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More than Human Community Work

Heather Lynch

Abstract

Michel Foucault's work on biopower has been used in critical social work scholarship to make visible its mechanisms of control (Fook). Social work, particularly in affluent geographies, is presented as an apparatus of biopolitical governance which operates through two human centred vectors; the management of populations and the subjugation of bodies. Critical developments in biopolitics, mostly from contemporary Italian (Agamben, Negri and Esposito) political science, have reframed biopower and made it relevant to contemporary issues of war, migration and environmental degradation. Thinking with Spinoza, Deleuze and Simondon, Roberto Esposito challenges Foucault's anthropocentrism. He expands the boundaries between *persons* and *things* with an interest in life in the making; life which is shared across bodies not between. His affirmative biopolitics critiques the biopolitical nihilism evident in Agamben's thanatopolitics. Esposito proposes an affirmative biopolitics as a politics *of not over* life. In doing so he affords an understanding of the affective movement of life which involves more-than-human relations and where destruction is a facet of life's motion. His work gives rise to the ethical challenges of a politics which eschews anthropocentrism. It is therefore of relevance to the development of a post-anthropocentric social work.

This chapter draws on an anthropological study of a multi-ethnic, economically disadvantaged neighbourhood in Glasgow (Scotland). This locality hosts a mess of contemporary challenges linked to migration, the current rise of right-wing populism and environmental degradation. Esposito's affirmative biopolitics gives insight into the central

concern of 'dirt' in this more-than-human community that includes, unwanted animals (bedbugs, mice, rats and cockroaches). His theorisation of com-munus challenges the normative understanding of community that instantiates human/non-human borders through practices of hygiene. This biopolitical response triggers an auto-immune response that harms those it intends to benefit. Esposito's affirmative biopolitics dissolves the border that biopower seeks to sustain.

Introduction

Allison Street on Glasgow's southside passes through one of Scotland's most conspicuous neighbourhoods. The section of the street that attracts most attention is flanked by 12 tenement blocks that were built in the 1860s by esteemed coal and iron master William Dixon Snr, for the purpose of housing his workers (Smart, 1996). This is one of the city's most intact Victorian neighbourhoods. The red and blond sandstone blocks form impressive classical facades that attest the wealth of a city that at the time of their building was known as the 'second city of the British Empire'. Their clean geometric lines contrast with the textures of vibrant coloured scarves, spreads of fruit and vegetables, scent of spices, squeal of children and the ever-present whirr, cough and splutter of engines passing through the one-way route.

An array of old-fashioned hardware stores, Halaal butchers, textile and haberdashery shops, green grocers, travel agents and South Asian fast food outlets front the ground floor of these tenement blocks. Trollies heavy with sacks of cabbage, potatoes and onions rest against the walls. This is a uniquely local economy that serves the specific needs of a neighbourhood that retains the cultural traces of multiple migrant waves, Irish, Jewish, Italian, South Asian and most recently Europeans from Poland, Slovakia and Romania. Govanhill has been called Scotland's 'Ellis Island' (Ross, 2013). The tenement sandstone has absorbed many

languages; presently it hears groups of, mostly men, chatting in Slovakian, Romanian or Roma. Other corners are cluttered with cast-out furniture, lengths of wood, broken bicycles, mattresses and bin bags spewing bedding and clothes. As you enter Allison Street from the main road your senses alert to colour, scent, motion and sound. The liveliness of this neighbourhood demands a response.

Allison Street divides opinion (Lynch, 2011). For some the vibrancy of the street, the array of cultures and the distinctiveness of the exotic fruit and spice shops is creative and energising. Many artists choose to live here, not just because the rent is less expensive than other areas but because of the energy of diversity and its inherent creative potential. Others, most often Glaswegians and 2nd/3rd generation South Asians who have lived in the neighbourhood for decades are aghast; tormented by what they view as the decline of an area that they no longer recognise as home. These sentiments have led to community-led campaigns to 'Restore Govanhill'. The group "Lets Save Govanhill" has promoted their views through a website with blogs and articles, Facebook groups, marches and petitions that intend to mobilise public opinion and pressure politicians. They call for the area to be cleaned and restored to a place that resembles the home they believe they have lost. Their efforts have generated newspaper headlines such as:

'Campaigners call for action over 'filth and squalor' in Govanhill'

(Swindon, 2015)

And

Squalid conditions in Govanhill must be improved, say residents

(Pooran, 2016)

Their complaint is not without base. This locality has a significant record of bedbug and cockroach infestation and the streets are frequently lined with cast out objects. A glance beyond the problem rubbish suggests a much more complex tangle of concerns that resonate as distinctive to this location whilst deeply connected to the problematics of more-than-human relations that are playing out across the world in diverse contexts in very different ways. The tensions, conflicts and liveliness of Allison Street offer insight into the challenges of living in more than human worlds. The battle lines of this conflict are the borders between human bodies and matter perceived as threatening to human life. In Allison Street this battle is expressed through a discourse of hygiene; a need to give order to that which escapes human civility.

The practices of hygiene are modes that differentiate disorderly dirt from a desired order of human life; human from microbe. Hygiene maintains the borders that delineate a defined and ordered human domain from the disorder beyond the human. It is a biopolitical apparatus which sustains a narrative of human life 'bios' as separate from the disorder of life in general 'zoe'. This border is hybrid operating across culture and science. Working on the human/filth; order/disorder; bios/zoe borders on Allison Street gives some insight into the technologies which sustain the dominant anthropocentric position of a human community under threat. This also makes visible the damaging consequences of a such a human-centric view. Dismantling these borders is not without problems as attempting to do so raises a range of ethical challenges that have at their core: How to live in a more than human world where communities involve relations between, not just, human bodies, cultures and aesthetics, but sandstone, plants, earth, water, insects, animals and bacteria?

Human and more-than-human 'community'

Various government initiatives and a mesmerising array of voluntary organisations undertake community work in this area.¹ In 2017 Govanhill was designated a 'Thriving Place' with an aim of addressing social and environmental concerns. From the vantage point of community planning, the 'Allison Street community' is substantive and amenable to human imposed order. This follows a normative view of community as a belonging to place, ethnicity and culture which is captured in the rhetoric of reports that discuss, not just the 'Govanhill community' but the 'Roma community'; the 'South Asian and ethnic community' (Harkins & Egan, 2012). This view is premised on multicultural pluralism (Kymlicka, 2011) that views community as a division of people based on identity and belonging. Community work is about creating connections that bridge these discrete communities. Roberto Esposito offers a very different conception of community. His *com-munus* is a division 'into' not 'between'.

In his genealogy of biopower, Esposito (2008, 2010, 2011) argues that modern formulations of community from Tonnies (1957) to Habermas (1981) and Putnam (2000) conceptualise community in a "substantialist, subjective sense" (Esposito, 2013, p. 83). For Esposito, such an understanding of community 'reduces the common to the proper' as 'community is treated as a substance that belongs to the members' (Bird & Short, 2013, p. 6). Informed by Deleuze's Spinozism, Esposito's theory of *com-munus* is not defined by identitarian divisions but by a shared belonging to the 'munus'. The *munus* cannot denote ownership as it is not the property of a group but a debt that connects all forms of life. This is a community which is not intentional, or self-authored, cannot own or be owned, has no sense of identity but is a commons of shared affectivity. *Com-munus* is a means of

understanding affective relations between bodies (human and more than human) that co-constitute unfolding life.

Community is nothing other than the border, or transition, between this immense devastation of sense and the necessity that each singularity, each event, each fragment of existence must be in itself meaningful. It refers back to the character, both singular and plural, of an existence freed from any presupposed, or imposed, or postponed sense; of a world reduced to itself, able to be simply what it is: a planetary world, without direction or cardinal points. A nothing-else-than-world. And it is this nothing in common which is the world that associates us in the condition of exposition to the hardest absence of sense and, at the same time, to the opening of a sense yet to be thought.

(Esposito, 2009, p. 35)

Read through Spinoza, this is an immanent community. Bodies within the *munus* are temporal constellations, formed through affective attachments whose making and remaking enhances or decreases their capacity to live. A body 'can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or an idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity' (Deleuze, 1992, 629). A body is not defined by 'form' or 'function' but by its capacity to affect or be affected. Esposito's *com-munus* which centres the border is radically opposed to normative views of community that focus on the *telos* of discrete representable human relations. Esposito describes these proprietary communities as immunitarian. He argues that immunitarian communities seek protection from the necessary chaos of the *munus*.

Proprietary communities are immunitary as they are defined by what is proper to them and the need to defend their 'proper' constitution from anything which might intrude and alter this. This leads to a situation, says Esposito, where 'the public sphere is that site in which men (*sic*) enter into relation with each other in the form of their dissociation' (Esposito, 2006,

np). The public discourse on Allison Street, as indicated above, is a desire for order motivated by immunity. ‘Save Govanhill’ is a call for protection and ‘restore Govanhill’ a call to hold stasis. This is problematic as immunity involves shutting down the affective relations that are the motion of life. Where proprietary community focuses on human relations with environment as a backdrop, the com-munus centres the immanent creativity of more-than-human relationsⁱⁱ.

Mainstream community work in Govanhill follows an immunitary perspective where human life is perceived as under threat from more than human environment. Exposure to the chaos of unwanted objects and animals has motivated a call for order. The headlines that focus on ‘filth’ are a plea to order environment that makes visible the power dynamics between human groups but also between human and more than human life. In Allison Street the fault-line between com-munus and immunus is ‘filth’. Where clean streets represent human order of ‘bios’, filth is ‘zoe’, bare life, the chaos of the munus.

Biopolitics of Hygiene

‘Filth’ is a sensory invasion, the sight and smell of waste, the sound and motion of feral creatures. It is an intrusion on a given aesthetic order perceived as a threat to human bodies. The drive to control dirt reveals the ways in which human order is imposed through mechanisms designed to sustain boundaries between and within species. From a multispecies perspective, this is a matter of what must be killed in order to preserve a desired human lifestyle. The discourse of dirt on Allison Street parallels Foucault’s formulation of biopolitics as it relates on the one hand to the biologisation of power and on the other alterity, where biopower presents alterity as the dirty other, (Foucault, 2003). This dirty other is a toxic threat to human life in general which must be controlled. The dirty other on Allison

Street refers to unwanted matter, to the creatures that live in this waste and those who are believed responsible for creating it, as indicated in the comment below:

Had to move out of Govanhill for my kids' sake after living there for 40 years!
Rats! Rubbish! Refugees!, Racist I am not, but the area was fine before these people started living here.

Govanhill CCTV camera petition 12th Jan 2016

Esposito developed his biopolitics of com-munus and im-munus from Foucault's genealogy of power. Foucault charts the shift from sovereign power - the power to kill, to disciplinary power- the power over the individual body, to biopower - the regulation of species and the power to make live. The act of making live is not without harm as it also involves the elimination of threats. The question becomes what should be killed in order to preserve and sustain life. Foucault poses this question in in lecture on biopower:

'How, under these conditions, is it possible for a political power to kill, to call for deaths, to demand deaths, to give the order to kill, and to expose not only its enemies but its own citizens to the risk of death? Given that this power's objective is essentially to make live, how can it let die? How can the power of death, the function of death, be exercised in a political system centred upon biopower?'
(Foucault, 2003, p. 254)

His answer is 'racism':

‘In the biopower system, in other words, killing or the imperative to kill is acceptable only if it results not in a victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race. There is a direct connection between the two. In a normalizing society, race or racism is the precondition that makes killing acceptable.’ (Foucault, 2003, p. 256)

Race matters on the basis that it presents a ‘biological threat’. As a hybrid term, ‘dirt’ hosts a revulsion to the ‘biological threat’ from human and more-than-human life. ‘Dirt’ came to presence as an indisputable ‘biological threat’ in the germ theory of Pasteur and Koch. Biopower pivots on the biological and medical sciences of the 19th Century as they afforded a perspective on human life at species level and therefore its potential for regulation and protection. The development of microbiology afforded understanding of biological adversaries. During this era, the independent work of renowned scholars Louis Pasteur, Robert Koch and Jon Snow (Schaffer & Latour, 1991) debunked the widely held view that disease was carried by miasmas. Snow’s work on London sewers and water fountains evidenced a connection between water supplies and cholera, showing that this was a waterborne disease. Koch (2012) invoked the microbe as ‘enemy’ in the battle against cholera (Wood et al 2012). Pasteur’s work evidenced the presence of microorganisms involved in the process of fermentation leading to disease development. This insight founded the discipline of microbiology and was the basis of ‘germ theory’. Germ theory proposes that infection is caused by microbial organisms which breach the integrity of the human body. This knowledge was significant in the revolution of western attitudes toward dirt, and practices of hygiene. Leeuwenhoek’s microscope had made it possible to observe these microorganisms in the early 1800s and Semmelweis (Codell, 1985) work on hand hygiene at the same time made a convincing case for increased cleaning. Germ theory is a norm which

underpins the local politics of Allison street. There is an assumed imperative to clean as cleaning protects from the 'biological threat' of 'filth'.

The comment above where 'rats, rubbish and refugees' are bound together identifies a biological threat that cuts across a human/more-than-human boundary. In line with Foucault, it connects biological and political adversaries and frames them as a threat that must be managed. The commentator points out that they are not 'racist'; their interest is in the virtue and necessity for hygiene. 'Filth' operates as a hybrid that conceals the political in the biological. There is a moral imperative to act illustrated in this comment that followed a newspaper article: 'All we want is Govanhill to be a clean safe place to stay' (Borland, 2017) is a plea that plays on the hybrid morality of hygiene.

The connection of dirt with morality is not new. Bushman and Bushman's (1988) history of cleanliness in America draws on historical documents which chart the rise of bathing and use of soap between 1750 and 1900. They describe how the fashion of upper-class bathing spread to middle class households by 1900. This was not a single concern but a convergence of historical notions of purity linked to morality found in religion, alongside aesthetic concerns of gentility. They state that titles such as Moody's School of Good Manners (1754) taught children that being dirty entailed appearing 'sordid and clownish' that being dirty was 'disgraceful'. They also refer to the work of Dr George Chayne in 1724 which introduced what was then a new domain, that of skin and the idea of pores which excreted body fluid. This knowledge of pores and perspiration promoted ideas of the skin as a porous surface that could not only excrete but suck this excrement back in if it was not removed. Skin was instantiated as a boundary which must be maintained to protect the integrity of the individual human. Cleanliness linked with morality is explicit in Alcott's contribution to Health at

Home (1884); 'cleanliness is not only a moral virtue, but has an extensive influence on the preservation of health' (in Bushman & Bushman, 1988, p. 1224). This historical study convincingly argues that the increased interest in hygiene as a public and private concern brings together a scientific basis for protecting human life with the moral imperative to do so.

Developments in microbiology weaponised the moral undercurrents of dirt. Koch's depiction of bacteria as 'enemy' set out human/microbe borders as battlegrounds. Thus, an everyday warzone was created where human skin was the main battle line. This perception of microbe as enemy continues to be evident in the plethora of 'killer' cleaning products which are the armoury of any household that cares about health and protection. Such practices seek immunity for human life from external threats. Foucault extrapolated this microbial threat from the individual body to human species. In doing so, he keeps his focus on human politics. Rosi Braidotti states that he provides a 'cartography for a world that no longer exists' (Braidotti, 2016, p. 37) and Karen Barad states this is one that remains within the 'traditional humanist orbit' (Barad, 2007, p. 235). Thomas Lemke (2015) questions Foucault's focus on subjugated human bodies and regulated human populations. However, Esposito's critical development of biopolitics is proving useful to scholars of more than human life in environmental humanities (Povinelli, 2016) and animal studies (Wolfe, 2013). Esposito's biopolitics provides a means of articulating the processes that enforce human exceptionalism through immunitary practices of boundary maintenance and protection.

I can hear some readers say, of course the people of Allison street should have clean streets. You may find the connection with 'rats' and 'refugees' problematic but not the desire for cleanliness. However, following the biopolitical trajectory through its various outcomes shows that this drive to protect human life leads to a variety of unintended harms, many of

which contribute to the current array of environmental emergencies across the globe, some of these are evident in Allison street.

Thanatopolitics

The human management of life and the numerous ways this requires killing not just protection are discussed by Agamben (1998) where he argues biopolitics should be called 'thanatopolitics' as the politics of life is in fact a politics of death. There is no doubt that modern hygiene practices have a significant role to play in this engine of death. Since Koch declared war on the microbe, technologies of cleaning have become increasingly sophisticated and diverse. Microbial murder is delivered through anti-bacterial toxins and weaponised cleaning products. These include, anti-biotics - literally killing-life – drugs which kill bacteria inside the body, to a parade of pesticides which kill 'pests' in homes and farms; and a succession of anti-bacterial cleaning products engineered to make sure bacteria are 'killed dead'. It has been some 57 years since Rachel Carson published her seminal book *Silent Spring* (1962) which draws attention to the harms of human reliance on toxins, yet only now when the impact of such products is evident in this new era of extinction has this become headline news. Human biopolitical reliance on products that kill unwanted bacteria have made the most significant contribution to contemporary problems of anti-microbial resistance, soil erosion, extinction of pollinators and other creatures vital for the ecodiversity (Rowe Davis, 2014) that benefits life in general. These concerns are widespread but with differentiated impacts. The ways that people who live in Allison street have been directly affected by the unintended harms of the thanatopolitics of hygiene is not through a loss of life but through an excess of unwanted life. Some of the creatures that are thriving in this age of extinction, are thriving in Allison street.

Bedbugs, cockroaches, mice and giant rats feature regularly in the discourse of filth in this street. They have grown in strength as a result of their ability to resist the various waves of poisons administered to them. All of these creatures share something in common in this time of extinction – they are winners. While pollinators, ladybirds and a variety of birds face extinction as a result of human chemical addiction, these creatures have become stronger. Their ability to resist the finality of poison has led to super bedbugs (Lilley et al, 2016), bigger rats (Zhang, 2018) and invincible cockroaches (Weisberger, 2019). Crises linked to a surge of bedbugs and multiplication of rats is reported regularly in the media. I have explored in more depth elsewhere (Lynch, 2019) how the use of pesticides has directly enhanced a bedbug resurgence across the western world while simultaneously contributing to the detriment of pollinators and birds. Moreover, a number of people that live in Govanhill who have experienced repeated use of these chemicals in their homes relate this contact to health problems. The products which aimed to immunise human life from the discomfort of more than human life has generated an auto immune disorder. Human technologies of hygiene have had a double action of killing more than human life necessary for a thriving human environment whilst enhancing the life of bacteria and animals deemed to pose a threat.

This poses a dilemma; a dilemma which is echoed in different fields of human, animal and environmental health. Do we create more and different chemicals in the knowledge that the life we seek to destroy will have started to develop resistance as soon as use commences? Do we look for different methods of killing? Do we limit use? Or do we question the premise and morality of germ theory and reconsider what relations are of value in a more-than-human world?

The local authority approach to public environmental concerns of rubbish and pests has been more cleaning and more anti-microbials. Glasgow city council has 10 members of staff employed to 'treat infestations', 5 of whom are based in the Govanhill area. An environmental team are based in a community centre adjacent to Allison Street and the area has additional street cleaning and waste disposal. The impact of living in an area where there are such creatures cannot be underestimated. Some of the people who shared their experiences of living with unwanted creatures in their home endured extreme distress. One woman Jean (pseudonym) said that she destroyed her home in an attempt to kill mice.

'Ma hoose is ruined, a've ruined it. A've ruined everywhere weh bleach plus that black sticky stuff, ah canny get back off, but ah wusnae carin. Ah don't want a mouse so ah wusnae carin.'

The abjection Jean felt at the thought of sharing her home with a mouse was powerful enough for her to destroy her property and flee her home in the middle of the night to escape the sounds of scuttling and scratching. She repeated 'ah wusnae carin' about any of the damage that she did to her home as protecting it from the presence of this feral threat was of such importance. She described frenzied attacks on mice with bleach-soaked mops in the middle of the night. She laughed at herself but also did not need to justify her actions as she presented this as a matter of survival. She felt that she had lost control over her home. It was not her space as it had been invaded by pervasive creatures who would not be deterred. The distress which Jean expressed to me resulting from the feelings of helplessness associated with an invasion of her home is indicative of what is conveyed about the neighbourhood as a whole.

Germ theory instantiates the dualism of human/non-human; life/non-life. It not only normalises the boundary between the human body and microbial life but also invokes a moral imperative to maintain this boundary. Jean was fully aware that a mouse could do her no harm but could not carry the moral burden of the breach of her home by a 'dirty' other. What Achille Mbembe terms a 'politics of viscosity' (2016) can be discerned in Jean's abjection and by activists who want to 'save Govanhill'. Mbembe states that the politics of viscosity 'deploys the motives of body, of pain, of suffering, of anger, outrage, grief and fear not only to make a set claims on the existing political dispensation but to contest its very *raison d'être* or to petition for an entirely different kind of community' (np). The politics of viscosity is motivated by a view of science and a sense of morality that cuts a clearly defined line between human and non-human. In doing so it obscures the real problem; that reliance on toxins to manage life is not just harmful to animals and plants but acts back on humans in unintended ways. Esposito's 'munus' does not dispense with viscosity but invites a lingering in viscosity as the substance of life. The boundaries within the *com-munus* are not lines in the sand but 'wounds' (Esposito, 2010), where 'mutual infection' is the engine of life.

Composting not cleaning

In *com-munus*, boundaries are not immunitary separations but visceral connections. Esposito shifts away from the dominant theorisation of biopolitics, as a politics 'over' life. Drawing on the techno-vitalism of Simondon he theorises a politics 'of' life, where the dynamic tension between preservation and contamination is constitutive in the flow of life. He articulates this tension around the image of the wound, where the wound is both injury and opportunity. Esposito, influenced by Spinozist vitalism, recognises that all life is connected. Timothy Campbell states:

The opening to an affirmative biopolitics takes place precisely when we recognize that harming one part of life or one life harms all lives. The radical toleration of life-forms that epitomizes Esposito's reading of contemporary biopolitics is therefore based on the conviction that every life is inscribed in *bíos*. (Campbell, 2006 pp. 2-22)

Esposito's affirmative biopolitics affords insight into the material motion of life beyond human/non-human boundaries. Biologists working on the microbiome provide increasing evidence for this position. Gilbert, Sapp and Tauber's (2012) claim that 'we have never been individuals' is testament to human life as microbial swarm, an assemblage of human and more than human atoms working together to generate the passing human form.

Neither humans, nor any other organism, can be regarded as individuals by anatomical criteria. To capture this complexity, the term "holobiont" has been introduced as the anatomical term that describes the integrated organism comprised of both host elements and persistent populations of symbionts (Rosenberg et al. 2007). (Gilbert et al, 2012, p. 327-8)

Gilbert et al. (2012) draw on current microbiology to argue that human life is not separate, developmentally, anatomically, physiologically, genetically or immunologically. Any person we might consider a discrete human is in material form a 'multi- genomic and multispecies' complex. In this context the immune system is more 'passport control' than fortress. The germ warfare operationalised since Pasteur and Koch whilst saving many human lives has become an action of auto-immunitary harm. A harm whose consequences are now felt in the form of anti-biotic crisis, soil erosion, a multitude of auto-immune diseases and in the current

wave of extinction that has brought imbalance to the eco-diversity within which human life is formed. This presents a substantive challenge. The morality that privileges human life is harming that which it sought to protect. Decentring the human means living in the wound, in the chaos of the *munus*, in more-than-human community.

Thriving life on Allison street shares the ability for relationality. Alliances between rubbish and green shoots can be found all around, in the cracks where wall meets pavement, in the crevices of lamp posts and shoots from drains. What is detritus to some is energy to others. The ‘pests’ that have been subject to a succession of extermination attempts demonstrate an ability to enter into relation with the various toxins administered to them. The bedbug alliance with chemicals has allowed them to develop increased metabolism (Adelman et al, 2011) and changes in the physical composition of their body (Lilly et al, 2016). The entomology of bedbug development indicates that the bugs do not simply repel insecticides but enter into composition with them in ways which allow them to change and have a different relationship with these toxins. This is the affirmative biopolitics within *com-munus*, the ‘power ‘of’ not ‘over’ life’. It is not an attempt to escape a threat by killing it, but to enter into an active relationship through experimentation and anticipation of change. Anna Tsing (2015) narrates the ways that life lives in damaged landscapes. Karen Barad (2014) urges composting as strategy for living in more than human worlds.

Community work based on *com-munus* not *im-munus* presents a radical challenge to neighbourhoods such as Allison Street. Viewing more-than-human relations as life, not ‘filth’ does not mean doing nothing but calls for a response that is not based on chemical annihilation. A more-than-human community perspective does not provide a model for intervention that eliminates harm and loss. It accepts that harm and loss are constituents of

life and that fortifying borders to protect from this loss can ultimately generate even greater harm. As is evident on Allison Street, while the moral narrative of germ theory prevails, it is very difficult for people to reframe the problem of ‘filth’. This involves challenging norms that have embedded since the time the street was built. It does however pose a challenge as to what ways of living might be found if the priorities of human life were decentred and community work involved composting instead of cleaning.

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ⁱ Statutory services have invested significant sums in recent years, to address these issues; £1.5 million for back yard improvements, £1.2 million for Govanhill Baths Development, at least £0.5 million for the installation and running costs of 'state of the art' CCTV cameras.

ⁱⁱ See Esposito's (2015) *Persons and Things*, where he challenges the prioritisation of 'person' as human