

Zooming in on the historical development of Downtown Los Angeles, this dissertation traces a continuity of abolitionist urban alternatives made by homeless and poor Angelinos from the 1960s to our present day. I show how notions of difference, at the axis of race, class, ability, and gender, shape Downtown Los Angeles's geography through carceral practices. These carceral practices, made by social services and policing, shape space by routinely containing and dispossessing poor residents. These residents are not idle. They push back, unsettling the nature of elite propertied development and thus the carceral manifestation of space. In their resistance, residents produce alternative networks of care, community control, and place. Throughout the dissertation, I advance the concept of *contested development*: how the violent effects of capitalist production of human, resource, and landed difference, in space, is challenged or reproduced. I reveal that when spatial difference is reproduced, it is carceral in form, innovating containment and dispossession. Adversely, when difference in space is challenged it reworks and resists the manifestation of carceral practices, producing life-giving abolitionist alternatives. Abolitionist alternatives to the containment and dispossession of people, land, and resources in Downtown LA, produce a cohesive vision for the creation of a new Los Angeles.

I show the contested development of Los Angeles by focusing on the site of Skid Row in Downtown Los Angeles. Skid Row is an important entry way into Los Angeles urban politics, particularly with respect to the problems of urban property and ownership over the built environment. As I reveal throughout the dissertation, regional property relations, which seek to secure the accumulation of capital through real estate and land development, is the primary rationale behind the carceral management of the poor. The racialized poor unsettle property and thus real estate development itself reducing carceral management while also challenging redevelopment. In so doing, the dissertation provides a theoretical and methodological

advancement of showing how urban politics for the last seven decades reveals the push and pull contradictions of development by way of the carceral manifestations of difference and the abolitionist alternatives to overwrite them.

