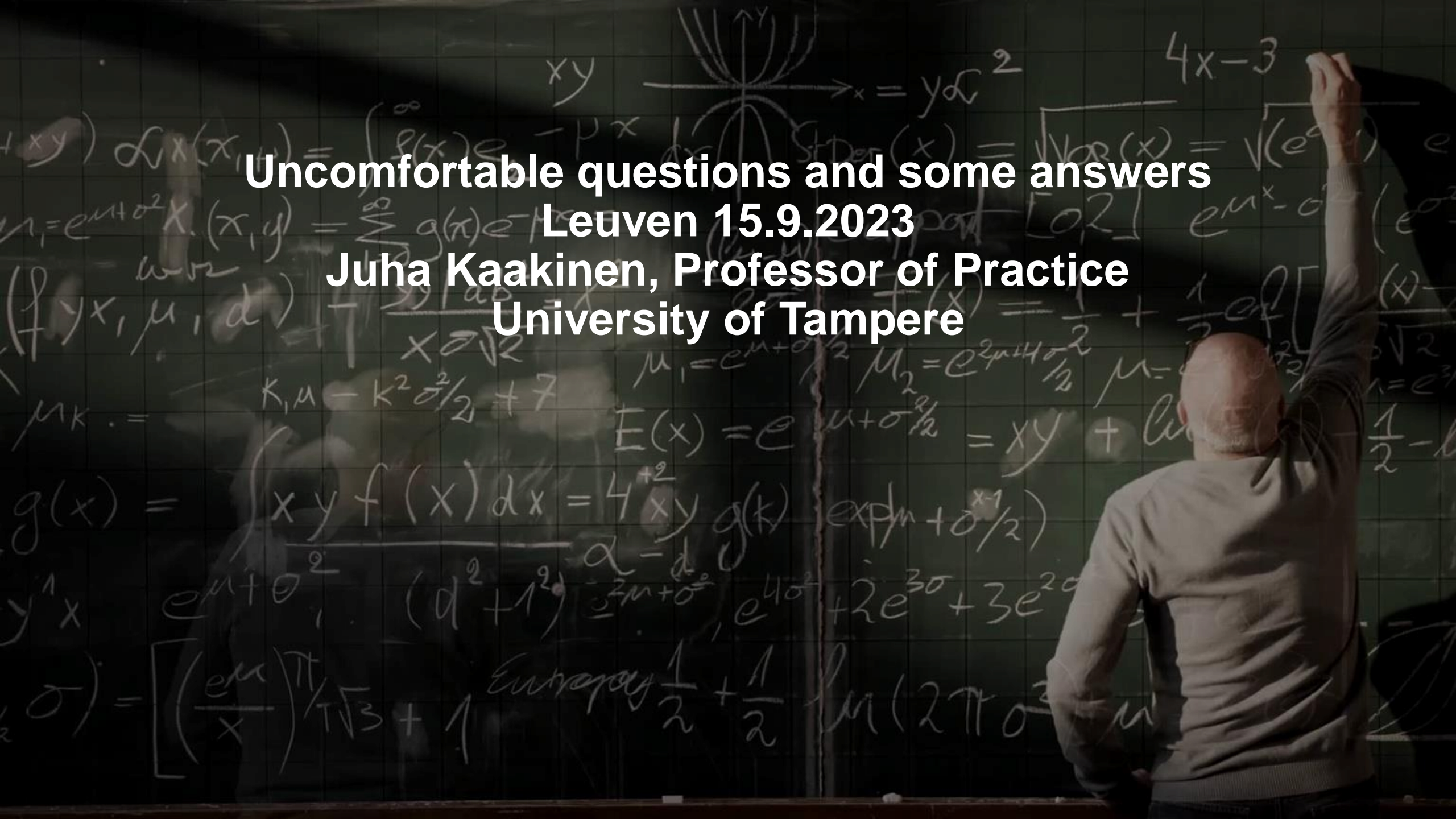


Uncomfortable questions and some answers

Leuven 15.9.2023

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Home

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Based on interviews and discussions with 100
experts including field workers, politicians and
researchers, documents and research reports

Report in English available at:

<https://ysaatio.fi/en/material/home/>



Voices from field work

- *"In the implementation of the homelessness targets, we cannot wait for the whole of Finland's social and health services to be fully operational before we can achieve results. It's too long a wait! We must demand resources for the main problem areas (psychiatric and substance abuse services) and work within the existing framework."*
- *"It seems that homelessness is seen as too small a social problem that is not being addressed in different regions and municipalities. Another problem is that responsibility for tackling homelessness is divided between ministries and there is a lack of overall coordination."*
- *"Homelessness work in my municipality has been left behind by the social welfare reform."*

What does it mean to End Homelessness?

- *Homelessness has been effectively eliminated in Finland, with the annual cross-sectional statistics showing fewer than 300 homeless people. Of this number, no more than 100 in temporary accommodation (lasting less than one month) and no more than 200 temporarily living with relatives or acquaintances due to forced circumstances (lack of own accommodation).*
- *By definition, there are no longer people living outside in Finland in this situation and no one is discharged from institutions as homeless. In addition, the period of residence in any temporary housing solution, including existing emergency shelters, emergency accommodation, dormitories or on the basis of fixed-term tenancy agreements, is limited to one month, after which a permanent housing solution must be provided.*

Ending Homelessness by 2027 proposals

- A new National Program
- Financial incentives combined with time limits: max 1 month in temporary accommodation
- Housing First 2.0: new forms of mobile and outreach support, rapid rehousing
- Better coordination of multiprofessional prevention including outreach (out of the office) prevention
- Key role of regional wellbeing services providing support together with NGOs
- Key role of cities in providing housing
- Increasing the share of affordable social housing from 25% to 30%
- Key target groups: active drug users, ex-convicts, young people

Ending Homelessness by 2027 proposals

- The emphasis of the proposals more on “how” than “what”
- Institutional (financial) nudging:
 - An additional €36 million in targeted funding for the implementation of the programme will be allocated to the wellbeing services counties for the programming period. Funding will be granted on the basis of applications and will be conditional on the wellbeing services counties, together with the municipalities in the area, having drawn up an implementation plan to eradicate homelessness. The amount of funding granted is linked to the commitment of the wellbeing services county and its municipalities to provide housing for the long-term homeless.
 - The precise use to which the funding is to be put will be specified in the implementation and financing agreement between wellbeing services counties and the State. The funding may be used for outreach work and mobile support, as well as for support for permanent housing under the Housing First model, among other things. Funding can also be allocated to the recruitment of people with lived experience for the tasks described above, including housing support for released prisoners. Funding cannot be used for temporary accommodation.

Nopsajalka Multiprofessional mobile support model

- Jyväskylä's Nopsajalka team serves clients who need special support, are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness and have difficulties in accessing the social and health services they need. The team consists of a psychiatric nurse, a social counsellor and a social worker. The team has expertise in adult social work, child protection, substance abuse, crisis and trauma work.
- The Nopsajalka team provides low-threshold social counselling, housing advice and substance abuse and mental health work. The team responds quickly to the client's situation, assesses their service needs and guides and supports them to other services they need. The service process is intensive and time-limited. The key operating principle of the Nopsajalka multi-professional team is 'escorted interchange', whereby, if necessary, the client is accompanied to ensure access to and continuity of services and support.
- Model developed together with practitioners and a research group from Tampere University led by Prof. Annalisa Sannino
- https://research.tuni.fi/uploads/2023/02/e806d7d0-jyvaskyla-nopsajalka_reportenglish_23.2.2023_pdf.pdf

Government's Program

“A new national program to end long-term homelessness will be started immediately”

Special emphasis on young people and prevention

State grants available (not yet known for whom and for what purpose)

Several other measures if implemented fully will both undermine the execution of the program and seriously increase the risk of new homelessness:

Cuts in several welfare benefits including housing benefit

Cuts in funding of housing advisory services

Cuts in state (ARA) grants for building housing for special groups

Cuts in building new affordable social housing

The Emerging Naive Social Policy

- An extreme form of residual social policy
- "We take care of the most vulnerable people"
- (just make the target group smaller and smaller)
- Neo liberal/ fiscal conservative economic policy
- Funding the services for selected target group by cutting benefits and services from other vulnerable groups
- A narrow, sector specific approach
- Lack of holistic understanding and interrelatedness
- Numbers and figures, not people



Is Housing First ending Homelessness?

Why is upscaling so difficult?

Is it possible to upscale Housing First?



Challenges of Advocacy



But over 11000 peer reviewed articles on Housing First is not enough?

Types of organisations

What

Know the needs of the clients
Dependent on financing by procurement
Limited capability for systemic change
Homelessness organisations are typically what -organisations

How

Have some specific capabilities needed for systemic change
Financial resilience

Systemic change requires a coalition of different kinds of organisations

Ideal Types of Housing First

Housing First Pathways (HFP)

ACT

Scattered housing

Fidelity

For chronically homeless people

Housing First 2.0

Small multi-professional team

"Nopsajalka"

escorted interchange

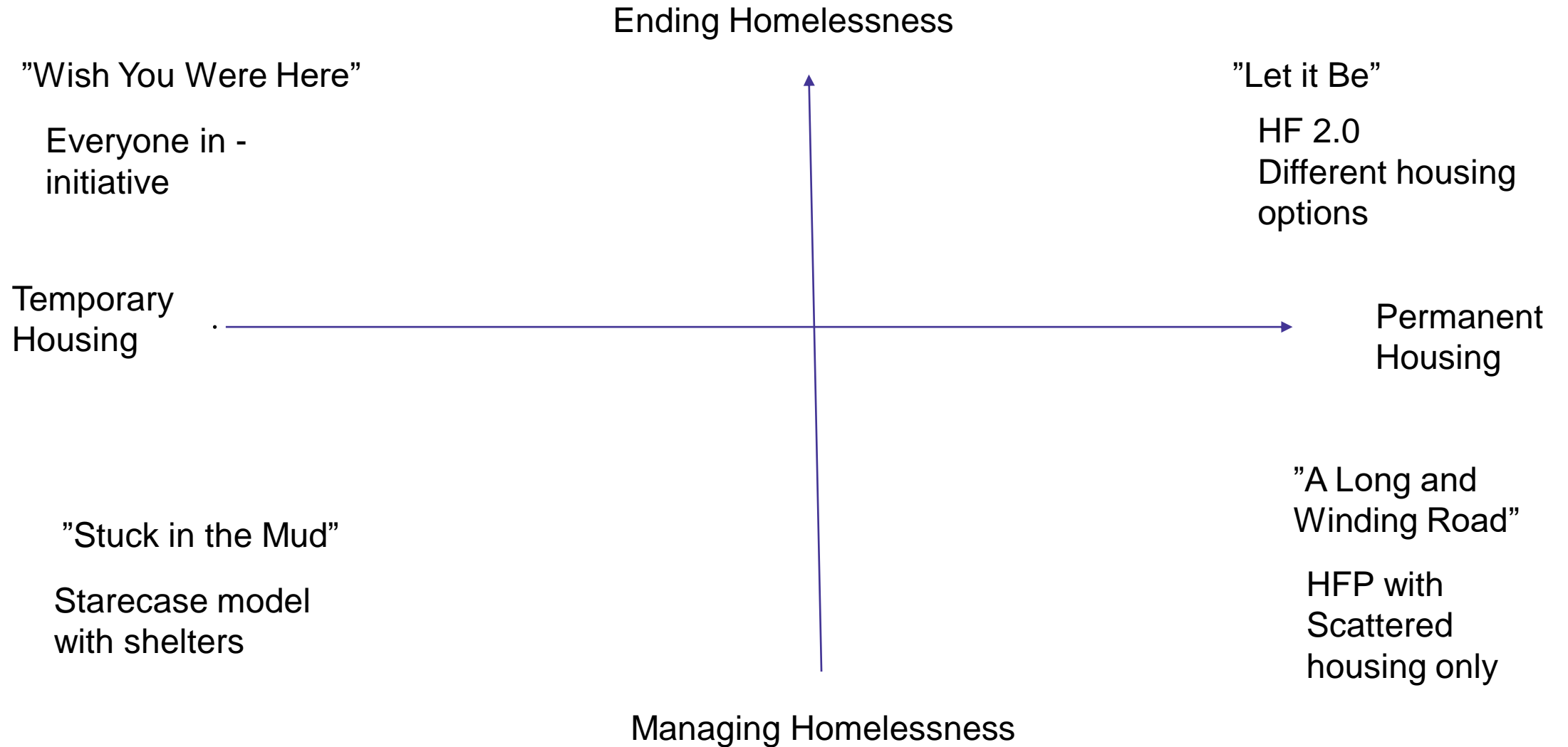
Different housing options:

scattered and single-site

supported housing with on-site

support

Systemic model



What's needed?

Ingredients from:

Ursula LeGuin carrier bag theory of fiction

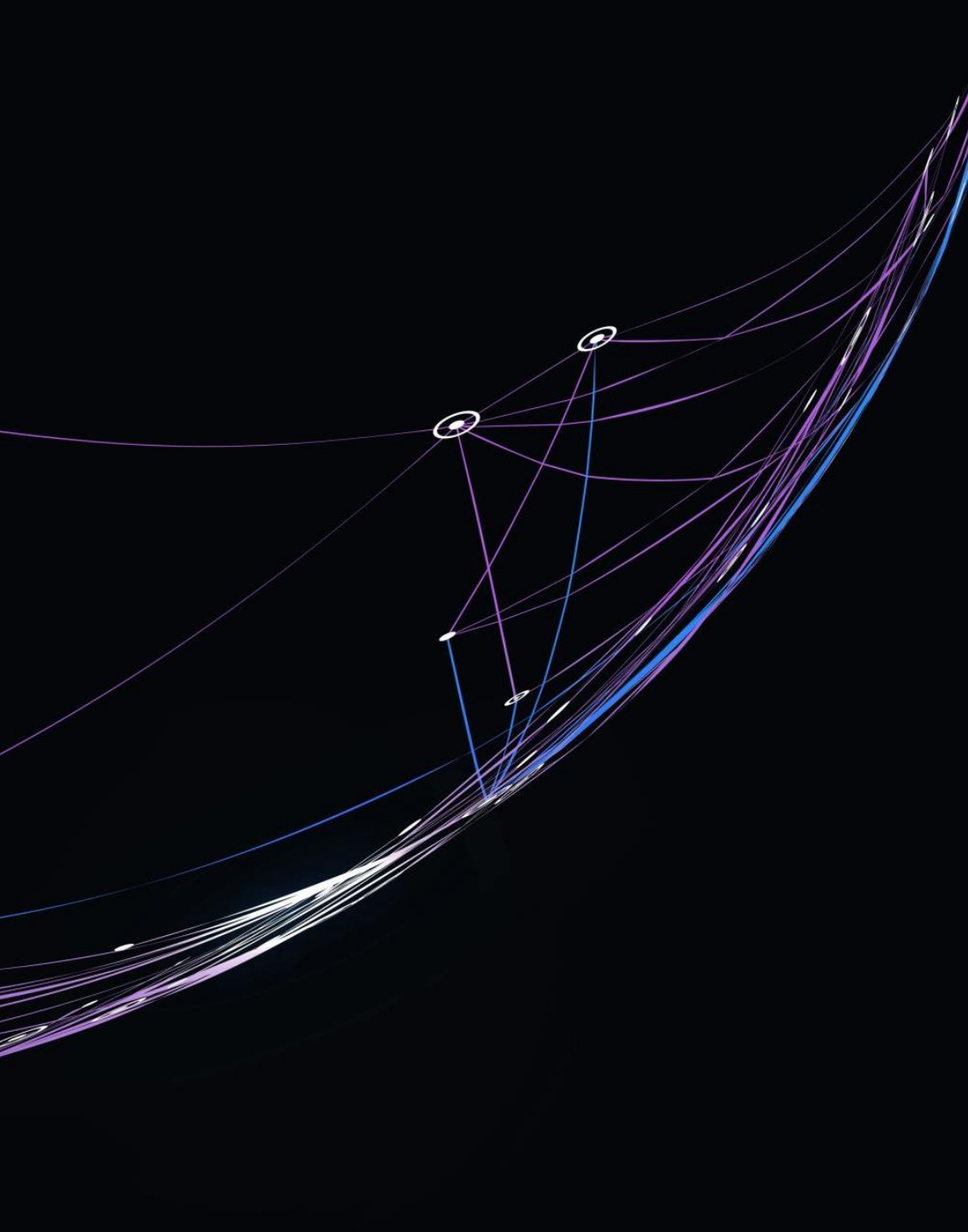
Elizabeth Povinelli Economies of Abandonment

Veena Das Moral Antropology



A feminist theory of social policy

A feminist redefinition of Housing First



- "There is no reason why we should not feel ourselves free to be bold, to be open, to experiment, to take action, to try the possibilities of things. And over against us, standing in the path, there is nothing but a few old gentlemen tightly buttoned-up in their frock coats, who only need to be treated with a little friendly disrespect and bowled over like ninepins."

- John Maynard Keynes, 1929