



# Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes

*Talmadge Wright*

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## **Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes** Talmadge Wright

Homeless persons find themselves excluded, repressed, and displaced in all sectors of everyday life--from punitive police and city zoning practices to media stereotypes. Wandering through the streets of developing cities, these poorest of the poor have no place to go. More and more, these city developments are not simply accepted passively; rather, resistance by organized homeless groups--civil protests, squatting, and legal advocacy--spread as conditions of everyday life deteriorate for the very poor. *Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes* details the development of two organized homeless resistances in two different cities. From the redevelopment protesters and squatting activities of the Student-Homeless Alliance in San Jose to the squatter camps of Tranquility City in Chicago, the differences and similarities between both groups are highlighted within the context of city redevelopment policies. Wright argues for considering homelessness not merely as an issue for social welfare, but first and foremost as a land use issue directly connected to issues of gentrification, displacement, and the cultural imaginings of what the city should look like by those who have the power to shape its development. How the homeless combat the restructurings of everyday life, how they attempt to establish a "place" is understood within the context of tactical resistances. Questions of collective identity and collective action are raised as a result of the successful organizing efforts of homeless groups who refuse to be victims. The struggle between individual and collective forms of empowerment is highlighted, with the conclusions pointing to the necessity to rethink and go beyond the traditional solutions of more housing and job training.

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