Squatting and the State offers a new theoretical and methodological approach for analyzing state responses to squatting, homelessness, empty land, and housing. Embedded in local, national, and transnational contexts, and reaching beyond conventional property theories, this important work sets out a fresh analytical paradigm for understanding the deep, interlocking problems facing not just the traditional “victims” of narratives about homelessness and squatting but also a variety of other participants in these conflicts. Against the backdrop of economic, social, and political crises, Squatting and the State offers readers important insights about the changing natures of property, investment, housing, communities, and the multi-level state, and describes the implications of these changes for how we think and talk about property in law.

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Squatting and the State
RESILIENT PROPERTY IN AN AGE OF CRISIS

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To Carla and David: our spouses whose support makes everything we do possible.
To Aidan, Cameron, Conor, and Madison: our children who inspire us.
To Benji, Cooper, and Ollie: who kept us company while we worked.
To ALPS and all its members: who challenge and inspire us to pursue ideas about property and its meaning in the world.
Contents

Preface and Acknowledgments  Page ix

Introduction: Squatting, Scale, and the State  1

PART I  SQUATTING AND THE STATE  21
1 States, Narratives, and Norms  23
2 Squatting and the Law  90
3 Property Theory and the State  143
4 Scaling the State  165

PART II  RESILIENT PROPERTY IN AN AGE OF CRISES  201
5 Resilient Property Methodology  203
6 Possession, Pragmatism, and Homeless Squatters  231
7 Ownership and Absent Owners  260
8 Aggregated Interests: Neighborhoods, Markets, and Social Movements  292

PART III  RESILIENT PROPERTY IN ACTION  337
9 Scaling Resilience and the State  339
10 Postscript: Resilient Property and the Pandemic  379

Bibliography  413
Index  474
Preface and Acknowledgments

This project has led us to think differently about property. It was a journey of discovery, in which new ways of thinking and talking about property gradually revealed themselves to us. Our ideas have progressed in fits and starts over the last four years. Our approach was problem-led: staying with the problem, as we built our approach and methodology, and then applying it to the wicked problem of homeless squatting on empty land. Our Resilient Property paradigm has become the lens through which we see property problems; like a “Magic Eye” picture, once we saw it, we couldn’t unsee how the vulnerabilities and resilience needs of governments, state actors, and agencies shape property systems and property law – explicitly and implicitly.

This book began with a plan to coauthor a short essay about squatting. We were both, separately, under contract with Cambridge University Press to write different books, which we planned to turn to once our essay was complete. We are tremendously grateful for the support our editors at Cambridge have given to this project, which – we came to realize – we needed to complete before we could turn to any others. We are also grateful to our friends and colleagues who, hearing us present our early-form ideas at conferences, nudged us to recognize that this was a book project and encouraged us to pursue it.

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Preface and Acknowledgments

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