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The delayed publication of this book - based as it is on a 2000 to 2002 survey of single homeless people in Britain - is attributed to the prolonged illness of the senior author. This has given rise to the rather unusual circumstance whereby the bulk of the book's subject matter has already been aired in a series of previously published journal articles (9 collaboratively written papers are citied in the references). Specifically, these prior publications prefigure the investigation of the 'tactics and performativity' of single homeless people (Chapter 3), the provision of outdoor relief and its links with faith-based organizations (Chapter 4), the problematic development of day centres as places of refuge and resource (Chapter 5), and the ambiguities and complexities associated with night shelter/hostel provision (Chapter 6). Furthermore, permeating the book and comprising substantial sections of chapters 1, 2 and 3, are three contextual themes which also feature prominently in already published work. The first of these relates to the entanglements of neoliberalism with the delivery of welfare, focusing in particular on the apparent shortcomings of 'punitive' perspectives on homelessness; a second theme emphasises the role of faith-based organisations in cultivating an 'ethos of care' in the delivery of homeless services; and a third theme promotes an appreciation of the purposeful agency and intrinsic humanity of homeless people which the authors claim is 'so often missing in accounts of urban homelessness'. Chapter 7, focusing on an issue less well represented in prior publications, examines the uneven development of homeless service provision demonstrating how specific combinations of political, institutional, social and cultural factors produce distinctive 'homeless places'. The penultimate Chapter 8 is devoted to an analysis of the 'production and consumption' of homeless services in rural areas – a topic of considerable interest for at least one of the authors over the past decade (8 prior publications cited).

While this book is then something of a reprise of material already in the public domain, there may well be some benefit in assembling the thoughts of a decade in one publication. Indeed, read in this light there is much to admire, especially for example, in the robust evaluation and assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of central government policies and local government practices (viz. Rough Sleepers Initiatives, Homeless Action Programme, Housing Plus, etc); this includes an enthusiastic defence of soup runs in an potent critique of the so-called 'killing-with-kindness' (i.e. anti-begging) campaigns sponsored by several English city authorities and homeless charities. The policies and practices considered are somewhat chronologically dated in that most have now been superseded by new government initiatives. However, as the authors cogently argue (p 19), many of these new initiatives – apart from some tactical shifting of ministerial and local government responsibilities and some extensions and adjustments in funding regimes and targets - do not fundamentally alter homelessness strategies beyond those articulated in the 2002 (England and Wales) and 2003 (Scotland) Homelessness Acts. Indeed the most recent of these new initiatives, 'Enhanced Housing Options' (Communities and Local Government, 2010), emphasising as it does the familiar notions of partnership between the state, voluntary agencies and the private sector, the provision of more-than-housing support services, a further shift towards professionalism and the recycling of the well-established principles of 'choice, empowerment and customer service', validates the book's claim to continued relevance.

Equally to be admired is the charting of what the authors christen 'alternative cartographies of homelessness' - created by the quotidian practices and purposeful behaviour of homeless people in seeking out and accessing places to sleep, eat, earn and socialise. In demonstrating the functionality of this detailed practical knowledge of urban geography, the authors present a useful and important corrective to what is sometimes perhaps too readily dismissed as the 'chaotic lives' of homeless people.

In some other respects, however, the book's methods, message and arguments are more contentious. In particular there is (i) the lack of punctiliousness with regard to data collection and analysis, (ii) the tendentious endorsement of faith-based-organisations and their links with the development of an 'ethos of care', and (iii) the arraignment of revanchist and post-justice perspectives on the so-called homeless city.

(i) Ethnomethodology and data analysis
Much of the raw data assembled and analysed in this book was acquired through an enterprising programme of ethnographic research, the 'Homeless Places Project'. This project involved a postal survey of 212 night shelters and hostels, 164 day centres and 63 soup runs across England, Wales and Scotland designed to establish a basic picture of the provision of single homeless emergency services, of their funding and staffing regimes, together with an understanding of their ethical motivations and mission. This postal survey was followed by a more detailed examination of seven English (only) 'contrasting towns and cities'. These comprised a large city in the south-west, a smaller town in the far south-west, a small agricultural and market town in the centre, a small market town in the south, a declining seaside resort in the north, a cathedral city in the west, and a large manufacturing city in the north-east.[1] Intensive survey methods in these selected urban locations involved overt participant observation in 18 night shelters, day centres and soup runs (involving 160 'conversations' with service users), semi-structured interviews with 39 project managers, 29 paid staff, 26 volunteers, and 37 other key informants, and 90 homeless people. In addition, 17 auto-photography exercises were initiated in two case study areas designed to record single homeless people's direct experiences and behaviours. These latter provided illustrations for the book and insights regarding hard to reach (by the researchers) sites of homeless occupancy.

All-in-all an impressive data collection exercise, but one which nevertheless invites several queries. For example, there is no indication of how the sample agencies were selected for the postal survey or indeed of their location or response rate; thus to imply that this constitutes a '*national*' survey (p 13 & passim) without addressing these issues of representativeness would seem to be at best an unfortunate slippage, at worst a regrettable sleight of hand. A compounding factor here is the decision to exclude London - by far the most conspicuous concentration of homeless in Britain - from the survey on the grounds that 'discussions of the homeless city have [hitherto] tended to be shaped by developments of a small number of large cities' (p 13). Furthermore, we are told that the data derived from the 'national' survey indicated that service users were for the most part between 25-45 years and that all but one were white British, but there is no indication of numbers or percentages. We are additionally informed that these service users were predominantly male. However, this juxtaposition of demographic data is misleading in that it seemingly conflates the so-called 'national' postal survey data (age and ethnicity) with the seven-town English only survey data (gender).

Further undermining the claim that the data represents a 'national' pattern is the overwhelming maleness and whiteness of the homeless people sampled and interviewed. The authors attempt to excuse the lack of female representation and gender analysis with the somewhat specious argument that they did not wish to 'essentialise' or 'overdetermine' the impact of gender on the homeless experience. Given the quantity of literature on gender and homelessness already published by the early 2000s - reinforced by subsequent research - which clearly demonstrated the very different homeless experiences of women, this smacks more than a little of a *post hoc* justification. Discursive considerations of gender differences - for example in relation to the vulnerability of women and their circumspect use of day centres and hostels - partially compensate for this lacuna. Unfortunately there is no such compensation for the absence of an examination of ethnicity. Again, research already

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[1] The location of these survey sites are anonymised in this book, yet in earlier publications the authors were not so scrupulous. They were previously revealed as: Bristol, Bodmin, Banbury, Dorchester, Scarborough, Worcester and Doncaster (see Johnsen et al, 2005)

published by the early 2000s had unequivocally demonstrated the importance of ethnicity and race in the homeless experience of sections of the British population – an experience not captured in either the author's 'national' or English survey, and regrettably scarcely acknowledged anywhere in this publication.

Additional examples of lack of precision in numerical data handling are replete throughout the text as illustrated in the frequent reporting of percentages with no mention of total counts; this stands in contrast to the care that seems to have been taken with the interpretation of interview data. Many of these numerical issues could easily have been addressed in a tabulation of survey results combined with more scrupulous attention to arithmetic detail and a more exacting data commentary.

(ii) Faith based organisations and the ethos of care
The startling first sentence (p. 1) - ' "Love" is not a word one comes across very often in writings on homelessness' - establishes a major theme of this book, namely that beyond what Cloke *et al* characterise as the prevailing dystopic view of a homeless city of exclusion and abandonment, is another homeless city characterised by care and compassion; a city where homeless people experience empathy and friendship rather than control and containment.   The authors draw upon the narratives of homeless people themselves and on their own surveys of homeless service providers to establish the dimensions of these 'spaces of hope'.   Central to this process, they argue, are christian, faith-based organisations (FBOs) in providing an 'ethic of care' which, through 'extraordinary acts of kindness', empower homeless people and facilitate their engagement in purposeful agency.

The role of FBOs in delivering welfare has been long established. Recent research - not least that recounted in this book - suggests that, particularly in the context of the provision of homeless services, FBOs have in the last few years become more public and influential. In Britain this increasing prominence reflects FBO willingness and ability to avail of opportunities created by the opening-up of care services to 'any willing provider' (especially to voluntary and civil society agencies) under neoliberal policies pursued by successive Labour and Tory governments (Milligan and Conradson, 2006).   Similar trends have been identified in many other European countries (see FACIT, 2008-11) and in North America (Cnaan and Boddie, 2002*).* [2]

The authors identify three tiers of FBO homeless agencies operating in Britain/England: those that proselytise, those that expect changes in attitudes and lifestyles and those that provide unconditional care. It is the latter - the soup runs, the day centres, night shelters and hostels - that are the focus of attention in this book. In these places, the authors claim, care is commonly linked with the idea of unconditional charity based on christian notions of 'agape' and 'caritas'; this is the purest form of care – faith-motivated, but not self-serving, encapsulated in what they call a 'voluntary attitude' (p 245).   That many FBOs provide exemplary care is not in doubt, and they demonstratively make an unambiguous positive contribution in creating spaces of refuge, compassion and security for many homeless people.

Cloke *et al* readily concede that such a 'voluntary attitude' of care and compassion is not exclusive to FBOs - they agree that there are many secular agencies that espouse and deliver a similar ethic. Indeed, in what can perhaps be identified as *the* major underlying theme of this book, the authors suggest that there has been a rapprochement between the secular and the religious to create 'postsecular' service spaces: that is, 'spaces of praxis in which secular and faith motivation collude in new forms of ethical citizenship' (p. 2). That there is some evidence of such rapprochement   - in both the substantive chapters of this book and in other publications - cannot be gainsaid; what can be disputed, however, is

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[2] The role of these FBOs has not always been favourable assessed: see for instance Hackworth, 2002, and the infamous 'Waterproof bibles – for the homeless' incident (Atheist Underworld, 2011)

whether the authors have accurately portrayed the relative importance of the contributions of the secular and the religious to this emergent 'harmony', and whether this harmony is accurately encapsulated in the notion of 'postsecularism'.

Cloke *et al* explicitly portray FBOs as providing the main dynamic in this secular/religious rapprochement, claiming that they play a 'crucial role' and act as 'umbrella organisations'. By contrast, they argue, 'homelessness has served as a highly visible example of the inability of secularist ethics alone to prevent or deal with social exclusion in contemporary society' (p 42) and suggest (as a consequence?) that secular agencies are 'embracing the principles of christian faith'. For their part many FBOs are seen as moving away from overt evangelising in adopting a form of praxis in which christian charity 'is being reproduced as relational love and friendship, a gratuitous and creative practice of service without strings' (p. 49). Yet, even as secular organisations apparently adopt christian principles and religion apparently becomes less overt in FBO practice, parity between the secular and the religious in the delivery of care is not achieved: while they 'appear similar', the authors argue, secular care is characterised by the '… absence of a *spiritual dimension* in holistic recovery' (p. 55; emphasis added). Thus for Cloke*, May and Johnsen (and one assumes all three concur), the FBO ethic of care is privileged over that of the secular.

A problem with this account is that the concepts and principles that inform a secular ethic of care - in contrast with those that inform the religious ethic of care - are not properly considered. The objective of the short section devoted to this issue (pp 54-56) is primarily to demonstrate the apparent overlap and similarity with christian ethics. Secular ethics are thereby co-opted, their non-religious, indeed anti-religious, enlightenment basis ignored, and any potential conflict with christian ethics disregarded. Two illustrative issues of potential difference can be briefly mentioned. First, contestations over the concept of 'spirituality'. According to Cloke *et al* this is what distinguishes and accredits superiority to faith-based services (see quote above). The commonly attributed meaning of spirituality is that it is to do with things 'beyond the material world' – for secularists this comprises emotion and aesthetics, for the religiously inclined it also embraces concepts of immanence. The answer then to the question which reverberates throughout this book: 'What difference does faith make in the delivery of care to homeless people ?', is thus revealed as tautological. A second point of potential and substantive difference relates to the 'mission' of service delivery. The theo-ethics of FBOs, as portrayed in this book, suggest that 'service without strings' is the pinnacle of achievement: in other words, 'giving is its own reward'. Certainly this may be one precept aspired to by secular agencies, but - as writers such as David Smith (1998) long ago established - secular ambition rarely ends there:

> … care, and the emotions usually associated with it, are not enough for an ethics capable of engaging the problems of the contemporary world. Once the importance of an ethic of care is recognized, attention has to be given to the context in which the practice of care takes place, to its political economy and institutional arrangements as well as to the kind of lives and needs which people are experiencing. Introducing the missing dimension of justice requires a version of social justice as equalization (Smith, 1998, p. 35).

Contra Cloke *et al*, secular ethics of care frequently embrace notions of 'solidarity, congruence and identity' which involve not only service, but also a commitment to and an active engagement with the processes of change - these are convictions which go beyond and challenge the 'theo-ethics' of many faith based organisations.

The argument for rapprochement as recounted in this book is based on an unquestioning acceptance of the concept of postsecularism - namely that, as religion transmutes from private reflection to public engagement, the age of western secularism is at an end. It is disappointing that Cloke *et al* ignore the contentious nature of these claims, not least scepticism as to whether an 'age' of secularism had/has any material reality, or whether 'postsecularism' has any useful meaning. They choose rather to uncritically transmit Philip Blond's - the *soi-disant* 'Red Tory' and the sometime adviser to the Cameron coalition on the 'Big Society' - portrayal of the claimed debacle of secularism, to wit: that secularism

permitted religion to be sequestrated by fundamentalism, that secularism assumed scientific advancement was applicable in ethical and political arenas, and that secularism has spawned a 'vacuum of hopelessness … a society shot through with cynicism' (p. 43-44). The debate as to whether these 'failures' adequately characterise present conditions, and whether (if they have any validity) they are causally linked with secular hegemony, is not acknowledged (see: Saxton, 2006; Molendijk et al, 2010; Kong, 2010). In omitting reference to these debates, Cloke et al conceal the shaky foundations on which their arguments are constructed.

(iii) The punitive, revanchist and post-justice city

Cloke et al recognise that '[r]e-imagining the city is [not] and never can be a politically neutral manoeuvre' (p 91), and indeed there is plenty of politics in this book; notably in the critique of the 'pernicious logic' (p 92) of revanchist and post-justice perspectives, and in the more nuanced evaluation of British neo-liberal homelessness policies.

From the first page revanchist and post-justice perspectives are inveighed against as casting the homeless city in a dystopian frame characterised by 'abandonment', 'exclusion' and 'annihilation'; a dystopia in which homeless people are seen variously as 'passive victims … swept up and out of the prime spaces of the city' in a 'seemingly insatiable appetite for high value commodification' (p. 2), or as 'convenient ciphers' in the construction of a 'critique of gentrification, public space law and so on' (p 18). Given that Cloke et al do not directly challenge the everyday reality of an increasingly punitive city, such invective may at first sight seem somewhat misplaced. An explanation for the authors' negativity can, however, be deciphered in the charge that revanchism as it emanates from the USA - especially as transmitted in the work of Mike Davis, Don Mitchell and Neil Smith - is too all-encompassing. It is seen, for example, as not sufficiently sensitive to context such that in Britain (and in Europe more generally), revanchism is manifest not as 'revenge', but rather as 'punitive-lite' or as Henk Meert would have it, a form of 'urban disciplining' (Meert and Stuyck, 2008). In the view of Cloke and his colleagues revanchism is also too encompassing in that it obscures and overshadows an alternative interpretation of the homeless city - espoused in this book - as a city of compassion and care, rather than of abandonment and exclusion. Additionally, it is claimed that the revanchist / post-justice perspective represents 'a spectacular triumph of structure over agency, and of the general over the specific' (p 1). For Cloke et al too much research (i.e. revanchism) proceeds 'at a relatively high level of abstraction, with only a narrow engagement with the concrete changes shaping homeless people's lives … and little or no discussion, via a field-based methodology, with the subjects of that research – namely, homeless people themselves' (p. 17). While these substantive differences of interpretation go someway to explain the authors' denunciations of revanchism, their invective has a further, equally important, purpose whereby their reading of the revanchist city serves as a recurring 'rhetorical trope' against which their wholly opposing view of a compassionate city can be favourably juxtaposed.

Politics are also to the fore in the evaluation of British neo-liberalism, especially with regard to its impact on homelessness. In this context Cloke et al identify three phases. The first sees neo-liberalism promoting self-serving individualism and thereby bolstering some of the excesses of secularism; in the second phase (as noted in the previous section), neo-liberalism opens-up welfare delivery to civil society, and the voluntary sector in particular, thereby creating opportunities for the dissemination of postsecularist ethics; in the third stage however, there is a (partial) reversion to secularist tendencies as the activities of third sector agencies are reined-in with the lure of funding packages, distracting them from homeless advocacy and aligning them with government (possibly punitive – but certainly controlling) objectives. Cloke et al note that this incorporation has been particularly characteristic of some larger secular agencies - what Crisis and Shelter make of this observation is not recorded. In this version of history, the way is thus left clear for those FBOs and like-minded secular agencies that are infused with a 'voluntary attitude', to carry the flag of postsecular ethics.

In the final chapter Cloke *et al* acknowledge that the adoption of a 'voluntary attitude' is not in itself a solution to homelessness, this requires 'deeper structural changes' (p 245). To address the underlying causes of homelessness, they suggest, 'we need to build a sense of political engagement and a sense that change is possible'. The contribution of postsecular ethics to that political engagement is seen as 'fostering a broader *politics of hope* that stands in stark contrast to the politics of revenge and abandonment that allegedly characterises the revanchist or postjustice city' (p. 251; emphasis added). Stymied by an unwillingness to give any credence to revanchist politics, Cloke and his colleagues are reluctant to characterise the compassionate spaces of care created by postsecular ethics as 'resisting' or even 'coping' ; rather these spaces are offered as 'demonstration projects', existing in a parallel world, occupying the interstices of the punitive city, contrasting with but separate from that city; veritable 'beacons of light', holding out (in the authors' vocabulary) the 'hope' of a better future. Thus Cloke and his colleague adopt a 'politics of the inert', leading by example rather than engagement, and in the process neatly complete the biblical trio of theological virtues: 'faith, hope and charity' [1 Corinthians 13:13].

Contrast this with the course of action advocated by Laura Stivers. Stivers (2011) wears her religious beliefs on her sleeve, but is no less committed to the ethics of compassion and empowerment than the authors of '*Swept Up Lives*'. She, however, accepts the reality of the punitive city and the need to engage directly with the structures of revanchism. In proposing a tactics of engagement - 'prophetic disruption' is her preferred epithet - Stivers asks: 'What would it mean to make power analysis central to the issue of homelessness and housing? How are power, privilege, and social domination connected to homelessness and where do we see intersecting oppressions (e.g. race, gender, class)'. In raising such issues Stivers acknowledges that in tackling the causes of homelessness there is a need to 'jump scales' (Smith, N., 1993) both geographically, in connecting the *micro* (spaces of compassion) with the *macro* (the punitive city), and conceptually in conjoining an ethics of care with an ethics of justice (Smith, D., 1998).

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