending on their abilities and skills (i.e. human capital) and willingness (i.e. pride, motivation) to accept any type of work irrespective of compensation (including 1-Euro public works ventures, see Stumberger, 2005: 36). A refusal to accept such employment and for that matter any non-compliance with regulation can, similarly to U.S. practice, lead to severe sanctions including a complete suspension of benefits (Stumberger, 2005: 98-100). While such coercion may be feasible for younger homeless

people in self-proclaimed need of guidance, coercive means could be particularly problematic for homeless people with "transient" or "deviant" life courses who experienced difficulties complying with regulations under less stringent practices during the late 1990s. As Busch-Geertsama stated:

> "In the current discourse about "*activation*" and "*workfare*" policies it is important to remember that enforcing strict cuts in cases of non-cooperation of unemployed people might be helpful for some, but might also implicate new risks for others (including an increased risk of renewed homelessness) and destabilize the level of integration achieved" (Busch-Geertsama, 2002: 20).

Rather, it is conceivable that many homeless people in Germany, similarly to their U.S. counterparts, will become classified as "unemployable" and thus become subject to "Basic Support" provisions only. This will effectively foreclose any possibility of gaining access to services geared toward reemployment.

Fifth, although municipalities are experiencing some fiscal relief in that public cash assistance is now federally funded, housing assistance is now solely to be funded by local governments which will have more discretion to establish funding criteria and limits (Busch-Geertsama, 2004b: 309). Previous experiences with the provision of locally funded cash assistance payments give little reason for optimism that local municipalities will effectively allocate funds for the provision and maintenance of affordable housing for formerly homeless clients under current fiscal constraints.

Ultimately, however, it is too early to say if these new federal and local changes will improve homeless people's exit chances since we lack any recent evaluations that would tell us about the effectiveness of the new reforms.

Policy convergence toward a neo-liberal "Workfare Regime"?

We can surmise that the new Hartz IV reforms include some drastic changes which have, not surprisingly, sparked a controversial and heated political and popular debate in Germany particularly in light of the fact that unemployment rates continued to rise since January 2005. Critics on the right have argued that the reforms are not sweeping enough and still contain too many regulatory provisions that continue to undermine the performance of the German economy in the global marketplace and thus demand further reforms toward deregulation. Critics on the left have countered that the new reforms are a dangerous step into the direction of neoliberalism with all the negative consequences (i.e. increasing poverty, exploitation, etc.) that have been documented in the U.S. and thus undermine the fundamental principles of social protection and solidarity in Germany. The

question remains as to whether or not Germany is headed toward neoliberalism and thus an emulation of U.S. practices?

While some of the new regulations clearly indicate movement toward workfare, deregulation, and coercion and employ much of the neoliberal rhetoric used by U.S. and British politicians, it would be premature to argue that the German welfare state is being restructured en route to a "liberal" welfare regime (for a similar assessment, see Busch-Geertsama, 2004b). Despite sweeping changes, the basic pillars of the German welfare state remain in place as funding levels, extent of intervention, and specific legislation dealing with homelessness are relatively unchanged. The recent changes, while putting more emphasis on the market, have a limited effect on the interplay among market, family, and state in the conservative regime as much emphasis still rests with the state.

Perhaps more importantly, considering that the empirical results from Berlin suggest that the federal policy framework does not necessarily play an overarching role in determining policy outcomes, it is imperative to more closely examine processes occurring at the local and indivudal scales as well as the agency of clients. The issue is therefore not the danger of a "rolling back" of the federal state in Germany but rather the implications that recent changes have on the provision of services, employment, and housing at the local level and how individuals perceive and use such services (Busch-Geertsama, 2004: 317). And this is, to date, the perhaps greatest shortcoming of comparative social policy research in that it largely omits processes occurring at the local (i.e. state, municipal) and personal (i.e. individual homeless person) scales. And, it has ignored the expectations and needs of clients based on their life course experiences in evaluating welfare intervention.

7.4 Where Do We Go From Here? Suggestions for Policy and Future Research

In the conclusion of this thesis, I suggest a number of reforms that build on recent policy such as Hartz IV's laudable change in service philosophy and the principal understanding that a greater emphasis on individual circumstances and life-course specific needs and expectations is imperative to help homeless people to exit homelessness more rapidly. The policy recommendations I propose include the use of information technology to improve service delivery and to conduct further research on homelessness and homeless policy; the enhanced utilization of active labour market and subsidised housing policies to

improve market access; and the support of grassroots activism to allow alternatives to mainstream reintegration. In combination, such measures have a good chance of helping homeless people to exit more rapidly and to stay domiciled which is in the interest of homeless people and society at large for reasons associated with both the social and financial costs of prolonged homelessness. After all, decreasing durations of homelessness will reduce public expenditures, and at the same time, prevent people from spiralling further into despair and hopelessness which ultimately make it more difficult and costly for the welfare state to intervene successfully.

Improving Local Service Delivery through Information Technology

The recent changes in Hartz IV toward a closer collaboration between case managers and clients immediately upon contact with the welfare system are clearly the cornerstone for any reform. Yet, in order for case managers to be able to devise suitable service plans with their clients, they need to have the data, skills and tools, as well as real power to make cross-agency decisions. Although Berlin has already moved in this direction by creating central agencies (Fachstellen), administrators must take a number of further steps to make such central agencies more effective. One way to enhance case managers' ability to provide individualized service and in so doing to improve the local welfare system by making it more transparent and thus responsive to individual life course needs, is through the use of information technology (IT) and specifically the development of a local Social Service Management Information System (SSMIS).[5] Such a SSMIS is essentially a multifunctional, intra-net based software and data base that enables the development of case-based service plans, the coordination of social service provision, and the monitoring of service and shelter provider's performance. In so doing, it also generates valuable data that can be used for future planning and research.

The primary function of an SSMIS is to build a client data base that includes a client's life course-based characteristics, problems, needs, and preferences which can then be automatically matched with continuously updated information from other data sources including housing, labour market, educational and job training, health and other service provider data. Access to consolidated housing and labour market data would allow case managers to provide immediate referrals to suitable job and housing options. Access to service provider data should help match client's specific needs with service options as

[5] Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have begun to develop such systems in Philadelphia and New York City and preliminary evaluations indicate its usefulness (see Culhane and Smith, 1997; Culhane and Metraux, 1997)

effectively as possible. Service provider data ought to include information about the facility, its location, its programmatic objectives, as well as a track record of its past performance as clients will be regularly asked to evaluate the services they receive. Developing a track record of service providers will also increase accountability and ensure a higher quality of service provision and in so doing close a serious loophole in current practices in Berlin. Moreover, an SSMIS has, despite substantial initial costs associated with development and training of end-users, substantial cost saving potentials which is a major advantage in times of severe fiscal constraints.

Another major advantage of an SSMIS is that in generating differentiated client and service provider data it would provide an excellent base for future research on homeless people, their service use, welfare outcomes, and in so doing, a possibility to continuously improve the service system by learning which specific needs require which types of service, or which services are effective. Another interesting potential for future research would be to develop uniform software that would ensure that data generated in different places is compatible. This would allow us to compare and evaluate local practices. It would also allow us to conduct research on the interrelations between policy and clients beyond the local scale which would also accommodate an increasingly mobile welfare clientele such as homeless people with "transient" life courses.[6] In this context it may even be feasible to develop SSMIS standards that could be used across national boundaries, for instance, in the context of the European Union which could create excellent possibilities for new, comparative social policy research across different welfare regimes given that the European Union encompasses the entire range of welfare regime types.

Ultimately, the development and use of a SSMIS will allow both case workers and clients to assess service options and collaboratively work toward a comprehensive and mutually agreeable service plan in line with the new Hartz IV guidelines, and in so doing help to optimize service delivery and ultimately decrease durations of homelessness. Moreover, it is feasible that the potential utility of such reforms that build on the life course may well extend beyond improving the homeless service system both in terms of social and financial outcomes. Should such reforms work with regards to a particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged social group such as the homeless, it might be possible to use such improvements as a guide to overhaul the welfare system in general making

[6] Streamlining procedures and data exchange would, for instance, greatly reduce the bureaucratic hassles and delays that homeless migrants have reported as data from different welfare offices would be immediately accessible.

welfare and service delivery more responsive, transparent, and cost-effective for service users other than homeless people.

Improving Market Access: Subsidized Housing and Active Labour Market Programmes

While the previously proposed innovative steps may increase the effectiveness of the welfare system and thus the ability of the welfare state to provide referrals, other concurrent policies must continue to improve access to tight urban labour and housing markets. Although a more specific discussion of labour and housing market reforms extends well beyond the purview of this thesis, we can draw some conclusions from the discussion of homeless people's experiences in Berlin. In terms of improving access to local housing markets, existing provisions and specific policies such as the "Protected Market Segment" must be continued and enhanced. In terms of improving labour market access, a much more difficult undertaking, the increased provision of job training opportunities and subsidized employment through Active Labour Market Programmes (ALP) appears to be the only practical solution in light of Berlin's widespread unemployment and the competitive disadvantages homeless people have.

One positive result of welfare state intervention in Berlin was that homeless people, once they accessed regular housing, had a good chance of staying stably housed because of existing provisions in the BSHG including the provision of continuous cash assistance and heating costs, rental subsidies (Wohngeld), and assistance with taking over rental deposits, move-in costs, and the acquisition of basic furniture and cooking supplies. In this context, the more recent cost-containment measure of cutting programs to take over rental deposits must be revoked immediately to prevent an increase in homelessness since homeless people simply lack the resources to pay for rental deposits themselves. Moreover, local municipalities must continue and enhance programs that increase the supply of affordable housing. Berlin's "Protected Market Segment" aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing for homeless people is certainly a very good example for how to accomplish a greater housing supply for poor and homeless people (Linde, 2002; SenVer Gesundheit, Soziales und Verbraucherschutz, 2002a). Therefore, the continuation of existing policies as well as a substantial increase in the supply of affordable housing units, especially such that meet the demand of single households, is imperative to prevent a new wave of homelessness in the near future.

While access to housing appeared to be a more doable undertaking as the experiences of the respondents in Berlin suggest, the prospects of improving access to

labour markets pose a much more difficult challenge in the light of widespread unemployment and market rigidities that are characteristic of Germany's conservative welfare regime. The principal solutions to this problem lie in improving job readiness through job training and retraining and the provision of subsidized employment through Active Labour Market Programmes (ALPs). In this context, the local welfare system has thus far failed homeless people as the empirical results presented in chapter 4 amply demonstrated. A first, and thus far completely underutilized, step is to better provide job training and retraining opportunities. Investing in human capital and thus improving homeless people's job readiness is key to enabling homeless people to better compete with other, more qualified non-homeless job seekers for the limited amount of job vacancies. The fact that only two of the twenty two job seekers in the sample gained access to job training opportunities is indicative of the fact that the local welfare state thus far failed in improving homeless people's chances to compete in the market place especially if they are younger and thus lacked job qualifications in the first place. Specific new provisions in Hartz IV address such qualification deficits, and positively so, mandate the local welfare agency to provide job training opportunities (Stumberger, 2005: 90-91).

A second step toward facilitating entry into the formal labour market is the enhanced utilization of ALPs for homeless people. It is telling that only three respondents in the present sample found jobs and only did so after accessing ALPs with the help of social workers. The benefits of subsidized jobs are evident since such jobs and the regular wages they provide enhance income potentials and personal autonomy. Moreover, public expenditures for ALPs are typically lower (£375/month) than expenditures in the context of the provision of relatively expensive shelter options in conjunction with welfare payments (£ 732/month), yet provide a more dignified, and from the perspective of homeless people, a more desirable solution.[7] Recent provisions in the Hartz IV laws encourage the provisions of ALPs.

Ultimately, German reformers may do well in considering some of the successful recent reforms that were undertaken in Social Democratic welfare regimes such as Sweden, Denmark, or the Netherlands which, despite economic problems and slightly declining public consent throughout the 1990s, combined active labour market policies, human capital development, and the maintenance of flexible yet stable systems of social protection, and against all pessimistic projections, continue to perform very well in the

[7] In 1998, wages incurred through ALPs provided a pre-tax income of £750 of which employers typically pay half and the labour office the other half. Typically costs for shelter (£17/day) and monthly welfare (£222) amount to £733.

global economy (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Goodin et al., 1999). Such proactive policy also worked well to prevent homelessness and extreme poverty and to reduce the numbers of existing homelessness and its durations (Edgar et al., 2003: 17-18). Homeless people as a particularly vulnerable yet certainly not helpless population would certainly benefit from reforms that would reduce the duration of their homelessness and get them re-employed.

Improving Grassroots Activism and Self Help

Considering, however, that even under the most promising conditions homelessness can never be fully averted, and considering that fiscal constraint will continue to undercut the possibility of the local welfare state to maximise its performance, it is important to consider alternatives to mainstream reintegration especially in the context of grassroots activism. A focus on alternatives is also warranted since homeless people have multiple social problems that may prevent them from re-entering the societal mainstream and because some people may not wish to lead a mainstream life.

The example of homeless street-newspaper vendors has provided a particularly good example of people who by pursuing alternatives not only gained stability, but significantly improved their lives. Not only did the sale of such newspapers generate much needed income, it gave vendors a sense of purpose and a possibility to make the best of their situation. Many vendors took pride in serving as messengers for other homeless people. They believe it was important for them to inform the general public about the plight of homeless people.

The fact that such activism is met with persecution and exclusionary policies, however, is evidence of intolerance of non-mainstream life choices and is exemplary of other rather dramatic changes in Germany that indicate similarities to punitive responses and "revanchism" in the United States (Eick, 1997; Hecker, 1998; Mitchell, 2003; Smith, 1996). The increasing exclusion of homeless people through punitive policy, warehousing, and simply by administering them rather than providing opportunities and options is short-sighted and is not only a disservice to the homeless themselves, but also to society at large. It bodes poorly for the state if it demands personal responsibility and coerces people to work, yet punishes people who do precisely that – take responsibility and work toward changing their lives, and by disseminating information, helping the lives of others. And, information is, after all, the first step toward overcoming stereotypes and exposing homelessness for what it really is – a political and economic problem that affects people from all walks of life.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Ethnography: A qualitative research approach that puts respondents into the centre of analysis employing qualitative research methods including case study analysis, participant observation, and in-depth interviewing.

Exit from Homelessness: The successful attempt to overcome immediate homelessness and to access regular or shared housing for at least 30 consecutive days.

Exit Strategies: Homeless people's attempts to exit homelessness by relying on assisted (i.e. institutional referrals, social work intervention) and/or unassisted (i.e. newspaper ads, social networks) efforts.

Homelessness: A state in which citizens are unable to access or re-access regular housing markets due to extreme marginality or other personal circumstances and crisis and thus either live without private accommodation, in a publicly or privately financed accommodation designed for homeless people, or in any other type of accommodation not intended for human habitation. People who live in substandard or unacceptable housing conditions or are threatened by homelessness are not examined in this thesis.

Homeless Policy: A set of policies specifically designed to address homelessness which typically allocates federal, state, and local funding to public, private, or non-profit service providers at the local scale. In the United States, homeless policy operates independent of mainstream welfare provisions and is allocated following federal guidelines established in the "Stuart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act" (1987). In Germany, homeless policy is integrated in the "Federal Social Act" (Bundessozialhilfegesetz, 1964) and thus part of mainstream welfare provisions.

Life Course: An examination of one's biography from early childhood to present (incl. parents, childhood, socialization, educational attainment, job training, employment and residential history, marital status, social networks, and social problems) with particular emphasis on discontinuities and the extent of previous social and economic integration.

Social Networks: The social relationships homeless people have outside (i.e. family, friends, acquaintances, former work colleagues and neighbours) and/or inside (i.e. homeless peers, service providers, social workers, administrators) the context of homelessness.

Survival Strategies: A diverse set of strategies homeless people apply to ensure their immediate survival and material well being including formal (i.e. wage labour, welfare) or informal (i.e. undocumented work, shadow work incl. panhandling, scavenging, selling blood, criminal activities, prostitution) means.

Welfare Regime	Describes the way in which social risks (i.e. poverty, unemployment, sickness, disability, old age, etc.) are allocated between three interrelated entities including market, state, and family in specific nation states.
Welfare System	A set of public or publicly funded institutions dedicated to the social and economic well-being of citizens based on specific social policies that address poverty, health care, unemployment, education, job training, pensions. Access to welfare can, depending on the political system, be based on universal social rights or can be target specific and means tested.

Appendix 2: References

1. Interviews with Homeless People in Berlin and Biographical Sketches

(by life course type)

Nr	Name	Age	Place of Birth	Interview Date	Interview Context (Case Study)	# Follow Ups	Exit Status (Duration in months)
	Biographical Sketch						
A: OLDER HOMELESS PEOPLE WITH "REGULAR" LIFE COURSES							
1	**Sachse**	35	Dresden, GDR[1]	17.02.98	Trachenbergring	4	E (32)[2]
	Sachse was born in Dresden, East Germany, had a relatively inconspicuous childhood, graduated from highschool,[3] completed an apprentice in the construction business, and subsequently worked for many years. In 1990, he lost his job, moved to Berlin, found work in the booming construction business, worked continuously for five years, and lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Eastern Berlin. After again becoming unemployed, he was unable to pay his rent and was consequently evicted.						
2	**Helmut**	37	W-Berlin	23.02.98	Trachenbergring	6	HL (>30)
	Helmut was raised in West Berlin as the third son of a business owner, had a "normal" childhood, graduated from high school, and completed an apprenticeship in food and consumer retail. He was employed at a supermarket chain where he eventually became a store manager while maintaining an apartment. He married in 1990, yet following his job loss in 1994 and subsequent increasing alcohol abuse, his wife left him in 1995. One year later he was evicted due to rent arrears.						
3	**Kalle**	44	W-Berlin	28.02.98	Trachenbergring	5	E (36)
	Kalle was born in West Berlin and raised in a foster care institution following the death of his single mother when he was three years old. He graduated from high school, completed an apprenticeship as a painter, and subsequently worked as a painter for a number of companies which allowed him to to maintain an apartment. In 1994 he lost his job due to physical problems and his increasing dependency on alcohol. Soon after he lost his apartment due to rent-arrears.						
4	**Hanno**	35	E-Berlin	06.03.98	Trachenbergring	5	E (42)
	Hanno was born and raised in East Berlin as the second son of industrial workers, graduated from highschool, completed job training as an electrician, and subsequently worked for a construction company doing manual labour until the company went out of business in 1995. Increasing debts as a result of his problem managing finances resulted in his failure to pay rent and subsequent eviction.						
5	**Det**	49	E-Berlin	06.03.98	Trachenbergring	4	HL (>32)
	Det was born and raised in East Berlin, completed high school and an apprenticeship as an electrician, joined the East German police force and remained a police officer until 1983. Afterwards, he worked as a security officer for Berlin's public transportation authority both before and after Unification. He was married twice and has two adult daughters. When his second marriage fell apart in 1996, he had an alcohol-induced nervous breakdown, left his family's residence, did not show up for work for two weeks, and was subsequently fired finding himself homeless.						

[1] GDR = East Germany, FRG = West Germany

[2] E = Exit, HL = Homeless

[3] To ensure consistency and to properly translate attendance in the lower tiers of the German education system including Hauptschule (9yr education) and Realschule (11yr education) in West Germany, and the Polytechnische Oberschule (10yr education) in East Germany, I am using the English term "high school". To describe attendance in the higher tier of the German education, commonly refered to as Gymnasium (13yr education), I am using the term "grammar school."

6	**Hans**	50	W-Berlin	09.03.98	Warmer Otto	3	E (276)
	Hans, the only child of a working class family, completed high school and an apprenticeship as a varnisher, and subsequently worked for ten years in his field for the same company. He married in 1966 and lived in a two-bedroom apartment in West Berlin. After the marriage ended in divorce in 1975 and he lost his job, he decided to begin an independent life on the streets free of any material obligations and pressures alternating between shelter life, life on the streets, and the correctional system.						
7	**Bernie**	40	Dortmund, FRG	09.03.98	Warmer Otto	3	HL (>12)
	Bernie was born and raised in Dortmund as the first child of miners, completed high school and an apprenticeship as a miner, and worked in the mining industry in Castrop-Rauxel until the mine was closed in 1992. He was married and has two sons. Since he became unemployed, he underwent retraining yet remained unsuccessful in finding employment in the Ruhr Conurbation. He came to Berlin in 1997 to search for work while his family continued to live in Dortmund living on public assistance.						
8	**Maria**	42	Palermo, Italy	10.03.98	Warmer Otto	2	E (5)
	Maria was born and raised in a small village in Sicily as the fourth of seven children. She received basic education, married at the age of 17, and moved with her husband to Berlin in 1976. In Berlin, the childless couple managed to build a middle class existence, yet the relationship, accompanied by increasing alcohol consumption by both, worsened often resulting in domestic violence. Upon becoming unemployed in 1993, her husband began borrowing money and left her unaware of their financial situation. The marital problems, alcohol consumption, and domestic violence escalated causing Maria to escape to a domestic violence shelter. When she returned home, she discovered that her husband had left. She found an eviction notice for failure to pay rent and became homeless.						

Nr	Name	Age	Place of Birth	Interview Date	Interview Context (Case Study)	# Follow Ups	Exit Status (Duration in months)
B: YOUNGER HOMELESS PEOPLE WITH "REGULAR" LIFE COURSES							
9	**Mario**	26	W-Berlin	22.02.98	Trachenbergring	8	E (10)
	Mario, the only child of civil servants, completed high school and began but did not complete an apprenticeship as an automobile mechanic while living with his parents. In his late teenage years conflicts with his parents began around his self-admitted lack of discipline and failure to complete the apprenticeship. Ultimately his parent threw him out and cut off their financial assistance in 1997.						
10	**Bob**	24	W-Berlin	25.02.98	Trachenbergring	9	E (17)
	Bob, the second child of a German entrepreneur and his Jamaican wife, spent his early childhood years in the United States, Canada, and Spain, where his father owned restaurants. His parents eventually relocated to Berlin where his father opened a restaurant. Bob took ballet and dance lessons and appeared in numerous TV shows as a child dancer while furthering his education in a prestigious private school. His parents divorced while he was in school and he subsequently lived with his mother while still maintaining close contact to his father for whom he worked in both his Spanish and German franchises. After a fight with his father over alleged drug use (he denies it), his father fired him and withdrew his financial support. Unemployed, with his mother unable to support him financially following her own unemployment, he found himself homeless.						
11	**Radek**	23	Danzig, Poland	06.03.98	Trachenbergring	6	E (13)
	Radek was born and raised in Danzig, Poland by his single mother. In 1989, his mother lost her job and decided to move to West Germany where they lived in a number of cities relying primarily on welfare payments. In 1993, they moved to Berlin where his mother found employment as a secretary and Radek continued his education, quickly making friends, and playing guitar in a hard rock band. In 1996 Radek graduated from high school and started an apprenticeship as an industrial mechanic. In October of 1997, Radek moved out of his mother's apartment following an argument and became homeless.						

12	**Markus**	21	W-Berlin	12.03.98	Trachenbergring	5	E (24)
	Markus grew up in Berlin-Tempelhof as the second child of middle class parents with whom he had a good relationship during his childhood. He did poorly in school and barely graduated from the 9-year system. While in school, he began to experiment with drugs (cannabis and inhalants) and became increasingly alienated from his parents. He began an apprenticeship as a baker in 1992, yet terminated it after one year. Due to his drug use and his lack of initiative to find job training opportunities, he had repeated arguments with his father who eventually threw him out in early 1996.						

Nr	Name	Age	Place of Birth	Interview Date	Interview Context (Case Study)	# Follow Uns	Exit Status (Duration in months)
C: HOMELESS MIGRANTS WITH "TRANSIENT" LIFE COURSES							
13	**Tobias**	32	W-Berlin	11/03.98	Warmer Otto	4	HL (>11)
	Tobias was raised in foster care institutions in West-Berlin following his parent's death in a car accident. After successfully graduating from grammar school in 1980, he began yet terminated an apprenticeship as a cook, and subsequently held a number of jobs in the restaurant business. In 1982, he inherited a significant amount of money after a former boyfriend died of AIDS which allowed him and his current partner to move to South Africa in 1984 where they bought a piece of property outside Durban and started a pottery business. In 1996, however, Tobias was deported by the South African Immigration Authority due to overstaying his visa and was sent back to Germany where he became homeless upon arrival.						
14	**Dan**	52	Pittsburgh, USA	10.03.98	Trachenbergring	4	HL (>20)
	Dan, a U.S. citizen, grew up in Pittsburgh as the oldest son of a wealthy steel mill owner. Defying the wishes of his father to take over the family business, Dan enrolled at the American University in Washington D.C. where he received a B.A. in German history in 1965. Because of his language skills, he fulfilled his mandatory military service in Germany where he worked as an interpreter for military intelligence. Upon honourable discharge in 1972, he resumed his studies and earned an M.A. in German Literature at the University of Indiana in 1976. He then moved back to West Berlin where he lived for eight years working as a civilian employee for the U.S. Army. In 1985, he moved back to the U.S. to work as an interpreter. He was fired because of an alcohol problem. He maintained a number of odd jobs over the years and had temporary experiences with homelessness living in cars. In 1995, he took a lucrative job as an English teacher and moved to Seoul, South Korea, where he stayed for two years. Feeling isolated, he decided to move back to Berlin, which he considered his "home" hoping to find a job as an interpreter or teacher. Once he arrived in Berlin in mid 1997, he found himself unable to find work and quickly depleted his savings. He consequently became homeless in early 1998						
15	**Schloeter**	52	Konstanz, FRG	26.02.98	Trachenbergring	6	HL (>36)
	Schlöter, whose mother was too poor to take care of all of her five children during the post WWII era, was raised in a foster care institution near Konstanz, graduated from high school and completed an apprenticeship as a painter. He attributes his desire to maintain a transient lifestyle to negative experiences in foster care. He moved from one German city to the next, living in hotels and supporting himself through day labour as a painter. In the winter months he would typically apply for and receive seasonal unemployment compensation specifically designed for construction workers. Although he excessively drank alcohol throughout his life, his alcoholism never posed a problem to finding short-term employment. In 1991 he moved to Berlin and worked in the booming post-unification construction business, which allowed him to maintain an apartment for the first time in his life. In 1997, however, he lost his job due to increasing health and alcohol problems and eventually became homeless.						

16	**Harri**	48	Duisburg, FRG	12.03.98	Strassenfeger	8	E (120)
	Harri was born and raised in Duisburg as the only child of a working class family. He completed an apprenticeship as an automobile mechanic in 1970. Over the next fifteen years, he worked as a travelling assembly worker at large construction sites in a number of West German cities, primarily living in hotels. Throughout his travels he developed a substantial drinking habit, which eventually caused him to lose his job and to live in a small apartment while relying on Unemployment Compensation for a number of years. In 1990 with increasing debts and continuing alcohol problems, he was evicted and decided to move back to Duisburg where he subsequently became homeless. For the next two years he lived on the streets in a number of cities in the Ruhr Conurbation. In 1992 he bought a train ticket to Berlin after he heard from other homeless people that the service infrastructure was better.						
17	**Matze**	35	Wuppertal, FRG	09.03.98	Strassenfeger	3	HL (>132)
	Matze, the second child of upper middle class parents, was born and raised in Wuppertal. He did poorly in school, barely graduated, and began but interrupted an apprenticeship as a painter. After working for a chemical company for a couple of years, he had to quit his job due to health problems. During this time, he became politically active in the peace and anti-nuclear power movement and left his parents to join other anti-nuclear power activists protesting against the construction of a nuclear waste reprocessing facility in Wackersdorf, Bavaria. After the activist encampment was forcefully dismantled by the police in 1986, he became homeless and lived in homeless encampments in a number of German cities, including Hamburg, Berlin, and Saarbrücken. In 1997 he moved to Berlin, where he continued to be homeless.						
18	**Marty**	30	W-Berlin	07.03.98	Strassenfeger	3	HL (>30)
	Marty was born and raised by his grandparents in West Berlin where he graduated from high-school and began, yet failed to complete, an apprenticeship as a painter. In 1992, following the death of one of his grandparents, he moved to Uelzen, West Germany where he lived in a dormitory for migrant workers and held a number of publicly subsidized jobs over the years. In 1994 he moved to a farm in rural Lower Saxony where he lived on Social Assistance, subsidizing his welfare income working as a farm hand in exchange for room and board. In 1996, he moved back to Berlin to find regular employment, yet remained unsuccessful and homeless.						
19	**Leo**	32	Rostock, GDR	23.02.98	Trachenbergring	5	unknown
	Leo, the second of three children of industrial workers, successfully graduated from high school, completed an apprenticeship as a construction worker, and worked continuously for seven years in Rostock. In 1989, a few months before the Berlin Wall fell, he fled East Germany and settled in a small town in West Germany. Unable to find a job and without any resources (his parents had died and both of his brothers were unemployed), he became homeless in 1991 and lived in a communal shelter. In 1993, he moved to Berlin hoping for better economic opportunities and immediately found employment at a private security company. He lived in a one-bedroom apartment. In 1997 he had to quit his job due to increasing orthopaedic problems and shortly after lost his apartment due to rent arrears as a result of his addiction to gambling.						
20	**Jens**	27	Cottbus, GDR	24.03.98	Trachenbergring	7	HL (>36)
	Jens, second child of industrial workers from Trettschau, had a rather lonely childhood, barely graduated from high school system, began yet interrupted an apprenticeship in the construction business. In 1990, he left his parent's home and moved to Berlin to find work yet became homeless immediately upon arrival causing him to return to his parents after one year of homelessness. He was unable to find work and lived at his parent's home until 1996 when he moved out following his parent's own unemployment. He returned to Berlin and became homeless again upon arrival.						

Nr	Name	Age	Place of Birth	Interview Date	Interview Context (Case Study)	# Follow Ups	Exit Status (Duration in months)
D: HOMELESS PEOPLE WITH "DEVIANT" LIFE COURSES							
21	**FTW**	26	W-Berlin	03.03.98	Trachenbergring	10	HL (>36)
	FTW, the only child of a lone mother, experienced severe abuse as a child. Public child services removed him when he was five years old and placed him into foster care. Since he displayed disruptive and aggressive behaviours, he was frequently moved between different foster care institutions in Berlin where he acquired only minimal reading and writing skills. At the age of fourteen, he ran away and began taking heroin and other drugs, financing his consumption through drug dealing and other criminal activities. He had multiple encounters with law enforcement, and cycled in and out of juvenile detention centres and living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in squatter communities, or in railroad stations when not in jail. In 1992, he was sentenced to four years in jail for aggravated assault. While in jail, he successfully overcame his heroin addiction, yet immediately became homeless upon release from prison.						
22	**Oliver**	26	W-Berlin	10.03.98	Trachenbergring	4	E (16)
	Oliver, the youngest of seven children of an impoverished German family, was raised first by foster parents and then in a Catholic foster care institution. He successfully graduated from high school and began yet interrupted an apprenticeship as a locksmith after he became dependent on heroin. During this time, he alternated between squatting and sleeping rough and was once arrested for drug dealing, spending six months in juvenile detention. In 1992, he temporarily moved in with his older brother and managed to overcome his addiction "cold turkey" and remains off drugs ever since. He held a number of odd jobs over the years in the construction business, underwent his mandatory military service, and, over the years managed to maintain an apartment in Berlin-Köpenik. Following a break-up with his girlfriend, he attempted to commit suicide. While recovering in a hospital, he was unable to pay his rent and was consequently evicted in absentia.						
23	**Sioux**	31	Erlangen, FRG	08.03.98	Strassenfeger	12	E (13)
	As the second of five children of a poor family in Erlangen, Sioux repeatedly experienced child abuse in his youth, barely graduated from high school, and eventually moved out of his parent's home at the age of sixteen. He became a member of Erlangen's punk scene, got heavily involved with drugs, and lived primarily on the streets and occasionally at friends' places. In 1986, he was arrested on drug related charges and spent 18 months in jail. Upon release, he got married and worked for a professional cleaning company and lived with his wife in a two-bedroom apartment in Erlangen where they had two children. In 1991 the couple divorced, Sioux moved out, and shortly after moved in with his new girlfriend, married her, and fathered another child. In 1992, he was involved in a brawl and was convicted to 3 ½ years in jail for aggravated assault. During his incarceration, his second marriage fell apart, and upon release, he moved away from Erlangen in order to leave his past behind. Between 1995 and 1996, he lived at a halfway house in Kulmbach and worked as an upholsterer. In 1996, after having fulfilled his parole obligations, he decided to move to Berlin to start over and became homeless upon arrival.						
24	**Marita**	19	Halle, GDR	28.04.98	Treberhilfe	4	HL (>60)
	Marita, who lived with her mother and her stepfather, was repeatedly molested sexually since she was two years old. Afraid of her abusive husband, her mother placed Marita in a foster care institution when she was five years old. When she was thirteen, she managed to run away and hitchhiked to Berlin. Once in Berlin, she was unable to find a place to stay and quickly got involved in Berlin's drug scene. She soon began taking heroin and has remained addicted, and more or less homeless ever since. She attempted to overcome her addiction numerous times, with and without assistance, only to resume using shortly after. To finance her addiction, she has to generate up to DM 300 (£ 125) per day and prostituting herself became her only option. Since she began prostituting herself, she has been raped, beaten, and cheated out of her compensation numerous times. She also had a number of encounters with law enforcement and spent months in juvenile detention, yet was always forced to return into the same milieu.						

Nr	Name	Age	Place of Birth	Interview Date	Interview Context (Case Study)	# Follow Ups	Exit Status (Duration in months)
E: HOMELESS PEOPLE WITH "DISABILITIES"							
25	**Andrea**	54	Kaliningrad, Russia	10.03.98	Warmer Otto	3	E (12)
	Andrea, a mentally disabled woman, was born in Kaliningrad (then Königsberg) shortly before the Russian Army occupied the city, forcing her widowed mother to join the desperate trek of millions of refugees moving west to flee the approaching Russian Army. Andrea suspects that her mental disaility was the result of malnutrition during this treacherous march. She and her mother lived a few years at a camp for displaced persons in West Germany and then moved to Berlin. Her mother devoted her life to raising Andrea, home-schooling her (she has minimal writing and reading skills), and completely sheltered her daughter from the outside world. Andrea recalls having had no friends and spending her entire life with her mother. Her mother received a very modest war-widow pension and worked part-time in a public library. In 1987, her mother unexpectedly died of a heart attack without having made any arrangements for Andrea. Devastated by her mother's passing, she proceeded to stay in their small rental apartment eating canned food until she was formally evicted for rent arrears and found herself, unaware of any options, homeless and wandering the streets of Berlin.						
26	**Monika**	34	W-Berlin	08.03.98	Strassenfeger	8	E (108)
	Monika, the only child of a wealthy German family, was born with an incurable visual impairment (she has very limited peripheral vision). She recalled a miserable childhood characterized by emotional abuse by both parents and feeling isolated, unloved, depressed and bored. During that time, she attended a school for visually impaired children and graduated successfully. At the age of 18 she finally managed to leave her parent's home taking a train to Hamburg, West Germany. Once having arrived in Hamburg, and lacking any alternatives, she began to prostitute herself and was quickly caught in the treacherous world of prostitution, violence, and abuse. Most attempts to escape the "red-light district" resulted in severe beatings by the pimps who capitalized on the fact that her visual impairment limited her options and mobility. She managed to escape twice moving to other West German cities only to end up in the same type of environment. In 1996, she managed to move back to Berlin only to find herself homeless again.						
27	**Biker**	38	W-Berlin	09.03.98	Trachenbergring	10	E (120)
	Biker was born in Berlin and grew up in Cologne after his parents moved following the construction of the Berlin wall in 1961. He recalls a worry-free childhood. He successfully graduated from grammar school, completed an apprenticeship in window repairs, specializing in historic and art window restorations. From 1976 to 1983, he worked in a number of West German cities until he decided to move to Berlin in 1983 where he continued working in his field making very good money. In 1985, he met his future wife with whom he had two daughters. In the late 1980s the marriage began falling apart and in 1989, after first having lost his job, he left his family. Shortly after, he had a severe motorcycle accident in which he almost lost his right leg. The injuries rendered him disabled and incapable of working in his field. After recuperating from surgery and a brief stay at a shelter, he became literally homeless in 1989 living primarily in cars and mini-vans for the next nine years.						
28	**Paule**	37	W-Berlin	22.02.98	Trachenbergring	5	HL (>48)
	Paule grew up in West Berlin as the only child of a marginalized family frequently experiencing abuse by his father. Upon graduating from high school, he completed an apprentice as a bricklayer in 1980 and subsequently worked for the same company for fifteen years until the company went bankrupt. He married in 1985 but the relationship grew increasingly bad over time and was accompanied by the alcohol abuse of both he and his wife. In 1994, he lost his job and has remained unable to regain employment ever since. He said that for some years he suspected that there was something wrong with him since he experienced increasingly severe mood swings which he attributed to his miserable life and his abusive relationship at the time, not mental illness. Following a particularly deep depression in 1995, he attempted suicide and was consequently committed to a mental health clinic where he stayed for three weeks and received his diagnosis. Upon release and on the recommendation of his doctors, he filed for divorce, moved out of the marital apartment, and ended up homeless.						

2. Key-Informant Interviews in Berlin

1	Name	Klaus Breitfeld		Title/function	Social Worker		
Organization	Wärmestube Warmer Otto						
Date of Interview	11.03.98,	Time	13:00 -14:45	Place of Interview	Berlin-Tiergarten		
2	Name	Helga Burkert		Title/function	Adminsitrator, Head of Division		
Organization	Grundsatzplanung und Konzeption zum Thema Wohnungslosenpolitik Senatsverwaltung fur Gesundheit und Soziales						
Date of Interview	24.04.98	Time	12:00 - 13:30	Place of Interview	Berlin-Charlottenburg		
3	Name	Sigi Deiß		Title/function	Social Worker and Pastor		
Organization	Foyer an der Gedächtniskirche						
Date of Interview	04.03.98	Time	14:40 - 16:20	Place of Interview	Berlin-Charlottenburg		
4	Name	Jürgen Demmer		Title/function	Social Worker, Administrator		
Organization	Bezirksamt Charlottenburg, Abt. Soziale Wohnhilfe						
Date of Interview	11.03.98	Time	10:30 - 12:00	Place of Interview	Berlin-Charlottenburg		
5	Name	Ralf Gruber		Title/function	Social Worker, Street Worker		
Organization	Bezirksamt Charlottenburg, Abt. Soziale Wohnhilfe						
Date of Interview	06.03.98 10.12.98	Time	16:30 - 19:00 14:15 - 17:20	Place of Interview	Berlin-Tiergarten		
6	Name	Michael Haberkorn		Title/function	Representative, State Parliament		
Organization	Social Poltical Speaker Fraction Bündnis 90/ Grüne						
Date of Interview	06.03.98	Time	10:20 - 11:40	Place of Interview	Berlin-Mitte		
7	Name	Karlheinz Kramer		Title/function	Social Worker		
Organization	Beratungsstelle für Wohnungslose in der Lewetzowstrasse						
Date of Interview	05.03.98	Time	12:00 - 14:20	Place of Interview	Berlin-Mitte		
8	Name	Anneliese Leps		Title/function	Head Nurse		
Organization	German Red Cross (DRK) Obdachlosenbetreuung im Bahnhof Lichtenberg						
Date of Interview	06.03.98	Time	13:30 - 14:30	Place of Interview	Berlin-Lichtenberg		
9	Name	Sybille Paetow- Spinosa		Title/function	Administrator, Social Worker		
Organization	Senatsverwaltung fur Schule, Jugend und Sport Landeskommission Berlin gegen Gewalt (Berlin State Commision against Violence)						
Date of Interview	12.03.98	Time	14:00 - 16:30	Place of Interview	Berlin-Tempelhof		
10	Name	Stefan Schneider		Title/function	Chairman, Activist		
Organization	MOB e.V. (Strassenfeger)						
Date of Interview	27.04.98	Time	12:00 - 13:30	Place of Interview	Berlin-Friedrichshain		
11	Name	Matthias Schulz		Title/function	Administrator/ Planner		
Organization	Sachbearbeiter ZEKO, Geschütztes Marktsegment Senatsverwaltung fur Gesundheit und Soziales						
Date of Interview	27.02.98	Time	11:00 - 12:45	Place of Interview	Berlin-Wilmersdorf		
12	Name	Uwe Spacek		Title/function	Editor		
Organization	MOB e.V. (Strassenfeger)						
Date of Interview	10.12.98	Time	18:00 – 20:15	Place of Interview	Berlin-Friedrichshain		
13	Name	Uta Sternal		Title/function	Shelter Manager, Social Worker		
Organization	Internationaler Bund, Wohnheim Trachenbergring AK Wohnungsnot (member)						
Date of Interview	10.02.98 08.12..98	Time	10:00-12:30 10:00 - 14:00	Place of Interview	Berlin-Tempelhof		

14	Name	Ingo Tederan	Title/function	Assistant Director	
Organization	UB U-Bahn, Fahrgastsicherheit (Subway Security) Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe				
Date of Interview	09.12.98	Time	10:00 – 11:30	Place of Interview	Berlin-Mitte
15	Name	Carola von Braun	Title/function	Administrator	
Organization	Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Berufsbildung und Frauen				
Date of Interview	27.04.98	Time	15:00 - 16:00	Place of Interview	Berlin-Pankow
16	Name	Reiner Wild	Title/function	Managing Director	
Organization	Berliner Mieterverein				
Date of Interview	22.04.98	Time	10:10 - 12:00	Place of Interview	Berlin-Charlottenburg

3. Key-Informant Interviews in Los Angeles

1	Name	Harrold Adams	Title/function	Executive Director	
Organization	Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA)				
Date of Interview	16.09.97	Time	9:30-10.45	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
2	Name	Richard E. Bonneau	Title/function	Captain, Commanding Officer	
Organization	Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD): Central Area				
Date of Interview	22.09.97	Time	14:00-16:00	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
3	Name	Marc Casanova	Title/function	Executive Director	
Organization	Health Care for the Homeless				
Date of Interview	23.09.97	Time	13:00-14:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
4	Name	Deborah Davenport	Title/function	Clinical Nursing Director	
Organization	Community Health Services				
Date of Interview	22.09.97	Time	9:00- 10:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
5	Name	Maja Dunne	Title/function	Policy Director	
Organization	Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA				
Date of Interview	16.09..97	Time	9:30-10.45	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
6	Name	Merryl Edelstein	Title/function	Senior City Planner	
Organization	Los Angeles City Planning Department				
Date of Interview	18.09.97	Time	15:00-17:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
7	Name	Bob Erlenbush	Title/function	Executive Director	
Organization	Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness				
Date of Interview	23.09.97	Time	10:00-12:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
8	Name	Ted Hayes	Title/function	Servant Director, Activist	
Organization	Genesis I, Dome Village				
Date of Interview	25.09.97	Time	10:00-12:00	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
9	Name	Arthur Jones	Title/function	Lawyer, Homeless Resident	
Organization	Genesis I, Dome Village				
Date of Interview	25.09.97	Time	10:00-12:00	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
10	Name	Gregg Kawczynski	Title/function	Manager	
Organization	Community Development Commission Housing Development & Preservation				
Date of Interview	17.09.97	Time	15:30-17:15	Place of Interview	Monterey Park, CA
11	Name	Dale Lowery	Title/function	Database and Communication Specialist	
Organization	Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness				
Date of Interview	23.09.97	Time	12:00-12:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA
12	Name	George Malone	Title/function	Supervising Regional Planner	
Organization	Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning				
Date of Interview	17.09.97	Time	10:00-11:00	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA

13	Name	Ruth Schwarz			Title/function	Executive Director	
Organization		Shelter Partnership, Inc.					
Date of Interview		11.09.97 24.09.97	Time	1:30-2:30 16:00-17:00	Place of Interview		
14	Name	Judy Weddle			Title/function	Human Services Administrator I	
Organization		Department of Public and Social Services (DPSS) Office of Welfare Reform Strategy					
Date of Interview		24.09.97	Time	11:00-12:30	Place of Interview	Los Angeles, CA	

4. Key-Informant Interviews in Washington D.C.

1	Name	Steven Berg			Title/function	Senior Policy Analyst	
Organization		Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)					
Date of Interview		26.08.97	Time	12:30-13.30	Place of Interview		
2	Name	Laura Dekoven-Waxman			Title/function	Assistant Executive Director	
Organization		United States Conference of Majors					
Date of Interview		03.10.97	Time	11:00-12:30	Place of Interview		
3	Name	Barbara Duffield			Title/function	Director Information Exchange	
Organization		National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)					
Date of Interview		26.08.97	Time	15:00-17:00	Place of Interview		
4	Name	John Heinberg			Title/function	Program Analyst	
Organization		Job Evaluation for the Homeless Demonstration Program Department of Labor,					
Date of Interview		05.09.97	Time	14:15-15:15	Place of Interview		
5	Name	Kirsten T. Johnson			Title/function	Professional Staff	
Organization		U.S. Congress - House of Representatives, Banking Committee Congressman Bruce Vento (D-Minnesota)					
Date of Interview		03.10.97	Time	14:00-15:15	Place of Interview		
6	Name	Dr. Fred Karnas Jr.			Title/function	Deputy Assistant Secretary	
Organization		Office of Community Planning and Development/ Interagency Council for Homelessness Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD					
Date of Interview		03.09.97	Time	12:30- 1:45	Place of Interview		
7	Name	Tanesha P. Hembrey			Title/function	Program Analyst	
Organization		Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Title I and Homeless Department of Education					
Date of Interview		05.09.97	Time	11:00- 13:00	Place of Interview		
8	Name	Dr. Marsha Martin			Title/function	Special Assistant to the Secretary	
Organization		Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)					
Date of Interview		03.09.97	Time	10:05-11:45	Place of Interview		
9	Name	Shawn A. Mussington			Title/function	Education Program Officer	
Organization		Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Title I and Homeless Department of Education					
Date of Interview		05.09.97	Time	11:00- 13:00	Place of Interview		
10	Name	Nan Roman			Title/function	Vice President	
Organization		National Alliance to End Homelessness					
Date of Interview		25.08.97	Time	10:00-11:50	Place of Interview		
11	Name	Laurel Weir			Title/function	Policy Director	
Organization		National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty					
Date of Interview		02.10.97	Time	15:00-16:20	Place of Interview		

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Appendix 4: Index

1. Subject Index

2. Name Index