



# Down and Out in Los Angeles and Berlin: The Sociospatial Exclusion of Homeless People

*Jurgen von Mahs*

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Los Angeles, California, and Berlin, Germany, have been dubbed "homeless capitals" for having the largest homeless populations of their respective countries. In *Down and Out in Los Angeles and Berlin*, Jurgen von Mahs provides an illuminating comparative analysis of the impact of social welfare policy on homelessness in these cities. He addresses the opportunity of people to overcome - or "exit" - homelessness and shows how Berlin, with its considerable social and economic investment for assisting its homeless has been as unsuccessful as Los Angeles. Drawing on fascinating ethnographic insights, von Mahs shows how homeless people in both cities face sociospatial exclusion - legal displacement for criminal activities, poor shelters in impoverished neighbourhoods, as well as market barriers that restrict reintegration. Providing a necessary wake-up call, *Down and Out in Los Angeles and Berlin* addresses the critical public policy issues that can produce effective services to improve homeless people's chances for a lasting exit. Jurgen von Mahs is Assistant Professor in Urban Studies at The New School in New York City.

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