

## Did Borders Really Leave Church Street? The Politics of Discipline in Burlington, Vermont's Church Street Marketplace

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This thesis examines the careful and deliberate maintenance of the conditions that produce a profitable reputation for Burlington, Vermont. Like other college towns, the city of Burlington is popularly thought to be politically progressive, friendly, and aesthetically nostalgic. Visitors are enthralled with the downtown area of the Church Street Marketplace, which offers not only a variety of options for shopping and dining, but also an engaging experience that balances safety and risk, seclusion and exposure. In my research I shed light upon the processes by which multiple institutions identify, categorize, and act upon individuals perceived to be disrupting this environment—individuals who are frequently labeled mentally ill, poor, substance abusing, or homeless. Drawing upon four months of fieldwork, which includes qualitative analyses of newspaper articles, public forums, community initiatives, and formal interviews, I supply an ethnographic account to offer new insights about how surveillance, discipline, and power may function in the newly emerging type of urban space known as the business improvement district.