REBUILDING PRECARITY:

DWELLINGS & DEMOLITIONS IN JAMESTOWN HARBOR, ACCRA, GHANA

By

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Over the past five years, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) has demolished regions of Jamestown harbor, an informal settlement in Ghana's capital city of Accra, to make way for a new harbor backed by foreign investment. Hundreds of residents' dwellings were destroyed, although many residents returned and built new dwellings. In Ghana, expanding infrastructure development engenders the continual dispossession of poor urban communities (Gillespie, 2016). Drawing on two months of ethnographic fieldwork using semi-structured interviews and a participatory drawing method, this research finds that residents of Jamestown harbor construct smaller and more unstable dwellings in response to their vulnerability. This thesis highlights how precarity emerges from the demolitions in Jamestown harbor and is reproduced as residents react to past demolitions by anticipating future demolitions. Understanding eviction-related precarity is of critical importance as rates of eviction among vulnerable populations in Ghana and across the globe continue to rise.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jamestown harbor, the location for a local fishing community and informal settlement in Accra, Ghana, is being demolished. Between 2015 and 2020, the local city government, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), repeatedly ambushed the community with excavation machinery in attempts to clear the area. It is estimated that over one thousand people have lost their shelters and possessions in this process. State-sponsored demolitions of indigenous communities for infrastructure development is a growing practice in Accra (Gillespie, 2016). Despite the attempts to clear the region, hundreds of Jamestown harbor residents remain in the harbor following the demolitions and have rebuilt their dwellings. The cycle of residents staying in the harbor after each demolition, followed by the return of government personnel and excavation machinery to demolish the harbor and remove residents, has repeated at least three times since the first major round of demolitions in 2015.

Figure 1.1. A sign in Jamestown harbor features a rendering of the "James Town Fishing Harbor Complex" (Source: Author, July 2019).

Jamestown harbor is located on the Gulf of Guinea in southern Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Previously a commercial port during the colonial era, the harbor now accommodates a local community composed of indigenous Ga people, migrants from other parts of Ghana including Fantis, Ewes, Guans, Akans, Dagombas, and foreigners from neighboring West African countries (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). Since the 1960s, this community has used the harbor inlet for artisanal fishing and developed an informal settlement where numerous members live in self-built dwellings. According to one resident, an estimated 2,000 people at most lived in the harbor prior to the demolitions.

Figure 1.2. President Akufo-Addo and Chinese Ambassador Shi Ting Wang at a groundbreaking ceremony in Jamestown harbor on December 5, 2018 (Source: Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Ghana)

Recently, Jamestown harbor has become the proposed site for the James Town Fishing Harbor Complex, a modern reconstruction of the harbor area which is purported to be for industrial fishing activities. A sign depicting an artistic impression of the James

Town Fishing Harbour Complex stands above the debris near the harbor's entrance (see Figure 1.1). The rendering illustrates a renovated harbor with new shipping channels, berths, seawalls, and breakwater along with facilities for supporting industrial fishing including a fish-processing center and market. In May 2018, the former Chinese Ambassador to Ghana, Sun Baohong, signed an agreement with Ghana's President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, announcing China's support for the construction of the James Town Fishing Harbor Complex with a USD$50 million grant. The backers of this proposal promise that the new harbor will "enhance the productivity of the fisherfolk and create about 1,000 job opportunities for the youth in the community" (Dredging Today, 2018). President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo also held a public groundbreaking ceremony along with the current Chinese Ambassador to Ghana, Shi Ting Wang, in Jamestown harbor to commemorate construction (see Figure 1.2). Aside from these public statements, ceremonies, and the large rendering of the new harbor at the beach's entrance, little else is known to the public about the James Town Fishing Harbor Complex.

Satellite imagery and interviews with community members revealed that the demolitions have occurred at least four times in the past five years, starting in 2015 (see Figure 1.3). The demolitions destroyed numerous informal buildings and dwellings and targeted a different subsection of the harbor each time that they occurred. The most recent demolition occurred on May 21, 2020 amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic. Video footage shared with me from May 2020 that was recorded by a resident in Jamestown harbor portrays a single excavation machine slowly taking apart a building, piece by piece, while dozens of residents stand by. This is the nature of the demolitions in

Jamestown harbor – they are incremental, slow, and repetitive, which makes their impact less noticeable and therefore more violent.

Figure 1.3. This satellite image of Jamestown harbor was taken in 2018. Outlined in yellow are all of the demolitions that took place between 2015 and 2018 (Source: Author, November 2020).

Research Questions

While Ghanaians await a new harbor along with its backers' promises of economic enhancement and job growth, the residents of Jamestown harbor constantly await the next demolition in fear of losing their dwellings. Jamestown harbor residents are invariably exposed to the threat of the demolitions, living between the memories of past demolitions and the anxiety of future demolitions. This thesis pursues how the demolitions subject residents to precarious livelihoods by asking the following research questions:

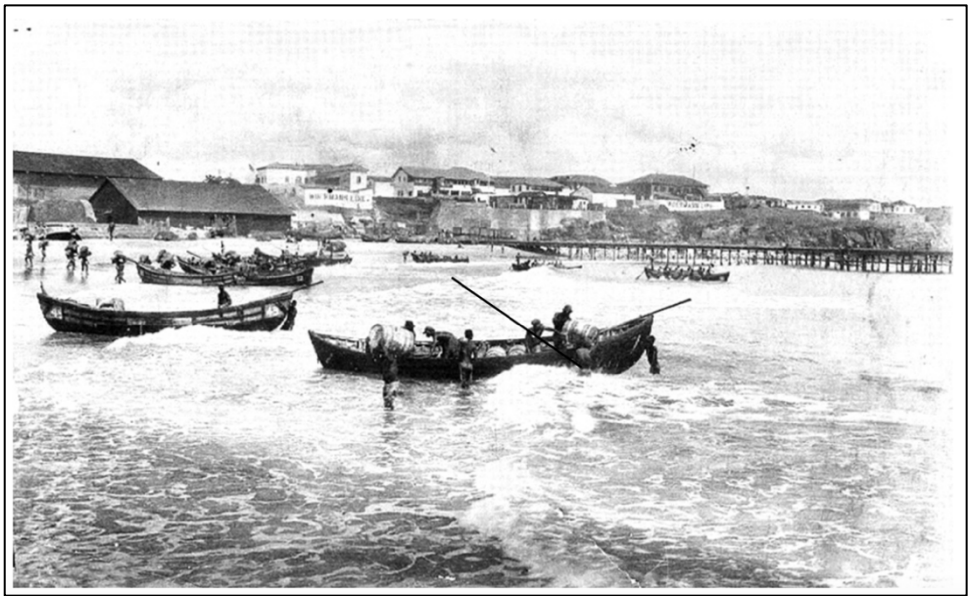
RQ1: How have the demolitions in Jamestown harbor impacted the informal social and economic activities of residents?

RQ2: How have the demolitions in Jamestown harbor affected residents' dwellings that they rebuilt? How has precarity manifested itself?

The remainder of this chapter provides a history and background of Jamestown harbor and its residents. I draw on Jamestown's colonial history and contemporary China-Ghana relations to explore how the uneven development of urban space in Jamestown harbor contributes to the vulnerability of harbor residents.

Colonial Development of Jamestown

Jamestown harbor was initially constructed by the British Gold Coast, the colony that the British Empire established in present-day Ghana in 1867. More than 100 tribes lived in Ghana prior to colonial rule, including the Ga people, who migrated to the coastal region during the 15th century, and the Ashanti people, the largest native empire in Ghana until 1867 (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). European powers meanwhile established colonies in Ghana from as early as 1460, including the British, the Danes, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Germans, and the Swedes. The exchange of gold and commodity resources earned the region its name as "The Gold Coast." In 1867, the British Empire overthrew the Ashanti to gain full control over the Gold Coast and ruled until Ghana's independence in 1957. Across over 500 years of colonial control by various European powers, an estimated 12 million African people were enslaved and exported from the Gold Coast.



Figures 1.4 (top) and 1.5 (bottom). Photographs from the late 1800s/early 1900s of Jamestown harbor. Traditional fishing boats line the beach against the backdrop of industrial cranes for loading/unloading cargo ships (Source: Jackson, 2019).

In 1877, the British Gold Coast administration established its headquarters in Accra. The Colony divided Accra into three regions: one for Europeans; one known as Adabraka for Natives; and the administrative region, composed of Ushher Town,

Victoriaborg, and Jamestown (Pierre, 2013). A harbor was erected in 1879 in Jamestown, and the intensive exchange of commodity goods, primarily gold, allowed for Jamestown to grow into a mercantile powerhouse for commercial trade during the 19th century (Jackson, 2019). With economic success from trading, the colonial administration invested heavily into Public Works, promoting the construction of a central British bank, post office, mail agency, hotels, and hospitals (Jackson, 2019).

The change in economic activities during the colonial era led to an influx of immigrant workers into Accra (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). Jamestown subsequently grew overcrowded and gained a reputation for being "a noisome and pestilential district" (Jackson, 2019, p. 43). Colonial administrators failed to provide basic amenities like waste management or water storage facilities for African natives, leading to unsanitary conditions. Reports blamed native populations in Accra for the spread of malaria and encouraged Europeans to avoid Jamestown (Jackson, 2019). Throughout the 1900s, slum remediation by the Accra Improvement Committee targeted overpopulated informal settlements including Jamestown (Jackson, 2019). Jamestown remains a "slum" to this day due to the continued lack of infrastructure (UN-Habitat, 2003).

Colonial legacies set the stage for present developments in Jamestown harbor. Colonial-era development of Jamestown privileged elite members of the British colony by focusing on transportation and shipment while neglecting necessary infrastructure for African natives, leading to slum-like conditions that are still present today. The newest push to renovate Jamestown harbor similarly engenders a system of uneven development,

wherein the dispossession of the native population directly serves the interests of elite stakeholders in the construction of a new harbor.

Political-Economic Forces from Ghana and China

The demolitions in Jamestown harbor are connected to both national and city-led development campaigns in Ghana and Accra. In 2019, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo launched the *Ghana Beyond Aid* program, a "national transformation agenda" seeking to reduce the country's debt and foreign borrowing (Government of Ghana, 2019). In April 2019, President Akufo-Addo addressed the nation with a vision for the future of Ghana, stating the following:

> It is time to pursue a path to prosperity and self-respect for our nation. A Ghana Beyond Aid is a prosperous and self-confident Ghana that is in charge of her economic destiny; a transformed Ghana that is prosperous enough to be beyond needing aid, and that engages competitively with the rest of the world through trade and investment.

The *Ghana Beyond Aid* charter insists that pursuing this vision requires "high and efficient investments in infrastructure" as the key instrument for its success (2019, p. 10). As the capital city of Ghana, Accra is a major hub for urban development. Over the past ten years, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) has pushed for gentrification via 'decongestion exercises' in informal squatter settlements throughout Accra where the urban poor are displaced to make way for new infrastructure (Gillespie, 2016). Gillespie (2016) documented the repetitive demolition of a Ga neighborhood by the AMA in east Accra called 'La' where the community has lost 80 per cent of the land to luxury estates. The AMA is likewise responsible for executing the demolitions in Jamestown harbor.

The People's Republic of China also possesses a strategic hand in Jamestown harbor's renovation. The financial contribution from China to the harbor's construction is quite likely tied to the most recent demolitions in March 2019 and May 2020. China's involvement in Jamestown harbor is also critical to the *Ghana Beyond Aid* agenda, given that infrastructure built and funded by Chinese aid supports Ghana's economic needs. Through the *Belt and Road Initiative*, China's plan to invest in infrastructure in nearly 70 different countries, China has established itself as a major player in development financing in sub-Saharan Africa. Between 2006 and 2017, China's lending accounted for over 80% of bilateral loans to African governments (Jubilee Debt Campaign, 2018). Political ties between China and African countries also increased with economic cooperation (Mlambo et al., 2016). China's involvement in Jamestown harbor, however, replicates the historically extractive practices of colonialism that weakened the development of infrastructure serving African residents.

As both a land and ocean-based development, the new harbor is associated with a decline in Ghana's fisheries. Illegal overfishing contributes heavily to depleted fisheries, costing West Africa $1.3 billion per year (Afoakwah et al., 2018). According to the Environmental Justice Foundation, the majority of trawlers are owned and operated by Chinese companies "in spite of local laws prohibiting foreign ownership and control in the trawl sector" (2019, p. 6). The failure of governance around the issue of illegal fishing is largely connected to "the power and personal fortunes of ruling elites" through the cooperation of Ghanaian officials with foreign (mainly Chinese) entities (Afoakwah et al., 2018, pg. 7). The decline and possible extinction of Ghanaian fish stocks endangers local fishing communities while multiplying the wealth of unknown elites (EJF & Hen

Mpoano, 2019). In Chapter IV, I discuss how the decline in fish stocks worsens residents' vulnerability to the demolitions.

China has come under heavy scrutiny for its involvement in African countries, accused of exploiting their natural resources and contributing to deindustrialization (Mlambo et al., 2016). Capital-surplus countries like China invest their capital into land and labor-surplus countries, such as Ghana, to avoid devaluation and fuel domestic growth (Mlambo et al., 2016). However, Chinese development in Sub-Saharan Africa neglects to invest money into local economies. Instead, projects are constructed using Chinese labor and materials sourced through Chinese-owned production companies. In adapting Marx's (1976) concept of 'primitive accumulation,' Harvey (2003) explains that elite classes consolidate power and capital via the dispossession of assets and livelihoods from the working class. By developing assets like the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex, Chinese and Ghanaian elites alike accumulate profits while dispossessing local communities (Gillespie, 2016; Mlambo et al., 2016). The exploitation of marine resources by fishing boats from China reinforces further the process of accumulation by dispossession in Jamestown harbor and Ghana.

The new harbor comes at the expense of the local community whose stories and removal become "unimagined" (Nixon, 2011), rendered invisible amidst the state drive for development. Most Ghanaians in Accra are unaware of the demolitions in Jamestown harbor. If the demolitions were to occur as a larger spectacle that brought these events to wide public attention, it could disrupt the national support that bolsters development policies. By demolishing Jamestown harbor slowly and incrementally, the proposed new harbor strategically threatens to erase "the intangible embodied stories, memories, crafts,

and events" that the harbor region shelters (Jackson, 2019, p. 2). This research aims to shed light on the suppressed and often unacknowledged voices of this community.

The Precarity of Jamestown Harbor

In Jamestown harbor, residents' livelihood strategies rely on the availability of informal work. The informal sector, which Hart first identified in his seminal work on migrant workers in Southern Ghana, is composed of those employed "outside the organized labor force" (1973, p. 68). Informal working opportunities span a wide range of activities in Accra, from petty theft and hawking to farming and fishing; informal workers may be self-employed or hired by smaller enterprises (Hart, 1973). Community members in Jamestown harbor engage in informal practices of artisanal fishing, food and drink vending, petty trading, and carpentry. The local population consists of the Gas, who have lived on the coast of Ghana for over 500 years, and migrant workers who have come from Ghana and other West African countries at various times throughout Accra's industrialization (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). The vulnerability of residents to the demolitions relates to their informal livelihoods, which contribute to the deep-seated precarity of the community.

Informality in Jamestown harbor derives from a local history that parallels development in Jamestown and Accra. Prior to British expansion in the 1800s, the Gas occupied the coastal region of Accra and engaged in small-scale fishing and farming (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). With the development of the harbor in Jamestown by the British Colony, the Gas shifted their economic activities away from small-scale fishing to accommodate the industrializing landscape (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017).

Many Ga men took jobs in trade and apprenticeships while Ga women became more involved in home-based activities such as fish mongering. The heavy industrialization of Accra during the colonial era also led to an influx of migrant workers who settled into the Jamestown area (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). In 1962, after Ghana's independence, a new harbor was built in Tema and the focus of industrialization shifted away from Jamestown. Many fishermen moved to Tema as well, leaving a small artisanal fishing community to acquire the abandoned harbor.

Figure 1.6. A view of Jamestown harbor captured from above at the Brazil House (Source: Author, July 2019).

In 1983, Ghana adopted Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) reforms due to rising debt burdens. SAPs were loan conditionalities mandated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) that enabled policies to increase exportable goods and implemented reforms "to reduce the role of the state in the economy" (Konadu-Agyemang, 2000, p. 479). Wrigley-Asante and Mensah (2017) document the resulting transformation: SAPs dramatically restructured Ghana's public sector, freezing

government employment and increasing interest rates and food prices. Many people lost their jobs, which led to an increase in informal home-based livelihood practices. The sale of cooked food and alcoholic beverages in front of homes by the roadside was expanded by jobless workers who settled in Jamestown (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017). Informal income opportunities now make up a majority of the earnings of low-income workers in Accra and Jamestown harbor (Wrigley-Asante & Mensah, 2017; Yankson & Gough, 2014).

Socio-economic changes in Accra since the colonial era have caused livelihood strategies in Jamestown to shift toward informal work. Residents depend on the local informal economy to sustain their livelihoods, putting them in a position of precarity whereby any shock can negatively affect their livelihoods. The demolitions are such a shock, along with the decreasing fish stocks due to illegal overfishing, which render the harbor further vulnerable and create new conditions of precarity. Dwelling construction is an important element of residents' practical response to conditions of vulnerability. Constructing dwellings allows residents to continue pursuing their livelihood strategies in the harbor. Yet this strategy can exacerbate their vulnerability. This thesis argues that dwelling construction both reflects and reproduces the precarity of harbor residents, as new dwellings inflict "embodied precarity" as residents experience mental and physical suffering while occupying them.

The following five chapters further flesh out the complex relationship among colonial legacies in Ghana, the increasingly precarious conditions of livelihoods in Jamestown harbor, and local dwelling construction. **Chapter II** is a literature review on urban political ecology, vulnerability, and precarity and **Chapter III** discusses the

methodologies used in this study. **Chapters IV** and **V** focus on the results of this research, followed by a conclusion of the findings in **Chapter VI**.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis uses an urban political ecology framework to examine Jamestown residents' practices of dwelling reconstruction following the demolitions. Such an approach considers the processes that contribute to the uneven development of urban space (Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003). These uneven relations are a driving factor in the displacement of the informal community at Jamestown harbor. I conceptualize the effects of the demolitions on residents in relation to their precarity, defined as the "differential distribution of bodily destruction and grievability that emerges through specific social and political arrangements" (Han, 2018, p. 337). I draw on theorizations of vulnerability to understand precarity as a product of the demolitions in Jamestown harbor (Butler, 2012; Marino, 2015).

Urban Political Ecology

Urban political ecology (UPE) draws from Marx's concept of metabolism to examine how nature is transformed by human labor under capitalism in the formation of cities (Swyngedouw, 1996). UPE seeks to understand how the production of urban environments is inherently bound by power relations through "capital accumulation as socio-natural transformation" (Lawhon et al., 2014, p. 500). According to Swyngedouw and Heynen, this transformation occurs through the control of material conditions that comprise urban environments, which "serve the interests of the elite at the expense of marginalized populations" (2003, p. 902). The resulting unevenness of cities determines access to environmental resources, including access to land and marine resources. UPE

aims to expose deeper societal issues of inequality, injustice, and poverty that lead to uneven access to vital resources (Lawhon et al., 2014, p. 500). UPE also addresses the cross-scalar social relations that are involved in the production of uneven urban landscapes, inextricably linking the "local" with the "global" (Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003).

Recent engagements in UPE offer new insights into the city. Post-colonial theory and African urbanism 'provincialize' UPE by drawing on a wider range of applications to African cities (Lawhon et al., 2014; Silver, 2014). Silver (2014) calls for UPE to pay greater attention to the informal activities of poor urban residents in African cities. Silver's work in Jamestown suggests that informal structures built by the urban poor address conditions of poverty by securing access to space within the city (2014). Rather than being passive victims of dispossession, the urban poor in Accra "redistribute urban space from the rich and the powerful through everyday acts of 'quiet encroachment'" (Gillespie, 2016, p. 69). Drawing on these approaches, we can thus conceptualize residents' practices of informal construction in Jamestown harbor as attempts to secure access to the harbor in order to maintain livelihood strategies.

The intersection of feminist theory and UPE points to new parameters of power that are enacted through and on the body (Heynen, 2018). Doshi argues for an embodied UPE by engaging the experiences of slum dwellers whose bodies are the targets of dispossession in Mumbai, India (Doshi, 2013, 2017). Doshi uses embodiment theories to analyze how social and political economic inequalities in urban environments lead state actors to embrace slum clearance as an environmental improvement strategy (Doshi, 2019). Doshi demonstrates how bodies are sites for the formation of political

subjectivities (2017, 2019). The privileging of Jamestown harbor for elite accumulation and development engenders conditions of precarity that are embodied by residents through physical and emotional suffering.

Vulnerability

With regard to dwelling construction in Jamestown harbor, it is evident that vulnerability demonstrates layers of precarity. There are numerous approaches to vulnerability in political ecology, anthropology, public health, and disaster risk, spanning both theoretical and empirical applications (Krellenberg et al., 2017; Marino, 2015). Political ecologists approach vulnerability as the socioecological and political economic conditions that make shocks more catastrophic for some communities than others (Marino, 2015; Ribot, 2014; Watts, 1983; Watts & Bohle, 1993). Marino defines vulnerability as "the conditions present in a community that include both exposure to a hazard and the inability to cope with or adapt to those hazards in a way that prevents negative outcomes, including death, infrastructure damage, and social dysfunction" (2015, p. 24).

Ribot (2014) explains why some communities are better able to cope with or adapt to hazards than others by framing vulnerability through entitlements theory. According to Ribot, "vulnerability in an entitlements framework is the risk that the household's alternative commodity bundles will fail to buffer them against hunger, famine, dislocation, or other losses" (Ribot, 2014, p. 682). Adaptive capacity is therefore shaped by a household's ability to produce surplus that it can store or to accumulate assets (Ribot, 2014; Watts & Bohle, 1993; Sen, 1981). Building off of access theory

which explains the ability of people to obtain, use, and benefit from things, adaptive capacity is further shaped by access to important resources, including material assets, social protections, social networks, and social services such as education, healthcare, and food subsidies (Ribot, 2014; Ribot & Peluso, 2003). Communities who are more vulnerable are therefore increasingly unable to sustain stresses due to unequal endowments and entitlements (Ribot, 2014). In Jamestown harbor, residents are fundamentally vulnerable as squatters, lacking political rights to the land that they dwell on and equal access to necessary resources or social protections. The physical reconstruction of their dwellings exposes multiple layers of precarity which impact their capacity to cope with or adapt to the shocks imposed by the demolitions in ways that prevent negative outcomes.

Eviction and Precarity

This thesis uses "precarity" to refer to the differential vulnerability of residents that emerges through repeated demolition cycles. Judith Butler (2004, cited in Kasmir, 2018) distinguishes precarity from precariousness, seeing precariousness as the general condition that stems from the fact that all humans are interdependent on each other. Precarity is, by contrast, the unequal distribution of this vulnerability "to marginalized, poor, and disenfranchised people who are exposed to economic insecurity, injury, violence, and forced migration (Bulter, 2004, cited in Kasmir, 2018, p. 2). Butler maintains that "the vulnerability to destruction by others…follows from a condition of precarity in all modes of political and social interdependency" (2012, p. 158). This thesis demonstrates how precarity underlies vulnerability in Jamestown harbor. Residents'

livelihoods depend on the informal economy and artisanal fishing sector, which are subject to shocks caused by the demolitions and illegal overfishing.

I am interested in how precarity in Jamestown harbor emerges within the community as a result of the demolitions. Lancione (2019a) demonstrates how conditions of precarity arise from forced evictions among Roma people in Bucharest, Romania. More than physical removal, evictions cause a realignment of relations through the dispersal of the Roma population (Lancione, 2019a). The instability of lost or changing relations generate fragile conditions that are felt through emotions, trauma, and additional labor (Lancione, 2019a). In Jamestown harbor, residents' livelihoods depend on social relations that support the functioning of the informal economy. I show how precarity emerges from the demolitions by changing harbor relations and provoking economic instability.

I am also interested in how precarity is reproduced in Jamestown harbor through residents' responses to the demolitions. Joronen and Griffiths (2019) apply the term "affectual precarity" to the reproduction of precarity among Palestinian communities who experience repetitive demolitions of their homes. Affectual precarity is the non-physical experience of the demolitions – the thoughts and feelings surrounding the memories of previous demolitions that inform the anticipation and anxiety of future demolitions (Joronen & Griffiths, 2019). This thesis examines how affectual precarity shapes residents' construction of their new dwellings, exposing them to bodily precarity.

Dwelling

This thesis examines how dwelling construction after the demolitions contributes to residents' precarity by studying the configuration of dwellings using different building materials. Though I approach dwelling construction in Jamestown harbor using grounded theory (see Chapter III), scholarship on incrementalism, maintenance, and experimentation were foundational to my initial conceptualization of dwelling construction. Silver (2014) demonstrates that in a region of Jamestown near the harbor, residents developed structures incrementally through small adjustments. Silver's work occurred before the demolitions in Jamestown harbor; however, their research was an instrumental reference for understanding dwelling construction in Jamestown. Building off of Graham and Thrift's (2007) theory of maintenance and repair, Castán Broto and Bulkeley (2013) consider the maintenance of housing in Mexico and India whereby people experiment with different building materials. The concept of experimentation informed early understandings of how in-situ maintenance and repair might take place in Jamestown.

My concept of dwellings has changed over the course of this study, namely in that seeing dwellings as the sites of embodied precarity lent to new conceptual parameters to dwelling. Urban scholars studying precarity and housing posit the performativity of housing as generating precarity (Bricknell, 2012; Lacnione, 2019). Bricknell (2012) argues for a 'critical geographies of home,' dividing housing into a physical location where people reside and a metaphorical space of emotions. Doing so includes the negative experiences of exclusionary housing (Brickell, 2012). For Lancione (2019), dwellings are also both physical and imaginative, subject to the politics of inequality, as

one can build something for themselves that equally represses them (Lancione, 2019). Dwelling construction and residents' precarity interact in Jamestown harbor to inform new ways of understanding dwellings, particularly as spaces of inequality and vulnerability.

The act of dwelling is also subject to inquiry among urban scholars who conceptualize dwelling as acting upon 'the right to the city' (Attoh, 2011; Das & Randeria, 2015; Harvey, 2008; Muñoz, 2018). Henri Lefebvre's (1968) 'right to the city' draws on Marxist political economy theories and examines how urban space is co-created and shaped by power (Lefebvre, 1968, cited in Harvey, 2008). The uneven development of urban space is bound to the decisions driven by those with access to the surplus of capitalist production where such surplus cannot be attained by those who do not already have it (Harvey, 2008). Urban scholars studying precarity and housing focus on the right to the city as the activities of the urban poor, who are more likely to experience eviction or establish alternative means of housing (Das & Randeria, 2015; Muñoz, 2018). Muñoz (2018) argues that the right to the city begins at the scale of the home where precarity occurs through the threat of eviction and displacement that disables the right to the city.

Dwelling can equally establish the right to the city in response to precarity (Attoh, 2011; Das & Randeria, 2015; Vasudevan, 2015). Das and Randeria (2015) explain that "the urban poor establish their rights to dwell through a building of material sites, relations, and networks through which they can find a secure habitation in the city" (2015, pg. 6). Kafui Attoh (2011), an urban scholar from Ghana, pushes further the notion of 'the right to the city' by asking, "What *kind* of right is the right to the city?" Attoh considers different kinds of rights, including liberty rights, claim rights, powers,

and immunities, in order to understand housing rights and homelessness. According to Harvey, the right to the city "depends on the exercise of collective power to reshape the process of urbanization" (Harvey, 2008, p. 23, cited in Attoh, 2011, p. 676). Attoh argues that "a right to the city can equally be a right to collective power and a right against unjust collective decisions" (2011, p. 677). Dwelling is therefore a "right" to the city itself rather than a means of resisting an infringement on those rights (Attoh, 2011). Rebuilding dwellings in Jamestown harbor represents a precarious response to the demolitions; however, it may equally be viewed as an act of resistance to residents' dispossession.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Chapter III introduces the methodology used to collect and analyze my data, which takes a feminist postcolonial approach to grounded theory and ethnography in studying the impacts of the demolitions on Jamestown harbor residents. This approach allows me to study these impacts in-depth in order to understand how precarity induced by the demolitions is experienced by residents. Chapter III illustrates the application of ethnography and grounded theory methods in greater detail. In this chapter, I lay out the research plan for this thesis which includes the methodology, quantitative methods, qualitative procedures, data analysis, limitations, and ethical concerns. Table 3.1 outlines the research questions, methods, and modes of analysis that guided this research.

Table 3.1. Research questions, methods, and modes of analysis

Research Questions	Methods	Analysis
How have the demolitions in Jamestown harbor impacted the informal social and economic activities of residents? How have the demolitions in Jamestown harbor affected residents' dwellings that they rebuilt? How has precarity manifested itself?	Participant observation, semi-structured interviews, participatory drawing exercise	In-vivo coding, thematic content analysis, narrative analysis

Methodology

This research focuses on the relationship between the demolitions of Jamestown harbor and the resulting precarity of harbor residents. Importantly, this research seeks to conceptualize this relationship by understanding the phenomena by which residents alter

the structure of their dwellings in response to the ongoing demolitions. By relying on the personal experiences of residents, this research seeks to understand how precarity as an effect of the demolitions is individually experienced. A qualitative approach to this study was therefore appropriate as such phenomena cannot be appropriately understood without the depth and range of focus that qualitative research offers (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Charmaz, 2014).

This study was designed and performed using a combination of ethnography and grounded theory, two prominent methodologies in the social sciences for conceptualizing qualitative data. Ethnography draws upon the participation of the researcher in observing and recording the daily routines of the people that he or she is studying (Emerson et al., 2011). This study employed ethnographic methods in the field through participant observation, a practice that involved "getting close" to residents of the harbor and participants outside of interviews (Emerson et al., 2011). This study, however, did not involve immersive experiences of any kind and I did not experience the demolitions for myself. Above all else, participant observation allowed me build rapport with members of the community, which aided my understanding of Jamestown harbor in many ways.

This study was also performed using grounded theory, a systematic and flexible approach to collecting and analyzing qualitative data that allows the researcher to construct theories from the data itself (Charmaz, 2014). According to Charmaz, applying grounded theory to an ethnographic study "gives priority to the studied phenomenon or process – rather than the setting itself" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 38). Grounded theory also allows for a more flexible mode of data comparison by allowing researchers to compare prior data with emerging categories, dispelling a positivist attitude of passivity (Charmaz,

2014). The goal of applying grounded theory to this study is to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena and processes that residents in Jamestown harbor incorporate into rebuilding their dwellings. By theorizing from a ground-level perspective, this thesis develops new concepts from the data directly, revealing the embodied experiences of precarity from residents themselves. I also use grounded theory to situate the findings of this study within existing theories of urban political ecology, vulnerability, and the right to the city while maintaining the novelty of social phenomena in Jamestown harbor.

This thesis takes a grounded theory ethnography approach to qualitative fieldwork through the implementation of participant observation, semi-structured interviewing, and a participatory drawing exercise to understand how the demolitions impacted Jamestown residents and their dwellings. Additionally, I incorporated a grounded theory approach to qualitative data analysis using in-vivo coding, memo-writing, and focused coding. Using grounded theory to reflect on new theories as they evolved in the field and during analysis also guided several changes to this research as new details emerged from early fieldwork (Charmaz, 2014). Prior to my arrival in Ghana and my first day in Jamestown, I had prepared for several months to conduct research on building material usage in Jamestown as a means for understanding climate change adaptation. During this first visit to Jamestown, however, I took a tour of the harbor with a local guide and through our conversations I learned that the harbor was being demolished while residents were still living there. Thus, my research questions changed, and additional questions were added to my interview protocol.

This research also incorporates feminist and postcolonial methodologies through the application of a participatory drawing exercise. Feminist researchers encourage academics to acknowledge the power relation between researcher and participant by incorporating methodologies which allow researchers to "share their power during the research process" (Caretta & Riaño, 2016, p. 263). Participatory research is one such method that has gained considerable attention by critical geographers. I designed a participatory drawing exercise based off of a similar method developed by Leslie McLees (2013). McLees (2013) created a participatory mapping exercise that she employed in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, asking participants to physically draw mental maps of their neighborhood urban farms. Borrowing from this methodology, which incorporates postcolonial and feminist techniques, I asked residents to participate in drawing their past and present dwellings with colored markers on white paper.

The goal of the drawing exercise was to better understand how dwelling structure changed after the demolitions through a more expressive experience (McLees, 2013). The participatory drawing exercise allowed for a more meaningful dialogue and served as a visual aid for describing previous dwellings that had been destroyed in the past (Caretta & Riaño, 2016; McLees, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The drawing exercise also engaged with feminist and post-colonial methodologies by providing participants with the opportunity to collaborate in the co-production of knowledge (Caretta & Riaño, 2016).

The Researcher

According to Charmaz, "the goal of much ethnography is to gain an insider's depiction of the studied world" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 35). As many ethnographers note,

however, the goal of gaining insider access should not temper the positionality of the researcher. I am a master's student in the Department of Geography at the University of Oregon and hold a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Geography & Environmental Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. In reflecting on my positionality throughout this research, I find myself coming back to the word *obruni*, which means outsider in Ghana. Obruni was historically used by Africans in Ghana during the colonial period to identify White Europeans, but over time it has come to refer to any foreign person associated with the class and cultural standing of Whiteness (Pierre, 2013). My positionality was that of an outsider to Ghana and was affiliated with any local implications of the word obruni. Being an obruni affected the way people interacted with me and influenced the nature of our conversations in various ways of which I could not be fully aware.

Gender roles also played an important role in my positionality. As a woman, safety was often a concern. I was aware of potential threats to my safety in Ghana and in Jamestown because I drew unwanted attention from men. Many female researchers use different strategies to mitigate this attention and I prepared by wearing a fake wedding ring and baggier clothes (Pascoe, 2007). Some men respected that I was "taken" while others were physically invasive as a gesture of interest. Sometimes I grappled with my anger as forceful grabbing was a stark reminder of the disturbing patriarchal treatment of women globally. Other times, I reminded myself that I was exercising my power as a white researcher and benefitting from the colonial project by even being in this position in the first place. Fortunately, these experiences only occurred a handful of times.

I also worked with a research assistant in Ghana named Grace, an undergraduate student from Accra who accompanied me in Jamestown for fieldwork. Grace was introduced to me by one of the family members with whom I stayed while I lived in Accra. Grace is Ga and her father originally came from Jamestown. Each day I met Grace at a café in Jamestown and together we walked down to the harbor.

The Participants

The participants of this study are the adult residents of Jamestown harbor. Most residents are either native Ga or Fantis from Northern and Western Ghana, though several ethnic groups are present in Jamestown harbor. English is the official language of Ghana; however, many Ghanaians do not speak English. There are several indigenous languages from the Akan group, though Twi is the most heavily spoken dialect of Akan across Accra. Most harbor residents that I interviewed spoke only Ga, another dialect of Akan that is spoken by the Ga people, while a few spoke Twi and broken English. Grace played a critical role in translating between myself and the participants of this study.

Qualitative Methods and Procedures

This research draws on two months of qualitative fieldwork in Jamestown harbor followed by ten months of qualitative analysis. All fieldwork took place in Jamestown harbor from July 1, 2019 to August 24, 2019.

Sampling

As many ethnographers observe, initial entry into the field can be an incredibly challenging process that requires gaining access to social networks (Desmond, 2012). After acquiring approval from local leaders, Grace and I unsuccessfully attempted to seek out potential interview subjects by approaching the first people that we saw. Fortunately, I was introduced by a colleague to a Jamestown resident named Casablanca, a well-known and charismatic tour guide, musician, and dancer. I conducted participant observations with Casablanca during the second and third week of fieldwork during which time he introduced me to potential interviewees. Meeting interview subjects through Casablanca also helped build trust in a way that I could not have otherwise accessed. During the remaining weeks of fieldwork, I used a combination of network and snowball sampling methods to interview residents of the harbor who either knew Casablanca or knew the other participants of this study. The real names of the participants were not used in this study and pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

Participant Observation

I returned to the harbor again three more times over the first three weeks of this study to further develop my newfound knowledge of the demolitions. On these visits, I conducted participant observation with Casablanca, who introduced Grace and I to the residents of the harbor. Grace and I conducted informal conversations with local members of the community, which included harbor residents, members of the Chief Fisherman's counsel, members of the Chief of Jamestown's counsel, and other members

of the harbor community. After gaining a better understanding of the demolitions and the ways in which residents of the harbor had rebuilt their dwellings, I adjusted my interview protocol and research questions to reflect these newfound circumstances.

In the following weeks, I conducted participant observation each day that I was in the field, before and after interviews. Participant observation during this time provided an opportunity to become better acquainted with Jamestown harbor through its facets of daily life, including dwelling practices. Oftentimes, this consisted of jotting down field notes while witnessing day-to-day events, though participant observation eventually evolved into daily conversations with the same people, including the Chief Fisherman's counsel, to which I paid a visit whenever I passed by. Toward the end of my research, I visited both of the schools at the harbor and met with the teachers. I also had the opportunity to speak with members of a local NGO called Plastic Punch, which teaches children of the harbor schools about practicing environmental awareness around plastic waste.

Through daily fieldwork, I gained important and unexpected knowledge from local residents that continuously informed my interviews and research (Emerson et al., 2011). I learned to visit the harbor in the early mornings after the fishermen returned from sea and timed my interviews around the fishing schedule. I also learned about illegal fishing practices and how foreign trawlers impacted the fishing community. Through these observations of customs along with the day-to-day conversations that took place outside of interviews, I developed a more refined understanding of the harbor, Ga culture, and the geography of Jamestown harbor. This also allowed me to tailor my

interview protocol to this knowledge and, through much trial and error, compose questions that led into rich conversations (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Table 3.2. Timeline of Field Methods (July 1, 2019 to August 24, 2019)

	Timeline (in calendar weeks)			
	2	4	6	8
Initial field entry				
Participant observation				
Semi-structured interviews				
Participatory drawing exercise				

Interviewing Procedures

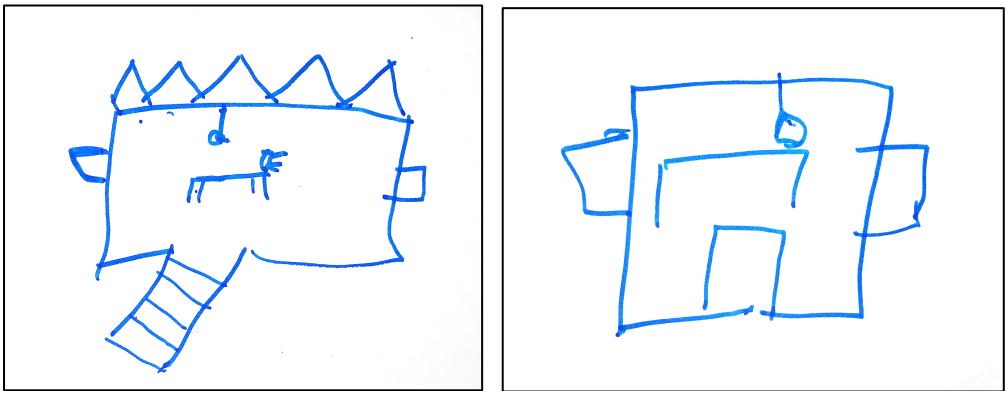
I conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with residents of the harbor, including 11 women and seven men ages 18 to 65. Interviews took place exclusively at Jamestown harbor inside of or near interviewees' dwellings and lasted anywhere from one to one-and-a-half hours. Using my interview protocol, I asked interviewees a series of questions about their lived experiences prior to, during, and after the demolition exercise in March 2019. This included questions about daily life, work, family, finances, and community. Next, I asked participants questions about the demolitions, what they witnessed on the day of the demolitions in March, as well as the impact that the demolitions had on their lives and their emotions, feelings, and observations. Midway through the interviews, I deployed a participatory drawing exercise (see below) along with a series of follow-up questions regarding the exercise. Toward the end of the interviews, I asked participants questions about the future and their attitudes towards the new harbor.

By treating each interview as a unique experience, my approach to interviewing favored dialogue over traditional question-and-answer interviews. I often skipped protocol questions that I deemed unnecessary or devised additional questions based off of participants' responses in order to facilitate more responsive interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). I was also careful not to interrogate residents about their experiences due to the traumatizing nature of the demolitions and generally proceeded with caution if any participant showed signs of distress during our conversations. Most residents were not hesitant to speak about the demolitions, however, and recalled the events that they observed during the demolitions in detail. I also respected participants with time restraints by offering to shorten our interviews while listening longer to other residents who took the time to share their personal experiences. As a result, no two interviews were alike, and some interviews lasted much longer than others.

Participatory Drawing Exercise

Approximately midway through each interview, I invited participants to partake in the participatory drawing activity for approximately 15 minutes. I first read a script to the participants that described the drawing exercise, which Grace translated. They were then asked to create a drawing on white paper provided using Crayola brand markers based on the question, "What did your previous dwelling look like prior to the demolitions?" Participants worked alone for about 10 minutes to answer this question using the provided markers and paper. After participants finished, I interviewed them about their drawings and asked a series of follow-up questions related to their previous dwellings.

Next, I asked participants to create a second drawing based on the question, "What does your current dwelling look like?" Participants then worked alone for approximately 10 minutes with the paper and markers provided based on the question to answer this question. Afterwards, I asked a series of follow-up questions related to their current dwellings along with questions that prompted comparison between their past and current dwellings. My reason for asking residents to draw their current dwellings was to use visual aids to provoke a conversation about comparing their past and current dwellings. This exercise sometimes led to residents mistakenly drawing other buildings, including their homes in faraway villages. This provided me with a deeper understanding of Jamestown harbor, as these residents explained that they visited their homes on the weekends and holidays. For these residents, living in Jamestown harbor allowed them to work there while their actual homes and families were in other locations.



Figures 3.1 and 3.2. One participant's drawings from the drawing exercise. On the left is their drawing of their dwelling before the demolition and the right is their drawing of their dwelling after the demolition.

Qualitative Analysis

I first conducted a content analysis to derive a general understanding of themes by combining my field notes with transcribed interviews. Through open and in vivo coding, I coded segments of three interviews based on emergent patterns (Rubin and Rubin

2012). I created several codes based on participants' descriptions of their dwellings after the drawing exercise, paying particular attention to the conversations in which residents drew comparisons between their present and former dwellings. I also noted how participants described their feelings of comfort or discomfort in either of their dwellings. I then organized my codes and engaged in a more thorough process of focused coding with other transcribed interviews. I often went back into my fieldnotes throughout this analysis in order to clarify a particular incident or to draw on ideas and themes that emerged during interviews.

After analyzing themes through open, in vivo, and focused coding, I organized my interpretation of their meanings into memos. Through thematic analysis, I applied these themes into an investigation of how residents' dwellings were impacted or changed by the demolitions by drawing on particular parts of our conversations. I also applied a narrative analysis, "a form of interpreting a conversation or story in which attention is paid to the embedded meanings and evaluations of the speaker and their context" (Wiles, Rosenberg, and Kearns 2005, 90), in order to consider the inherent forms of precarity that underlie changes to dwelling structure.

Cartography and GIS

I used cartographic methods in order to understand the extent of destruction in Jamestown harbor (see Figure 1.3). To create the maps used in this study, I first geo-referenced satellite imagery from Google Earth of two images from Jamestown harbor in ArcGIS. These images were taken in 2015, prior to the destruction of the harbor, and in 2018, after one of the demolitions. In Photoshop, I altered the 2015 image in order to

create outlines of the buildings, which I cleaned and colored yellow in order to show the significance of destruction when overlaid on top of the 2018 image. I also created the reference maps using data from Natural Earth which situates Jamestown harbor within Accra, Ghana.

Quantitative Methods and Procedures

Dwelling Count

To better understand the population size and number of dwellings in the harbor after the demolitions, I deployed a dwelling count in Jamestown harbor to derive an estimate of how many people live there. Along with Grace and Casablanca, I counted and marked in my notebook the number of dwellings where people permanently or semi-permanently resided based on the criteria of approximate size (large enough to house an individual or family) and visibly distinctive features of residency including bedding, cookware, and/or hung clothing. Many shelters in Jamestown harbor are also used for storing items, such as fishing nets or gasoline drums, and were therefore not counted in the dwelling count. I counted 159 shelters total in Jamestown harbor. Given that each shelter houses anywhere between one and five people, I estimate that between 159 and 795 people in the harbor actually shelter there, with a median of 477 people. This is by no means a comprehensive estimate and does not account for the total number of people in the harbor who come and go or who shelter elsewhere.

Methodological Limitations

There are several important methodological limitations to this research. First, this research is subject to my own biases and perception of events. There could also be several sources of error in my transcriptions, analyses, or findings due to the inherently inconsistent nature of human subjects and a human researcher. Having an interpreter can also create bias as I did not receive answers directly from the participants of this study. Since I did not hire a professional interpreter, working with Grace, a university student and native Ga woman, required flexibility on both of our parts. More often than not, the small mistakes I discovered revealed the intricacies of qualitative research and, through trial and error, I learned to use these moments as opportunities to discover new insights about Jamestown harbor and the people who live there.

During the drawing exercise, multiple residents hesitated when offered the markers and paper, as they were unaccustomed to drawing. Thus, many drawings displayed minimal images of squares or rectangles. Additionally, participants sometimes became confused by which dwelling or house they were being asked to draw. Many demolitions have taken place in Jamestown harbor and some residents have therefore built multiple dwellings. Likewise, many residents of the harbor had family homes to return to during non-working days, which resulted in participants drawing these structures instead of the dwellings that were demolished. It was difficult to catch these mistakes in the field, though Grace was usually able to determine where participants were talking about a dwelling other than the one on the beach. These mistakes were productive and often revealed hidden meanings. I therefore adapted the drawing exercise to accommodate participants whose dwelling circumstances changed after the demolitions.

Ethical Concerns

Feminist researchers address the power dynamic between researcher and participant in their work, though reading about and acknowledging these power dynamics is far different from experiencing and navigating them. First, my positionality as a white woman granted me access to the field because several residents mistook me as an NGO worker. Some participants also asked me to use my position to help them in some way, be it financially or through access to information. I did not pretend to be an NGO worker, rather these were assumptions that I had to address any time they came up by describing my abilities as a researcher and my limitations as a student. By virtue of IRB protocol, research subjects were not paid or compensated for their participation. However, many participants imagined that this research could help them because of my position as a white woman. I responded to these participants by saying that this research could shed a light on their circumstances. Each person had the space to decline my invitation to participate after clarifying these matters. These moments were altogether difficult and brought my awareness to the extractive process of ethnographic research.

CHAPTER IV

EMERGING PRECARITY: SHIFTING HARBOR RELATIONS

In answering my first research question – How have the demolitions in Jamestown harbor impacted the informal social and economic activities of residents? – this chapter examines how residents' livelihood strategies were impacted by the demolitions. Many people returned to Jamestown harbor to continue working, despite their experiences of the demolitions. I use Elyachar's (2010) theory of social infrastructure to conceptualize the social dynamics of Jamestown harbor's informal economy and its connection to artisanal fishing. I also explore the ongoing depletion of fish stocks in Ghana caused by illegal overfishing and its effect on the informal economy in relation to the demolitions. Drawing from participant observation and semi-structured interviews, Chapter IV examines how the demolitions and reduced fish stocks compound and form the foundation for precarity in Jamestown harbor.

The Informal Economy of Jamestown Harbor

Weekday mornings in Jamestown harbor are busy. Canoes line the beach surrounded by fishermen threading their seines, large fishing nets that float on the water's surface. Nearby, fish mongers lean over plastic buckets cleaning fresh fish from the morning's catch. Vendors perch behind stalls of cold drinks, hot pots of food, and other items for purchase. It's business as usual in Jamestown harbor despite the piles of debris and scarred ground, remnants of the active demolitions.

Figure 4.1. Fishing boats in Jamestown harbor near the shore after the fishermen have returned from sea. In the background, several fishermen prepare their boats and nets for another trip (Source: Author, July 2019).

The informal economy in Jamestown harbor is built on social relations, conceptualized as a "social infrastructure" (Elyachar, 2010). Elyachar (2010) defines social infrastructure as the networks of communicative channels that develop through phatic labor, labor that is produced through language, linking buyers to sellers through social means. The networks in Jamestown harbor link fishermen, canoe owners, fish mongers, and their customers to shopkeepers, vendors, and other small business owners. Phil, a long-time resident of Jamestown harbor, sits behind a manual sewing machine. He has returned to the harbor after each demolition. He explains, "I will always come here… There are lots of people around and especially the fishermen, for instance. If they wear any clothes and their clothes get torn… the person will come to [me]." Artisanal fishing workers support Phil's tailoring services each time they return to his stall. Like Phil,

many small businesses owners rely on the social infrastructure of Jamestown harbor to support their businesses. Social infrastructure is established through years of communication and trust. Importantly, the informal economy as a social infrastructure relies on informal workers investing in other informal workers in order to function.

Figure 4.2. A small shop in Jamestown harbor. The shop owners, a husband and wife, sell beverages to the local community. They sleep in the dwelling behind the stall at night (Source: Author, July 2019).

Jamestown harbor is being impacted by changes to land and sea, creating precarious conditions for residents by negatively impacting the informal economy. The demolitions drove away several residents which translates to fewer customers for shopkeepers and vendors. Additionally, a decrease in fish stocks has led fishermen in Jamestown harbor to lose money and reduce their spending in the informal economy. In the remainder of this chapter, I examine how the demolitions and the depleted fish stocks in Ghana have both impacted the informal economy in Jamestown harbor. This puts the

smaller population of residents in the harbor in a more vulnerable position with respect to the demolition and rebuilding process.

Demolitions Reduce Harbor Population

Jamestown harbor has seen a large change since the demolitions started destroying the harbor. Phil painted a picture of what the harbor used to look like before the demolitions, stating, “At first, this place was very nice. There were a lot of people passing around…there were *choba*, drinking spots. This place was just like a market, or a safe place for us.” In his depiction of the harbor prior to the demolitions, Phil described a large marketplace that included bars, a large hotel for visitors, public restrooms with plumbing, multiple schoolhouses, and a cold store for selling fish, among other establishments. Sadly, much has changed since the harbor was demolished. Phil explained, “It’s not like the old place that I used to know.” Large piles of rubble are scattered around the harbor, which are all that remain of the bars, hotels, schools, and dwellings of those who have now gone. Since the demolitions began, Jamestown harbor’s population has decreased to about half of what it used to be, according to residents.

The demolitions have also impacted the social infrastructure of Jamestown harbor. Due to the decreased population, small business owners who rely on their relationships with their customers now struggle to make money. Joyce, a resident that sells cooked beans, explained:

> Before the demolition I was having a big saucepan, about three of these, what I use to sell currently. Anytime I bring the beans, it gets finished. But after the demolition, most of the Fanti people, because they don't have a place to stay, they have gone back to their region. And because of that I have to use this small saucepan to sell.

For Joyce, having fewer customers affects the amount of food she is able to sell. Joyce explains that the Fanti people, migrant workers from the Northern and Western regions of Ghana, have not returned after the demolitions. Without the ability to stay in the harbor after their dwellings were destroyed, many migrant workers have left. Joyce and other residents who run small business have lost money as a result of the decreased population and must now rely on the remaining population in the harbor for income, including the artisanal fishing workers. However, fishermen and other members of the artisanal fishing community have also lost money due to the declining fish population in Ghana and cannot contribute as much to the local economy.

Declining Fisheries Impair Artisanal Fishing

Artisanal fishing is a large industry in Ghana on which approximately 10% of the country's population, an estimated 2.6 million people, rely (Nunoo et al., 2015). Though artisanal fishing is nominally overseen by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture, it is informally organized through traditional fishing practices. In Jamestown harbor, the Ga people enlist their long-held fishing practices under the supervision of the Chief Fisherman. Fish is a staple of the Ghanaian diet, supplying approximately 60% of animal protein (Nunoo et al., 2015). Fish is both a source of income and a source of food in Jamestown harbor.

Figures 4.3 (top), 4.4 (bottom left), and 4.5 (bottom right). Large kilns Jamestown harbor where fish mongers prepare and cook large batches of small fish to sell to customers (Source: Author, July 2019).

Fishermen in Jamestown harbor report decreasing catches, a phenomenon experienced by millions of people in artisanal fishing communities in Ghana (Freduah et al., 2017). Marine resources have exceeded their exploitation limit and fish stocks are expected to continue declining nationally (Afoakwah et al., 2018). Overfishing by illegal fishing practices is among the largest threat to Ghana's fish stocks, including the use of explosives and light to capture larger numbers of fish. *Saiko* is an illegal fishing practice

that has caught the attention of international organizations. According to a report by the Environmental Justice Foundation (2019), *saiko* fishing is defined as the following:

> The local name for illegal fish trans-shipments in Ghana, where industrial trawlers transfer frozen fish to specially adapted canoes out at sea. It used to be a practice whereby canoes would buy the unwanted by-catch of industrial vessels. (p. 4)

Saiko fishing is a massive problem which removed 100,000 metric tons of fish in 2017 alone (EJF & Mpoano, 2019). Significantly, *saiko* is an organized practice involving industrial trawlers and land-based fish markets. 90% of these trawlers are linked to Chinese ownership (EJF & Mpoano, 2019).

Sam, who has fished in Jamestown harbor for over 30 years, explained that illegal fishing practices have slowly taken over the artisanal fishing industry in Ghana. He has witnessed the introduction of light fishing and other destructive practices that he claims began when trawlers from China first arrived at Ghana's coast over 10 years ago. "Since then, our life has changed totally," says Sam. Fishermen report catching fewer fish, which is unusual for this time of year. One resident suggested, "This season is the season that the Ga people celebrate their *Homowo*, so every year during this season fishermen normally get a lot of fish. But now, if they go, they get only small small fishes." *Homowo* is the annual Ga celebration of harvest which takes place every August. Fishermen expect to see an increase in the number of fish during the *Homowo* season. However, the size and quantity of fish have waned considerably this season. Fisherfolk attribute the decline to illegal fishing practices contrary to Ga traditions, which place limitations on fishing activities.

The poor regulation of fishing activities is largely due to the challenges associated with monitoring and enforcement (USDA FAS, 2019). Ghana's Ministry of Fishes and

Aquaculture responded to the issue of declining fish stocks in 2019 by placing two closures on marine fishing, the first from May 15 to June 15 for artisanal fishing and the second from August 1 to 31 for industrial fishing (USDA FAS, 2019). The closures were intended as a "bumper" to allow for uninterrupted spawning during the spawning season of small pelagic fish. However, residents of Jamestown harbor grew resentful of the interruption to their livelihoods, experiencing extreme hunger while fishing was stopped. Since the implementation of the two closures, fish stocks have not yet improved and fishermen in Jamestown harbor continue to catch fewer fish (USDA FAS, 2019).

The depleted fish stocks have created a new dilemma for the fishermen in Jamestown harbor due to the informality of artisanal fishing. Fishermen not only lose money catching fewer fish, but the reduced hauls dramatically constrain their livelihood strategies. According to Sam:

> At first during August time, like this month, because of the festival we go and borrow money to get fish to sell to people. But now, because we don't get a lot of fish, we can't go and borrow any money to take care of our business anymore. If you go and borrow the money, it will be your debt because where are you going to get money to pay back the money you have borrowed? The kind of work we are doing, we can't go on pension… We don't have any money to depend on. At first, if we go to sea, we get a lot of fish to sell to people, we get money from it. But now, if you go to sea, you don't get a lot of fish to sell. Because of that, we don't have any money at all.

Without continuous fishing, informal borrowing or saving for the future are difficult for fishermen to achieve. Scholars demonstrate how precarity through income insecurity is one of the main disadvantages to the informal sector (Han, 2018). The fishermen in Jamestown harbor find themselves in precarious positions when fish stocks plummet, given their inability to save or borrow money to support their livelihoods in the absence of immediate income sources.

The reduced fish stocks create an added shock to the informal economy by reducing the amount of money that fishermen can make. Ida, a sweeper who helps maintain one of the dumpsters in Jamestown harbor, explained the impact of declining fisheries on her work:

> Over here, business is reciprocal. If the fishermen go to sea and they get fish, they can sell to people, especially the women [fish mongers]. If they sell it to the women, the fishermen will get enough money. If I also sweep here, I can get money from them. I will sweep for the women who buy the fish, and if they also have money, they will also pay me well. So, if they get and I also get, in a way we are helping each other. If they don't get money, how can I also get money?

Shopkeepers, vendors, and other workers like Ida depend on fishermen catching and selling fish for their businesses to survive. Without the circulation of money from the artisanal fishing industry into the informal economy, small business owners also experience the precarity of income insecurity.

Residents Return to Work

After the demolitions, many people returned to the harbor despite the numerous setbacks that they have faced. Faith suggested, “I have watched that they will come and do the harbor, but still they are not coming so I have decided to come here again.” The demolitions were not enough to keep Faith away from the harbor. Since construction of the new harbor has not yet commenced, residents returned to the harbor to continue pursuing their livelihood strategies. Isaac spoke of the significance of the harbor’s informal economy and the frustrations of many residents after the demolitions:

> Because this place is a business ground, when they demolished this place a lot of people got angry because this is where they transact their business. If you want them to demolish this place, where do you want them to go and do their business?

Many residents fear losing their networks in the harbor, an indication of the importance of the harbor's social infrastructure. The informal economy of Jamestown, despite its precarity, is still a safer option than leaving altogether because residents' livelihoods are so deeply embedded in the region's history of artisanal fishing. The demolitions, however, threaten to destroy the social infrastructure that harbor citizens have built over time.

Discussion

This chapter has examined how precarity emerges from previous demolitions, making residents more vulnerable to the potential shocks of future demolitions. As informally employed workers, residents' livelihoods depend on the productivity of the informal economy and artisanal fishing sector. The informal economy, however, is predicated on a social infrastructure that has been radically destabilized without a steady population in the harbor. The decreasing fish stocks likewise affect the amount of money fishermen can make, causing them to decrease their spending in the informal economy. Residents nonetheless remain in Jamestown harbor; however, they are now more vulnerable to the demolitions because of these extant conditions of precarity.

The results of this chapter broaden recent scholarship on eviction-related precarity by demonstrating how the demolitions contribute to realigning relations in Jamestown harbor (Lancione, 2019a). The dispersal of some previous residents after earlier demolitions contributed to greater precarity in the harbor particularly because of the economic significance of residents' relationships. Chapter V explores how residents respond to these conditions through the ways in which they construct their dwellings.

Their means of adaptation reproduce their precarious circumstances by generating further discomfort and suffering.

CHAPTER V

REPRODUCING PRECARITY: UNDERINVESTMENT IN DWELLINGS

This chapter demonstrates how the structure of and building materials for dwellings in Jamestown harbor changed after the demolitions. This study found that residents underinvested in their new dwellings by using cheaper building materials to construct smaller dwellings. I explore how residents' dwelling strategies changed as a result of underinvestment and why residents decided to underinvest in their dwellings after the demolition. I also examine how residents' dwellings performed in terms of temperature and moisture control in order to understand how precarity was embodied and reproduced.

Dwelling Construction in Jamestown Harbor

Dwellings in Jamestown harbor transcend some Western ideas of housing. Dwellings in Jamestown harbor may be kitchens, bedrooms, shops, storage units, washrooms, meeting places, schools, or many of these things combined. Rihanna, a resident of the harbor, illustrated this phenomenon in describing what her last dwelling meant to her:

> That is where I sleep and wake up to conduct, eh, transact my business. That's where I stored my beans, utensils, everything that I use to sell. That is where my children also sleep.

More than houses, dwellings serve several functions for residents of the harbor (Lancione, 2019b). For the purpose of this research, I maintain that dwellings are spaces that residents 1) claimed as their own, 2) spent a substantial amount of their time in, and 3) defined by their own terms and use of the space. This chapter will focus on the design

of each person's dwelling and how this changed after the demolitions. It is therefore important to first understand how dwellings in the harbor are constructed.

I approach dwelling construction as a practice conducted by harbor residents using local knowledge and wielding available materials. Local knowledge is considered the knowledge that is unique to a particular location and that has developed over an extended period of time (Naess, 2013). People in Jamestown harbor are knowledgeable about available building materials as well as how to put these materials together in order to achieve structural stability. According to Joyce, a resident of the harbor who built her first dwelling before the demolitions started, "Over here, if you come here, you can't use any other things than wood, so I used wood and slate [corrugated metal sheets] … Building a wooden house is very easy." Wood, corrugated metal sheets and concrete are commonly sold at the marketplace, a 30-minute walk from Jamestown, or acquired through other means such as trading with other residents. As a result, these materials have become common for constructing dwellings in the harbor and residents have developed a strong familiarity with their use. Residents have likewise developed their knowledge of dwelling construction by experimenting with and exploring different building materials and dwelling designs.

Local knowledge of environmental and climactic particularities is important to dwelling construction. Dwellings are constructed to endure the tropical weather of Accra, which oscillates between heavy rain and high heat. Living comfortably under these conditions requires using materials to build dwellings that can protect residents and allow them to feel comfortable. According to Diana, a 41-year old harbor resident:

> There is a lot of salt around this place, and the best thing to use to cover your roof is slate [corrugated metal sheets]. Slate is very hard, like cement. This is the slate, the one on the first shelter…If you are here the best thing to use to cover your roof is slate… if you use any other thing it will rust, it will rust fast. So, but the slate will never rust.

Corrugated metal is valued as a roofing material because it is sturdy, water-resistant, and salt-resistant (see Figure 4.1). A sturdy roof is essential in the harbor, being the first point of contact for rain. Residents use corrugated metal as roofing to also prevent water from getting inside, keeping themselves and their items dry.

Figure 5.1. Corrugated iron sheets used for roofing, held down by rocks and other various heavy objects. These dwellings were located outside of the study site on the far side of the harbor, which has not been demolished since 2015 (Source: Author, July 2019).

Often, residents did not construct their own dwellings and instead hired a carpenter from within the harbor community. Carpenters often learn how to construct dwellings through apprenticeships with other carpenters. The local knowledge of constructing a dwelling is thus passed on within the community from one carpenter to the

next. Darryl, a 25-year-old resident of the harbor and self-taught carpenter, learned to build dwellings by watching and learning from other carpenters. He explained the process and importance of creating a sloped roof:

> I'll make sure if I'm cutting the wood, I cut some that are normally short so that it [corrugated iron sheet] will slope on top of the shelter. Those normally slope down like this, so that if the rain is coming it can normally fall down. So, the front one is longer than the back one, so when it is raining it will fall down like this… Some people do their own flat, but for me, the way of my style or my planning is by building it this way so that the water can slope down.

Darryl adopted his methods from other carpenters; however, he used his own knowledge of how rain falls on his dwelling to make adaptations, resulting in a sloped roof. Darryl's augmented method of implementing concrete floors and rainproofing reflects his application of local knowledge of the beach environment.

Despite the importance of incorporating proven techniques to building their dwellings, residents of the harbor substantially modified these techniques in constructing their dwellings after the demolitions, resulting in marked changes to dwelling design. These adaptive strategies are the result of the changing conditions caused by the demolitions. Residents applied these adaptive strategies through underinvesting in their new dwellings as a means to respond to their emergent vulnerability from the demolitions. According to Smit and Wandel, "adaptations can be anticipatory or reactive, and depending on their degree of spontaneity they can be autonomous or planned" (2006, p. 282). Underinvestment is simultaneously a reactive and an anticipatory adaptation strategy that residents have developed in response to the demolitions in Jamestown harbor.

Underinvestment in Dwellings

Many residents underinvested in their dwellings in anticipation of future demolitions. In order to understand the nature of underinvestment, I analyzed the differences between subjects' representations of their two dwellings: the one constructed before the demolitions that was subsequently demolished between 2015 and 2019, and the one constructed after the demolitions. Using observations and each resident's knowledge of how both dwellings looked and functioned, this study found that residents constructed smaller dwellings using cheaper and/or salvaged building materials. Residents underinvested in their dwellings by spending less money on building materials, resulting in the use of cheaper and flimsier building materials as well as in smaller dwellings.

After the demolitions, the basic building materials that residents used to build dwellings, primarily wood and corrugated metal, became less accessible. Many residents could no longer afford these materials after losing their dwellings, which were also their assets and, in many cases, the location from which they conducted income-generating activities. As a result, residents who returned to the harbor after the demolitions used different building materials for their dwellings, opting for materials that were less costly though less sturdy, especially plastic and fabric. For instance, Millie, a 45-year old resident of the harbor, lives in a short dwelling covered only by plastic tarps that are held down by tires and rocks. When asked about these materials, Millie stated, "We have just used something to cover the top, we don't have any door." Like Millie, numerous residents slept underneath open dwellings that were only covered by a roof and often lacked walls, doors, or floors. In some cases, residents built incomplete or partial

dwellings, electing to invest more into some parts of their dwellings while underinvesting in others.

Figure 5.2. Plastic tarps were used as roofing in place of corrugated metal. Cheaper building materials like plastic and fabric were easily damaged by rain and sun, shown above as rips in these plastic tarps (Source: Author, July 2019).

The decrease in available materials also prompted residents to use salvaged building materials in place of corrugated iron and plywood. Salvaged building materials usually consisted of the materials that residents used in their previous dwellings prior to the demolitions. Diana, who has worked with her sister at the harbor for over 30 years, recalled building a small dwelling out of destroyed wood from her demolished prior dwelling:

> After the demolition of the first one we used the broken wood to build the small one, that is why it was short. So, we didn't buy any new wood we used the destroyed wood to build this one.

Using broken salvaged wood, however, limited the size of the new dwelling because there was only a small amount of wood that Diana and her sister could use to construct it. That new dwelling was unfortunately destroyed again during the March 2019 demolitions, so Diana and her sister decided not to build a new one. They leave the harbor every afternoon to stay with family and return to Jamestown harbor for work in the mornings.

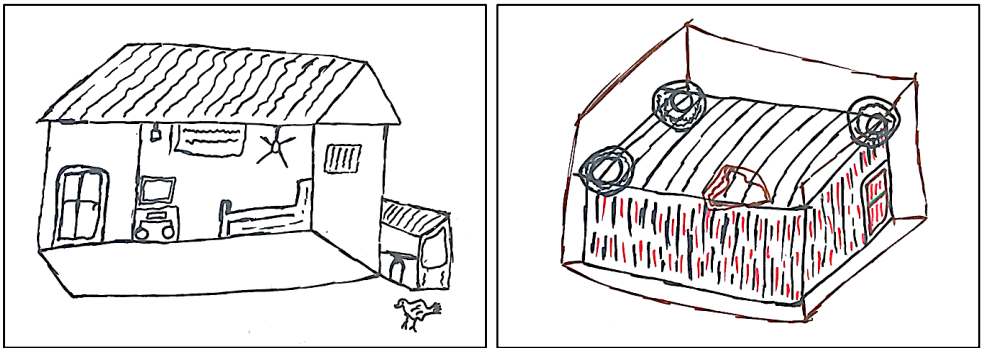
Figure 5.3. Faith's dwelling used recycled wood, fabric, and plastic tarps, held down by rocks, tires, and string (Source: Author, July 2019).

Faith, a 58-year-old fish monger and grandmother, currently lives alone in a small dwelling at the harbor. She previously lived in a larger dwelling that supported herself, her daughter, and her grandchildren. Her current dwelling (see Figure 5.3) is much smaller than the last, composed of recycled wood and some fabric. When asked about the difference between her dwellings, Faith explained:

> This one, I don’t spend much on it because, after all, you are here now and they’ll come and demolish, so I don't normally spend much on it. But the old one, I used to spend much on it.

Faith paid a carpenter to build a smaller dwelling after her first dwelling was demolished, anticipating that the demolitions would occur again. The fabric she draped over the top outside of the dwelling where she cooked wore down easily during repeated rain events. Faith admitted that using fabric was even worse than using plastic, but that she used fabric because she did not want to invest her money into purchasing plastic. She also decided not to add concrete to the floor because she was afraid that her dwelling would be demolished, and the money spent on concrete would be lost.

Darryl, a carpenter, also built a smaller dwelling following the demolitions. During the drawing exercise (as described in Chapter III), Darryl drew and described the features he was proud of in first dwelling, specifically the running electricity that powered lights, a ceiling fan, a television, and audio speakers (see Figure 4.4). While the walls were constructed with wood, Darryl used mortar around the bottom edges of the shelter, combining cement with sand to prevent water from entering his shelter when the tides rose.



Figures 5.4 (left) and 5.5 (right). Darryl’s drawings of his first dwelling before the demolitions (left) and second dwelling after the demolitions (right). The drawing of his first dwelling shows a house with running electricity, windows, a fan, television, and a space for his chickens. The drawing of his second dwelling shows a much smaller dwelling, designed to prevent his dwelling from being destroyed.

Rather than reconstructing a similar dwelling, Darryl built his new dwelling with smaller dimensions and cheaper materials (see Figure 5.6). Darryl revealed that he built a smaller dwelling as a means of deception:

> Like the way I have done it, I decided to use frame like this so if the AMA [Accra Metropolitan Association; city government] people are coming, they will intentionally see that this is just a frame, it is not a shelter so they will not come close to it… I decided to also use rubber like this, so if they see, they will see that it is not a shelter that someone sleeps in it… They will think that it is a place where people normally sit to prevent themselves from the sun rays, so they will not think that someone sleeps in it.

Darryl's plan to build a dwelling that the city would overlook is the utmost act of strategic adaptation in anticipation of future demolitions. Darryl's comment also reveals an underlying assumption that dwellings where people lived were the targets of the demolitions. This illustrates why Darryl used deception as a means of adaptation and why residents assumed that their dwellings would be destroyed in the future: residents themselves were the targets of the demolitions. Darryl therefore deliberately implemented underinvestment to avoid his dwelling being demolished rather than expecting it to be demolished.

Figure 5.6. Darryl's dwelling after the demolitions. Darryl used recycled wood for a "false" frame along with tires covered by plastic tarps to build the actual dwelling that he slept in (Source: Author, July 2019).

The anticipation of demolitions reinforced the transitory character of dwellings in Jamestown harbor. Sam, a fisherman and resident of the harbor, explained:

> Because of the nature of my work, that is why I decided to build it like that way. I didn't build something permanent, just because I wanted to protect myself and my family.

Sam rebuilt his dwelling to be closer to work in Jamestown harbor. Sam emphasized that protecting himself and his family was a priority when he built his dwelling. He noted that his dwelling was not permanent as he anticipated another demolition, so he built his dwelling as a temporary place that served a more utilitarian purpose of being close to work. Underinvestment into a temporary dwelling was therefore an adaptive strategy to explicitly "protect" himself and his family.

While Sam's dwelling was meant to be temporary, a number of residents elected not to build dwellings after the demolitions at all. These residents returned to Jamestown harbor only to conduct business. After losing her dwellings to demolitions several times, Diana and her sister decided not to build a dwelling again. She explained:

> They have demolished this place seven times, so if you use block [concrete blocks] it's just waste of time. Because of the way they are demolishing this place, if you waste your time or if you waste your money to build a shelter then you are wasting your own money.

Although future demolitions are not guaranteed, the experience of surviving multiple demolitions in the past makes gambling on that possibility a high risk. While the demolitions occurred suddenly without much warning, rumors about demolitions spread around the harbor quickly and often. These rumors were confirmed by Diana, who elaborated further:

> You know, some people are building shelters, but there is a rumor that they will come here again, so, what about if I build another shelter and they come here to demolish this place?

Diana explained that with the rumors going around about future demolitions, she chose not to build another dwelling as the government would inevitably destroy it. Joyce, a 60-year-old food vendor who returns to the harbor daily to sell cooked beans, disclosed the following:

> You know, when they came, when they were deciding the land where they want to build the harbor, they took all this place. Suppose they will have given us some portion, they wouldn't have cleared every part of this place, but when they were clearing this place, every part of this beach was cleared. It means that they have come to take every part of this place. Suppose I know where they will end the harbor, I would have decided to know that, 'Oh it means some people will be allowed to come back.' But every part of this place was cleared, it means everyone over here will be cleared out of this place.

Joyce candidly addressed the plight that residents encounter and respond to by underinvesting in or choosing not to rebuild their dwellings: residents are the targets of the demolitions. Like Darryl who built a sparse dwelling as a means of deception, Joyce and other residents acknowledge that the government explicitly targets residents of the harbor through repeated demolitions.

The Impact of Underinvestment on Small Business Owners

Dwellings provided a means for numerous residents to vend food or sell merchandise in the harbor. Rihanna sold *fose*, second-hand clothing, out of her dwelling prior to the demolitions. However, Rihanna lost her *fose* business after her dwelling was destroyed, explaining:

> I used to sell dresses over here, but after the demolition I couldn't get a place to sell *fose* [second-hand clothing] anymore… I started to sell alcoholic beverages and other things because even if it's raining and the rain falls on it, I can just clean it and sell it again. But with dresses, if it gets wet and no one buys I have to throw them away.

Rihanna explained how she underinvested in her new dwelling to save money, a result of losing her dwelling and subsequently her *fose* business. Rihanna started selling alcoholic beverages as an alternative to make money in the harbor. However, selling alcohol came with its own obstacles. Rihanna said:

> I sit here 'til evening. Even sometimes I have to do nights. That selling in the nights because during the daytime people don't buy, so I have to spend sleepless nights to sit beside my drinks to sell.

Most of Rihanna's customers purchased alcohol after work in the evenings, so Rihanna had to accommodate their schedules by staying up later. Additionally, the lower

population in Jamestown harbor as a result of the demolitions decreased the number of customers Rihanna could get.

Figure 5.7. Rhianna's dwelling is covered by plastic tarps and fabrics (far right). In front of her dwelling is a covered table where she sells alcoholic beverages (Source: Author, July 2019).

Faith's work was also affected by the demolition of her dwelling. As a fish monger, Faith relies on her cooking utensils to clean and cook fish. Faith explained:

> I used to have my own frying pan, knife, and everything, but because the caterpillar machine [excavator] was used to demolish this place, all my properties were destroyed, so my frying pan was destroyed. While they were demolishing this place, the people around too were stealing people's properties, so they took my things away.

Faith's belongings were left out in the open and stolen after one of the demolitions. Faith described the impact of losing her cooking utensils by saying, "It made me very hungry because I couldn't sell my fish. All my money was spent on preparing things." After her dwelling was destroyed and her cooking utensils were stolen, Faith spent her money on

new cooking utensils. Faith's dwelling lacked sturdy building materials to keep her warm or dry because she could not afford them. For small business owners like Rihanna and Faith, the demolitions created even more precarious circumstances by destroying their dwellings which they used to sell things. Underinvestment was a reaction to losing money and shelter as a result of the demolitions.

Dwelling Performance

I asked residents to compare the performance of their former and current dwellings, specifically in terms of temperature and moisture control. Many residents reported experiencing discomfort in their new dwellings. Their new dwellings did not keep them warm or cool enough and did not protect them from flooding. The smaller size of their new dwellings also made many participants uncomfortable.

Residents who built smaller dwellings noticed a difference in their two dwellings. Diana reported having to "squeeze" into her dwelling to get to her bed. When Faith was asked how staying in her shelter made her feel, she reflected, "This thing is meant for goats," when talking about her dwelling in relation to the proper size of a house. Darryl likewise complained about his dwelling, which he deliberately built as a smaller space:

> If you are walking inside, you have to walk like an animal. As soon as I enter, then it means I am going to sleep, or I am just going to take something in and move out.

Darryl described crouching on his hands and knees, which made moving around inside difficult. This also made daily tasks like getting dressed more challenging. Faith and Darryl both described living in their dwellings to feeling like animals. These metaphors

reveal the dehumanizing nature of living in confined spaces, connecting the precarity that Jamestown residents face to past and anticipated future acts of violent dispossession.

Dwellings performed poorly in the rain due to the use of cheaper building materials. Faith reported that her current dwellings leaked when it rained:

> This one, if anytime it's raining it falls on me, it's not good like the other one… Before the demolition we were living in a nice house, so that one we were able to manage [better] than this.

Poor dwelling performance was demonstrated through the leaking rainwater, an issue Faith did not experience in her prior dwelling. Faith expressed that several facets of daily life were made more difficult by a leaky dwelling. She described frequently wringing out wet clothes and sleeping on a soaked mattress.

The heavy rains in Accra also contribute to flooding in Jamestown harbor, which occurs because the harbor is several feet below the main street. Faith said the floodwaters would reach her knees, causing damage to her home and possessions. She explained:

> We are sloped like this. All the rain from the top comes to us… Sometimes we sit and raise our legs. But because this place there's not a lot of sand, we don't normally sink, but we raise our legs.

Over the last 15 years, Accra has experienced the most devastating flood events recorded with reports citing climate change as the root cause (Amoako & Inkoom, 2018). Lacking sturdy dwellings, regular rains caused minor issues for residents like wet belongings, while larger floods have led to serious property damage. Faith's reaction to flooding by simply raising her legs demonstrates how powerless residents feel amidst the increasingly devastating rains.

Maintenance and Repair

Heavy rains and flooding damaged many residents' dwellings and wore building materials down quickly over time (see Figure 5.2). Some residents reported repairing their dwellings more frequently due to the use of cheaper materials like fabric and plastic. Phil explained:

> To be frank with you, this one, because I didn't use quality things to build it, it's normally destroyed sometimes because of the cloth. The cloth is not strong, so sometimes [inaudible] and I have to repair it… Normally, any time it rains, I get a problem, that my cloth might tear or something, so anytime even if there is any natural occurrence, I have to repair this place because something like that happens.

Phil fastened fabric to the sides of his dwelling as a means of underinvestment, but the fabric tore easily whenever it rained. Phil therefore repaired the fabric often because of how easily and frequently it was damaged. Much like Phil's fabric, Rihanna's plastic tarps developed holes from exposure to the sun. Rihanna described her process of repair:

> The only thing we normally repair is this rubber [i.e. plastic tarps]. Because the sun falls on it for so long, you see that holes will come into it and we have to change it.

Rihanna explained how she "normally" repaired the plastic tarps on her dwelling, meaning regularly.

The use of plastic tarps or fabric as a means of underinvestment had unintentional consequences, causing Rihanna and Phil to devote more time and energy toward maintaining their dwellings. The damaged fabric on Phil's dwelling also caused him to experience discomfort:

> Now that they have demolished this place, even when it rains, as you can see, it always falls on me because this place, the cloths are not good, you can see, they are, the cloths are torn. So anytime it rains, it falls on me. I don't feel comfortable around here.

Despite repairing the fabric on his dwelling often, Phil struggled to keep up with the recurrent damage. He subsequently experienced discomfort from the rainwater that seeped through the holes in the fabric of his dwelling and onto his body. The continual damage of and repair to cheaper building materials demonstrated how underinvestment created precarity for some residents through additional labor and discomfort.

Residents with Children

A number of women with children chose to send their children away as a result of the poor conditions in Jamestown harbor. Rihanna explained:

> As you can see, I have three children. Two are in Kumasi… But see where I am staying? They can't come to me. Because of our situation I can't even bring him [her third child] to come and stay with us, so he's still in school.

Rihanna sent her children away to school because she did not want them to experience the suffering associated with dwelling in Jamestown harbor during the demolitions. She cannot leave because her livelihood is contingent upon the informal economy. Because residents of Jamestown harbor with families must also spend money to provide for their families, investing in their dwellings creates a monetary tradeoff with family needs. Women who were mothers or grandmothers bore a larger burden. These women played the important role of caretaker, especially when their husbands, ex-husbands, sons, or sons-in-law were not economically supporting their families. They struggled to care for their children or grandchildren, forcing them to separate from their children while investing less.

Faith was left to care for her grandchildren alone without the help of her daughter's husband. Faith proclaimed, "The rain should beat us for us to get food to eat."

Faith echoed the concerns that many other residents with children raised about their dwellings, that the strain of living in a less-secure dwelling was preferable to not feeding their children. As a result, Faith sent her grandchildren to live away from the harbor, investing less money into the dwelling that she now occupies:

> Because it's my own house [referring to the dwelling before it was demolished], because it's my house, and also, because of my grandchildren and my children, that's why I did it so nice like that. Suppose it was only me. I would have slept on the floor like that, without cementing, but because of my grandchildren…

When caring for her children and grandchildren, Faith lived in a larger dwelling that could support everyone in her family. In anticipation of future demolitions, Faith managed to find alternative housing for her family while remaining at the harbor alone. Living alone at the harbor also ensured that Faith could build a smaller dwelling with cheaper materials without risking her family's health and safety. Faith and Rihanna's stories illustrate the precarity of dwelling in Jamestown harbor and the impact it has on their families. Experiencing the discomfort and suffering associated with underinvestment prompted them to send their children and grandchildren away so that they would not have to suffer as well.

Embodied Precarity

Due to underinvestment, residents reported poor dwelling performance and experienced discomfort inside their dwellings, feeling cramped, cold, or wet. Rihanna explained:

> Even if you sleep in it you don't feel comfortable. If I'm selling and I'm feeling sleepy, I can't go inside and sleep. I just sleep [out] here because I feel more comfortable sleeping outside than inside the room… If the wind is even blowing, you don't have anywhere to go, so you have to stand in the rain and get wet. After the rain has stopped, the only thing you have to do is to just change yourself [clothes] and just sit here again.

Rihanna described the misery of poor dwelling performance, which took form in discomfort and agony due to the rain and wind. Rain and flooding were the greatest causes of severe distress among residents, and the physical discomfort of being wet was a frequent occurrence. Physical discomfort also caused mental and emotional suffering, which prevented residents from engaging in regular activities such as eating, sleeping, working, or caring for their children. Sadly, the stress of carrying on under these conditions only serves to recreate embodied precarity day after day.

Discussion

This chapter has demonstrated how residents' dwellings changed after the demolitions, primarily through underinvestment. Underinvestment was a strategy that residents employed after the demolitions by using fewer and less expensive building materials on their new dwellings. Residents underinvested in their dwellings to reduce future anticipated losses after experiencing losses in previous demolitions. As the targets of the demolitions, some residents also used underinvestment to deflect attention away from their dwellings. Residents' dwellings were consequently smaller and less sturdy due to underinvestment, leading to poor dwelling performance. Residents who built flimsier dwellings experienced leaks and flooding from the rain while those who built smaller dwellings felt cramped inside. Poor dwelling performance contributed to bodily precarity, experienced through physical discomfort and mental suffering. By underinvesting in their

dwellings, residents of the harbor sacrificed both their health and comfort for the foreseeable future.

This study informs broader understandings of eviction-related precarity by expanding upon the work of Joronen and Griffiths (2019), suggesting that residents' memories of past demolitions lead them to anticipate future demolitions and modify their behavior in the present accordingly. The emotional dimensions of precarity – misery, worry, and fear – are felt on a day-to-day basis. Residents carry the burden of resuming their daily activities with the added labor of repairing their dwellings, in spite of their physical and mental state. Precarity is thus continuously reproduced by the demolitions as residents try to maintain their livelihoods while anticipating the impact of future demolitions.

The results of this chapter also contribute to recent scholarship on dwelling, precarity, and the right to the city (Attoh, 2011; Brickell, 2012; Das & Randeria, 2015; Lancione, 2019b). As sites of bodily precarity, dwellings reflect both the physical and immaterial dimensions of inequality and power. The precarity of residents contributes to underinvestment, as residents use underinvestment in order to survive and continue pursuing their livelihood strategies in the harbor. By rebuilding amidst precarity, residents establish their right to dwell in Jamestown harbor against the elite actors from Ghana and China who threaten to remove them. Though dwelling construction can be considered an exercise of resistance, this chapter has also demonstrated that dwelling construction is constrained by residents underinvesting in their dwellings to mitigate further risk in future demolitions.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis examines the ways in which the ongoing demolitions in Jamestown harbor have impacted the livelihoods of residents who remain there after their original dwellings were destroyed. Based on the data collected from the dwelling count in August 2019, an estimated 800 residents of Jamestown harbor are at risk of losing their current dwellings along with their livelihoods to future demolitions. This research illuminates the ways in which this ongoing violence is experienced day to day, revealing how residents structure their present lives around a sense of uncertainty. Residents navigate this space by underinvesting in their dwellings through the construction of smaller dwellings using less expensive building materials. Underinvestment is an adaptation strategy that residents enact in order to continue occupying the harbor while mitigating the possibility of losing their investment in their dwelling. Despite witnessing multiple demolitions of their dwellings or of nearby dwellings, residents stay at or return to the harbor in order to participate in the harbor's informal economy.

This thesis also explores how underinvestment is a strategy of persistence whereby dwellings allow residents to retain their livelihood strategies in the harbor. Residents informally employed as small business owners and fish workers rely on the Jamestown harbor's social infrastructure, which is rendered ineffectual without a sufficient harbor population. Small business owners have been impacted by the decreasing harbor population, a result of the continuous exodus of residents who have chosen not to rebuild their dwellings. The decline of fish populations from illegal overfishing in Ghana further impairs small business owners by causing fishermen to lose

money and cut down on expenditures. The precarity of the informal economy exacerbates the impact of these shocks by offering little means for residents to save money for the future. Thus, underinvestment as a strategy emerges from residents' precarity, which limits their ability to adapt to the demolitions in ways that prevent suffering.

The results of this thesis contribute to discussions surrounding urban political ecology and vulnerability (Joronen & Griffiths, 2019; Das and Randeria, 2015; Doshi, 2017). I draw on an urban political ecology framework to identify how the proposed development of the James Town Fishing Harbour Complex produces conditions of precarity in Jamestown harbor, where development serves the interests of elite enterprises from China and Ghana while dispossessing the local community. By understanding the embodied experiences of precarity through the informal activities of the urban poor in Accra, this thesis builds off of scholarship that supplements UPE with feminist and postcolonial theories (Doshi, 2013; 2019; Silver, 2014; Lawhon et al., 2014). Applying theories of vulnerability further advances our understanding of precarity in Jamestown harbor as the conditions already present in the harbor that preclude residents' adaptation to the demolitions.

The demolitions are dehumanizing, directed toward the helpless residents of the harbor in ways that aggravate panic and forestall resistance. The slow and recurrent nature of the demolitions likewise contribute to an "unimagined community" (Nixon, 2011) in Jamestown harbor where the invisibility of violence further bolsters national support for harbor redevelopment. Building off of AbdouMaliq Simone's concept of "people as infrastructure" (2004), I articulate the need to appreciate the significance of livelihoods in Jamestown harbor with urgency and respect. The flexibility and provisional

nature of informal economies in cities of sub-Saharan Africa likewise defy Western approaches toward labor as strictly economic output. Infrastructure is sustained through the people, their relationships with one another, and their daily interactions, which altogether constitute the invisible functioning of urban space that is as critical to the greater development of the city as any physical building, road, or harbor.

Approaching Jamestown harbor with a 'people as infrastructure' perspective recognizes residents as critical actors both in the harbor and in the city of Accra. The relationships between different residents and fisherfolk sustain the informal economy, facilitated through daily activities or business transactions and maintained through the continuous contributions of residents to the harbor community. Dwelling construction is likewise an intimate incarnation of these networks, recognized as the foundation for residents to resume working each day. Envisioning an alternative that supports harbor residents would therefore consist of constructing a harbor *for* the people of Jamestown harbor with greater regulation around illegal fishing activities in order to sustain the social infrastructure that has developed through the decades of hard work. To dispossess Jamestown harbor residents is to destroy a functioning part of the city of Accra, a cruelty that inevitably induces vulnerability and precarity upon residents by causing harm and suffering.

By studying how precarity is reproduced in Jamestown harbor, this thesis highlights the importance of understanding how vulnerable populations in Ghana respond to multiple stressors. The eviction of informal populations in Accra for development projects engenders conditions of precarity, exacerbating their vulnerability in complex ways (Gillespie, 2016). The livelihoods of informal fishing communities in Ghana and

West Africa are likewise increasingly susceptible to disruptions as fish stocks plummet from illegal overfishing (Freduah et al., 2017). Climate change poses an additional threat and flooding is expected to continue harming informal settlements in Accra (Amoako & Inkoom, 2018). It is therefore critical to understand community responses to multiple stressors in order to promote policies which help build resiliency, particularly as the eviction of vulnerable communities grows in Ghana and across the world (Freduah et al., 2017; Gillespie, 2016; Lancione, 2019a).

Further research is needed to elucidate the relationships between the eviction of vulnerable populations and embodied precarity. Expanded scholarship on how these relationships are expressed in urban fishing communities facing multiple stressors to their livelihoods would contribute greatly to these findings. By studying precarity in Jamestown harbor, this research offers a means of understanding the wider relevance of precarity's spatialized relationship to power, displacement, and resistance. Connecting precarity to the construction of dwellings further exemplifies the ways in which eviction-related precarities are individually lived, experienced, and reproduced. Precarity is, thus, a substantial and effective conceptual tool for understanding how vulnerable populations respond to stressors. Only by recognizing the significance and reproduction of precarity can we begin to envision alternatives that alleviate suffering and mitigate unnecessary harm.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

OPENING

1. Do you have any questions for me?

DAILY LIFE

2. What is your age?
3. Who do you live with?
4. How long have you lived on this beach?
5. Where did you live before coming to the beach?
6. Describe a typical day with great detail.
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. What kind of work do you do?
        ii. Do you make money? How?

DEMOLITION AND ANTICIPATION

7. Why do you live on the beach?
8. What did you do in order to move to the beach?
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. Did someone help you? Who?
9. How do you feel about living on the beach?
10. Were you here for the demolitions?
    a. IF YES: Proceed to next questions
    b. IF NO: See next section
11. Can you explain in detail what happened the day of the demolitions (approx. 6 months ago)?
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. How did you find out what was happening?
        ii. Who comes and what do they do?
        iii. What happened to your home?
        iv. How did you feel?
12. Did you prepare for the last demolition? How?
13. Why did you return to the beach?
14. Has the beach changed since the last demolition? How?
    a. Has your life changed? How?

IF PARTICIPANT IS A NEWCOMER TO THE BEACH SINCE LAST DEMOLITIONS:

15. Why did you come to the beach?
16. Were you aware of the demolitions when you moved here?

Proceed to LAST QUESTIONS

DRAWING ACTIVITY

DRAWING PROMPT #1: *Can you draw for me what your home looked like before the most current demolition?*

PREVIOUS HOME:

17. Please describe to me what you drew.
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. Describe the drawing in one or a few words.
18. Why did you build your home like this?
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. What is this (*point to section of drawing; perhaps a window*)?
            1. Why did you build it?
19. Where was your home located? (*have them point if need be)*
20. What materials did you use?
    a. Why did you use these materials?
    b. Where did they come from?
21. How did your home make you feel?
    a. *Probing questions:*
        i. Describe how you felt when you were inside your home.

DRAWING PROMPT #2: *Can you draw for me what your current home looks like now?*

CURRENT HOME:

1. Please describe to me what you drew.
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. Describe the drawing in one or a few words.
2. Why did you build your current home like this?
    a. *Probing questions*
        i. What is this (*point to section of drawing; perhaps a window*)?
            1. Why did you build it?
3. How is it different from your previous home?
    a. How are the building materials different?
4. How long did it take to build?
5. What materials did you use for your current shelter?
    a. Why did you use these materials?
    b. Where did they come from?
6. Did you work on the construction of your newest shelter?
    a. If not:
        i. Why?
        ii. Who was/is in charge of the most recent construction your home?
        iii. Who helped?
        iv. Did you pay anyone?
    b. If yes:
        i. Did you have help?

7. How does this home make you feel?
    a. *Probing questions:*
        i. Describe how you feel when you are inside your home.

COMPARING HOMES

8. How does your new home compare to your old home?
9. Which home do you prefer?
    c. *Probing questions*
        i. Which one is more comfortable?
        ii. Which one is hotter?
        iii. Which one is colder?
        iv. Which one is better in the rain?
10. Which home cost more money to build?
    a. Why?
11. Which home requires more repair?
    a. Why?

LAST QUESTIONS

12. If there is another demolition, how will you respond?
13. How do you feel about a new harbor?
    d. Why?
14. If the harbor is built, where will you go?
    c. Why?
15. Is there anything that you think is important to tell me that we haven't already discussed?

APPENDIX B

IMAGE LIBRARY

Enlarged Map of Demolitions in Jamestown Harbor (Figure 1.3)

Dwellings in Jamestown Harbor (Study Site)


PEUGEOT
MOTION & EMOTION

Dwellings on the Other Side of Jamestown Harbor (Not at Study Site)

Artisanal Fishing Boats in Jamestown Harbor

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