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## Promoting “Civility,” Excluding the Poor (Vancouver 2010)

Jacqueline Kennelly

The 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics ushered in “the most complex domestic [surveillance] operation ever undertaken in Canada.”<sup>1</sup> Preparations began at least four years prior to ensure the smooth interinstitutional collaboration between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP, Canada’s federal policing arm), municipal police forces, the Canadian Armed Forces, and private security firms, which together became the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit (VISU). These “official” aspects of surveillance for the Vancouver Games were supplemented by legislative changes, the implementation of new bylaws, and city “guidelines” for residents of Vancouver. This chapter traces these initiatives, as represented within media reports, legislature records, and official documentation, and asks: for *whom* are these practices intended? Through a qualitative research project designed to investigate the experiences of homeless and street-involved youth in the year prior to and during the Vancouver Winter Olympics, the chapter attempts to illuminate the effects of such surveillance regimes on the most marginalized members of host cities. In doing so, I wish to highlight larger issues pertaining to the neoliberalization of city spaces, intensified under the auspices of Olympic preparations, and the implications these have for marginalized residents’ citizenship rights within urban spaces.

The qualitative data from which this chapter is derived was collected as part of an ongoing comparative study documenting the experiences of homeless, street-involved, or marginally housed youth before, during, and after the Olympic Games in Vancouver (2010) and London (2012). Specifically, data for this chapter was collected the year before the Vancouver 2010 Games (February to April 2009) and during the Games themselves (February 2010). Interviews, focus groups, and an arts-based project were conducted with a total of 33 youth in the first fieldwork period; interviews and focus groups were conducted with 27 youth in the second fieldwork period. Participants ranged in age from 15 to 24; the groups were highly diverse in both ethnicity and gender, including a fairly even mix of male and female, as well as some transgendered, participants. There was also a disproportionately high number of Aboriginal participants, reflective of the specific histories of colonialism and subsequent impoverishment experienced by Aboriginal youth and children in Canada (Downe, 2006).

The chapter proceeds as follows: I begin with a discussion of the surveillance preparations put in place for the Vancouver Olympics, tracing the semantics and logistics of Canada's largest peacetime surveillance operation. I use the experiences of the youth participants with whom I worked to critically assess the effects of these surveillance practices on the city's most marginalized populations. Looking not only at surveillance during the Games, this first part of the chapter also examines the effects of pre-Olympic policing practices, and their meanings for young homeless people. Next, the chapter turns to what I call the "soft" aspects of surveillance – that is, the educational and regulatory efforts made to ensure that the entire city population is "on-side" and "on-message" with the Olympic promotional apparatus (as opposed to the more overt, or "hard," forms of surveillance that take the form of policing and security checks, for example). I conclude with some reflections on the implications of both "hard" and "soft" surveillance practices associated with mega-events such as the Olympic Games for marginalized young peoples' sense of inclusion, safety, and belonging within Olympic host cities.

### **Justifying security measures: terrorists, activists, and those who protect the sponsors**

Critical theorists of contemporary security culture note that much of the rhetoric on which enhanced surveillance is justified promulgates *risk* as the central category of concern, where surveillance practices are directed at "the pre-emption of the catastrophic event" (Dean, 2010; see also Bajc, 2007a). As noted by Bajc (2007b: 1653), "Surveillance has become the primary means through which states control uncertainty, act on perceived threats, and facilitate the resulting change within their borders." It is within this context that states justify huge and ascending expenditures for Games-related surveillance. In the case of the Vancouver Games, an initial security budget of \$175 million ballooned to roughly \$850 million by the time the Games were held.<sup>2</sup> Such amplifications of costs were explicitly justified in terms that referenced the yet unknown but always potential existence of threat:

The RCMP-led Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit acknowledged it can't protect the Games for the \$175 million it has been given. ... Into this mix add a host of world events – the rapid rise of militant extremism, Millenium Bomber Ahmed Ressay, the Sept. 11 attacks, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the four London bombings – which has the impact of driving up threat levels.<sup>3</sup>

While potential terrorist acts were most frequently cited as the rationale for enhanced security, concerns about "protest groups" were also noted; for instance, in 2008 the *Vancouver Sun* reported that police planners for the

Winter Games were seeking permission to ignore public requests for information under the federal Access to Information Act because “such information can be put to nefarious counter-intelligence use by terrorist or protest groups compromising the security of the 2010 Games.”<sup>4</sup>

Not included in Olympic security spending estimates are the costs of refocused policing practices in marginalized neighborhoods deemed to be a danger to the “quality of life” in Vancouver. For example, the 2009 business plan of the Vancouver Police Department included an explicit focus on the Downtown Eastside (DTES), a low-income neighborhood that has often been the target of policing efforts, and a locale that is characterized by city elites as a blight on the reputation of Vancouver as a tourist destination and global city.<sup>5</sup> The plan included additional numbers of police patrolling the neighborhood, more street spot checks (whereby a person can be stopped and asked for identification or other questions), and more by-law violation tickets issued.<sup>6</sup> The plan suggested that “with more officers being dedicated to the area, and more of their shift spent enforcing the law on the street, the disorder and offending associated with this area will decrease, increasing the quality of life and safety for all residents and visitors in the area.”<sup>7</sup>

While the chimera of safety makes for persuasive public rhetoric, an important question to be asked is, *which residents’* quality of life is being enhanced through these practices? When asked in a focus group how homeless youth – most of whom had recently lived in the Downtown Eastside and still spent time there<sup>8</sup> – felt about seeing more police on the street, the group was unanimous about feeling less safe, rather than more. As one participant remarked in an interview, “The police are the ones I don’t feel safe about.” When I asked why, he replied that the police are “the ones who can hurt you. Other people aren’t going to hurt me because I don’t have anything on them. They don’t have anything on me. They’ve seen me walking around since I was a kid. I know some pretty crazy dudes. And they would actually protect me, right? But the cops you can never trust.”

Such remarks are unsurprising, given the degree to which homeless people in general, and street youth in particular, are subject to criminalization and negative interactions with police (Mitchell and Heynen, 2009; Mayers, 2001). They also signal the long-standing issues of entrenched impoverishment within Canada, and in the Eastside of Vancouver in particular, issues which have worsened over the past several decades and taken on a distinctively youthful character in the process. Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside has been reported to be the “poorest postal code in Canada,”<sup>9</sup> where average incomes are substantially lower than in the rest of the city, an illegal drug trade and

street prostitution are highly visible, and the HIV infection rate is as high as that of the poorest countries in Africa. Vancouver also carries the dubious distinction of belonging to the province with the highest degree of child and youth poverty in Canada.<sup>10</sup> Vancouver's Eastside, which consists of both the Downtown Eastside and residential neighborhoods such as Grandview-Woodland and Strathcona, has historically seen the highest concentration of child and youth poverty in the city.<sup>11</sup> Although the Vancouver Olympic events were largely situated outside of this impoverished neighborhood, the "Olympic lane," which was a designated street lane reserved for Olympic traffic, ran right through the main thoroughfare of the DTES (along Hastings Street). The Athletes Village was walking distance from the neighborhood, and the Olympic media center was mere blocks away.

The shifting priorities of policing in pre-Olympic Vancouver were felt by the youth most strongly in the year before and the month immediately preceding the Games; in both 2009 and 2010, youth reported being more frequently harassed for offenses that were previously disregarded, such as jaywalking, littering, and possession of drugs. In each of the instances, the youth remarked upon both the increasing pressures they were experiencing from the police and the degree to which it seemed disproportionate to the actual offense. Their overall impression was of being specifically harassed, particularly in the period leading up to the Games; the youth believed this to be an effort to "clean the streets" in preparation for the arrival of the "rich people" they associated with the Olympic Games. For example, in 2009, Alison reported that "they're arresting you more for possession. They didn't care for possession before. They'd just smash your pipe. And try to intimidate you. But that [was] it." In the same year, Artemis reported that:

Cops are ticketing people for like jaywalking, ridiculous reasons. They're searching, like, they aren't supposed to just stop somebody on the street and search them or whatever and they're doing that. And actually one officer told me his boss demanded that he hand out tickets, and he wouldn't have given me a ticket otherwise but he's going to lose his job. So I didn't ask him if that had anything to do with the 2010 [Olympics], but that could be it very well.

Similar comments were made during a focus group discussion in 2009, where one participant reported that "people are getting arrested left, right, and center." In 2010, Justine remarked that the arrival of the Olympics in her city had been heralded by "more laws." "If you throw a [cigarette] butt on the ground they'll stop you and charge you for that. [For] littering." When I asked her to elaborate on this experience, she reported, "[The police] let us go but they

said to throw the butt in the garbage can or in an ashtray outside. I'm like, there's tons of butts on the ground." She explained that this experience happened about a month before the Games began.

The accounts above clearly demonstrate that the business plan of the Vancouver Police Department was being rolled out in the period before the Games, and homeless and street-involved youth were feeling its effects. Indeed, they often experienced such policing as differentially applied, and they felt themselves to be the unfair targets of these increased interventions. Justine believed that she was singled out by the police, who used the excuse of enforcing an obscure littering law; as she noted, "there's tons of butts on the ground." Likewise, Artemis suspected that his increased encounters with police were spurred on by Olympic-related incentives.

By contrast, while low-income and homeless youth felt themselves to be the target of increased policing, corporate sponsors of the Olympics were hiring private security firms in order to enhance their own sense of safety.<sup>12</sup> Such security took the form of bodyguards hired to protect key employees, and in one case the securing of an entire hotel "on behalf of a major communications firm that's a major partner for the Olympics."<sup>13</sup> Such increased security is justified on the basis of the sheer size of the Olympics, whereby "companies realize the police will have difficulties dealing with day-to-day security issues, and are taking it on themselves to ensure security for their own key staff and events."<sup>14</sup> Not coincidentally, those who are able to afford such extra protection also happen to be wealthy outsiders to the city in question; their presence is simultaneously used as justification for the increased policing imposed on low-income neighborhoods. This raises again the question of *for whom* the streets are being made safe: for local residents and the most marginalized members of the city's population? Or for corporate sponsors of the Games, temporary visitors who will be spending tourist dollars, and global media conveying images of Vancouver around the world?

Of relevance to such a question is to consider the experiences of the youth *during* the Games. While many reported intensified police interactions in the year before and particularly the month immediately preceding the opening ceremonies, the youth were mostly unanimous in feeling that their interactions with police dropped substantially while the Games were happening. As mentioned above, policing and security for the 2010 Olympics was governed by the RCMP-led VISU. The goal of this body was to have police "on every corner" during the Games themselves<sup>15</sup>; this was achieved through the secondment of approximately 6000 additional police officers from 119 agencies across Canada, approximately 5000 Canadian Armed Forces troops, and approximately 4800

private security guards (not including the private security that was already on hand through individual businesses and property owners).<sup>16</sup> This was in addition to the 1327 Vancouver Police Department officers available as of January 2010,<sup>17</sup> a number that had grown from 1124 in 2004.<sup>18</sup>

Given the swell of security officials within the city, it is somewhat remarkable that the youth reported a drop in police interactions: surely the behavior of the youth did not change so much during the Games that *less* police intervention was warranted? And surely the presence of approximately *fifteen times* the normal number of security personnel would imply that *more* rather than less interactions would be likely? That this did not manifest suggests that the surveillance apparatus constructed around the Vancouver 2010 Games was concerned not only with surveillance practices but also with projecting the appearance of the city as liberal, tolerant, and welcoming. Given the intense focus on Vancouver by global media during the Games, any incident that might suggest that the police were engaging in targeted enforcement that infringed on the human rights or civil liberties of marginalized peoples within the city would not have enhanced the image that Vancouver elites were hoping to convey. The Canadian Armed Forces were particularly sensitive to this dynamic; reflecting back on the Vancouver Games, Rear-Admiral Tyrone Pile notes that “with all the effort put into preparing, just as much effort was taken to maintain a low profile throughout the Olympics.”<sup>19</sup> This was achieved by “using an array of surveillance technologies, including closed-circuit cameras, electronic sensors, and unmanned vehicles flying high over the Olympic venues in Vancouver and Whistler.”<sup>20</sup>

Such sensitivity to appearances by the Vancouver Integrated Security Unit meant that homeless and street-involved youth experienced a welcome reprieve from constant police interactions during the Games themselves. For instance, Sandy conveyed being harassed by police, with escalating degrees of violence, in the weeks and months leading up to the Games, particularly when she and her friends were sitting on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Significantly, the art gallery is located adjacent to Robson Square, the center of Olympic celebrations within Vancouver. However, once the Games began, she reported that being moved on by the police “doesn’t usually happen anymore, with that big TV screen there [near the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery].” When I asked why she replied: “Because the TV screen’s there. ... It’s a big fucking TV screen, have you seen it? ... Because now we’re not loitering.” She laughed. “Now we’re not loitering *because* we’re watching TV. Isn’t that awesome?”

Captured in this vignette is the malleable nature of so-called criminal behavior; what had been intensely surveilled and punished in the weeks preceding the Games had now become banal or innocent in light of the media spectacle of the Olympic Games (“now we’re not loitering *because* we’re watching TV”; see also Kennelly and Watt, 2011). Thus the “hard” aspects of Olympic surveillance did not produce monolithically negative interactions for homeless youth with police; in this case, it had a mitigating effect and permitted youth, temporarily, greater mobility and freedom from surveillance than they typically experience within Vancouver. Such freedom is certainly short-lived, and not predictable; nor does it outweigh the intensification of surveillance experienced by the youth in the year preceding the Games.

### **Self-regulation in the global Olympic city: civility, censorship, and city marketing**

The official implementation of security protocols, through the establishment of VISU and the 2009 business plan of the Vancouver Police Department, form one arm of pre-Olympic and Olympic surveillance practices. The picture would not be complete, however, if we did not also consider the “soft” forms of Olympic surveillance, particularly relevant in liberal democratic states where populations are encouraged to be self-regulating through both the threat of legal consequences and non-coercive means such as education and media (Rose, 1999; Brown, 2005). In the case of the Vancouver Olympics, these took the form of bylaws, legislation, and informal practices and protocols designed to ensure that the members of a host city comply with the efforts to “secure” a city in preparation for the Olympics; affective language such as “civility,” “pride,” and “patriotism” are often bandied about in support of this goal. Several elements are disguised by these practices and their attendant language; one such is the disproportionate burden laid on marginalized members of a city’s population. Another is the degree to which these practices are designed not to ensure the safety of a population within the host city but to prop up the business interests of the corporate sponsors to the Olympics. This section of the chapter examines some instances of these practices and the effects they had on the youth with whom I spoke.

Just before the Olympics arrived, the City of Vancouver released a Vancouver Olympic protocol guide, directed at 600 City of Vancouver employees. The protocol includes such detailed instructions as ensuring that one’s socks match one’s pants, the proper manner in which to shake hands, and the degree of openness with which to smile:

A smile denotes warmth, openness and friendliness. Smile “gently” and with sincerity. Be careful not to overdo it. False smiles can look artificial, and never-ending smiles may invite suspicion. A frown or a furrowed brow suggests anger or worry, even if your words are positive.<sup>21</sup>

The protocol guidelines make it clear that the task of City of Vancouver employees during the Olympics is not only to perform their jobs but also to stay “on message” with city marketing strategies, ensuring through their own good behavior that the city is represented in the best possible light. The City of Vancouver also spent \$25,000 on a supplement entitled *Host City 101* for the *Vancouver Sun*, one of the major daily newspapers in the city. In it, city residents were given a top ten list for how to be a good host, “including offering directions, telling people where to get visitor information, or directing them to police or hospitals. Beyond all that it urges people to ‘share your love of the city’ and ‘enjoy yourself.’”<sup>22</sup> Mayor Gregor Robertson writes in the supplement: “With the world’s spotlight shining on Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Games, we have an unprecedented opportunity to boost our local economy and showcase our city to the world.”<sup>23</sup>

How do such initiatives fit into an investigation of Olympic-related security? One way to understand their relationship is by turning to the concept of “city marketing.” E.J. McCann (2009: 119) notes that city marketing schemes generally promote “the city as welcoming and safe, vibrant and fun, tolerant and accepting of social and cultural difference, environmentally friendly, culturally rich, business friendly, and as strategically and conveniently located.” In order to enhance such an image, McCann suggests that cities will often engage the following tactics:

[T]he provision of packages of business incentives, the (re)building, policing, and cleaning of the urban built environment to keep its appearance in line with the city’s marketing image, and continual efforts to maintain coherence in the city’s marketing message by keeping disparate interest groups either “on message” or out of the spotlight. (McCann, 2009: 119)

When the logic of city marketing is at the fore, the stage is set for not only the publication of somewhat comical protocols and top ten lists but also strategies of city cleansing that rely on policing and security to ensure that a city “looks its best” when the Olympics come to town. As noted by Christian Tagsold in Chapter 3 on Tokyo in this volume, city cleansing strategies were used for just this purpose in Tokyo in 1964. In the case of Vancouver, these strategies could not be explicit, as part of the image of a tolerant, liberal, Western democratic city is that it does *not* engage in such practices. In other words, it was in Vancouver’s marketing interests to appear safe yet simultaneously

*not* appear like a repressive police state that might deter tourism or investment. This is in contrast with the practices of Moscow in 1980, as documented by Carol Marmor-Drews in Chapter 8 of this volume, which focused quite openly on cleaning the streets of the homeless and drug users as part of their preparations for the Games.

The balance between appearing safe yet also ensuring that a city “looks its best” seemed to be struck in Vancouver by ensuring that police interventions happened gradually, incrementally shifting the sites of visible poverty into less prominent areas of the city. For instance, the year before the Games many of the youth remarked on the disappearance of activity from a community park in the middle of the Downtown Eastside, locally referred to as “Pigeon Park.” During a focus group, Alison pointed out that “the people that are getting arrested are the people that are really out in the open, like Pigeon Park and stuff. Like, every night I go home [after] work. And when I go by ... the cop is always sitting by Pigeon Park now.” When asked what had happened to the people in Pigeon Park, another woman replied, “They’re in the alleys.” This was confirmed by another, who said, “Yeah. They’re in the alleys. Now the cops don’t go down the alleys anymore. Like even I still walk around there. When I first came here [Pigeon] park was crammed with people fighting, doing whatever. Now you’re lucky to see more than one person sitting there for more than five minutes.”

Youth also reported various individual experiences with the police pressuring them to move out of highly visible downtown neighborhoods, both the year before the Games began and during the weeks immediately preceding the opening ceremonies. One young man reported, “I’ve been told [by the police] to get off Granville Street for the whole night just because I was alone and had a suitcase.” When asked when that had happened and whether the police had given a reason, he replied: “Just before the Olympics” and that he thought it was “because I was homeless.”

One manner in which such pressure was applied to homeless youth was via a project introduced in 2006 by former City of Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan. In his Project Civil City initiative, he was explicit about its goal being to ensure that the city was ready for the arrival of the Olympics in 2010.<sup>24</sup> Part of the Project Civil City initiative was the Downtown Ambassadors program; unlike other ambassador programs in major Canadian cities, this one made use of trained security guards to patrol city streets and ensure that the codes of “civility” implied by the title of “Civil City” were respected (Sleiman and Lippert, 2010). Run by Genesis Security and the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA), Ambassadors are “trained to provide hospitality assistance

and crime prevention services” with a focus on what they term “quality of life” issues “such as panhandling, litter, theft, illegal vending, and graffiti.”<sup>25</sup> The youth I spoke to in 2009 had many negative reports of interactions with the Ambassadors. Marianne, a young Aboriginal woman, described the following encounter:

I remember when [the Ambassadors] first came out I was pregnant and I was sitting down on Granville Street. Like, I wasn’t panhandling. I wasn’t asking people for money and they were like, you need to move. And I was like, what? ... I’m eight-and-a-half months pregnant. They’re like, we don’t care. It’s not our job, we’re trying to make our city look more nice. You know? They told me, it doesn’t help to have homeless people kicking around on the streets. ... You’re making our city look bad. Don’t you know? We have the Olympics coming.

Marianne was not alone in experiencing the Downtown Ambassadors as extremely problematic. In 2009, Pivot Legal Society and the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU) launched a complaint against the Ambassadors, which was heard by the BC Human Rights Tribunal.<sup>26</sup> Pivot and VANDU alleged that the group “discriminates against the homeless and drug users in the city,” stating that they “act very much like homeless police’ because they tell people who sit, sleep or panhandle on sidewalks to move along, and that they are not welcome.”<sup>27</sup> Although the suit was dismissed in 2012, Tribunal Member Tonie Beharrell made the following important caveat:

My finding that the complainants have not established a connection between the adverse treatment alleged and a prohibited ground of discrimination should not be taken as a finding that I accept the DVBIAs’ assertion in this regard. In particular, I note that the evidence ... raises the potential that the Ambassadors were not acting solely on the basis of illegal behaviour, but were also targeting certain types of individuals. I also note that the removal of individuals ... is, intuitively, much more likely to occur with respect to individuals who are or appear to be members of the Class than with other members of the public.<sup>28</sup>

As noted above, the Downtown Ambassadors program was begun in order to prepare the city for the arrival of the Olympics, through recourse to the euphemistic language of “civility.” In doing so, the program succeeded in making the lives of marginalized people within the city significantly more difficult. We must question here what concept of “civility” is being promoted through the “Project Civil City” initiative, and who are perceived as “uncivil” under this definition.

New legislation was not required to affect the results described above; nonetheless, new legislation was introduced at the provincial level that gave the police even more powers to move homeless people off the streets. Officially titled the Assistance to Shelter Act, activists dubbed it the “Olympic Kidnapping Law,” in light of the authorization it granted to police to forcibly move a person from the street to a shelter. Ostensibly limited by police assessment as to whether the person in question is considered to be “at risk” due to inclement weather, the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) decried the law, stating that “This bill would have police arrest citizens who are not guilty of any crime, and detain them without any charge, simply because they are homeless.”<sup>29</sup> Likewise, the City of Vancouver introduced an “Olympic By-law Package” in July 2009 that the BCCLA successfully challenged on the basis of its infringement on free speech and Canada’s constitutional guarantees. The bylaws were designed to protect the interests of the Olympics’ corporate sponsors by ensuring that small businesses did not make use of copyrighted terms such as “Olympics,” “Winter,” “Gold” and other Olympic-related terminology without paying for the rights. If violated, the bylaws carried a maximum fine of \$10,000 a day and a jail term of six months. Critics were concerned about the chilling effect that these bylaws could have on anti-Olympic protesters; as noted by Robert Holmes, president of the BCCLA at the time, “Telling people who exercise free speech that local authorities may barge in, rip down signs inside your property, fine you or throw you in jail will underscore the growing impression that our governments care more about their own camera appearances at Olympic events than about people’s rights.”<sup>30</sup> While the City of Vancouver eventually changed their bylaws “to make sure it’s crystal clear that’ constitutional rights ‘can’t be abused,’” according to Mayor Gregor Robertson, the modified bylaws remained in place for the duration of the Games in order to protect corporate interests.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the victory of the BCCLA in softening the language of the bylaws, they were still used in one significant case to justify the removal of an anti-Olympic mural located in the Downtown Eastside. The graffiti by-law required “occupants as well as owners to remove graffiti from private property, thus providing for more timely removal of graffiti from buildings that are not owner occupied, and improving the look of the city leading up to the Games.”<sup>32</sup> This by-law was proposed to become a permanent change, remaining in place after the Olympics were gone. At the implementation stage, the City of Vancouver made it clear that “public art” was to be exempted from its sign by-law provisions; nonetheless, a mural depicting the Olympic rings as four sad faces and one smiley face was ordered removed from the outside wall of a Downtown Eastside gallery. The City claimed that its removal was ordered on the basis of its new graffiti by-law, rather than the sign by-law, which required owners and occupants to

remove graffiti from their habitation in preparation for the Games.<sup>33</sup> The gallery curator felt that the removal was ordered due to the context of the work, noting, “over the years she has hung about 30 murals there, and has never had any trouble.”<sup>34</sup> The City denied that the mural was removed due to content, stating that a city inspector described the work as “black graffiti tags on wood paneling covering a window.”<sup>35</sup> Whether the City ordered the mural removed on the grounds of content or through their perception that it was undesirable graffiti, the introduction of the Olympic By-law Package had the effect of censoring the artistic expression of at least one Vancouver artist. Taken in combination with other Olympic-related legislation and by-laws, this example adds to a broader picture of a city’s population being required to shape their behavior in alignment with the demands of the Olympic Games. The youth participants were quite clear about the reasons behind this intensified pressure, understanding the city’s obligation to portray a particular image. As noted by Richard, “The Olympics mean you’ve got to fit a certain [image]. The city has to fit a certain look. Like a certain way.” When asked to describe this look, he replied, “Well it’s like clean and I’ve noticed that a lot of homeless people are getting locked up and put in jails because they’re homeless and the city people don’t want to address it. They’d rather just sweep it under the table.” The youth also felt strongly that such practices were unfair, and resulted in their increased marginalization in order to make way for affluent outsiders. As noted by Jess:

Well I was on the street four months ago and all that I would hear people talk about is when the Olympics come here they’re either going to find [temporary] housing for people or stick them in jail when they see them on the street because we don’t want to look bad because we’re getting the Olympics. So what? You’re going to toss us out because some richie-rich people have the Olympics for a few days? That’s bullshit. Right? They don’t have any money to spend on low-income housing because they’re spending all the money on the Olympics.

Such reflections raise the question posed earlier in the chapter: who benefits from Olympic security, and indeed from the hosting of the Games? Much is made within Olympic promotional materials of the so-called legacies of an Olympic Games for a host city, and it is on the basis of these legacies that bid committees convince local populations and governments to stand behind their bid. Yet increasingly empirical studies such as this one are documenting that the positive legacies of the Olympic Games are questionable at best, certainly appearing to create more difficulty than benefit for those who are already most marginalized within a host city.

## Conclusions

This chapter has traced both the “hard” and “soft” aspects of surveillance in the name of security in Vancouver in the year preceding and during the 2010 Winter Games. It has done so in part by juxtaposing the “facts” of security spending, numbers of security personnel, and the introduction of new bylaws and legislation with the lived experiences of homeless and street-involved youth residing in Vancouver the year before and during the Olympic Games. Suggesting that a complete picture of Olympic security can only be obtained by considering both the official numbers *and* the regulatory practices imposed on a city as a result of hosting an Olympic Games, the chapter has attempted to illustrate the effects of such practices for a city’s most marginalized members.

The experiences of the youth, as captured through qualitative methods, raise important questions about the priorities and focus of a city once it has secured the prize of hosting the ultimate in sporting mega-events, the Olympic Games. While bid committees make extravagant promises of social legacies, including expanded social housing, opportunities for young people, and a commitment to protect a city’s low-income residents, the reality, after the Games are completed, is that the majority of these commitments remain unfulfilled.<sup>36</sup> What remains is a security legacy (Giulianotti and Klauser, 2010) as opposed to a social legacy and city marketing as opposed to enhanced citizen rights to their own city. In addition to the bylaws (some of which were permanent, such as the graffiti by-law) and the changes in legislation (such as the Assistance to Shelter Act), Vancouver continues to carry the security legacy of surveillance technology infrastructure that was put in place for the Games, including permanent wiring for CCTV cameras and the construction of a new control room for their deployment.<sup>37</sup>

In light of such outcomes, it is important to return to the question with which this chapter opened: for whom are Olympic-related surveillance practices intended? Evidence documented here points clearly in one direction: surveillance is most decidedly *not* in place to benefit homeless and street-involved youth, nor, arguably, is it meant to assist in supporting the well-being of other marginalized people within a city. Rather, Olympic-related surveillance, at both the “hard” and “soft” levels, seems to be designed to protect the interests and bodies of Olympic corporate sponsors, affluent tourists, and the Vancouver business interests who benefit from city marketing practices. In light of this, it is imperative that we question the implications of hosting an Olympic Games for local democracy and the inclusion of the young and the poor.

## **Notes**

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