

Approaching Issues of Homelessness through Heidegger's Notion of Dwelling

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Part One: What is Dwelling? (An Exegetical Account of *Building Dwelling Thinking*)

Section One: Introduction and Project Goals

It is undeniable that homelessness is a pervasive issue.¹ Though homelessness has always been worthy of concern, it has gained more attention in philosophy as the discipline has increasingly turned its eye toward justice oriented work.² What it means to be homeless has taken on a variety of meanings, ranging from the lack of a physical structure to consistently dwell in to the feelings of displacement or lack of sanctuary.³ The way in which homelessness is defined and addressed also has serious implications, both in conceptualizing issues surrounding homelessness and in the planning of and providing solutions for it. There have been countless attempts from social, religious, political, and economic groups to remedy the issue, but many of these attempts fall short, whether it be due to a lack of resources, support, or understanding of

¹ "Global Homelessness Statistics." Homeless World Cup Foundation. September 12, 2018. Accessed February 20, 2019. <https://homelessworldcup.org/homelessness-statistics/>; "State of Homelessness." National Alliance to End Homelessness. Accessed February 20, 2019. <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-report/>.

² Homelessness and Home. Accessed February 21, 2019. <https://homelessness.philosophy.uoregon.edu/>; Fricker, Miranda. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011; Guenther, Lisa. *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlives*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013; Oliver, Kelly. *Carceral Humanitarianism: Logics of Refugee Retention*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017; Daly, Anya. "Homelessness & the Limits of Hospitality." *Philosophy Now: A Magazine of Ideas*. 2017. Accessed February 21, 2019. https://philosophynow.org/issues/123/Homelessness_and_the_Limits_of_Hospitality; Talia Mae Bettcher, "Trapped in the Wrong Theory: Rethinking Trans Oppression and Resistance," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 39, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 383-406.

³ Weil, Simone. *The Need for Roots ; Prelude to a Declaration of Duties towards Mankind*. Translated by Arthur Wills. With a Pref. by T.S. Eliot. Boston: Beacon Press, 1960; Michael Allen Fox, *Home: A Very Short Introduction* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 92.

homelessness itself.⁴ A key factor in creating successful social change is to not only engage with issues through an empirical and objective lens, but also through a subjective and personal one. Without a holistic approach to and understanding of homelessness, it is unlikely that widespread change will take place.

Some twentieth century philosophical traditions, such as phenomenology and existentialism, have been revisited and used as investigative tools to further explore social issues like homelessness.⁵ Phenomenology and existentialism as intellectual programs are grounded in emphasis and exploration of selfhood, appearance, and meaning. German thinker Martin Heidegger has had considerable influence within these two schools of thought. Indebted to thinkers such as Holderlin, Kierkegaard, and Husserl while inspiring others like Arendt, Sartre, and Derrida, Heidegger was not only positioned at the junctures of multiples lines of thinking, but provided a large, complicated, and thought-provoking body of work. Much of Heidegger's life and work has received mixed reception due to his affiliation with the Nazi party. Despite having a complicated legacy, the type of thinking Heidegger engaged in and inspired may provide valuable insights to contemporary issues surrounding homelessness.

⁴ CBSNewYork. "Attempts To Get Homeless Into Shelters Fail 99 Percent Of Time, Data Show." CBS New York. August 29, 2016. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/08/29/homeless-shelter-failure/>; Capps, Kriston. "Three Ways Cities Try (and Fail) to Solve Homelessness." CityLab. November 17, 2014. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2014/11/three-ways-cities-try-and-fail-to-solve-homelessness/382815/>; Semuels, Alana. "How Can the U.S. End Homelessness?" The Atlantic. April 18, 2018. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/04/end-homelessness-us/479115/>; Harnish, Veronica. "I've Been Homeless 3 Times. The Problem Isn't Drugs or Mental Illness - It's Poverty." Vox.com. March 08, 2016. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/8/11173304/homeless-in-america>; Broden, Scott. "Murfreesboro to End Lease with Room in the Inn Homeless Shelter." DNJ. May 26, 2017. Accessed February 25, 2019. <https://www.dnj.com/story/news/2017/05/26/murfreesboro-end-lease-room-inn/349076001/>.

⁵ Heather Curry, *A Semiotic Phenomenology of Homelessness and the Precarious Community: A Matter of Boundary* (University of South Florida Scholar Commons Graduate Theses and Dissertations, 2015); Guenther, 2013.

This particular project is composed of three parts. In the first part, I seek to provide a brief analysis of Heidegger's concept of dwelling. This will be done by revisiting one of Heidegger's more peculiar essays, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*. In the second part, I will survey current philosophical/sociological literature on homelessness, and in the third, I will see how a reexamination of Heidegger's concept of dwelling can be applied to and inform issues surrounding homelessness.

Section Two: A Very Brief Introduction to Heideggerian Thought

To set the stage for the exegesis of *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, it will be beneficial to quickly review previous ideas in Heidegger's work. Heidegger wanted to establish an ontology that shifts the focus from the Cartesian subject (*I*) to the ground on which questions of being are asked at all. In other words, Heidegger believed that the question of what the subject is presupposes existence itself, and he wanted to know more about the structures that made existence possible. Heidegger saw himself (for better or worse) as a torchbearer illuminating the true path and nature of being. Understanding the conditions of existence itself was a necessary prerequisite for making oneself intelligible. This is made evident in Heidegger's own conception of what a human being could be, which is a *Da-sein*. Michael Wheeler provides a succinct description of a *Da-sein*, which he defines as "the inherently social being who already operates with a pre-theoretical grasp of the a priori structures that make possible particular modes of Being."⁶ This concept of *Da-sein* is never truly fixed throughout Heidegger's work, making it particularly elusive.

⁶ Wheeler, Michael, "Martin Heidegger", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/heidegger/>>.

With this, Heidegger attempts to write in a manner that de-emphasizes subjects acting on objects and instead opts to recover the *middle voice* found in ancient Greek language. The greek middle voice was voice term used to communicate reflexive activity in which a subject is not completely acting nor being completely acted upon (for example, “the shirt is soaking,” or “the casserole is baking.”). Another concept that will be revisited throughout this paper is *gelassenheit*, which roughly translates to “letting-be-ness” or “releasement.” For Heidegger, *gelassenheit* and the middle voice help describe the way humans have a relationship to other beings that acknowledges their own nature while emphasizing the importance of the human in the relational activity itself. Again, the rationale behind Heidegger’s desire to recover Classical Greek middle voice and deploy *gelassenheit* is to capture the way in which Da-sein has a relationship to/with beings that is neither active nor passive. Furthermore, Heidegger has a habit of creating concepts and deploying words that are difficult to translate from German, whether it be due to the mashing of words together, attempting to establish word plays that are best understood only in German, or by playing loosely with the genealogy and etymology of the words themselves. It seems that Heidegger deploys these etymological-linguistic gymnastics to dislocate words from the reader’s typical interpretations and associations. As a result, putting a pin in Heidegger’s notion of dwelling is an arduous task, especially considering Heidegger’s aversion to clear, concise definitions.

Section Three: From Da-sein to Dwelling

To gain a proper understanding of dwelling, it is necessary to locate it in relation to the rest of Heidegger’s thought. Heidegger’s work is often divided into two distinct periods: the

early period, which is characterized by its dense, technical prose and its focus on establishing a fundamental ontology, and the later period, which sees a shift away from this project and is written in a poetic, nearly mystical style. In earlier works, Heidegger aspires to uncover the structures of being itself via phenomenology. Dwelling is mentioned briefly in Heidegger's earlier works, but it is not until the later period that he fully develops the concept. With his new focus toward dwelling, there is also a shift in terminology. In later works, the phrase Da-sein, which dominated earlier writings such as *Being and Time*, is almost completely replaced with words like *human* or *mortal* (mortal being deployed when speaking about the Heidegger's concept of the Four-fold specifically). At times, Da-sein sounds like a discrete being, but at others it becomes something more of an achievement of "authentic" being or a receptivity toward the world. Despite this, dwelling seems to be a continuation of Heidegger's earlier projects concerning Da-sein. Both Da-sein and dwelling have a distinct flavor, and both concepts are used by Heidegger as tools to help readers re-evaluate what is already under one's nose, namely, the structure of existence itself (as is seen in the phenomenological method). If *Being and Time* was an attempt to lay out a map explaining what it means to *be*, then later works, specifically *The Question Concerning Technology* and *Building Dwelling Thinking* detail the route he believes humanity must follow to authentically relate to ourselves and other beings around us.

Interestingly, the emphases of these works runs parallel to the split between Heidegger's older more technical work and his newer more mystic/poetic work. The risk of being derailed from this track is to lose connection with being entirely. Fortunately, there is a moment of clarity in which Heidegger explicitly links Da-sein and dwelling. Put succinctly, Da-sein is a dwelling being, or in Heidegger's own words, "Dwelling is the basic characteristic of Being" (BW, 362).

Section Four: An Investigation of *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*⁷

Now that the shape of Heidegger's philosophy has been etched out, it is time to investigate the primary work of interest. In his famous 1951 lecture, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, Heidegger explicitly poses two main questions: "What is it to dwell?" and "How does building belong to dwelling?" These questions are the guiding force and the backdrop from which he will work. More specifically, each question is treated as an opportunity for Heidegger to re-present the philosophy he had worked on for the past decades while also providing insights into what he believed to be plaguing his own country.

Heidegger's first move after posing these two questions is to clarify the meaning of the terms he will be using. He asserts that the act of building in its true sense is distinct from cultivating or constructing. Regarding buildings as objects, he makes it clear that not all buildings are necessarily places of dwelling. Furthermore, one can dwell in a space that is not a building or lodging, and to dwell is not the same as inhabiting a space. Heidegger argues that dwelling is an end to which building is a means but that dwelling also occurs in the activity of building.

In the next part of the essay, Heidegger traces the etymology of various German words; he connects the word *bauen* (build) with *buan* (to dwell, stay in a place) to propose that building and dwelling are inherently related. He then connects *bauen* (now considered dwelling) to *bin* (to be). Next, he contrasts *bauen* as constructing by relating the word to concepts of cherishing, protecting, and preserving. In this juggling of words, Heidegger establishes building as dwelling

⁷ Martin Heidegger, Edited by David Farrell Krell, *Basic Writings* (New York: Harpercollins, 2008), 347-363. *Section Four is an entire recapitulation of Heidegger's Essay, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, therefore the entire section is cited.

and dwelling as being on earth. Despite earlier dissociations with building as cultivating and constructing, Heidegger ultimately argues that cultivating and constructing actually unfold from building as dwelling. Heidegger then relates the Saxon word *wuon* and the Gothic *wunian* (to be at peace) to *bauen* and then connects *wunian* to peace as *friede* (to be free). *Friede* is the connected to *frye* and *fry* (preserved from harm, spared). From this chain of relations, Heidegger argues that to be free is to spare and preserve and to dwell is to be free and preserve. It is not yet clear what is to be freed, spared, and preserved through dwelling, however.

After this, Heidegger takes a leap in introducing the framework in which dwelling is ultimately contextualized. He states that in thinking of *bauen* as building and dwelling, there is an understanding of the “manner in which mortals are on the earth.” Here he introduces *earth*, *sky*, *divinities*, and *mortals*. These individual components are known as *the four*, and their existence as a unity is *the fourfold*, or primal oneness. At this point it is essential to note that Heidegger believes this fourfold to literally and physically exist. This is the framework that Heidegger would like to usher in in place of Cartesian subjectivism. To recapitulate, by *earth*, Heidegger is speaking of literal earth, *sky*, as literal sky, *divinities*, as literal divinities, and *mortals* as humans. For the sake of consistency, discussion of humans will use the word *mortal(s)* from this point forward. Heidegger claims that mortals are unique in that they are “capable of death as death.” Being capable of death as death, for Heidegger, means that an individual is not only sentient but aware of its own mortality. Knowledge of the certainty of death is what distinguishes mortals from every other component of the fourfold. Another defining characteristic of mortals is what Heidegger calls the ability to dwell. Dwelling is the activity which mortals engage in as part of the fourfold.

Here, mortal dwelling will be discussed at greater length. The semantic connections Heidegger made earlier will now come into play. In dwelling, mortals partake in the fourfold by “safeguarding the fourfold in its unfolding.” This safeguarding is the same as saving, freeing, and preserving. Understood conversely, mortal dwelling does not exploit or wear out the earth, nor does it attempt to master it. Heidegger connects the dwelling/saving activity to *gelassenheit*, which roughly translates to letting-be-ness, or setting something free into its own essence. This connects back to the ancient Greek middle voice, in which a thing relates to itself and/or other things in a way that is neither active nor passive. Mortals, according to Heidegger, “receive sky,” “await divinities,” and “initiate their own essential being.” Another characteristic of mortals, much in line with the rest of Heidegger’s thought, is keeping death in mind. Heidegger believes that for a mortal to dwell and preserve the fourfold, they simply “stay with things,” or “bring the essence of the fourfold into things.” Furthermore, the requisite conditions for a mortal to dwell and preserve the fourfold necessitates that mortals themselves are let be as things in their essence (going back to the concept of *gelassenheit*). It is now clear that in order for a mortal to dwell properly, there are requisite conditions that must be met, and these conditions are the same as the function that is being performed by mortals themselves. Perhaps dwelling begets dwelling. It is here that Heidegger believes he has properly addressed the first question: *What is it to dwell?*

Heidegger then begins to answer the second question: *How does building belong to dwelling?* In discussing building and dwelling, Heidegger provides an example of a bridge that crosses a stream, connecting a small town and a city. Heidegger argues that a bridge is a gathering (*versammlung*) of the fourfold. Components surrounding the bridge, such as banks of a stream, the crossing of mortals, and the sky above the bridge, are only made intelligible by the

bridge gathering them together. The bridge in this case is not significant by virtue of its bridge-ness nor its symbolism but solely as a *thing*, according to Heidegger, and western thought and its divisions of objects has disquieted the unity of things gathered in the fourfold in a given space. After introducing the bridge as a thing that gathers the fourfold, Heidegger discusses locale, space, and site. According to him, locales create spaces for sites in which a fourfold can exist. Locales are established by things such as bridges. When Heidegger uses the word *space*, he is not referring to quantifiable or measurable space (*extensio*), but rather room for the possibility of a site. Following this logic, a site seems to demarcate where actual dwelling occurs. Heidegger resists thinking of site and space in calculative terms, seeing as it is not hospitable to establishing locales.

This plethora of terms all serves in Heidegger's long way around attempt to state that the relationship between mortals and space occurs in dwelling. In dwelling, mortals establish locales, and the locales allow the fourfold to be established. Building is the method of dwelling that establishes locales, so in building (which is a form of dwelling), the fourfold is gathered. In building and dwelling, there is the establishment, attunement, and preservation of literal physical spaces where all four components of being: sky, earth, divinities, and mortals, can exist in their own unique way that transcends human expectations and desires. Again, for Heidegger, "dwelling is the basic characteristic of Being."

Heidegger ends his essay by briefly touching on the housing crisis that Germany was experiencing at the time he was writing. He argues that the housing shortage during the time of writing was not the same as what he believed to be the timeless issues surrounding dwelling. He believes the root cause of the housing crisis, the physical and ontological homelessness (not

being at home within *being* itself), is caused by mortal misrelation with the fourfold. Heidegger concludes in stating that, “mortals must ever learn to dwell,” reemphasizing the continuous struggle for authenticity regardless of physical housing issues. To recapitulate, Heidegger believes that building is a component of being itself, and in building, one is enacting dwelling, or the type of being which establishes the proper relation of the self with its surroundings.

With Heidegger’s essay in mind, it will prove beneficial to explore both homelessness and dwelling through the work of various contemporary thinkers. Each thinker’s work will illuminate parts of Heideggerian thought that can be extrapolated to develop an ethical framework to address issues of homelessness. If successful, this enterprise will help reconceptualize homelessness, provide direction for action, and inspire others to engage in practical and impactful dwelling activity.

Part Two: Contemporary Perspectives on Homelessness and Heidegger's "Dwelling"

Section One: Fox- Home and Homelessness

According to Michael Allen Fox, author of *Home: A Very Short Introduction*, there are multiple ways in which both home and homelessness can be understood. Fox establishes minimal definitions to define home (such as home being a place of refuge) and from there introduces more elaborate ones which include familiarity, gathering, and centrality to life.⁸ Another definition of home is, "the place one takes for granted."⁹

Heidegger is mentioned explicitly when Fox charts out ideas of home. Heidegger's notion of individuals as dwellers, or things with dwelling as an intrinsic characteristic, aligns with Fox's own idea of home as a universally understood and lived out concept. Fox describes Heidegger's notion of dwelling as "developing roots in a place such that one is at home there."¹⁰ *Developing roots* is an interesting phrase; it captures the kinetic component of Heidegger's notion of dwelling, but it relies on associations with organic material or nature which Heidegger would like to exclusively ascribe to Earth (Earth, here, as a component of the Four/Fourfold).

Now that Fox's notion of home as well as its relation to Heidegger has been established, the stage is now set to discuss what it means to be *without* a home. To unpack the existential and interpersonal implications of homelessness, Fox classifies homelessness in four different ways: "There are those who chronically have no home; those who no longer have a place to call home

⁸ Michael Allen Fox, *Home: A Very Short Introduction* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) 1,2,4.

⁹ Fox, 2.

¹⁰ Fox, 21.

because of reduced circumstances; migrants who have had more than one place to call home, but confront issues of who they are and where they truly belong; and those who are spiritually homeless.”¹¹ It is abundantly clear that homelessness is not limited to houselessness. People can experience ruptures within their homes, displacement from home (in the case of refugees), or slowly experience the dissolution or unraveling of home through extenuating circumstances.

Fox discusses other concomitants of homelessness. Many people find themselves averse to homeless individuals, whether this be due to fear, resentment, disgust, pity, guilt, etc. According to Fox, homeless individuals, upon being seen, are manifestations of “what can go seriously wrong in life,” and bring unease.¹² Suddenly, the line between those with and without homes is blurred, and the mythologized wanderer – the person with no face – becomes concretized. The *other* is made intelligible as a real person that is perceived and confronted physically. To briefly employ a psychoanalytic lense, that which appears (the homeless person) in physical space conjures and brings near the far off fears of being without a place in which to rest. While homeless individuals bring near the fears of their own condition to others, they themselves may constantly feel home moving away from them. Fox laments the fact that physical space to inhabit, privacy, comfort, and feelings of belonging to a community are “temporary and elusive” for those who are homeless; to be homeless means to be without privacy, community, and a sense of self.¹³

¹¹ Fox, 92.

¹² Fox, 92.

¹³ Fox, 94.

In light of this discussion, it is clear that Fox sees home not only as a spatialized entity but one which is imbued with “spiritual or symbolic significance.”¹⁴ The personal investment in home is made abundantly clear, making an understanding of homelessness and its potential remedies all the more necessary.

Section Two: Curry- Homelessness and Community

In the paper, *A Semiotic Phenomenology of Homelessness and the Precarious Community: A Matter of Boundary*, Heather Renee Curry not only writes on the concept of homelessness but also what it looks like for an individual to be homeless in a public space. Curry’s focus is not limited to the absence of a house, but how homelessness is interrelated with issues surrounding community. Like Fox, Curry acknowledges the “emotional resonance” of home.¹⁵ Beyond this resonance, Curry also believes that home is a space in which the self can be cultivated and emerge in the community.¹⁶ Before discussing community at large, Curry immediately notes in the Hegelian/Sartrean fashion that one’s sense of self is intelligible only through the negation of the other. This negation can be applied both on an individual level and on a community level to understand the situation of homelessness. Furthermore, this raises questions about what the self is both in relation to other individuals and a larger community. According to Curry, “community is bound up in a dialectic of inclusion and exclusion.”¹⁷ In the

¹⁴ Fox, 15.

¹⁵Heather Curry, *A Semiotic Phenomenology of Homelessness and the Precarious Community: A Matter of Boundary* (University of South Florida Scholar Commons Graduate Theses and Dissertations, 2015), 29.

¹⁶ Curry, 30.

¹⁷ Curry, 11.

same way Curry understands the inclusion/exclusion dialectic regarding community and the self, this same dialectic can also be applied to houses or places of dwelling which specifically demarcate between interior and exterior, a place of dwelling and the place outside of dwelling. Further discussion on interiority and exteriority of houses will be seen in the section of this paper concerned with the work of Kelly Oliver.

To Curry, homeless individuals are a prime example of people who are excluded from community. Following this line of thought, there are prerequisites for being included in a community – owning a house being one of them. Entering and exiting a house is symbolic of one's entrance and exit of a community or public space. For those without a home, this back and forth between the house and community – between the public and private spheres – is impossible. Their private life is either hindered or destroyed because of constant occupation of the public space, and the public life is damaged due to derision experienced by others and the inability to reap the benefits of the private life. To attempt to cultivate a sense of self in the public setting alone is comparable to being a fish out of water. Under the surveillance of others, one cannot emerge to be who they are. The public/communal space is simply not suited for intimacy in the same way the private/home space is. For Curry, community itself is not identical to public space, however, but rather part of the boundary crossing between public and private.¹⁸ Community involves the sharing and transmission of thoughts, feelings, and experiences that occur both in public and private space. Individuals who are homeless are excluded from community due to their lack of ability to access both public and private spaces which are necessary to partake in a community the way those with homes do. Continuing this line of

¹⁸ Curry, 23.

thought, being without a house in many communities can create a cascading effect in which alienation and othering are rampant and homelessness moves from physical domains to psychical and existential ones.

Curry attempts to translate this issue of the homelessness and the emerging of the self into Heideggerian terminology. She argues that someone who is homeless is “outside the condition of dwelling that is most basic to us all.”¹⁹ While dwelling may be interpreted with ambiguity here, her assertion that homeless individuals are “delegitimized as the originary site of being in the world” is undoubtedly indebted to Heidegger’s thinking.²⁰ For Heidegger, being-in-the-world describes the way in which humans become accustomed to the lives they live or the continuous situations one finds oneself in. This concept is Heidegger’s starting point for his phenomenological work and the object used to fill the hole created by the displacement of the Cartesian cogito. Being-in-the-world can be loosely fit into the familiarity with which one navigates public, private, and communal spaces. Put succinctly, not having a home provides a seriously obstacle to being in proper relationship with Being.

One line of thought that may connect Curry and Heidegger lies in how beings express dwelling. Curry argues that “a private space of dwelling finds its architectural expression in the house,” and Heidegger states that dwelling is the fundamental characteristic of being.²¹ Architectural expression certainly includes but is not limited to building –though not all building is for the purpose of dwelling, but rather, building is the means by which dwelling can be

¹⁹ Curry, 31.

²⁰ Curry, 31.

²¹ Curry, 34.

realized. However, to bind being qua architectural expression and being qua dwelling too tightly risks equivocating each thinker's use of the word *dwelling*. Houses can be understood as physical and architectural expressions of being. Another potential equivocation may occur when Curry claims "Public institutions are not sites of dwelling, and indeed, as Heidegger explains, one must 'dwell' in order to be. Dwelling is the activity of being."²² Public institutions may not be sites where cultivations of the self and extreme interiorization occur without being gazed upon by others, but it would take a stronger argument to say that public institutions are not sites of dwelling (in the sense that dwelling is the activity of mortals establishing and gathering the fourfold).

The portion of Curry's project in which she explores homelessness through Heideggerian terminology yields some reward but leaves more questions than answers. Though Curry's thought is saturated with concerns similar to Heidegger, their focuses do not map onto one another perfectly. Heidegger was often worried about the ontological disjointment/displacement of all individuals, Curry's paper only focuses on the disjointment of individuals who are without homes. Both are aware of the eerie misalignments and conditions within which an individual may exist. Curry provides a convincing description of one aspect of the homeless condition, explaining that those who are homeless must establish their own home "in the seam of the public and private."²³ Whether or not the dissolution of this seam is possible or desirable will not be addressed in this section of the paper, but this description does well to portray the limited, tense, and scrutinized space in which many homeless individuals have to navigate.

²² Curry, 35.

²³ Curry, 36.

In reading Fox, some attitudes and feelings of those who observe homelessness emerged, specifically the feeling that homeless individuals are manifestations of misfortune. For Curry, there is more to the experience of seeing a homeless person than being reminded of the fragility of one's socioeconomic position. To her, the immediacy of the physical body interacting with the world is more clearly understood as a result of observing someone who is homeless. Curry discusses the phenomenological experience of standing on pavement and being cognizant of the fact that humans inhabit bodies that at times feel radically discontinuous with the rest of the world. Individuals who are homeless and occupy the "seam" between public and private not only occupy spaces that are physically and symbolically atypical, but this occupation itself brings forth the discontinuity between the self and the world.

One dark fact that must be acknowledged is that many laws criminalize the ability to even live in public spaces.²⁴ When socioeconomic structures, laws, and policies work in unison – intentionally or otherwise – to cyclically and continually deprive people of tangible and intangible needs, it can have devastating effects. For Curry, this aforementioned phenomenon is known as *necropolitics*, or the political disposal of life.²⁵ Policies on homelessness seem to make not only Heideggerian dwelling, but any dwelling at all, impossible for those who are homeless.

Unfortunately, Heidegger seems to shrug off policies addressing, and historical instances of, homelessness (namely the housing crisis which he explicitly mentions in *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*), seeing them as happenstance and collateral resultant of humanity's collective ontological misalignment. This is a grave oversight on Heidegger's part which serves as one of the most immediate points of departure from his thinking. In the third part of this paper, an

²⁴ Curry, 58.

²⁵ Curry, 58.

argument will be presented which asserts that what Heidegger sees as merely symptomatic in homelessness is worthy of combating in its own right, and his own philosophy may be used as a justification to do so.

Section 3: Bas- Homelessness and Refugee Situations

Zelda Bas desires to understand the situation of homelessness through a phenomenological method similar to Heather Curry, though her purview goes beyond homelessness and into issues concerning refugees. To do this, Bas focuses on understanding homelessness through the work of Hannah Arendt, a prominent philosopher and student of Heidegger. Bas believes that homelessness in its essence is intertwined with the deprivation of human freedom and ultimately has three origins: “rightlessness, spiritual disconnectedness, and political invisibility.”²⁶ Bas begins her discussion of homelessness by invoking thoughts from 20th century thinker Simone Weil. According to Bas, Weil sees humans as “rooted” by genuine participation in a community and believes that homelessness can exist as both spiritual and geographic uprootedness.²⁷ Bas provides an excellent exploration of homelessness both as a political condition in which humans are deprived of basic rights and as a spiritual condition in which one feels severed from the community and the self. In her work, Bas weds these two lines of thought through the works of Arendt and Weil.

Bas sees refugee situations as large-scale representations of homelessness, and her paper serves the dual purpose of providing a metaphysical and sociopolitical account of the formation

²⁶ Zelda Bas, *A Phenomenology of Homelessness: Hannah Arendt in Conversation with the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (Bard Senior Projects Spring 2016. Paper 124), 5

²⁷ Bas, 2,3.

of massive homeless refugee populations. Arendt's own account of statelessness and homelessness hinges on the idea that demarcations of sovereign states, nationality, and other arbitrary facets of identity become misused and break down.²⁸ This sentiment is shared by contemporary philosopher Kelly Oliver, whose work concerning the dissolution of sovereign states and the emphasis on Earth citizenship, will be discussed at length in a later section. The dissolution of 20th century European nation-states led to the creation of massive refugee camps, which Bas argues are spatial manifestations of homelessness.²⁹ Much like how Curry states that homeless individuals exist on the seam between public and private spheres, Bas argues that refugee camps "are modern spaces of confinement for bothersome populations who do not fit the framework of the law."³⁰ A country of origin may expel an individual and no new country may accept them, putting them in a stateless, rightless, homeless margin between two completely habitable places. There is a sad irony in the fact that a homeless individual may be literally sandwiched between and surrounded by the homes of another.

Bas is the first writer thus far who has discussed origins of homelessness and refugee crises as resultant of actions of political powers and sovereign states.³¹ If the totality of issues surrounding and including homelessness and refugee situations could be solved politically, then it is theoretically possible to use be able to use Heidegger's model of dwelling to inspire a political framework that circumvents situations which give rise to statelessness and

²⁸ Bas, 5.

²⁹ Bas, 7.

³⁰ Bas, 7.

³¹ Bas, 13.

homelessness. Even so, it must be noted that an exclusively political solution is almost anti-Heideggerian in nature. It is certainly not the case that homelessness is an exclusively political phenomenon. To this point, one of Heidegger's concerns is that humans do not lose sight of their ontological condition, and implementing an exclusively political course of action implicitly prioritizes polity over the ontological.

Bas reiterates Arendt's argument that creating stateless individuals is a not merely a result of organizational issues but also an intended consequence resulting from privileging national interests and prioritizing the sovereign state over the individual.³² Alongside prioritization of the sovereign state, human rights become equivocated with national rights.³³ Heidegger would be weary of human and state rights converging, since this would lead to a *Da-sein* not only being a *they-self*, but the conditions in which only state rights exist would ultimately be inhospitable to dwelling. When state rights and human rights are equivocated, individuals caught in uneasy political situations easily be deprived of their livelihood, dignity, and necessary conditions for survival. According to Bas, Arendt considers the loss of home to go beyond the political; the loss of home also signifies disconnect with the daily life one is most familiar with.³⁴ The entrenchment in daily life, or rootedness, appears similar to Heidegger's own notion of *being-in-the-world*.

Bas notes that being deprived of a home diminishes the agency and ability of individuals in influencing their present and future conditions.³⁵ In her words, being deprived of a home "is to

³² Bas, 17.

³³ Bas, 17.

³⁴ Bas, 18.

³⁵ Bas, 19.

be shorn from the human activity of creating the world in which we live.”³⁶ Creating the world in which one lives may be seen as a similar activity to Heidegger’s dwelling. For Bas, this is not limited to semiotics and intangible relationships. Additionally, Bas believes, as does Arendt, that the creation of world also essentially occurs using physical earth materials.³⁷ The rootlessness that accompanies homelessness is clearly both physical and metaphysical. There appears to be an interplay between the physical causalities and apparatuses of homelessness and the metaphysical repercussions and hardships experienced by those who are homeless. Such metaphysical repercussions include isolation and loneliness, which for Bas are derived from the loss of meaning experienced in displacement.³⁸ Bas ultimately argues that to be homeless is to be meaningless, and if refugee camps are spatial manifestations of homelessness, then they are by extension spatial manifestations of meaninglessness.³⁹

Similar to Curry, Bas notes that Arendt demarcates between public, social, and private modes of existence.⁴⁰ In this tripartite model, it is more difficult to pinpoint a seam or rupture that homeless individuals may occupy as they do in Curry’s thinking, but it is clear that each mode of existence is adversely affected in homelessness. One can understand the social as a mediation of public and private; given the fact that homeless individuals likely experience deficiencies in public and private spheres, it follows that there would be adverse effects in the

³⁶ Bas, 19.

³⁷ Bas, 19.

³⁸ Bas, 33.

³⁹ Bas, 43, 44.

⁴⁰ Bas, 33.

social sphere as well. As it relates to refugee communities – which constantly wrestle with survival and overcoming obstacles to have basic needs met – private spheres of existence are extremely hindered. Beyond this, the concerns within the public and social spheres are dictated by the radical deficiencies of these basic needs.

Looking back on Bas's work, it becomes evidently clear that homelessness is not only tied up in discourses of power and politics, but homelessness is embedded within larger scale issues pertaining to refugee situations. Conversely, refugee situations which deal with resource scarcity, displacement, and unsustainability can be as microcosms of humanity's continuous wrestling with existence on our own planet. In the next section, earth as Heidegger's own concept and as the planetary body is explored in greater detail.

Section Four: Oliver- Homelessness, Earth, and Earth Citizenship

In her work, *Earth and World: Philosophy after the Apollo Missions*, Kelly Oliver provides key insights into some of Heidegger's more elusive concepts and in doing so, also uncovers what can be described as a planetary ethics. It has been mentioned before that Da-sein is often an elusive concept throughout Heidegger's work. Oliver believes that the catalyst for the transition from Da-sein as world former to dweller lies in his concept of earth, which emphasizes the materiality and material necessity of the being-in-the-world an individual finds oneself in.⁴¹ She also notes that Heidegger's later work involves a shift in the goal of Da-sein from being one

⁴¹ Kelly Oliver, *Earth and World: Philosophy After the Apollo Missions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 111.

who forms a world to one who cares for a world.⁴² Caring for the world in this case is done through dwelling.

Heidegger's concept of earth, both seen in his essay "Origin of the Work of Art" and "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," is relevant for conversations of homelessness, given that a physical refuge is a critical component that is absent in the lives of those who are homeless. Beyond this, earth (liberally interpreted), is the material used in building as a means with dwelling as its end. Heidegger's bridge, Curry's sidewalk, and Bas's refugee camps all depend on earth in the physical formation of a structure which can hold symbolic significance. Oliver states that earth, for Heidegger, involves raw materiality of issues at hand, while world goes beyond the temporal present and its physicality and also concerns itself with the past and the present. Temporal components or emphases of earth and world map onto previous notions of diminished personhood in homeless individuals both in their present experiences as well as their future opportunities. In other words, the constraints homeless individuals experience in earth also have ramifications for how they will dwell in the world, both present and future.

In addition to explicating Heidegger's own concepts, Oliver introduces the notion of being a citizen of the earth, as opposed to being a citizen of a sovereign state. As noted in the work of Bas, Arendt, Weil, and other thinkers, being on the wrong side of the line of a sovereign state can hold serious consequences. Demarcations established by sovereign states are arbitrary and constantly changing, and changes in these demarcations often lead to violence. Most relevant to the overarching line of inquiry, groups of people experience a change in status outside of their control. Oliver describes the attitude Heidegger warns about in *Question Concerning Technology*

⁴² Oliver, *Earth and World*, 111.

as a “planetary imperialism” in which lesser fortunate individuals are thrown by the wayside.⁴³ In the activity of othering, whether the object be planetary resources or fellow planetary inhabitants, there is no shortage of danger. That is why it is key not only to reconceptualize notions of citizenship, but do so in a way through a mode of being and activity in line with dwelling.

The significance of world citizenship is also seen in Oliver’s book, *Carceral Humanitarianism: Logics of Refugee Detention*. In this work, Oliver notes that necessary provisions for life such as safety via asylum, shelter, and sustenance – previously understood to be basic human rights – are now treated as items which are delivered as an act of charity.⁴⁴ She ultimately argues that humanitarian action meant to address crises never exists outside the influence of partisan entities and political/militaristic motives.⁴⁵ The existence, neglect, manipulation, and calculative use of refugee camps maps onto Curry’s notion of necropolitics, but in this case, the number of lives at risk is not in the tens or hundreds of thousands, but in the millions. Disaster fatigue and habitative coping mechanisms prevent most individuals from truly being able to grasp the intensity and severity of the plight of international refugees. The way in which refugees are used as tools for military intervention and advancing agendas of particular nations is further evidence of the dehumanization process which other homeless individuals experience, and the treatment and living conditions of most refugees are so severe that they meet the United Nations criteria for genocide.⁴⁶ With this in mind, it seems that many

⁴³ Oliver, *Earth and World*, 110.

⁴⁴ Oliver, Kelly. *Carceral Humanitarianism: Logics of Refugee Retention* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 1, 2.

⁴⁵ Oliver, *Carceral Humanitarianism*, 2.

⁴⁶ Oliver, *Carceral Humanitarianism*, 15, 24, 72.

homeless individuals and refugees have effectively been sentenced to death (more specifically, a slow death) in which their physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and ontological states deteriorate.

To combat this issue, Oliver argues that it is necessary to reconceptualize relationships between humans in order to cultivate “radical hospitality” which overcomes pitfalls of blind servitude to sovereign statehood and other constructed facets of identity.⁴⁷ This mode of being and thinking hinges of the shared earth and world, both concepts having familiarity in Heideggerian thinking. It appears then, that the ability to dwell would necessitate addressing refugee situations (also thought of as large scale manifestations of homelessness) so as to gather mortals in a local where they can exist in their own essence. Physical displacement is an obvious sign of homelessness, yet the displacement of one’s conception of their role in the world, one’s values, and one’s relation to being is also worthy of serious inquiry.

Section Five: Scott- Lostness

Charles Scott provides a complicated yet insightful account of Heidegger’s thinking pertaining to homelessness and dwelling. A small excerpt from Scott’s book, *On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethics and Politics*, highlights Heidegger’s belief of homelessness as an ontological disorientation:

[Heidegger’s] preoccupation with human destiny and human lostness is important for [Rector’s Address and Letter on Humanism], and his conviction is consistent in both pieces that

⁴⁷ Oliver, *Carceral Humanitarianism*, 77.

people are homeless to the extent that their lives and thought are oriented primarily by a specific ethos rather than by the essence of their language and thought, which becomes manifest in an epoch making interruption of the Greek ethos.⁴⁸

Scott brings to the forefront the fact that Heidegger believed in the potential for a “human lostness.” Though this sentiment is made obvious in his use of phrases like *das man* (the man or the they), *das gerede* (the talk or the chatter), and *uneigentlichkeit* (inauthenticity), it makes clear that there exists a way that Heidegger believes individuals ought to be despite his aversion to a circumscribed ethic. The closest thing to an ethic, as evidenced in Scott’s sentence, is an “orientation” toward or attunement with language and thought. For Heidegger, true thought, not an intellectual, social, and cultural inheritance, is a core component of proper being. Language is essentially divinized in the rest of Heidegger’s work, so it is natural to see why this is among the two pieces of the Greek ethos he longs for. To reiterate, one notion of homelessness, for Heidegger, consists of a life and way of thinking that is not concerned or in touch with language and thinking. To be homeless, in this sense, is to be out of touch with the very characteristics that permeate and circumscribe being itself. It has already been made clear that an ontological disorientation of this fashion will be followed by ontic disturbances, and Scott does an excellent job of describing how and why these disorientations occur, according to Heidegger’s thinking.

In another work, “The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger,” Scott argues that individuals actually have the potential to make themselves and others homeless through the type of living Heidegger warns about in his essay “The Question Concerning Technology.” In

⁴⁸ Charles Scott, *On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Ethics and Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 97.

that essay, Heidegger argues that leading an inauthentic life and endangering oneself and others is a result of enframing the world and the earth as resources to be consumed or expended or in his words, destining as enframing. Much like this, Scott argues that homelessness occurs as a result of struggles related to “getting, expending, and owning.”⁴⁹ “Getting, spending, and owning” are concepts/activities that run counter to Heidegger’s notion of dwelling, and as evidenced in his ontology, he resists movements that attempt to make being intelligible for the purposes of manipulation.

The ethical upshot of Scott’s observations, though not immediately clear, is incredibly important. The manner in which an individual attempts to acquire, possess, and consume their surroundings is not only the source of disorientation, but in enacting this process, they can come to harm others. In other words, a misguided telos of this fashion would and currently does undoubtedly induce collateral damage.

Section Six: Wrathall- Dwelling as Liberation from Commodification of Existence

In the previous section, we discussed Scott’s rereading of Heideggerian dwelling as it relates to the proper relationship with other people and things. Like Scott, Mark Wrathall provides an account of dwelling that is made understandable through the ideas in Heidegger’s essay, “The Question Concerning Technology.” Wrathall sees Heidegger’s notion of dwelling as a direct response to this threat.⁵⁰ In QCT, Heidegger was concerned with humans becoming and being reduced to mere resources, or in Heideggerian terms, experiencing “destining as an

⁴⁹Charles Scott, *The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 194.

⁵⁰ Mark Wrathall, *How to Read Heidegger*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2006), 109.

enframing.” For Wrathall, dwelling not only opposes the commodification of components of the fourfold, but “establishes a space in which human being can once again reclaim its essence.”⁵¹ Again, reclamation implies a state of being that was once achieved and then lost. For Heidegger, this occurred due to the replacement of Greek “thinking” (for Heidegger, the word *thinking* holds a unique meaning) with dogmatic and misconstrued philosophies.

While Heidegger introduces the fourfold and discusses each component of the four at length, Wrathall makes the notion of the fourfold more intimate. In his brief exegesis of “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” Wrathall views the way in which humans/mortals attune themselves with the fourfold as a unique task, and successfully achieving this task is when Da-sein is seen. It is worth noting that the meaning of Da-sein has changed across Heidegger’s work, moving from entity to state of being to achievement. In Wrathall’s interpretation, dwelling is a task that is continually worked on as opposed to a discrete event. Critical to a reading of Wrathall is his assertion that moving away from a technological mindset via dwelling involves the development of new skills and dispositions.⁵² The question becomes what these new skills and dispositions would be and what they would aim toward. While language and thought are integral to Heidegger’s project, these skills and dispositions, given the context of “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” still seem ambiguous. It is from this point that the argument to address issues of homelessness can emerge. Heidegger’s own vision of successful dwelling will lead to a certain motility which he understood as a homecoming or movement to an ideal state. This homecoming ought to be critically evaluated, as it will be in the next section.

⁵¹ Wrathall, 109.

⁵² Wrathall, 110.

Section Seven: Eubanks and Gauthier- Homelessness and Homecoming

As mentioned in previous sections, Heidegger's aversion to Cartesian subjectivism is clear throughout his work. Cecil Eubanks and David Gauthier go further in claiming that the crux of Heidegger's entire project is to overturn philosophy rooted in what he calls "the irruption of subjectivity."⁵³ While they do well to identify Heidegger's efforts to decentralize the notion of subject and complicate subject/object distinctions, this seems to be an overarching simplification of Heidegger's project. Beyond challenging inherited notions of subjectivity, Heidegger goes to great lengths to explain being intimately and being conceived more broadly. Pertaining to being on a broader level, Eubanks and Gauthier claim that Heidegger wants to, "help man return to the homeland," a homeland in which "primordial oneness of mortals within the fourfold" is actualized.⁵⁴ According to him, this was only a state of being that the Greeks had achieved. Heidegger ultimately advocates for an ontology of dwelling.⁵⁵ *Homecoming* is the term of choice for Heidegger in describing reclamation of a homeland that unfolds ontologically and then physically.⁵⁶

Eubanks and Gauthier perfectly capture the upshot of dwelling as well as its necessity to operate within a community framework. They state that Da-sein "is not a self-conscious individual but is a being that is ensconced in a communal world that dictates its practical and

⁵³ Cecil Eubanks & David Gauthier, *The Politics of the Homeless Spirit: Heidegger and Levinas on Dwelling and Hospitality* (History of Political Thought, 32 no.1, pp.129-146, 2011), 3.

⁵⁴ Eubanks and Gauthier, 3, 7.

⁵⁵ Eubanks and Gauthier, 3.

⁵⁶ Eubanks and Gauthier, 3.

theoretical concerns.”⁵⁷ The manner in which one is in the communal world is *dwelling*. Though the activity of Da-sein is dwelling, Eubanks and Gauthier note that Heidegger also establishes a tension/dissonance between Da-sein and home via anxiety.⁵⁸ Dwelling understood as being aligned with the fourfold seems to be at odds with anxiety given the fact that Da-sein itself is often found feeling not at home (unheimlich). However, anxiety is precisely the experience Da-sein has in beginning to acknowledge its finitude, and finitude (as mortality) is the key characteristic that defines mortals within the fourfold. In this way, it becomes clear that an individual must come to terms with their own homelessness and then move toward authentic being in homecoming.

Despite the ambition of a transformed and clarified world, Heidegger’s own notion of homecoming and the perceptions surrounding it are undoubtedly tainted by his affiliation with Nazism. On a theoretical level, Heidegger’s homecoming does not appear far from his fundamental ontology established in *Being and Time*. However, homecoming appears elitist at best and dangerous at worst given its historical context. It is worth noting that *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* was written after World War II, though this does not exempt Heidegger’s work from the ideological influence of Nazism.

To address this, Eubanks and Gauthier use Emmanuel Levinas’ own ontology as a tool to highlight what they believe to be the potentially dangerous shortcomings of Heidegger’s thought. Levinas presents multiple accusations against Heidegger’s philosophy of being, claiming that it

⁵⁷ Eubanks and Gauthier, 5-6.

⁵⁸ Eubanks and Gauthier, 6.

is tainted by ontological supremacy, anti-humanistic bias, and pagan religiosity.⁵⁹ To defend each claim at length is outside the purview of this paper, but a few short remarks will be provided.

Heidegger's intense concern for the authenticity of being and his fixation on death have been seen as problematic by other scholars. This in tandem with the unfolding of Nazism that co-occurred with much of Heidegger's own intellectual activity provides reasonable grounds for accusations of supremacist thinking. Despite this, there were many thinkers who influenced Heidegger, such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, who had philosophies which focused extensively on the individual. The historico-philosophical tradition of "the narrow path" from which Heidegger emerged makes his work susceptible to the criticism of supremacy. Regarding the accusation of anti-humanist bias, a charitable presentation of Heidegger's thinking is that he merely aspires to decentralize humanity in relation to the rest of being through what may be called a post-humanism. Furthermore, concerns of "pagan religiosity" are likely a result of Heidegger's attempt to break away from Western tradition, specifically, historical metaphysical programs intertwined with Christian onto-theology.

The kinetic component of dwelling as homecoming will be further explored in the next section, which seeks to incorporate mobility into an ontology of dwelling.

Section Eight: Todres and Galvin- Heidegger's Ontology and Wellbeing

The journal article, "*Dwelling-Mobility*": *An Existential Theory of Wellbeing*, begins with Heidegger's closing remark from *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*: "The proper dwelling plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the essence of dwelling, that they ever learn to

⁵⁹ Eubanks and Gauthier, 7.

dwelling.”⁶⁰ Les Todres and Kathleen Galvin seek to bridge Heidegger’s ontology with general well being through the concept of dwelling. With their own interpretation and creative appropriation, the two emerge with a theory of wellbeing which they call “dwelling-mobility.”⁶¹ This dwelling-mobility attempts to capture the form of existential well being. According to Todres and Galvin, “[Heidegger] concerns himself with what it is about being-as-such that makes various kinds of human experiences possible.”⁶² These concerns are undoubtedly phenomenological and ontological, and Heidegger certainly wanted to understand the a priori structures involved in “being-as-such.” Like Eubanks and Gauthier, Todres and Galvin see the fourfold as Heidegger’s attempt to explain Da-sein’s relationship to beings in a way that avoids the pitfalls of western/Cartesian metaphysics.

Todres and Galvin take the activity of dwelling through/in the fourfold as a transtemporal task which is done with things in their present condition and more importantly, may include “moving with things as they become what they can.”⁶³ Heidegger himself notes the transtemporal structure of Da-sein (specifically the way in which Da-sein simultaneously occupies past, present, and future). While Heidegger’s original notion of dwelling certainly encapsulates the present, Todres and Galvin would like to interpret Heidegger in a way that involves the mobility and forward looking nature that they emphasize in their own philosophy of mobility.⁶⁴ In this

⁶⁰ Heidegger, 363.

⁶¹ Les Todres & Kathleen Galvin, “*Dwelling-mobility*”: *An Existential Theory of Wellbeing* (International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 5 no.3, 2010). Abstract.

⁶² Todres and Galvin, §1.

⁶³ Todres and Galvin, §1.

⁶⁴ Todres and Galvin, §8.

way, dwelling has a forward looking component for the individual who dwells and the fourfold they gather through dwelling.

Heidegger may consider an individual (das man) homeless in as far as they experience misalignment with the fourfold. This type of existential misalignment with one's own condition of being is similar to Kierkegaard's notion of misalignment of the self's relation to the self (which he calls sin).⁶⁵ While anxiety for Heidegger captures the experience Da-sein has in confronting its own mortality, anxiety may also be understood in how Heidegger deploys the term *unheimlich* (often translated as uncanniness) which he uses to describe the existential homelessness an individual may face. This notion of *unheimlich* can potentially be countered in 'homecoming,' though it is unclear whether homecoming is to be achieved individually or communally. A communal interpretation may justify efforts to combat homelessness, or in the case of Todres and Galvin, encourage the uplifting and mobility of others through dwelling-mobility.

Homelessness understood through a Heideggerian lens also involves the limits of an individual's possibilities and projections. Possibility and projection are notions found in Heidegger's own conception of Da-sein given its tripartite temporal structure. Todres and Galvin also have an eye toward future possibilities, as evidenced in their notion of mobility.⁶⁶ More specifically, Todres and Galvin's orientation toward mobility is seen in their understanding of physical conditions and environments as potential hindrances for an individual's future possibilities.

⁶⁵ Kierkegaard, Søren, Howard V. Hong, and Edna H. Hong. *The Sickness Unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition for Upbuilding and Awakening*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983.

⁶⁶ Todres and Galvin, §6.

In Todres and Galvin's own notion of dwelling, there is a flexibility and attunement to particular events and locations. Their own notion and perhaps Heidegger's notion of dwelling do not guarantee happiness, but only genuine connection with what, where, and how one exists (or ek-sists). To reflect on what has been discussed, Todres and Galvin provide a more clear cut and kinetic interpretation of well being that is not nearly as elusive as Heidegger's own notion of dwelling. Todres and Galvin capture the essence of dwelling in a simple yet powerful way that does justice to their own ontology of dwelling-mobility: "To dwell is to 'come home' to what is there with oneself and the world, whatever the qualities of that may be"

Section Nine: Fry- Architecture of Homelessness

Fry notes that experiences of homelessness, though often deeply rooted within the self, are not always generated from within.⁶⁷ When thinking of Heidegger's conception of thrownness (*geworfenheit*), it is not difficult to imagine situations in which physical inhospitality and instability have psychical and existential repercussions. Fry captures this notion perfectly when he says, "...the designed either facilitates or negates our ongoing ability to dwell in the environments we occupy."⁶⁸

Heidegger is not alone in exploring words and concepts through etymology. Fry notes that the Greek term *oikos* roughly translate to *home* or *household*, while *nomos* and *logos* translate to *law/reason* and *word/reason/plan* respectively.⁶⁹ Fry takes this amalgamation of

⁶⁷ Tony Fry, *Homelessness: A Philosophical Architecture* (Design Philosophy Papers 3 no.3, pp.191-203, 2015), 191.

⁶⁸ Fry, 191.

⁶⁹ Fry, 192.

words to uncover the term *Oekologie*, or *ecology* in English. Ecology goes beyond a conceptualization of a house via *physis* and brings forth more dynamic structures and relations; an ecology involves moving parts and activity which are dictated by an unspoken yet universally understood set of rules or procedures. With a notion of home established with an ecology in mind, the task or mode of being which is sought out in dwelling seems as though it wouldn't be far behind. These ecologies exist materially or immaterially and when forsaken, lead to both homelessness and the unsustainability of dwelling.

For Fry, home can be understood as physiological and ecological. An ecological perspective aligns with notions of interconnectedness seen in discussion of Earth citizenship, but the word *ecology* also elicits the idea of a relationship that goes beyond living beings and has a more intimate tone than the word *physical* or *physiological* could capture. From both perspectives, Fry makes it clear that living unsustainably is to forsake one's own homeland.⁷⁰

Along with each thinker discussed previously, Fry is of the belief that homelessness is distinct from houselessness. Prior to the establishment of houses as understood today, humanity existed in such a way where shelter was perceived to be continuous with the world itself. Fry believes that the establishment of houses made the world an exteriority, and that through establishing/constructing houses, the sense of connection with the world as a homeland in its own right and respect was lost.⁷¹ Heralding back to Bas and Oliver, the house in its establishing interiority and exteriority is similar to the sovereign nation. While both the house and the sovereign nation are perceived as protective and nurturing entities, they can actually alienate one

⁷⁰ Fry, 192.

⁷¹ Fry, 194.

from the world. Through misalignment with each, it is possible to lose touch with the connectedness of global citizenship. The establishment of interior and exterior is also seen as a concern with Bas and Arendt's discussion of the public/social/private structure and Curry's lacuna between the public and private that homeless individuals appear to occupy.

The continuous perception of world as mere exteriority has other repercussions as well. Fry argues that the development of houses led humanity to treating the world and resources as *standing reserve*, borrowing the exact terminology that Heidegger uses in his essay *The Question Concerning Technology*.⁷² More recently in history, it has been observed that contemporary housing is monstrous in its consumption and destruction of the world and its resources. To be homeless in one sense is to lose the possibility of being sustained or sustaining; in the 20th century, homelessness existed due to war and upheaval (which demonstrates unsustained political structures), but 21st century homelessness is becoming increasingly common due to planetary unsustainability which is precisely a result of the technological advancement and limited framing of the world that Heidegger feared.⁷³ Many have proposed a technological solution; Fry argues that technological salvation for the housing and environmental sustainability crises is a myth (an an ironic one at that). It is undeniable that humanity has not only dwelled but transformed the world technologically.⁷⁴

Fortunately, Fry does not see humanity's situation as entirely aporetic. It is undeniable that treating the world as standing reserve will always lead to existential homelessness, even if

⁷² Fry, 199.

⁷³ Fry, 196.

⁷⁴ Fry, 196.

every individual is provided with shelter. Fry suggests that first it is necessary to “re-narrativise” humanity’s condition.⁷⁵ This lies squarely in the domain of Heidegger’s own mission to “re-narrativise” (or perhaps un-narrativise to get back what Heidegger believed had been achieved previously) humanity’s situation via establishing a fundamental ontology. Though a lofty task, Fry proposes that the can be achieved through the “invention” of futuring “homely-pleasure” framed by “concretised ethics.”⁷⁶ To translate, humanity needs to construct a story of its existence and relation to the world that will open doors to newfound (or unearthed) appreciation of the planet. In doing so, this story will also make clear how the earth ought and ought not to be treated (even if exact decision procedures are not laid out).

If a story of the relationship between individuals, houses, and the rest of the world were to be told, Fry believes that he has something worthwhile to contribute. He has made it abundantly clear that a house does not guarantee a being-at-home-in-the-world that Heidegger describes. Fry claims that for a house to become a home, there must be an emotional investment as well as what he calls a “cultural mode of dwelling.”⁷⁷ In addition to being a place where dwelling is possible, Fry believes that a home is a place of becoming and lasting in which formation and sustainability of an individual is possible.⁷⁸ Conversely, to be without a home interferes with dwelling and leaves an individual lacking what Fry calls “a crucial point of reference from which one’s self and world is comprehended.”⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Fry, 200.

⁷⁶ Fry, 200.

⁷⁷ Fry, 194.

⁷⁸ Fry, 195.

⁷⁹ Fry, 195.

Part Three: An Ethics of Dwelling: A Response to Issues of Homelessness

Section One: Emergent Thoughts from Contemporary Works

Through engaging with Fox's work, it becomes clear that both home and homelessness have multiply realizable definitions. While homelessness always serves as a manifestation of "what can go wrong," Fox goes further by distinguishing between chronic homelessness, spiritual homelessness, homelessness induced by reduced circumstances, and homelessness as a result of migration. All of which are cases in which an individual is unable to develop roots – a process that appears to be both active and passive (thinking back to the greek middle voice). Roots in Fox's work are reminiscent of Heidegger's own concepts of earth and world (with world also including being-in-the-world). Fox expands homelessness beyond simple preliminary definitions, thus pushing it beyond physicality alone. Both he and Heidegger see home as universal concepts, and Fox expands the notion of homelessness in a way that allows for deeper insights.

Fox's splintering of the notion of homelessness is essential for better understanding it as a serious and pervasive issue that needs to be addressed. The type of spiritual homelessness that Fox mentions maps on to most of Heidegger's own concerns, but Fox in some ways even goes further by incorporating temporal components (thinking of chronic homelessness and its cumulative existential effects), noting the acute reduction of means and circumstances which can leave an individual without a home (eviction), and mentioning spatial movements such as migration. Under this expanded conception, homelessness is applicable to immediate situations as well as more unorthodox ones. For example, spiritual disturbedness/homelessness will prevent

individuals who have physical homes from engaging in dwelling activity which is necessary for the cultivation and gathering of themselves, others, and the rest of the fourfold. The most significant takeaway from Fox's work lies in his description of developing roots. Roots are entrenched in a location but are still capable of being replanted when necessary. Furthermore, a roots system can successfully propagate only if the soil is adequate and contains enough life, energy, activity, and support. Communities then, must act as the soil in which individuals can roots themselves in to truly grow and flourish. The symbiotic relationship and interdependence is something less emphasized in Heidegger's own work but not completely alien to it. A dweller can even be conceptualized as the soil in which the fourfold (including other dwellers) can be cultivated.

Like Fox, Curry sees home as a space where the self can be cultivated. Curry provides us with a useful distinction between public, private, and community spheres. To successfully navigate the public and community spheres requires healthy existence and activity within the private sphere. For individuals without homes, they are forced to exist on the seam of the public and private, which results in insufficiencies in all three of these domains. Curry's phenomenological account of existing on the seam of these spheres is compelling and serves as a reminder of the complexity and fragility of humanity's modes of existence. Community itself is rooted in a dialectic of inclusion and exclusion, in which some thoughts, feelings, and experiences are shared and others are not. In the case of those who are homeless, they are almost always excluded. At times this exclusion is unintentional, but one must accept the reality that the architecture of societies disenfranchises and sometimes destroys those without homes through a process which Curry calls *necropolitics*.

Curry's phenomenological account helps engage readers with realities of homelessness that cannot be conveyed through statistics alone. This demonstrates the value of the phenomenological tradition that Husserl pioneered and Heidegger engaged with. Imagining a situation where there is no place for rest and refuge under a hot sun, in a cold park, or on a street corner is a sobering reminder of the severity of these situations. In light of this, efforts should be made to provide immediate physical shelter for those without homes so they can escape the scrutiny of the public sphere. This would only be a first step to providing a place of dwelling, however. These physical spaces would have to have elements of stability and solidarity and long term concern to be successful, or else they would simply become a place to dump off those without homes, thus reifying social/spiritual homeless and refugee situations. Heidegger was well aware that the erection of structures to remedy issues of being was insufficient and potentially dangerous. Another way to facilitate navigation among the public, private, and communal spheres is to educate others about homelessness while encouraging them to make public spaces more hospitable. On a physical level, public spheres could create minimal shelters (pavilions, seating areas, etc.) that homeless individuals can legally occupy. This too runs the risk of stigmatization, but integrating dwelling spaces into the public domain could increase visibility of the issue and safety for homeless individuals. Closer integration of homeless individuals within a community also facilitates the ability to dwell by literally gathering other mortals. To combat systemic disenfranchisement, actions should also be taken to create solidarity between individuals who are homeless. Thinkers such as Frantz Fanon and Paulo Freire were cognizant of

the fact that liberation needed to be generated by those who are being oppressed, and this liberation could only occur through the mutual understanding, aspirations, and praxis.^{80,81}

Bas expands the philosophical/sociological discussion by connecting homelessness to refugee situations. In conversation with the works of Arendt and Weil, she argues that homelessness originates in rightlessness, spiritual disconnectedness, and political invisibility. While the loss of rights and political visibility creates physical restlessness, the spiritual disconnectedness Bas describes aligns more closely to Heidegger's sentiment regarding metaphysical restlessness. Bas ultimately sees refugee camps as large scale spatial representations of homelessness.

Political invisibility arises in homeless populations for a number of reasons – one of which being that a home address is often a necessary prerequisite for applying for jobs, receiving mail, and being able to effectively participate in civic duties. Creating immediate shelters can help homeless individuals slowly re-integrate themselves into their community. These shelters would also mitigate physical restlessness (though not completely). Dehumanization of homeless individuals also exists as a result of significant misunderstandings and misperceptions of community members who have homes. Contrary to popular belief, homeless individuals are not prone to violent criminal activity, but are often criminalized due to legislation that prevents them from surviving (panhandling, finding places to sit or sleep, etc.).⁸² Surprisingly violent crime

⁸⁰ Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Richard Philcox. Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2017.

⁸¹ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

⁸² Price, M. "New Insights on Homelessness and Violence." American Psychological Association. December 2009. Accessed February 22, 2019. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2009/12/violence>.

rates are higher among homeless individuals who move from shelter to shelter as opposed to those who live on the street.⁸³ This is likely due to the constant confrontation of other individuals in a space designed to provide rest and refuge. For Heidegger, it may even be the case that an individual living on the streets is more close to dwelling than one moving from shelter to shelter. Issues of criminalization are also complicated due to the fact that many individuals will commit crimes solely to be sheltered inside of a jail.⁸⁴ This should be an alarming fact that further emphasizes the need for proper spaces to dwell in.

Oliver highlights the significance of earth in her analysis of Heidegger, arguing that it is the concept that marks the shift from the individual as a world forming Da-sein to a world caring dweller. The emphasis on earth is a reminder that physical dwelling is a critical prerequisite for world dwelling. Oliver also ushers in a notion of earth citizenship which is critical for a reevaluation and potential refutation of sovereign states as appropriate models for facilitating dwelling.

Oliver's work serves as a reminder that homelessness is a shared phenomenon in which everyone is adversely affected. Global/earth citizenship is a concept that must be conveyed to demonstrate to individuals why they should care about one another. Earth citizenship reinforces Da-sein's role as a communal being and also challenges individuals to conceive of existence outside of themselves in a novel way. The key to successful implementation of a mentality of planet citizenship is education. Ignorance of the interconnectivity between humans is certainly a

⁸³ Price, M. "New Insights on Homelessness and Violence." American Psychological Association. December 2009. Accessed February 22, 2019. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2009/12/violence>.

⁸⁴ Ramesh, Randeep. "A Fifth of All Homeless People Have Committed a Crime to Get off the Streets." The Guardian. December 23, 2010. Accessed February 22, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2010/dec/23/homeless-committing-crimes-for-shelter>.

component of existential violence against others, making it essential to teach others explicitly about issues of homelessness.

Scott notes that Heidegger was preoccupied with human lostness, specifically lostness as a lack of attunement with being via language, thought, and poetry. He also notes Heidegger's desire to chart out an orientation toward being as opposed to an ethical system. Without the correct orientation, there is a danger in consuming and losing the self, others, and the world. With these thoughts in mind, the question arises of how to prevent lostness and more importantly, how to regain attunement with existence. Introspection, or more specifically, a constant reflectivity is necessary to prevent being carried away by unfruitful thoughts, opinions, and actions. Acts of introspection can lead to the contextualization of the self in relation to others, the realization of the contingency of values, and awareness of the trajectory one finds themselves on. Heidegger may have seen language, thought, and poetry as significant structures of being, but to take this too seriously risks floating off into a solipsistic existence detached from the realities and immediacies that need to be tended to in the present. It is true that language underlies all human activity, but it is not necessary that one be subservient to it. In this case, one should utilize language as a tool to better understand contemporary situations of homelessness and take steps to remedy it. Language serves to connect individuals in the same way an ethics of dwelling would.

Wrathall circumscribes dwelling in an informative manner. In his view, dwelling is a response to the threat of humans destroying everything as a result of their ontological disorientation. In dwelling, humans would develop new skills and dispositions to better themselves and the environment/locale in which they dwell. This type of dwelling is not a

discrete event, but rather a continuous process through which one can “[establish] a space in which human being can once again reclaim its essence.”⁸⁵ Wrathall does not explicitly mention exactly what new skills and dispositions are needed to combat commodification of people and the planet, but what these skills and dispositions could be is worthy of exploration. Patience, empathy, and hospitality are all character traits that should be inculcated in individuals to address this specific issue. Dissolving perceptual barriers between insiders and outsiders will lend itself to increased action to combat homelessness.

Wrathall also emphasizes the uniqueness of each locale in which the fourfold is gathered and dwelling occurs. With this in mind, dwelling activity is going to vary depending on what community one exists in. To remedy any issue at hand, a variety of skills and provisions are needed; counselors can help people identify and overcome their personal traumas, construction workers and engineers can erect shelters hospitable for dwelling, and public advocates can spread further awareness of issues. Just as each locale is a unique one that requires a variety of skills and dispositions, humans themselves are equipped to fulfill each need. Mindfulness of the kaleidoscopic nature of communities and the individuals in them is necessary to create long term and sustainable living and flourishing, and Heidegger’s Da-sein/dweller is responsible for this.

Eubanks and Gauthier argue that Da-sein is an inherently communal being. This is in line with Heidegger’s own views which are critical of subjectivity. Heidegger may have alluded to communal existence in the form of homecoming, but there are clear conceptual limitations to his own form of homecoming which were likely a result of his misplaced nationalism. Likewise, there are other components of Heidegger’s overarching philosophy that need to be shed in order

⁸⁵ Wrathall, 109.

to create a cogent model for an ethics of dwelling. For example, Heidegger's obsession with the individual has attracted criticism; it is almost surprising that given such an extensive account of the individual, Heidegger does not provide an articulate account of how intersubjective activity can and should occur. His work is certainly concerned with the state of humanity, but there is a particular lack of altruism and concern for the other that must be acknowledged. Heidegger's intense focus on the greeks as a touchstone for authentic existence can also be shed. Greek thought as well as Christian and pagan mysticism become so romanticized in Heidegger's thinking an unpleasant mystery, abstractness, and lack of intelligibility emerge. Eubanks and Gauthier do provide valuable critical analysis of Heidegger and his work, but there is still much to be gained in appropriating and expanding his concept of dwelling.

One expansion of Heidegger's thought is seen in the work of Todres and Galvin, who aspire to bridge ontology and wellbeing practices together through dwelling. In developing a new framework called dwelling-mobility, they make salient the fact that dwelling is a transtemporal task (which focuses on past, present, and future) as well as an interpersonal one through which individuals support one another. This interpersonal emphasis is also aligned with a desire to eliminate hindrances to individuals' possibilities and projections. Todres and Galvin provide inspiration. Emphases on *rootedness*, *flow*, *peace*, and *possibility* highlight their desire for others to not only coexist with homeless individuals but actively support them with physical, psychological, and socio-emotional provisions.⁸⁶ Dwelling-mobility, then, is an expanded ontology which maps onto Heidegger's emphasis on attitudinal and continuous activity. The way in which beings interact with physical/spatial locations is key to understanding the structure of

⁸⁶ Todres and Galvin, abstract.

humans as beings themselves. To this end, it becomes clear that physical locations ought to be optimized for genuine human habitation. It is worth noting that this genuine habitation does not guarantee happiness or other phenomena that hyper-consumptive societies value. Rather, genuine habitation would elicit an individual's innermost ability to dwell.

Fry's work carries on Todres and Galvin's sentiment. According to Fry, homelessness is not always generated from within (an idea that is in some contrast with Heidegger's thinking), as he believes that physical and non-physical designs of a society can inhibit dwelling. Fry, in the same vein as Oliver, sees home as a physiological and ecological entity which is inseparable from other individuals the earth as a material substance. Both thinkers also note the danger in heavy investment of interiority and exteriority that is encouraged through the establishment of housing. Structures of inclusion and exclusion always run the risk of leading to treating the outside world as "standing reserve," which makes it imperative to, in Fry's words, "renarrativise" humanity's relationship to the world.

Cutting off/restricting one's physical freedoms will undoubtedly create further physical issues and create ontological stresses. To put this more concretely, an individual with no place to inhabit will be an unlikely candidate for dwelling and stewarding the fourfold. Physical deprivation and excess inevitably disorients individuals as they attempt to navigate the world. The physical structures an individual is surrounded by may perpetually forsake the earth as the material from which they came and skew one's perception of reality itself. With this in mind, it is essential to be mindful of the manner in which building takes place, who it serves, why it exists, and how it will affect others. Fry's work as well as that of the thinkers previously discussed should serve as a justification for an ethics of dwelling. It is clear that in this dwelling, it is

necessary to provide physical, non-physical, and ontological provisions for homeless individuals in a way that establishes self-sufficiency and autonomy. More precisely, this self-sufficiency and autonomy should be called dwelling.

Section Two: An Ethics of Dwelling through the Fourfold

It should be made clear that an ethics of dwelling is not a robust and calculative method but rather an attempt to expand on kernels of Heideggerian thinking. In outlining this ethic, parts of *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* will be revisited to highlight portions most relevant to homelessness. Then, suggestions for an ethics of dwelling will be presented through each component of the fourfold- earth, sky, divinities, and mortals.

Unfortunately, Heidegger does little work in providing details about each component of the fourfold. He states that earth includes rocks, water, plants, and animals (not humans).⁸⁷ His notion of sky consists in the paths of celestial bodies, the changing of days and seasons, weather, and of course, the sky as observed by humans.⁸⁸ Divinities are merely described as “beckoning messengers of the godhead” which appear and withdraw at particular times.⁸⁹ And in Heidegger’s own words, mortals are “human beings capable of death *as* death.”⁹⁰ The brief descriptions of each component of the fourfold raise more questions than answers, and the concepts themselves appear abruptly within the essay. Each component remains ambiguous

⁸⁷ Heidegger, 351.

⁸⁸ Heidegger, 351.

⁸⁹ Heidegger, 351.

⁹⁰ Heidegger, 351.

throughout, perhaps purposefully so given Heidegger's later orientation toward mysticism. He makes it clear that mortals are the only component within the fourfold that engage in the activity of dwelling, which in some way, distinguishes mortals from the other components. Dwelling consists of what Heidegger calls "saving" the earth, "receiving" the sky, "awaiting" the divinities, and "initiating" mortals into their own "essential being."⁹¹ Despite Heidegger's vague and poetic presentation of the fourfold, each component can be explored, unpacked, and ultimately positioned to establish an ethics of dwelling. The hope is that expanding on dwelling as it relates to each component of the fourfold will bring to light new ways in which one can approach, conceptualize, address issues surrounding homelessness. This expanded notion of dwelling ethics can also assume the name *stewardship*.

Stewardship of Earth

One potential interpretation of engaging in earth stewardship involves addressing environmental issues. While there are technological innovations and tactics currently being deployed to combat extreme pollution, thinkers such as Wrathall, Fry, and Heidegger are of the belief that a radical reconceptualization of earth itself needs to take place before humanity can truly address such issues. Within this vein of thought, it is necessary to challenge and eradicate conceptions of nature bound up in moral or cosmic valences. More specifically, the notion of a "mother earth" limits the way in which individuals can conceptualize and interact with nature. An ethic such as the one proposed in this paper calls for dwelling on, in, and through the earth, but in a way that does not see earth as a force often conceived when one hears of nature. Nature thought of as *physis* will do better for the sake of this discussion. Conceiving of nature as *physis*

⁹¹ Heidegger, 351.

dethrones nature as an arbiter of fortune and natural affairs. It also challenges the way in which one should think of *saving* nature. To *save* earth or nature – from an environmental perspective – means that one must attempt to relinquish their own anthropocentric notion of what nature and earth should be. Furthermore, it is necessary to challenge one's own conception of what is deemed good for nature. To save the earth means to not impose humanity's will on it to the extent that forsakes and corrupts it. Each component of the fourfold is equally necessary, but earth plays a foundational role and conjures a particular physicality through which dwelling is possible.

An expanded conception of Heidegger's earth may also serve as inspiration for an outlook that is not limited to humans (one could call this a *post-human* perspective). When meditating on the living and nonliving things that earth consists of, a particular indifference begins to emerge. This indifference arises and becomes more salient as a result of the decentralizing of humans within our own notions of what is important. An ethics of dwelling does not negate mortals but instead places them into a proper relationship, specifically an egalitarian coexistence, with earth. This latitudinal relationship with the rest of the earth facilitates perspective taking and empathy that will prevent mortals from continuing to manipulate and necrotize the materials that make life possible. Enterprises that Heidegger are concerned with attempt to give asymmetrical concern and authority to mortals. In the same way Da-sein can exist authentically by being in tune with the a priori structures that make its existence possible, mortals must acknowledge that earth is the literal, spiritual, and ontological ground on which they reside.

This ethics of dwelling does include an ontological shift away from humanity but not to such a degree that any humans would be neglected. On the contrary, this relocation of humans within the network of being should serve as a reminder of their unique position as stewards of the rest of being. To reiterate, an ethics of dwelling ought to help an individual understand that they are no *less* important but that other beings outside of themselves are *more* important than they may have originally realized. While an ethics of dwelling includes not privileging humans above non humans, it also paves the way for the beginnings of a political framework in which humans do not privilege themselves above other humans. One of the most prominent structures which manufactures situations in which humans privilege themselves above others is through the nation state. It is precisely for this reason that an ethics of dwelling encourages a notion of planetary citizenship that goes beyond the nation-state. Heidegger's own notion of homecoming was clouded by the hypernationalization that permeated Germany at the time. In a new and expanded dwelling, it is possible for Heidegger's notion of homecoming to be partially realized; though this would not occur through the prevailing thought or action of any nation, but instead through what can be called a planetary homecoming.

With this new framework, the saving, preserving, and freeing of the fourfold via dwelling entails that humans are responsible for the stewardship of the entire planet. However, Heidegger makes it clear that the fourfold is located specifically in the locales in which humans dwell. Evident in the word *locale* itself is a smaller, circumscribed area in which activity takes place. The locales that Heidegger present do not resemble the entire planet, but are most likely inspired by the small abodes of the Black Forest where he grew up. This relation of the fourfold to locales seems to complicate the argument that dwelling of one human is done with the entire planet in

mind, but even still, many locales in which humans exist have people who are homeless in them. To this point, one can dwell in a manner that is within global consciousness (being a steward to those who are homeless from an international perspective) as well as in a smaller locale, such as a town or neighborhood. In this regard, dwelling with earth, planetary stewardship, and planetary homecoming in mind may be thought of as occurring in concentric circles. The innermost circle would be the home, while outer circles go on to reach those across the planet.

Stewardship of Sky and Divinities

While an ethics of dwelling can be applicable for earth in a literal sense, sky serves as a symbolic and thought provoking entity in this new framework. Sky does not elicit the same thoughts of immediacy, groundedness, or impact that come with earth. Despite this, the notion of sky can serve as an important conceptual touchstone for an ethics of dwelling. Until very recently, sky has been outside of humanity's reach – it has always conjured wonder and been a reminder to humanity of what lies beyond itself. To this end, sky can represent the acknowledgement of limit in human enterprises. No matter how high one ascends, sky is never truly reached but always lies beyond. The paths of celestial bodies and the changing of days, weeks, and seasons serve as encouragement for individuals to endure various trials and hardships. Every being, living or otherwise, exists under the same sky, and this can serve as yet another point for connection.

Like sky, divinities serve the purpose of being a conceptual reminder of the condition that humans find themselves in. Unlike earth and sky, divinities have no corporeal element, though this should not render them entirely insignificant. Divinities elicit a notion of humility that can provide further inspiration for post-human thinking, reflection, and activity. In Heidegger's own

framework, the ease with which divinities can disclose or conceal themselves is meant to capture the elusive nature of being as well as the limits of human intelligibility of what lies beyond themselves. With this in mind, divinities have epistemic and ethical implications, serving as a reminder that one should not overstep in their activity and ambitions.

Stewardship of Mortals

In stewardship of other mortals, it is the responsibility of individuals to provide continuous occasions for an individual to be able to dwell/actualize their potential. One cannot dwell on behalf of another mortal, but it is clear that dwelling entails laying a groundwork and sustaining possibilities of dwelling in others. In this way, one can let other mortals “be in their own essence.” Despite this, it is clear that Heidegger’s notion of saving or fourfold gathering should not only be interpreted in a negative sense. To save does mean to save *from* something, but also to save *for* something. Saving is a positive activity. In the context of remedying homelessness, it is not enough to merely remove someone from the streets or their atypical place of dwelling. To dwell would also mean helping others find their own place to dwell, both for the sake of stewarding over other mortals and in solidifying and strengthening pre-existing locales.

Heidegger often resists presenting political and ethical procedures in his work (despite his personal political endorsements). Despite this, a handful of political suggestions for dwelling as it relates to mortals will be presented. These suggestions may be initially perceived as ideological and far fetched, but it is critical to challenge and eventually dismantle societal structures which inhibit nurturing and growth of life (especially since many of the societal structures currently in place are enforced to benefit a select few and not many, viz. hyper consumptive global capitalism). Humanitarian crises should be sufficient justification for

promoting housing as a political right as well as an existential one. Creating housing environments is a fairly obvious suggestion, but a less considered idea is legalizing and regulating squatting activity in currently unoccupied properties. This would be a challenge to earth as standing reserve by taking properties which are owned by others but are not being used (think of the scores of vacant lots, warehouses, plots of land which have been idle for years) and converting them – at least temporarily – into locales for fourfold gathering. Beyond converting legally uninhabitable spaces into de facto housing, government entities could provide housing as a safety net for individuals who need it, further promoting the idea that housing is a right and not a privilege.

In addition to increasing the number of physical housing structures, individuals can dwell with mortals by encouraging dwelling through activity and solidarity. Heidegger explicitly mentions the way in which an individual can feel “at home” in doing particular types of work, so providing more opportunities for work and activity would facilitate dwelling. If this idea is reified in the political sphere, there could perhaps be “right to work” policies put in place that would increase opportunities for people to acquire physical necessities and capital needed to navigate society with fewer barriers.

Regarding solidarity, individuals can participate in dwelling by educating themselves on and respecting others’ cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This will not only inculcate empathy and dissolve epistemic barriers but also provide recognition for individuals who do not feel welcomed in particular spaces. If one takes Heidegger’s notion of “gathering” things within a locale seriously, then there is justification for helping establish communities which would have shared heritages, values, and identities (given that adequate support is provided in addition to the

act of gathering). An act of gathering would also include gathering mortals who are other dwellers to create an interlocking community/network of support for others and oneself. Heidegger notes that Da-sein is a social being whose being-in-the-world requires other individuals, activities, rituals, and structures. With this, it becomes clear that a single individual taking action is not sufficient for effective action (beyond the private authenticity which Heidegger prizes and attempts to champion in his work). The limits of individual action are also made salient given the fact that mortals are finite beings whose essential essence is their capability of death *as* death – being finite beings while also being cognizant of their own finitude.⁹² Despite limits of individual action, overwhelming realizations of finitude, and the urgency of addressing a deep and complex issue like homelessness, the task of gathering and supporting mortals is essential if one is to successfully care for being and world as a dweller.

Section Three: Concluding Thoughts

In exploring other philosophical works concerned with homelessness, the limits of Heidegger's thinking as inspiration for addressing the issue are made evident. The inspiration Heidegger's work instilled in those after him may be of better service to issues of homelessness than his own writings; despite this, Heidegger still provides valuable insights which are worth holding on to. Heidegger was cognizant of the fact that to be at home entails much more than inhabiting a physical space (though this becomes an important prerequisite for the possibility of dwelling). The crux of many of his later projects lies in the unique and necessary role that individuals play in being a steward of being – which does not mean to control being, but rather

⁹² Heidegger, 352.

provide being with its own space to unfold without interference from misguided human enterprises. Heidegger's delineation of earth and world as well as each component of the fourfold also provides multiple lenses through which one can observe and understand what it means to dwell, and the interconnection of building, dwelling, and thinking also lends credence to discussions of homelessness. However, it is in exploring the works of those who participate in and relate to Heidegger's philosophical tradition that a discussion of homelessness has become truly solidified. Through thinkers such as Fox, Curry, Bas, and Fry, the concept of home quickly transcends associations of mere physical occupancy and becomes one which provides opportunities for self cultivation, refuge, and activity. Oliver, Scott, and Wrathall provide compelling arguments to resist insular and ontologically violent thinking and instead opt for expanded worldviews which decenter but do not devalue human existence. Eubanks & Gauthier and Todres & Galvin highlight the contours and limits of Heidegger's thinking in the attempt to expand upon it.

It becomes clear that an ethics inspired by dwelling involves thoughtful action, introspection, and dedication. As emphasized in this paper, dwelling itself is not an acute activity but rather a state of being and continuous attunement to the rest of being. It is obvious that mere problem oriented attempts to remedy homelessness lack an adjacency found in the concept dwelling and as a result, ultimately end in failure. To succeed in undertaking a task such as this, a paradigmatic shift in the way we build, think, and ultimately dwell is needed. If dwelling is indeed the basic characteristic of being as Heidegger claims, then the solution is already within us, and it is waiting to be lived out.

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