

The homelessness crisis within Seattle has been a longstanding issue for numerous decades. Seattle has a long history regarding homelessness, and the evolution of this crisis is fascinating, specifically in the city of Seattle. Even though both historical and modern responses to homelessness have consisted of relocating people, the methods and language used within laws differ significantly, with historical responses involving shipping people off on boats to work elsewhere, while modern methods encompass sweeping people out without providing an alternative/solution.

Both past and present methods to combat homelessness have included physically moving people elsewhere. Within the past, "Able-bodied or 'sturdy' paupers-as compared with the 'impotent poor' who could not work--were regularly rounded up and shipped off to the increasing number of English colonies around the world, including the colonies in America" (Ensign 16). Historically, the city has taken drastic measures to move and exterminate the homeless population, but the key detail here is that they put those house-less individuals to work. And while this is definitely not an ethical approach, it is a key contrast to the methods used today to relocate homeless people within the US. In fact, "Too often, homeless residents experience forced evictions or 'sweeps' of the encampments, usually with little notice and no provision of alternative housing, frequently resulting in the destruction of important documents, medicines, and little shelter the residents have" (Tars). Although physically shipping people off in the past sounds less humane, the current day methods of 'sweeps' are kicking people while they are already at a very low point in their lives. The difference between historical and modern methods of relocating homeless people is the intent behind it and the alternatives and lack of alternatives the city provides.

Both today and in the past, the homelessness crisis has been criminalized and laws have been written in to effect, however, the laws between the past and present have evolved

and are notably different. The beginning of Seattle consisted of white European settlers coming to the Pacific Northwest, and with them, they brought laws and policies that originated in Europe. One example of those laws is "The Elizabeth Poor Laws," which "Established the duty to support, mandating that the primary responsibility for the care and support of a poor person was that person's family. They stipulated the rule of three generations, meaning that the pauper's parents, grandparents, and children were morally and legally responsible for the care of 'their own'. If the poor person's family either did not exist or could not support their family member, the local parish could auction off the care of the pauper to the lowest bidder at a public auction—a thinly veiled version of slavery" (Ensign 16). The Poor Laws essentially answered this huge question of who is responsible for homeless people, which is something that many civilians question today. The laws also state that homeless people are literally auctioned off if no one steps up to care for them. These laws are quite different from the ones we have today surrounding homelessness. However, "Former President Trump has been fearmongering around homelessness and made a nationwide camping ban and push to put unhoused persons into 'relocation camps' a part of his platform" (Tars). Modern laws and campaigns to push bills don't encompass much about who is morally and literally responsible for homeless people. Additionally, a comparison between modern and historical laws is that they both involve forcefully moving homeless people around. However, the language and methods used within these laws are quite different.

In conclusion, there are parallels between how the country and Seattle specifically have handled the homelessness crisis; it is the methods and laws/criminalization that set these two time periods apart from each other. Historically, the methods and laws set in place were very inhumane and extreme, especially when it came to forcefully relocating people. However, the essential goal of moving homeless people out translates into modern laws as well. The language within modern laws is made to seem more humane, even though the underlying intent

is the same that it's always been in the past, which is to relocate people who are not wanted. The city needs to find a way to help people rather than skew past laws and methods to manipulate people into thinking they are humane when, in fact, these methods have never been.