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FROM THE GROUND UP
HOMELESSNESS AND STATUS-CENTERED OUTREACH

by

JEFFREY GRUNBERG

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, the City University of New York

1997

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Abstract

FROM THE GROUND UP:

HOMELESSNESS AND STATUS-CENTERED OUTREACH

by

Jeffrey Grunberg

Concerned with the goal of improving outreach to people who are usually homeless and living on the streets, this study reviews current efforts and suggests additional procedures. It also discusses the lives of people who are usually homeless, and how such recognition of their social standing, may best inform outreach. It describes some of the "good" reasons people may have for making the "bad" decision to live on the street. Recognizing that most people who have ever been homeless are now housed, and that most of those who are homeless now are indoors, this study makes two assumptions: 1) Those relative few who are both homeless and on the street, despite service offerings by professional outreach workers, are there partly because of the policies and procedures common

to outreach efforts. 2) Both the homeless street person and the trait-centered outreach worker play a role in producing success rates of 25% or less. In other words, 75% or more of the time the outreach worker does not succeed in getting their target people to come indoors for at least "a cup of coffee." Together, these assumptions create what can be compared to a "marketing" problem whereby the sales person is selling products, which the customer is not buying. In this case, the street person is defying outreach and the outreach worker is defying the wishes of their "clients", thereby creating an approach-avoidance conflict. This thesis studies what can be done to render outreach efforts to this subgroup of homeless people more successful. It describes what techniques are needed to improve the initial engagement and educative processes of outreach. The goal of status-centered outreach, as with all outreach, is to increase the homeless person's access to professional services.

Part One states the problem numerically, by reviewing various methods for counting, and descriptively, by identifying a subgroup of people who are usually homeless and who live on the street. Part Two describes current efforts to bring homeless people who are living on the street indoors to introduce them to the services they need, and reviews their successes and failures.

Part Three discusses alternate ways of understanding street homelessness. By reviewing the literature, homelessness is discussed as being comprised of highly interactive sociological as well as psychological processes. Part Three also discusses an alternative outreach approach, based on consumerism ideals, referred to as status-centered outreach, which should be performed in ways which enhance the social standing of the individual most directly: In the eyes of his peer reference group and thus from his own perspective.

Part Four reviews the first two years of work of one such consumer status-centered outreach program conducted in midtown Manhattan. Its successes will be measured in terms of the number of people it is able to bring indoors. This Network Fair program was developed in order to attract indoors more people than are usually attracted by traditional trait-centered outreach approaches. Once attending a Network Fair, and motivated by the use of incentives that are responsive to their needs, it is anticipated that the majority would take time to sit down with participating social services professionals.

The focus of this study is on the initial phases of outreach, the steps of engagement and connection with social services professionals. Follow-up involves re-visiting the sites, all within a one-hundred square block area of midtown

Manhattan, the general locus of the homeless people in the "treatment" group. Over the follow-up period, the return of the "treatment" group members to the streets can be estimated.

Part Five permits some observations on the consumerism approach to the outreach process, as well as other relevant applications. .

PREFACE

"You know why people call you a bum?"
"I can't understand why."
"They feel better when they say it."
"The truth ain't gonna hurt you, if
you're a bum, you're a bum.(1)

Ironweed
William Kennedy (1979)

What follows are the last two pages, word for word, of a letter sent to me by a homeless seventeen year-old who was living on the street.(2)

"THE TRUE STORY OF MY LIFE"

I began running around the wrong people. I also was cutting school by stealing from people. I was stealing bike, cares, busses, one cop's car, braking into houses, stores, chuch's, library's, an my own house, running etc. One time I almost got shot because I did a dum thing one I cut school like a dummy and went with some kids I met where my friends their names were Paul, Calley, Peanut and if I ever see those clown's again I will ring their necks so let me tell you what happen that day like I said I had cut and went with these four jackass and I was a jackass to for going anyway I was riding a bike that one of them had stole from somewhere Wene I don't know and didnt care were he got it from. So I'm riding along until we came to a house at a corner. Calley went to the house and took a bike I was still on the corner when Calley told me to go an get the bike in front of the house and turn to look at Calley. But they were gone and then a blue car I am shore it was navy anyway a old man pulled out a shotgun and fired at me I was scard I tought

he ment to miss me I really dont know but glad he did anyway he told me to get on the bide and ride it back to his house so I did really I had no choice in the matter any way because I had a Gun in my face and if I didn't do like he said i wod be dead Because I think he would not have missed me then and I was not going to try him. after this had happend I started to hang by myself, one day I went to the Libray to Read, a book Then I got an idea on how money would if I broke in there so that night I did guess how much money I got out of there only \$50 not much but for me od and guess what the money bought some food and crazy things and then they found me walkind down the street and me to 5 to 8 so they put me in a home and I ran away from there and went back to the city where I met this nice long Black haired girl she was a white girl I always wanted to have sex with her But never culd if ever have the chance to see her again i would have sex with her for shore, so I spend 90 days there from Nov to Jan 13 and they sent me upstate to a place called Lincoln Hall for 1 year and 27 But I only did 300 days, then I went to a group home it did not work out because I had a fight and stabbed one of the three so they took me to a psy to see if I was sick they said no so they sent me home, home didn't work out to hot so I left and went to stay at Mr. Lee he said I could if I wanted to so i did so one day I had took a drug and was sent to the hospital I stayed there for 7 months and they sent me to see where I used to fight a lot have sex and runaway but always come back until they sent to pps for durugs and I use to have sex with people the women there to and did not give a damn, so I left. There and went home and got black belt after all this at the age of 16 years of age and I was a very happy person. and I have had 30 ametur fights and won 9 frof. and won and lost 7 and tied 1 and I hope I could get my life together soon with the Help of the Lord God.

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What people who are usually homeless lack, combined with a highly competitive real estate market, helps make them the losers, homeless and on the ground. Often, a person in such a predicament may make decisions, which serve to prolong or worsen their situation. How we may more successfully reach out to them, in an effort to get them to live indoors where

the chances for survival are greater, is the subject of this study.

Current outreach efforts, typically guided by the diagnosed traits of the target population, have been largely successful for most homeless people. However, for most of those who remain on the street, such trait-centered efforts have been relatively ineffective. In these cases, given the actual social distance and low social status experienced by these holdouts, it is hypothesized that outreach, especially during the initial phase of engagement, should be status- and not trait-centered.

By starting with a recognition that homeless people are in need, we can view them as legitimate consumers of social services. Recognizing them as such confers consumer status upon them. For those whose low social standing would be an impediment to accepting services, i.e., they do not feel they can accept services with dignity, such outreach may empower them to make decisions, which will point them towards what they most want: A house and a job. As Jerzy Kosinski stated,

Homelessness is a perfectly valid category of the free enterprise system. For whatever reason, this person who is homeless finds himself or herself in a mini-enterprise. This mini-enterprise is reduced to asking for help, for money, from passersby.(3)

Lee, Jones, and Lewis (1990) found that 58% of the

general public blamed society for homelessness. They concluded that "homelessness today has been 'framed' as a structural phenomenon sufficiently often in the news and other 'arenas of public discourse' to mute traditional beliefs about the individualistic roots of socioeconomic failure." Grunberg (1989) found that the homeless person disagrees with the general public's assessment: while over 90% want housing, 88% want jobs. Most importantly, 70% of the homeless people surveyed blamed themselves for their condition; only 2% blamed their last landlord or employer.(4) If outreach is based on how the homeless person sees things, an empowerment model of outreach would appear to be appropriate.

To help them work themselves from the ground up, we must make it possible for them to take the leadership role, by providing us with guidance as to how we may help them, i.e., how we may appeal to them. Our job as outreach workers becomes one of respecting and enhancing their decision-making processes. By thus empowering them, status-centered outreach may serve to repair their otherwise degraded social standing. They would be treated as potential customers whose interest in a "service product", the outreach workers wish to arouse.

We take such a stance because we cannot afford to wait for them to accept services on our terms, that is, as our social services clients or patients. The streets are too dangerous, and street life too mortality-driven for extended

periods of time to be tenable.(5) We are primarily discussing those who are living on public property, so that they are allowed to be where they are. Presumably, they don't know about or have not been offered something better. They have to see something other than what they have and want it enough to "pay" for it (with action).

Consumers from all walks of life respond best to choice, which is why they are offered menus in a restaurant, and why there are so many large shopping centers. Even if they eschew the choices given them, the chances are good that they will accept something when allowed to choose one or more amongst many items. They also respond best to products endorsed by satisfied customers to whom they can relate and sales people who can relate best to them. This "consumer requirement" can be satisfied most easily by asking formerly homeless consumers of services to provide the outreach services themselves.

Additionally, by conferring consumer status upon even the long-term homeless, we can lift them to higher levels of social standing, re-legitimize them in their own eyes as well as ours, and re-invent them in the eyes of their peers. By assuming them to be legitimate customers of the social services industry, and treating them as such, we believe that many of these "resistant" people will come indoors, at least long enough that they may be educated regarding their options, most to further consider service offerings made by social

services professionals.

Focusing on one step at a time, which if taken establishes a new goal, the outreach worker's ultimate goal is to bring the person inside, as one program put it, "...for anything from a cup of coffee to a social services referral." (6) The focus of this paper then, is to delineate how we may more quickly satisfy outreach's ultimate goal.

However, although studying outreach only, our goal of course is set with a larger goal in sight: That of improving upon the possibility that our target population will succeed at indoor life. We do this by best fulfilling the first step, that of outreach. In performing and studying outreach, we do not attempt here to re-think the social services process, i.e. what happens after outreach has succeeded in bringing the person inside to sit with the professional. Certainly though, the notion of (homeless) person-as-protagonist is in harmony with one of the major principles included in the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics: "The social worker should make every effort to foster maximum self-determination on the part of clients." (7) Further, Friedlander (1976) codified the philosophical values of modern social work as including "The right of self-determination--the idea that the individual has the right to determine his or her own needs and how to meet them." Indeed, as Plapinger (1988) found, "the degree of agreement between client and social

worker as to service needs had a major impact on the service linkage process." Rather than make guesswork out of outreach, our attempt is to attract them indoors, where an atmosphere can be established to meet Cohen's (1988) finding that

Clients are far more likely to accept a service when it is clearly explained and is completely voluntary. Such a clear offer of service is particularly relevant when services are proffered to clients rather than being sought by them.(8)

In our suggested model, clients will be given multiple choices in a setting in which they will experience themselves as seeking services. This will optimize the chances that they will make a choice. Our goal then, is to permeate the initial stages of outreach with a consumerism perspective.

Regardless of our methods or outreach style, there will always be some who will stay outdoors on the street. We do not believe we should stop trying to convince them to do otherwise. The need to convince them is essential, for in their everyday life on the streets, they make many decisions. The goal we have is to include in their decision-making the decision to live indoors. After that decision is made, they may make other important decisions such as, if necessary, to consider treatment.

We recognize they may have considered opinions as to why they should not accept an offer of "indoor" life, i.e. that

they may have "good" reasons for what we may consider a "bad" decision. We persist because we see the principle purpose of outreach as being to restore lives, which may otherwise be on the decline.(9)

First, we will establish the numbers of those living on the street who we believe are in need of our outreach model. Second, we will demonstrate the dangers of the street so as to explain our motive. Third, we will examine current methods of outreach. We will then discuss our perspective on the experience of homelessness, which will lead to an explication of our status-centered outreach model. An examination of the application of our suggested outreach model will follow.

It is important to note that although our target population, single adults living outdoors, makes up but a fraction of the numbers of homeless people in need, we should not for this fact, fail to establish corrective, insitutional measures such as establishing new program models. As Kornblum (1988) stated, "The failure of the community psychology movement was a failure of institution building."(10)

PREFACE: Notes

1. See William Kennedy's Ironweed, page 188.
2. This was a letter received by the author in 1983, while working in the social service department of a large men's shelter. The writer reported that it was something he had written when he was younger before he moved into the shelter. He dropped off the letter and left.
3. This is taken from the late novelist, Jerzy Kosinski's interview, in Giamo and Grunberg's Beyond Homelessness, Frames of Reference, page 34.
4. The study referred to here is one conducted by this author, when contracted by The Grand Central Partnership, a midtown business improvement district. The results of that survey, which was taken on March 31, 1989, were statistically analyzed by the Brain Function Institute, and the summary analysis was written by Gregory Bavaso, who was then a graduate student in the CUNY doctoral sociology program--see Appendix A.
5. See Jonathan Hibbs et al., Mortality in a Cohort of Homeless Adults in Philadelphia, Aug. 4, 1994. They report that "The age-adjusted mortality rate among the homeless was nearly times that of Philadelphia's general population."
6. See Carl Cohen and Jay Solokovsky's Old Men of the Bowery. In following one outreach program, they found that after many outreach visits, or contacts, about 25% of the street clients finally accepted an invitation to come to the project office where they received "anything from a cup of coffee to a room, financial aid, or psychiatric care." (Goleman 1986a) We take this as our measuring stick when considering the effectiveness of the outreach approach recommended here.
7. As described in Walter Friedlander's, Concepts and Methods of Social Work, pages 2-6.
8. See Marcia Cohen's Social Work Practice with Homeless Mentally Ill People: Engaging the Client, page 506.
9. This is drawn from Harold Garfinkel's Studies in Ethnomethodology, Chapter 6. He wrote of "Good organizational reasons for bad clinical records."
10. See William Kornblum's Sociology in a Changing World, page 365. He refers to Janowitz' (1976) use of the term 'institution building' as referring in part to creating new institutions to meet new needs or to correct social problems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My work at developing an ever limited understanding of some of the people who have become homeless, began as a graduate student in the department of psychology at the New School for Social Research. In Fall 1976, along with Benedict Giamo, who now teaches at Notre Dame University, I began making participant-observation field visits to the New York Bowery. Our collaboration was so successful as to infuse me with enthusiasm for my work to this day. My experiences with Ben were formative; neither of us were aware that we had made a career move. What was supposed to be just several months of field work, grew to several years in the Bowery and many more beyond. The support I received since then from a variety of people and institutions has been so extensive as to render impossible the task of making this section comprehensive. From Richard Salyer of Volunteers of America, who gave me my first paying job working with homeless men, and who runs some of the country's best programs, to Paul Casserino who guided my early clinical understanding of homelessness, to Alan Sutherland who was the shelter director and my supervisor for much of that time, and who helped me grow as a manager. From those at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital like Paula Eagle, who advised me to pursue my doctorate in the first place and who,

along with Fred Kass, supported me through many trials and tribulations in the Fort Washington Armory, to Carol Caton who encouraged me to write about my work, to Herb Pardes whose interest in my work at Presbyterian Hospital was a motivating force.

Great thanks goes to both Peter L. Malkin, chairman of Grand Central and Thirty-fourth Street Partnership, and Daniel A. Biederman, president, who not only gave me a great job working with homeless people in midtown, but also financially supported the work of the Network Fairs. They broke ground in creating partnerships between local business communities and social service agencies, not only by being first, but in size and scope. One could easily point to them as the reason so many people have been helped off of the streets in midtown. I must also make mention of Richard Dillon who provided me with many hours of (uncompensated) support and advice in my work with the two partnerships. His years of experience with the New York Police Department has provided seemingly limitless insight.

All throughout the years I have been at New York's City University, I received extensive counsel from Prof. Robert Reiber who first suggested I enter the sociology department, from Robert Kelly who helped give me perspective, from William Kornblum who has been supportive from the start in all of my work both on and off campus, and from Lindsay Churchill, whose

class on ethnomethodology continues to reverberate in me. I will forever be grateful to him for introducing me to the world of Harold Garfinkel. Lastly, but seemingly endless, has been the support of Charles Winick, without whom I might have many times felt the various tasks incumbent upon me as a graduate student too cumbersome. He has mentored me through the writing of this paper with indefatigable interest.

In the end of course, I have to thank my immediate family, Alexandra Verna and Scott Grunberg. Not only were they kind enough to give me room to work, they supported me in so many ways big and small, as they waited this out, and the wait is over.

FROM THE GROUND UP
HOMELESSNESS AND STATUS-CENTERED OUTREACH

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This can only be dedicated to the various people I have known, who are living below their potential, yet whose strength has been inspiring.

CHAPTER ONE: THE USUALLY HOMELESS

"They are socially alienated and culturally separated from us but still they are in our very midst!"

James P. Spradley (1)

While definitions of homelessness vary somewhat, some researchers, like Rossi (1989), who in making an attempt to understand why more "extremely poor" are not homeless, refer to those who are homeless as the 'literal' homeless. In doing so, he makes the point that there are so many who are nearly homeless, that there is little to be gained but for the distinction. For the purposes of this study however, the distinction is all important. As Rossi points out, it is

apparent that the network of kith and kin is the last line of defense against homelessness; the homeless, in turn, are apparently those for whom this network has been destroyed.(2)

There is then, a distinctive group among extremely poor people which can be considered to have the greatest need. To that extent, the broadest definition of homelessness can obfuscate the endemic suffering of this particular subgroup and according to Rossi, it is not just a matter of economics.

So while there is substantial reason to hold to the broadest definition, our starting point here are with those who meet a more narrow definition, i.e., those who are the "literal" homeless. Narrowing our focus even further, we will be most concerned with those who do not even have the luxury of a shelter bed, who do not live indoors, but who actually sleep outdoors.(3)

Which definition is utilized impacts upon the process of calculating the numbers of people who are homeless. If one were to count the 'invisible' homeless, those who may be on the street or elsewhere even if unseen, it becomes necessary to speculate through the use of ratios based on the 'visible' homeless people who live in shelters.

According to Blau (1992), the best considered judgement is the estimate reached by The National Alliance to End Homelessness, which fell somewhat in the middle of the two definitions above. It includes estimates of the unseen homeless on the streets but excludes those doubled up. It found that while 2 million people are homeless for at least part of the year, 735,000 are homeless at any given time. Considering the kind of turnover suggested by these numbers, especially if one were inclined to add in those doubled-up, it is clear that most people who are homeless, or who have ever been, are now housed, even if precariously. For the purposes of this study, we have developed two categories, based on a

gross understanding of where most homeless people spend their time:

Group One - Usually-housed (or indoor) homeless

These are people who are usually housed. Homeless at various times during the year, most of their time, even when homeless, is spent indoors. The National Bureau of Economic Research (1986), determined that these indoor homeless people spend 55% of their time in shelters and the rest of the time, on the streets.

Group Two - Usually-homeless (or outdoor) homeless

These are people who are usually homeless. While they obtain housing at various times, most of their time is spent outdoors. These are the people who are "actually", homeless. Blau refers to this group as living indoors 20% of the time they are homeless and on the street 80% of the time.

Further, Blau states that fifty percent of the people who become homeless get out of it in less than three months, and most of the rest, in less than three years. However, he found that one fifth stay homeless much longer than three years.(4) According to the National Alliance numbers, this would mean that 20% of the 735,000, or about 150,000 people, homeless as of this writing, are usually homeless (see Group Two) and have been for several years.

One major difference between people who live on the streets and everybody else is that mortality rates are four times higher on the streets.(5) This indicates that life on the street reduces longevity. Perhaps it is a narrowing field

from the start, with those who escape the streets at one end, and those who die on the streets at the other.

Marcuse (1988) wrote how today's homelessness differs from that of all earlier periods: "Today's homelessness is a long-term, not a temporary or transitional phenomenon." For one fifth of the nation's homeless, approximately 120,000 of them single men and 30,000 single women, that is apparently true.(6) It also seems true that most of these people actually sleep on the street.

While the rapid process of urban renewal has caused the demise of skid rows throughout the country, it has not caused the disappearance of homeless people, instead only their redistribution. As Giamo (1989) found, "...homelessness has become uprooted."(7) Many of those displaced settled wherever they would be tolerated, but often only until the communities would rise up to expel them.(8) One such place remains in or near transportation facilities whose fast paced activities, around-the-clock hours, and very own transient population offered the least social resistance and for those who would panhandle, the most economic opportunity. The new homeless, coming into the cities, having no skid row to move into, often just stayed where the buses dropped them off.

The focus of this study will be in midtown manhattan where due in part to three large transportation facilities, there has typically been a concentration of homeless people.

Chapter 1: Notes

1. James P. Spradley's You Owe Yourself a Drunk, page 6.
2. This is taken from Peter Rossi's Without Shelter, page 29, where he attempts to include everybody at perpetual financial risk of homelessness. He notes that there are 35 million poor people out of whom 2% might be experiencing homelessness at any given time.
3. The "actual" homeless is the group of people studied in this paper. Differing in few other ways, to be discussed later, homeless people are seen as either being usually homeless or usually housed. People who we consider "actually" homeless are those who are usually homeless and living on the street.
4. Joel Blau's The Visible Poor, page 29.
5. See Jonathan Hibbs, et al. (1994).
6. Women comprised only 10.4% of the people found living on the street in this study - see Appendix A. This is a bit lower than other studies, which typically find that men outnumber women by 5 or 6 to 1 - see Peter Rossi's Without Shelter. Because of the larger numbers of single men who are homeless than single women, the preponderance of studies of homelessness focus upon men. There is however, little in the literature to suggest that there are discernible differences among single adults by sex.
7. See Benedict Giampo's On The Bowery, page 30.
8. Wherever homeless people settled, having left behind the "hidden" public and private spaces of the Bowery, they were seen as out-of-place. New laws and old, aimed at regulating the practice of panhandling and the use of public places for the purposes of sleeping and other activities usually done in private (or at least in the "privacy" of the Bowery), began to be applied. Communities came together around the issue, in some cases forming advocacy groups, in other cases initiating social action aimed at bringing indoors those who would come voluntarily, or forcing indoors (to hospitals) those mentally-ill who might not. Left behind on the streets were those who managed to resist such outreach efforts; people who are usually homeless and therefore the subject of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: HOMELESSNESS AS A LIFESTYLE

"I'm not here 'cause of problems. I got no mother and no father. Listen here, could ya? I was born an orphan; got no relatives and I was never married. Man, I don't got no problems."

Bowery resident, Fall, 1977 (1)

Introduction

According to a census taken on the night of April 1, 1996 of the New York City shelter system, there were only 191 beds available out of a total of 6,109 beds.(2) This demonstrates that many homeless people do accept the help offered them. If one adds private shelters, transitional housing, and inpatient substance abuse or mental health treatment programs, most of which are filled to capacity, it becomes reasonable to speculate that what is being offered is accessible and relatively acceptable to most. In fact, based on this alone, one could argue that efforts to reach out to this needy population, 75-90% of which, according to Snow and Anderson (1993) are men, have been largely successful. Those who do remain on the street despite the millions of dollars being spent in the performance of outreach services, and the

hundreds of millions of dollars on the shelter system, remain in the minority. In the relatively safe indoor surroundings of others, the larger group of 'usually-housed' homeless people are less socially isolated than their more unfortunate, 'usually-homeless' peers. The latter is a subgroup, which suffers from street homelessness, which in many ways is the lowest rung of homelessness. Cohen and Sokolovsky (1989) noted that Bowery men, i.e., those who live on the streets, had only two thirds of the social connectedness of their community housed peers. "Bowery men had 6.4 informal ties versus 10.8 among comparably aged, middle class men." They found that "relative isolation was more common on the street." One Bowery resident told them, "People are more trouble than they're worth. Ya think they're your friends then next thing ya know your shoes are gone. Living on the street is easier because you can stay away from everyone if ya want to." (3)

Cohen and Sokolovsky found that as people lived on the street, they showed a tendency towards increased dependency on each other. As this dependency on a smaller and smaller circle of people develops, social distance from everybody else increases. Under these circumstances, one would expect responsivity to mainstream outreach efforts to decrease.

In this sense then, while they support each other, helping each other "survive" streetlife, they assist (perpetuate) each other's isolation from those social forces,

which will help them escape street life. As they live on the streets, they might grow even less amenable to standard outreach efforts.

The 'outdoor' homeless are considered "street people". They sometimes visit drop-in-centers, but typically live in boxes, tunnels, doorways, park benches, in bushes and trees. Their physical safety and social status are at their relative lowest along with their self-esteem. The public is unable to distinguish between "local or transient" homeless(4), and judgement based on such constructs as "deserving" or "undeserving" becomes muddled. This leads to a demonstrable ambivalence, and a society that grows less monolithic when it comes to setting standards for charity, or civility. The New York City commissioner of Parks and Recreation said, "The public mood is both ways. On the one hand, people don't want them around and demand that you remove them. On the other hand, people feel guilty and give them money." (New York Times, 1989).

The visibility of street homeless people speaks paradoxically to their social isolation. In Stephen Crane's Experiment in Misery, we see a description of visible descent,

A youth was trudging slowly, without enthusiasm...was clothed in an aged and tattered suit...By the time he had reached City Hall Park he was so completely plastered with yells of "bum" and "hobo"...that he was in a state of the most profound dejection.(5)

Yet, as Griffin wrote in Black Like Me, after walking through familiar areas with darkened skin, passing as a black man, past a club whose solicitors worked the sidewalk calling out to all those except him, "Tonight they looked at me but did not see me." (6)

Apparently "being seen" is a required pre-condition for the possibility of "not being seen". Invisibility results from a social process, which perpetuates exclusion. Both actors participate but it is the homeless person living on the street whose life is, relative to his peers, on the skids.

The status of the invisible person is lower than the one who does not see him. As Garfinkel (1960) stated:

Any communicative work between persons, whereby the public identity of an actor is transformed into something looked on as lower in the local scheme of social types, will be called a "status degradation ceremony." (7)

This process whereby one person is "degraded" at the expense and for the benefit of others is, according to Garfinkel, "in accordance with socially valid and institutionally recommended standards of 'preference.'" (8) In fact, as Garfinkel pointed out, these ceremonies are rarely lacking in a society. "There is no society that does not provide in the very features of its organization the conditions sufficient for inducing shame." (9) In short then, where there is status, there are battles adjusting it. The sociology of deviance, as explained by Becker (1963), accounts

for this.

Social groups create deviance by making rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender.' (10)

An understanding as to who the homeless are, or as to what are the effects of the experience of homelessness, has been available for public consumption much before 1980, when it became visible once more. Pre-1980, homelessness was confined to certain geographical areas where it was an object of study by a discrete corp of social scientists. Park (1923), commenting in the preface of a study of Chicago's migratory worker population, developed a "restless disposition" notion, which he said helped the workers acquire social traits, which made them "something quite different." (11)

Anderson's Hobo (1923), the Chicago study that Park was commenting on, took note of a category of "the home guard" (12) a term, which he described as applicable to men who "seldom come to the attention of the charities or the police, or ask alms on the street." (13) These he distinguished from "the bum" who he said are "ne'er-do-wells--men who are wholly or partially dependent and frequently delinquent as well." (14)

Elijah Anderson's A Place on the Corner (1974), a study of some of Chicago's "black working and non-working men who spent a good deal of their time in the bar or on the corner", summed up the collectivity of "outsider" living this way:

Status within this informal system is action-oriented and precarious, based in large measure upon what people think and say and do about other members of the group.(15)

Most notable perhaps, is Spradley's You Owe Yourself a Drunk (1970), a study of Seattle's skid row, where he found that "repeated arrest and incarceration changes identities and motivates these men to take up the life style of urban nomads."(16)

Since the early 1980s, when homeless people first began to be seen outside of their expected locations such as New York's skid row, "the Bowery," homelessness has become so visible as to be seen by many people first-hand and by nearly everybody second-hand. As Giamo (1989) stated, "Homelessness has transgressed the geographical boundaries of skid row....it has become uprooted."(17)

There have been many varied responses. Indeed, a services industry has grown around the problem of public destitution creating a taxonomy which guides funding streams. People who are homeless are often understood via the rubric of the "medical model". Advocates who take aim at political

forces blame third parties; the homeless are seen as victims who are perennially owed more than society is willing to pay. But there has also been certain imagery, which has endured throughout the various publicly staged manifestations of public homelessness.

Capturing some of these images is the film documentary 'On the Bowery' (1956). Rogosin's expose of life on New York's Bowery, a square-mile area in Manhattan's downtown, with the help of just one actor, had in vitro access to the life of real-life Bowery residents.(18)

The fifty-five minute docudrama chronicles the tribulations of Ray Salyer who, upon his first entry into the Bowery, walks upright and strong. He carries his suitcase in firm hands and is of equally firm character as he enters a Bowery bar, the 'One Mile House', so named because of its distance from the city morgue.(19) He sits at the bar, orders a beer, and with little concern for his surroundings, imbibes with large gulps determined not so much to finish his drink as to get on with his life. Before very long, he is approached by another man for whom he buys a drink. Within the time span of that drink, he is invited to join a table of his peers, all of whom have less drinking money than he does.

The social activity offered Ray, the animated conversations laced with humor, the occasional touch on the arm, pat on the head, or sympathetic ear, the companionship,

even the anger and the deceit, all add up to a social scene with a powerful pull. It is here, through the various mechanisms of reciprocity, that he will meet his demise. By movie's end he is truly down and out. We are told that six months later, he is dead.

The Bowery offers a community where life on the 'skids' is often experienced as a *fait accompli*. As one Bowery resident put it to me, "I'm a bum. I have nothing to live for and I'm going out now to talk to the public and make some money." (20) Yet it was also a community which produced a supportive even if haphazard network of reciprocity. Small talk buttressed by a recurring exchange of greetings, and physical interactions comprised of repeated handshaking, backslapping, one-handed neck massages, and hair tousling is common. Bottlegang groups allowed equal participation even among those who could put forth but a penny or two into the pot. Homespun homilies reflective of communal support such as "One hand washes the other," or "There's room for everybody," or "What goes around comes around," are typically offered. (21)

There is a sense of belonging, which prolongs the men's homelessness even as it protects them from its worst effects. This was best expressed by two sentiments revealed to me at different times by the same longtime Bowery resident, "I may be a bum, but uptown they're bums too; only difference is, they wear a tie," and "You can't spell bum without 'u' in

it."(22) The feeling of being socially accepted is unrivaled in other quarters. The Bowery is, as one Bowery person stated, "...someplace to be somebody."(23)

Anderson (1976) referred to this experience as resulting from what he called an extended primary group:

Its members possess a "we" feeling, which they gain through their social interaction with one another and through their intimate involvements in the group as distinct from the external social world.(24)

As Anderson further states, "They have created an incentive system of roles and identities within which people can be somebody and establish a more trustworthy social world."(25) This conclusion is well within the framework of Mead, who argued that "self concept and identity is a result of collective action."(26) Yet, Anderson showed that within the peer group of street corner men he was studying, "the men show themselves to be utterly unequal as they assert their individuality by drawing distinctions among others with whom they share the social space." (27) Apparently then, a tension between the desired state: self-concept as grounded in the collective, and the homeless state: self-concept as grounded in the increasingly separate and detached individual, is the tension, which Straus (1946) referred to in his study of Connecticut's single homeless men, one which leads to under-socialization. This was discerned from the homeless

man's lack of social participation, except when drinking, in socially created and organized activities which would bring him into contact with other individuals.

The "pull" of the Bowery for people with no preferred place to go was elucidated by Macrory (1952) who stated the following:

The Skid Row Tavern offers little more to the bulk of its patrons than alcoholic beverages and the music of the juke box. The patrons are mostly drifters, homeless single men, transients, vagabonds and alcoholics. Nevertheless these places, with a vested interest in the drinking of these men, provide the only warmth and continual association available to them.(28)

Orwell's Down and Out In Paris and London describes dozens of situations where such self-destructive acts of martyrdom are "traded" for status. It shows the work involved with adaptation to the maze of rules associated with the receipt of charity, as well as how "A man receiving charity practically always hates his benefactor"(29). And Crane's Men in the Storm shows more of the unexpected side:

In occasional pauses of the crowd's movement the men had opportunities to make jokes; usually grim things, and no doubt very uncouth. Nevertheless, they were notable--one does not expect to find the quality of humour in a heap of old clothes under a snowdrift.(30)

But such outward adaptation does not necessarily resolve inner turmoil. This is shown in Goines' novel Dope Fiend where the private suffering of a man, whose life is on the

skids, pales against other more powerful trends. Sitting at his mother's kitchen table, his lead character Terry avoids what could have been a transcendent moment:

Terry stared at his mother. For a moment he wanted to cry, to be able to lay his head on her huge bosom and beg for help, for understanding. He needed someone to understand the hell he was caught up in. He stared at her short, squat figure and knew she would never understand. Her wide face would fill with concern, because she loved him, but she would never be able to understand.(31)

In both Orwell's and Goines' works, the downtrodden character seems unable, or unwilling, to benefit from the proximity of those most able to help; close, but still disaffiliated.

Target Population

As for differences between the usually-housed and the usually-homeless, Rossi (1989) wrote:

It is also important to note what things did not relate to the proportion of time spent on the streets. A measure of psychotic thinking symptoms did not relate to spending more time on the streets. This finding, taken in conjunction with the interviewers' ratings of coherence and lucidity, implies that what is obvious to interviewers, and by implication to shelter managers and operators, is what is critical: those who act out are noticed more. Age, criminal record, employment status and length of time homeless also did not significantly affect the proportion of time spent on the streets.(32)

By now, all homeless people, whether usually-housed or usually-homeless, are generally believed to have many problems. Table 1 and 2, both of which represent studies from the early or mid 1980's when widespread "public" homelessness first came to prominence, suggest a variety of ailments, with most homeless people having more than one. In Table 1, although 84% were found to have some sort of mental illness, only 37% were found to have schizophrenia, often thought to be the most common affliction of street people. In Table 2, we get a sense of the qualities of everyday life for many homeless persons. We see that most have been in jail, use alcohol and are unemployed, with many having mental or physical health problems. In sum, the effects of their various ailments, and of being outside the many social processes associated with employment, contribute to the creation of social distance even from those usually considered the most reliable: family and friends.

Table 1 Problems of the Homeless in Philadelphia
 (N=179) from Arce (1981)

PRIMARY DIAGNOSES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Schizophrenia:	67	37%
Alcoholism:	44	25%
Personality disorders:	12	7%
Affective disorders:	10	6%
Organic Brain Syndrome:	9	5%
Other mental illness:	9	5%
No mental illness:	28	16%

Table 2 Problem Inventory for Homeless People
 (N=979) from Roth (1985)

Problem Area	% Reporting
HOUSING.....	100.0
EMPLOYMENT	
-No work for pay during last month.....	75.3
-Looked, could not find work.....	29.5
-Disabled, could not work.....	13.0
-Do not want to work.....	3.0
-Not job ready.....	5.0
SOCIAL SUPPORT	
-No relatives/Cannot count on relatives.....	64.2
-No friends/Cannot count on friends.....	58.1
-Has neither/Cannot count on them.....	43.1
DRUG/ALCOHOL USE	
-Any type of drug or medication use.....	32.2
-Reported alcohol use.....	64.2
-Reported having sought alcohol treatment...	26.6
PHYSICAL HEALTH	
-Any type of physical health problem.....	30.7
MENTAL HEALTH	
-Psychiatric symptom requiring service.....	30.8
JAIL/PRISON	
-Ever been in jail or prison.....	58.5

The fact that nearly six out of ten have spent time in jail forces a consideration of the "social training" of jail-life as documented by Irwin (1985)

Effective socializing institutions, such as the family and the school, hold people in sustained relationships and provide the settings and the time needed to communicate the norms and meaning of the society. They also invest the carriers of culture with prestige and power so that they can be effective agents of socialization. This is the case with the jail, except that it socializes persons into deviant or outsider cultures. Many processes in the jail disengage people from the dominant society and embitter them toward it.(33)

While Rossi has shown us that traits do not distinguish the usually-homeless from their usually-housed peers, in an effort to be able to understand how best to help the individual, we must look at what homeless people have in common. We must look at what they as individuals, and we as the helping others, may be up against other than, or inclusive of, traits.

Proteanism

People's lives do not occur in vacuums. Experiences are not events tied end to end. There is instead a liquid quality to life. Proteanism is the embodiment of this liquidity. It is "the ability to stay constant in metamorphosis."(34) Robert Jay Lifton (1993) refers to proteanism as the "modus

vivendi for our times", typifying "the great social differences in the self-presentation people display in any particular institution or place." (35)

Proteanism facilitates social movement and fosters the development of personal momentum. For most, it empowers everyday life, enabling successful movement from social moment to social moment. What would otherwise be a fragmented life can instead become a life composed of contrary ways of believing or thinking or acting gathered together into one 'corporate' personality. A cohesive whole emerges from many otherwise disparate parts.

Proteanism Inside and Out

An excellent example of how proteanism effects those who live inside mainstream life, i.e., insider proteanism, is aptly presented in novel form such as in McInerney's Bright Lights, Big City (1984). Nameless throughout, the book's chief protagonist tells of his movements during a period of time in Manhattan. His life is thematically similar, as we will later see, to those who are usually homeless. However, from the very processes the narrator is describing, we see immediately that his story is not about someone who will ever be "actually" homeless. Rather, he is an Insider whose status is basically assured; for whom "living on-the-edge" will likely only be a conceptual framework.

From marriage, good job, and aspirations, he goes to separation, unemployment, and passive hopelessness. Propelled and kept afloat by his social standing in the mainstream, much of which accrued to him at birth, proteanism enables his self-destruction to have productive quality. With strong social supports in place, his difficulties lead to introspection, eventual insight and a virtually guaranteed return to good times. All throughout, he does not experience his membership in the mainstream as being threatened. There being safety nets in place, there is no real chance of homelessness.

McInerney's protagonist typified the protean man and the insider both. In the end, proteanism kept him moving and socially erect. Whatever happens to him, never places him "on the ground." While there is discontent and under-achievement, there is no homelessness. While our narrator at no time appears happy, his life moves along at a fast pace. He is kept afloat as much by the social wind-currents of proteanism as by anything else. It helps him 'get away' with unresolved shallowness. Allowing him to segregate his diverse presentations of self, he is not seen as shallow so much as multi-faceted. In these ways, he aligns himself with so many others, therefore helping to prevent the processes which ostracize; he is never socially maligned, his social standing remains intact. Yet it is in terms of social standing that the differences between homeless people and those who have

never been homeless becomes clear. According to Rossi (1989), not only do those whose social circles once contained them now forsake them, but also those of society's mainstream.(36)

As Grunberg (1992) wrote:

Despite over a decade of newspaper articles, television specials, and advocacy, Insiders at one end of the continuum, and Outsiders at the other, remain unknown to each other. The results? Both groups are still worlds apart. Besides not standing alongside each other in the work place, they are also not sharing movie theater seats nor meeting each other at social gatherings. They do not go to the same hairdressers, eat in the same places, or get examined by the same doctors. All in all, it is a situation ripe for typecasting where opinions based solely on second and third hand information, or by what is seen at a glance, are formed by each every day.(37)

McInerny's character as Insider, as compared to Outsider, enjoys relatively uninterrupted support. Even among outsiders, the usually-homeless or usually-housed homeless, whose stakes are higher, there are varying levels of social supports in place. And among outsiders too, the differences impact on lifestyle. Examining issues of social standing among the homeless themselves, Anderson (1923) made note of a typology of homeless men and their social standing amongst their peers. He distinguished the seasonal worker, the hobo, and the tramp, who are migratory types, from the "home guard" from the "bum", who were relatively stationary.

The home guard, like the hobo, is a casual laborer, but he works, often only by the day, now at one and again at another of the multitude of unskilled jobs in the city.

The bum, like the tramp, is unwilling to work and lives by begging and petty thieving. The stationary casual laborers, contemptuously termed "home guards" by the hobo and the tramp, work regularly or irregularly at unskilled work, day labor, and odd jobs...they seldom come to the attention of the charities or the police.(38)

Within the group of home guards are what the men of his study referred to as "remittance men" who, being the "black sheep" of their own families, received what amounted as payoffs to stay away from home.(39)

In effect then, here was a group of people who, like the street homeless of today, or Anderson's "ne'er-do-wells", had the lowest status amongst their peers and family members. As Anderson concludes "the most hopeless and the most helpless of all the homeless men is the bum". Included in this category are the "inveterate drunkard and drug addicts" who are "unemployable...the most pitiable and the most repulsive types of down-and-outs".(40)

Even as Lifton (1994) describes proteanism as being the stuff of life for those living within the mainstream, he describes it as having quite another effect for those who
s u f f e r f r o m h o m e l e s s n e s s :

But when it came to the underclass, or severely disadvantaged, what's tragic and rather consistent is that the proteanism that at least has the possibility of serving other groups quite well tends to combine with an already existing fragmentation which is profound and, therefore, intensifies the fragmentation. In many cases that we see before us from interviews, this leads to the most pained forms of dissociation and still deeper fragmentation.(41)

Taking note of the fact that "work with the black poor (who comprise 80% of new York City's homeless) revealed that when dislocation and social breakdown are extreme and brutally absurd, functional proteanism is likely to give way to fragmentation,"(42) Lifton's "deracinated self," was a "self so rootless as to be rendered hollow. A sense of worthlessness, or taint, can be transmitted over the generations, along with various dissociate mechanisms of survival."(43-44) Social critic, Cornel West has addressed the absurdities imposed on such fragmented lives as well. The result, he said, is an overwhelming "collapse of meaning."(45) Such meaning to an individual, as Adler described it, "is not a matter of words. It is built up in his style of life and runs through it like a strange melody of his own creation."(46)

Homelessness As A Lifestyle

It is suggested that for this subgroup, those who are rejecting traditional outreach, one must be able to treat their symptoms as secondary while looking beyond them for primary social patterns. This reveals a lifestyle devastated by disaffiliation and social distance.

Adler, (1956), wrote "The very first requisite is a recognition of the coherence of the personality and of the

unity of the individual in all his expressions."(47) Furthermore, "the style of life commands all forms of expressions; the whole commands the parts." Adler considered the differences between a pine tree growing in a valley and one which grows on top of a mountain: "The style of life of a tree is the individuality of a tree expressing itself and molding itself in an environment."

As Garfinkel wrote, "In doing sociology, lay and professional, every reference to the 'real world,' even where the reference is to physical or biological event, is a reference to the organized activities of everyday life."(48) Here, we consider the activities, which comprise the everyday life or lifestyle of people who have been homeless for years.

People who have been homeless for a long time can be shown to be suffering from a lifestyle of homelessness or from 'homelessness-as-a-lifestyle'. This is a condition, the components of which often include early life transiency, impulsiveness, clusters of unsolved problems, as well as a lack of social and other supports. These lifestyle elements interact with one another in perpetuating fashion, dragging the person along in an undertow, one result of which is downward mobility.

'Life-style' is used to define an individual's style of social movement, his or her method of facing problems, an operational guiding force as if there were a super-ordinate

guiding idea: the idea to stay homeless. A person suffering from a homeless lifestyle disorder, is someone whose life has literally pointed him or her towards the street. The person's own activities, regardless of his goals, perpetuate his or her homelessness as if it were itself a goal. And much of this may have been hatched of necessity itself.

Just what comprises a life style, or 'style of life' as it is often referred to by Adler, allows for purposeful living. Shapiro, describing neurotic style, wrote:

His attitude and interests will be of a sort that guarantees that the next act will appear as the only plausible next thing to do. His attitudes and interests are such as to continue and sustain the process and to make the characteristic experiences inevitable, however discomforting they may be. There are certain angry, guarded, masochistic individuals who seem not only to feel humiliated and victimized easily, but also to be alert for opportunities to be so. They sometimes seem to go far out of their way to seize a chance to feel victimized. It is sometimes possible to understand their interest and their satisfaction in this: each new injustice scores a moral point against the enemy.(49)

Chronically homeless men actively participate in their homelessness. "Soft determinism, that is, the participation of the person as cause" was declared by Murphy to be "one of the most valuable working concepts available."(50) It is an important concept because their problems of living transcend any particular set of economic, medical, or psychiatric diagnoses. Their historically rooted, on-going, personal

relationships with people and places insure their social isolation, which further establishes their on-going state of homelessness.

This section will deal with those men who repetitively experience homelessness, for whom homelessness has become a lifestyle. It will not deal with those rendered homeless by the clenched fist of a sudden tragedy or the well-functioning adult, or family, suddenly hurled into temporary disaster. Instead, it will focus upon those whose lives seem to have been aimed towards the streets all along, those whom Wallace refers to as "skid-row aficionados".(51) Caught up in a pattern of relating to people and places in a manner which has pluralistically enveloped nearly every aspect of their lives, they have come to suffer severe disturbances of affiliation.

Insular social interaction, circularly caused by distrust, transiency, and personal strategy, is not uncommon among homeless people. As one shelter resident detailed for me in 1986,

I stayed at a welfare hotel in midtown Manhattan for a couple of weeks. Then, I was told I could move into a community residence in Brooklyn. I lived there for four months before being transferred to another midtown Manhattan location. It was an old folk's home. I hated it and just left. I went to New York and got into one of those shelters on Park Avenue. Two shelters later, in 1983, I ended up at this shelter. Then a social worker got me a hotel room. But three weeks later, I got thrown out because I could not get along with the management. I began moving around to different rooming houses and shelters until I finally ended up back here.(52)

As a recent New York City mayoral commission found, a substantive number of homeless people "...have grown up isolated from mainstream social and economic life."(52)

To discuss the lives of these homeless then, it will be necessary to take into account those aspects of life that are often common to people living in extremis, as outsiders. Among them are stabbing and gunshot wounds inflicted and received, unknown children, ill health, sporadic employment, gangs, alcohol abuse, impulsiveness, adoption, immigrancy, cultural clashes, welfare, veteran, and disability benefits, work programs, hallucinations, hard drugs, forgery, large gaps in memory, depression, state and city mental hospitals, prisons, distant and broken families, thievery, the con game, passivity, counterfeiting, pseudonyms, and lastly, all under the heading of, disaffiliation.

Bassuck (1984) found 74% of shelter residents with no family relations and 73% without friends. The figures jumped to 90% for those homeless who also had psychiatric histories. The conclusions were that "...homelessness is often the final stage in a lifelong series of crises and missed opportunities, the culmination of a gradual disengagement from supportive relationships and institutions."(53)

At its worst, homelessness is a deviant lifestyle in so far as it comes to encompass the disaffiliate. It drops them

into a huge, social Skinner box. Their lives seem to be happening, at the same time, because of the way they live and despite the way they live.

This is not a pessimistic viewpoint. Homelessness is not an end-product. It is an active verb, a process by which a lifestyle only may develop. While the term homeless gives one the impression that a home will solve the problem, for those discussed in this section, that is clearly not the case.

Following are brief life stories of four adults(54) whose paths have taken them "from the playpen right into the shelter." (55)

CASE 1: Affiliation by the Bottle

Hsuan-Li, as we shall refer to him, was born in 1949 in Hunan Province, which is located in the central part of mainland China. His father, a municipal judge, and his mother had high expectations for him and his six brothers and sisters. All seven obtained college degrees. The oldest, a woman currently residing in China, received a doctorate in drama and literature from an American university. The others, except for one still in school, received master's Degrees. One is now in Europe working as a business lawyer. Another is a professional printer living in the American midwest.

When Hsuan-Li was 14 years old, he left home to enroll in the Chinese navy. He traveled to many ports in the China Sea

during his three-month stint and all the while, he now recalls, he was aware of a growing need for more privacy than the society he lived in permitted. He resented the grouping together of people. He just wanted to be alone and, whenever possible, he was.

After those three months, he entered the Army where, after reaching the level of Sergeant in four years, he was approached by the government to enter advanced military training school, where he could become a general. He declined. Immediately, he was transferred back to the Navy where he was forced to start from scratch. Working as a male nurse, he reached the level of sergeant again in three years.

At the age of 22, he left military service and went to Chinese college away from home, where for the first time he lived alone. He worked in a government-sponsored program in order to maintain a small income.

During these few years, whenever he was by himself, he developed a taste for rice wine. He does not remember experiencing any difficulties regarding this practice of combining wine with solitude.

As a graduate at the age of 26 years, he traveled to Japan, again as part of a program, he helped train workers on the art of building tunnels. He lived there for one and one-half years in a dormitory, made no friends, and usually sat

alone in his room drinking sake.

Following this, he spent another one and one-half years in Hong Kong, where he worked as an advisor/trainer for those in the business of building civil structures. Here he first tasted American wine and whiskey.

He then traveled to the United States, where he attended a New England university, and lived alone in a neighboring town in a small one-room apartment. He had won an assistantship and did not drink at all during these two years. He felt less pressure, could be alone whenever he wanted, and, being new to the country, dared not risk losing what he had.

Upon graduating in 1980, now a thirty year old with a master's Degree in industrial engineering, he was offered a position as engineer with a New York City-based construction firm at a salary of \$20,000 per year.

I was given the most boring job there. Maybe because I am Oriental. All they wanted me to do was deal with the numbers and the blueprints. All I did was sit alone in the office while everybody else was out there working. They never asked me to help them build anything.

He did not talk to anyone about this. He drank once in awhile but was much more interested in saving money and, after one and one-half years with the firm, he saved \$3,000.

His social life was negligible. He ate lunch alone. He lived alone. There was nobody to telephone. Up until this

time, around July of 1982, he had only approached one girl for a date, a girl he did not really want to go out with. When she accepted, he just stayed home and stood her up. Later, however, he met a woman whom he loved. He asked her out but, he says, "She rejected me. She refused me."

This disappointment seemed to combine with his growing sense that he was being taken advantage of at the office. His old feelings of needing privacy gained momentum. He began to feel that people might want to hurt him. So, he decided, it was best to keep to himself.

I was alone and lonely. I didn't have any friends. One day, I thought I heard voices that were warning me of something. So I quit my job and went to my apartment.

He stayed there for three months, without leaving it even once. He ran out of food within two months. He had neither television nor radio. There was only the noise of the streets to listen to.

One day, a power or something pushed me out. I left my apartment with my bank card. I locked the door and threw away the key. For three days I walked. I began to eat then, but only liquids at first.

He went straight to the bank and withdrew, over strategically planned intervals of time, his entire savings account and headed south. The first complete stop he made was

in Louisiana. Then, he continued through Mississippi and Texas making only short stops. When he reached South Carolina one evening, he laid down on the street to sleep. He was awakened by a police officer, who brought him to a state mental hospital where he stayed for two months.

When he was discharged, the hospital made an appointment for him to report to the outpatient clinic. Instead, he went to Atlanta, Georgia, where he worked parking cars in a garage for two months. He remembers drinking very little during that period, even though he had much of his money left. He still thought he was hearing voices. Sometimes, they asked him to hurt other people. He refused to listen to them. He quit his job, traveled to southern Georgia, and worked as a farm laborer.

It was not long before he quit and went to California. Again, he slept on the street. Again, he was taken to a hospital by a city policeman. This time, he was a patient for eight months. he was given medication, kept to himself, and began to relax. Upon release, he spent six months in a mission, where he mostly read novels and newspapers. He then traveled to New York where he began staying in various shelters.

Before then, he had been treated by several different city hospital emergency rooms "just for nerves. They never asked me to stay. But they would talk to me and make me feel

better." Upon entering a shelter, he was seen talking to himself while eating alone at breakfast time. He was approached by a social worker making assigned rounds. Inquiries were made into his condition and Hsuan-Li stated that he wanted to see a doctor.

The doctor was an Indian man. He didn't ask me too many questions so I stayed pretty quiet. He decided to send me to this program. I think it's okay. I feel better.

The program to which he refers is geared to helping the mentally ill homeless. He is a regular attendee as he divided his time between its work program, social activities, and poetry workshops. His poems are well written and usually talk of suicide and loneliness. He keeps mostly to himself, yet goes out in the evening with several drinking buddies.

Asked to rate his life at present, Hsuan-Li hesitates only briefly. "Okay, not too bad." The reference points for this simple statement are the late sixties and early seventies when he remembers being very depressed and feeling very alone. "I didn't tell anybody because they were my private feelings. It was not for the public."

Any affiliations Hsuan-Li has had mostly resulted from situations structured by others or were under the confinement of strict rules. He has had few friendships and has never dated anyone.

Discussion:

Upon his entering the Navy for the second time, liquor began to play an ironic role, a means to the maintenance of his affiliation with society. There, in one of his small rooms, alone, it provided temporary flight. Mainly a coping mechanism, it stalled the inevitable, offering a break from the ongoing anxiety that he experienced during his nine-to-five vocational affiliation with society. It did not prevent, might even have exacerbated, his eventual and total break with the main.

As a shelter resident today, he still drinks. Once again, liquor is serving as an integrative tool, one that is mediating affiliation. His alcohol intake, however, has taken on a different form. Historically, it is in line with the drinking habits of the subculture he has joined. As Straus (1946) explained, the homeless man is under-socialized with a paucity of lifetime activities which would bring him into contact with other individuals. "One of the chief functions of drinking was to provide an easy introduction to congenial companions." (56) In a subsequent study of New York's Bowery, Straus and McCarthy (1951) revealed an "impressive number" whose life is dominated by pathological drinking but who are not addicted to alcohol:

They do not seek the maximum effect of alcohol, but are rather "plateau drinkers" whose use of alcohol is an

established pattern of their life activities.(57)

In The Tavern and the Community, Macrory (1952) went further. "Not only is it easy for the individual to drink, but it is necessary for his integration in the group; he finds it affectively rewarding."(58)

And, in 1978, through my own field research in the Bowery, I discovered the close ties between affiliation and liquor. This was especially embodied in the social structure known as "bottlegang" groups:

The purpose of obtaining liquor brings cohesion to a group of men. It allows a degree of intimacy between men which might not be available otherwise. Thus the "bottlegang" appears to fulfill the needs to both drink and affiliate. It seems that eventually, the desire to affiliate and to drink become so intertwined that they are a most inseparable. The need for a modicum of emotional relationships may very well usurp the need to drink.(59)

In his past, Hsuan-Li drank to stay affiliated with society at large. Now, while affiliation is still the goal, there has been a subtle shift in style. Drinking has become an integral part of the relationship he has with his homeless peers. His particular affiliates too have histories, which involve a sense of personal inadequacy that liquor-mediated relationships help to hide. As with every support system, the elements within it help to perpetuate the whole.

While drinking could not be thought of as the main

causative factor for his homeless lifestyle, it empowers his passivity while forestalling his actual break with the main. It is aiding his enculturation into shelter life, while at the same time affording him with the temporary courage to take interpersonal risks.

Right now, he reports being content with the fact that he does not have to deal with his fellow countrymen; he avoids the Chinatown community, which he feels will look down on him for "being a bum." He will wait until he is doing better before he attempts to contact his relatives again.

CASE 2: IMPULSIVENESS, DRUGS, AND SELF-PERPETUATION

"My father disowned me. My mother died when she had me." This is how Eduardo Valdez, fifty-two years old, began his reply as to why he felt he was now homeless. As he went on:

My father was visiting my mother at the hospital just after I was born. He looked at me and yelled, "He is not my son." My mother got so upset that her condition got very bad. She bled too much and she died. So my grandfather and grandmother took me home to live with them and their three sons.

In the middle of winter 1933, Eduardo was born to a black Hispanic father and a white mother, both of whom had spent their lives in Puerto-Rico. Just after Eduardo's birth, he was taken to live in a small, northern city, a poor town whose main industry was sugar cane.

By the time he entered the first grade, he was already very good at baseball. He carried a ball around wherever he went, always trying to teach people how to play the game. He remembers being known for that and for attending school and church regularly.

When he was in third grade, both grandparents died within months apart. "From then on," he reports, "it was always, 'What are we going to do about Eddie?'"

He began to work almost immediately, selling papers to buy shoes, or picking avocados to help pay for food. When he was in eighth grade, he quit school to work full time for a ceramic tile factory. He worked there for 4 years until he was 18 years old. He quit his job so he could come home more often. By then, he had a baby with his 16-year-old girlfriend with whom he lived in a nearby town.

His girlfriend spent most of her time raising the child and keeping house while Eduardo worked odd jobs in the community.

At the age of 22, he traveled alone to the American mainland, and found a job. In nine months' time, he sent for his girlfriend and son and settled in Manhattan. He commuted to New Jersey where, for several years, he worked in a factory making Christmas tree decorations.

From the years 1961 to 1965, he and his common-law wife had four children, two of whom died soon after birth. Well

before his second child was born, however, Eduardo became involved with heroin along with some friends.(51) Almost immediately, he had run-ins with the New York City Police Department.

He was arrested in 1958 and sent to Riker's Island prison for one year. He resumed his drug habit upon his release. To maintain himself financially, he forged checks, for which he was arrested in 1961. He was sent to federal prison for one year. In 1964, after becoming involved in many fights, "during which either I would get stabbed or I would stab someone. We were always slashing away as soon as a fight began, and were usually all high." He was arrested for assault while under the influence of drugs and was sent to a state hospital for the criminally insane, where he stayed for eight months.

Between 1965 and 1971, he was jailed six times, never for more than six months at a time. In 1971, he entered his first methadone maintenance program and in 1978, after many more jailing and many more methadone programs, "I finally stopped shooting up and stopped taking methadone. I never went to jail since."

Since 1978, whenever he has felt the urge to take something to calm himself down, he has gone to an outpatient, psychiatric clinic, reported his anxiety and his depression, and received some medication. Then, on his own, he would just

stop taking it. Once, he grew so depressed that he tried to commit suicide by taking a whole bottle of thorazine. His stomach was pumped in an emergency clinic and he was released. As for income over the last 25 years, and why he entered a shelter in 1984, he said:

I have been on Welfare many times, maybe one dozen times. I have received food stamps, and on three occasions, I have received social security disability benefits. I have also worked all over the city, sometimes at a Chinese fruit stand, or for some store-owner doing clean up work two days at a time, three days maybe. If I didn't have an address, I could not get Welfare. Also, it is hard to find work. I was willing to work but nobody would hire me, so I came to the shelter.

When asked when, in his eyes, things were going the worst for him, he replied:

Maybe nobody would believe this but, one day, I was sitting in my apartment and my girl said, "Papi, I'm thirsty. You want to get me a soda?" I said, "Okay Mami." I went outside, it was rainy, and I saw a picture face down. I was curious. I looked at it. It was my first girlfriend. I couldn't believe it. I ran back to my live-in woman and showed it to her. She said for me to get rid of it. I got rid of it immediately. But, ever since then, things have gone down. She died one month later.

That experience precipitated his worsening depression and his suicide attempt. At present, he say he knows where one of the uncles who raised him lives, where two of his nieces live and where his children live. He says however, that he will wait before looking any of them up:

I changed too much. My features look different. I don't dress good. I look terrible. Maybe when I get my teeth back. I lost them a few years ago.

Eduardo is usually very neatly dressed. He is a quiet man, convinced that one day, if he can reactivate his disability benefits and find a room, he will be on his own again. He would like to find a woman. Currently, he has diabetes. He has just recovered from pneumonia, and his clinic is on the lookout for AIDS. Eduardo feels that there is no one he can talk to as he trusts nobody. "A lot of people would bother me if they could."

A lifetime of suspicion, actually a tool of the drug trade, now serves him well. He is cautious, accustomed to depression, and passive in demeanor. This serves, in part, to mask his impulsiveness which, though he appears burnt-out from his long streetlife, actively mediates most of his decision-making. He says he trusts no one yet he will take a pill from another homeless man, an impulsive act to be sure, and that quickly, he will have another reason to distrust himself and others. Such a progression into suspicion is not uncommon among those whose lives are lived along, as one well known Bowery homily goes, "the boulevard of broken dreams." (59)

Grunberg's (1978) Bowery fieldwork notes, dated March 7, 1978, reports from table side comments by one Bowery resident:

He was still wearing a winter coat and several layers of clothing and a hat. It seems that he spends every night on the street and in the morning, it is quite chilly. He does not like the flophouses, and instead, sleeps in hallways, under bridges, etc. In fact, the previous night he slept with a man he was able to point out to us. "See that guy," he said, "I shared a doorway with him but I had to keep my eye open all night long. Do you think I could trust him? Nah. He would have taken something the minute I turned my back." He later said that he "...wouldn't consider any of these men friends. I call them chums, that's all."

Eduardo's mode of affiliation has evolved in just such a self-perpetuating atmosphere. At the same time, his own actions have been those of a man whom none else should trust. He has forged checks, hurt people, and repeatedly engaged in the self-destructive world of intravenous drugs doing whatever he must to support it.

Eduardo Valdez seems to be as Shapiro (1965) says "guilty but without pre-meditation." (60) He remains a likeable man, articulate, soft spoken, and seemingly thoughtful. He will often help a newcomer to the shelter with some friendly advice and is very quick to report any indiscretions he witnesses. Yet, he lives in an environment fraught with difficulties. (61)

In the landscape of today's shelter, there are many open dormitories. Some of the rooms have ten or more beds and on any given evening, men can be seen attempting sleep with half-opened eyes. Or, if they do not have lockers and locks, with

their several layers of belongings either on their back, or tied with strings and belts to their bedposts.

In the Bowery, one man demonstrated what he called the "Bowery craft" of pretending to sleep at his table so that he could keep his eyes on everyone around him.(62) Of course, an evening full of substance abuse will close the most distrusting eyes, yet the message is clear and its effects on affiliation are obvious.

The common expression, suspicion breeds contempt, is pumped full of meaning in a shelter for homeless men. One of the most frequently voiced pronouncements that shelter social workers hear from their clients is how they are not like the others, "...all those guys, they don't care about their life. Well, I'm not like them. They're all bums. They just want to get by."(63)

Most often spoken in harsh tones, this pronouncement expresses a certain sense of desperation, of anger, of a need for distance from their peers. Sometimes, it is merely a posturing, an attempted manipulation designed to convince the social worker of their sincerity, usually towards some desired end. Other times, it is a crying out, a denial, or a projection. Regardless, it is a demonstration of the general interpersonal tension 'out there' in the building.

A lifetime of suspicion has ironically rendered in Eduardo Valdez, in a building of hundreds, with his family not

too far away, a feeling of being isolated.

There are many more themes present in the everyday functioning of many of today's chronic, homeless men (64). Some of them will emerge in the discussion of the evolution of homelessness in the next two examples. The first is a white, Jewish man, in his mid-forties. The second is a 23 year old black man.

CASE 3: TRANSIENCY, DECEPTION, ANGER, and JAIL, example 1:

From birth, until he was eight years old, Irving Meyer lived in an orphanage just outside of New York City.

Just after his birth, his Polish father was drafted into the armed services. When he returned, he remarried without reclaiming his son, settling down instead, alone, in a nearby borough. Irving never met his mother, refers to her as either dead or divorced, and only came to hear about her through her own parents who had visited him at the orphanage every Sunday. During non-visiting hours, they would pass by in their car, he said, honk their horn two times, and watch as he raced from the building to receive his gifts.

His maternal grandmother had a dream that one day, Irving could come live permanently with them. After more than one year of court battles, they obtained legal guardianship and Irving moved in with her. One week later, however, she died. Soon after, his grandfather returned to Israel where he had

lived after fleeing Hungary.

Irving was then to be raised by his uncle Paul along with three older male cousins. Occasionally, he received news about his father whose marriage had produced a boy and a girl, both of whom, Irving says, now live in Israel. His sister, Mary-Lynn, lives on a kibbutz.

At age 12, he was taken along on construction jobs with two of his cousins, and being a quick learner, was able to earn a small salary.

In school, he had a "tough kid mentality."

I was ready to fight anyone. They made fun of my name and time and time again, I had to hit somebody to just shut them up. It was almost as if I had no choice. I didn't want to, I just did. I was always getting into trouble for that and also because I would leave the school as soon as my work would be done. I had over a 140 IQ and I was faster than the other kids at schoolwork so, I would finish, and then leave.

Just after Irving turned 16, his Uncle Paul died. Six months later,

I was already tired of hearing them worry about me. "How are we going to support Irving? What are we going to do now?" I didn't want to get sent to the orphanage again. We were only living one mile away from it, and I used to pass by it all the time, so I lied about my age and joined the Air-force.

After three years in the service, just before his scheduled release, he enrolled in a college. This enabled him to win an

application for an early release. As he explains,

I didn't even plan on going to the school, I just wanted to get out. Besides, I hadn't even graduated high-school. I was already twenty-years old and I wanted to work.

He went back to the same construction company that employed him before. They hired him and he worked there for one year. Soon he felt that he was being underpaid considering the work he was doing. He argued his point very loudly and, during the argument, he quit.

He bought a motorcycle and headed out to the west coast on a trip that would take him through many small towns and at a dozen states.

He met up with a friend in Minnesota, someone he had met briefly during his days in the service, and then left on his own to Montana where he stayed for awhile before heading towards Boise, Idaho. He met up with a girl who, at the time, was earning money dancing at a strip club and taking occasional private customers. He never would learn her real name but he hit it off with her so well, that she quit her job and joined him on his travels.

Eventually, they settled in Florida. It was only a matter of time before they ran into money problems. Irving sold his motorcycle to a man he only slightly knew. The man paid him half of the money up front, took the motorcycle, and

promising the rest, disappeared without paying the balance.

One day he was out driving around in a car he had acquired on loan, when he saw his old motorcycle parked outside an apartment house. He waited for its owner to show up and then pressured him for the money threatening to take the bike back. The man reached for a gun, which was tucked in his belt and as he did, Irving dove for it. During the struggle in which the gun was not yet fully drawn from the man's pants, Irving managed to squeeze the trigger. This sent a bullet into and down the man's legs. Irving leaped upon his victim now in full possession of the pistol. He aimed it at the man's face, demanded the money, and managed to take several hundred dollars and several ounces of cocaine that the man had strapped to his chest. Irving jumped into his car and fled.

After selling the cocaine, he bought another motorcycle and, with his girlfriend, headed out to California not even aware that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. In California, he took part in a deal to sell marijuana at double its going price. The plan was to purchase ten pounds in California and then drive back to Florida where it would sell for twice that amount.

His plan worked. However, one day while driving along a Florida highway, he was pulled over for a broken taillight. The computer showed his warrant and he was eventually

sentenced to nine months in the county jail. Upon his release, on yet another motorcycle with his same girlfriend, he headed back to California where, within two months, he was heading towards San Quentin prison for stealing air-conditioners from a factory.

Next, after serving his time, he met up with a prison friend in Mexico who offered him part of a cocaine deal. He bought an amount for \$750, cut it down three times, sold each portion for the original amount, and tripled his money. He took his earnings and headed back to Florida. There, he was offered counterfeit money at 15% face value. His plan involved buying an amount of fake money which he could use to buy into another drug deal he had heard about. This way, he could make a profit on the resale of the drugs, and win two ways. He stored his counterfeit dollars in a reel-to-reel tape-recorder that he had at his apartment, which he shared with his new girlfriend.

A man previously thought to be a friend, came by his apartment, beat up his girlfriend and stole the tape-recorder. When Irving came home he was shocked. His girlfriend told him what had happened and this sent him into a fury.

I was so angry that I got a gun. I knew where to look for this guy and the minute I found him, I shot him right in the chest. I was arrested and put in that same county jail for ten months awaiting charges. They found out what kind of person this guy was and that he had just robbed me and beat up my girlfriend. Also there turned

out to be a problem with the way the police gathered the evidence and by then, I was so well versed in jail-house lawyering, I put it all together and beat the case.

Through a friend he met during that stay in jail, a reputed organized crime figure, he obtained work.

It was a job as a chauffeur for a gambling club. But one day, the FBI came around and asked me to inform on my employers. I refused. Then I went to my boss and told him I would have to quit and why. I knew that eventually the FBI would get something on him and that I would be blamed for it. They understood my feelings and wished me good luck. They even gave me one thousand dollars to tide me over.

He went to California, grew his hair long, and bought another motorcycle. In 1970, he was arrested for grand larceny and was sent to San Quentin again, this time for three years. In prison, as before, his status was high. He was an accomplished "jailhouse lawyer" and spent much time in the prison library meeting clients in an effort to help them gain early releases.

After winning his own early release, he stayed in California taking odd jobs before going back to Florida and meeting another girlfriend whom he traveled north with. However, in New Orleans during the Mardi Gras festival, he says that he lost her in a crowd.

Alone, he made it back to New York where, in 1976, he spent most of his time looking for work. He found little of

that but was able to earn as much steady money as he ever had from "boosting", i.e., shoplifting in supermarkets. He could make upwards of two hundred dollars each day if he had a good driver and some willing merchants who would pay quick cash. He also got himself arrested seven times during the next few years usually ending up at Riker's Island for short periods of time.

Between 1978 and 1983, he has been in and out of the shelter system always employing different names and identification numbers. He says that when the right time comes, he is willing to use his real name so that he can make a clean go of it. He has entered a work training program and, despite many temptations to make the "easy dollar through crime," he insists this year will be a pivotal one for him.

I'm getting too old for this life and besides, I have too much on my record. One more arrest and I'll be considered a career criminal and will draw big time.

He has not seen nor spoken to his father in ten years and reports not now having anyone that he can consider a friend. His last one,

let me use his apartment a few months ago but didn't tell me he was taking my half of the rent and buying drugs with it. He got arrested and the landlord took the apartment for non-payment of rent.

CASE 4: TRANSIENCY, DECEPTION, ANGER, and JAIL example 2:

Warren Cummings was 21 years old and no stranger to New York when he entered its shelter system early in the summer of 1982.

Born to working-class, black, common-law parents, he was born in the Dade County, Florida "projects." His father, whose name he never learned, dropped out of sight when Warren turned three. At four, Warren and his mother moved to Brooklyn into a building where one of her sisters already lived. His mother found a job in a local laundromat and left her son to be raised by his aunt. Two years later, she met a man who soon thereafter moved in to help raise the family which grew by three more children over the years.

In fifth grade, due to such classroom behavior as "shooting paper clips, putting tacks in the teacher's chairs, and hanging out with a crowd that did whatever we wanted to do," Warren was thrown out of public school and forced to attend a special school. There the teachers were

allowed to hit you if you don't do what the teachers say. They take their belts off and make you lean with your hands on the blackboard. If they didn't have a belt they would use a bamboo pole.

He stayed there for three years and was allowed, after graduating, to re-enter the public school system where he

finished the ninth grade.

During these public school years, he and his school friends took part in a scam to avoid attending classes. With store bought program cards, they forged the appropriate signatures so as to convince their parents of their perfect school attendance records. Schooldays were spent sneaking on the subways, for which he was ticketed on four different occasions, drinking beer, smoking marijuana, and hanging out, using carfare and lunch money. They would be home by 3:30, with nobody the wiser.

When starting tenth grade, he went to the first day of school, sized up each teacher's method of signing off on the cards, and stayed absent for three consecutive months. At the beginning of the fourth month, he was caught by his mother and step-father, who beat him and monitored him for several weeks.

While in high school, he found a part-time job in a supermarket, where he earned upwards of \$80 dollars per week.

On our breaks from work, on the weekends, we would throw bricks at passing buses and then run away. I might have hurt people but I really don't remember. I did not try to hurt anyone but we really didn't think about that.

During his off school hours, he hung out with Ted, an eighteen year old who said he was a "hit man for the Mafia."

He was in the twelfth grade. He always had two or three thousand dollars in his pocket from hurting or killing someone for his bosses. He wanted me to join him but I knew that if I joined, I might never get out.

Ted held orgies in his Harlem apartment often inviting three or four girls and several male friends.

Rum, beer, and reefer would be all over the place. If the girls didn't want to go along, Ted would slip some spanish fly in their drink and then everybody's clothes would come off. There would be ten or more of us naked.

When he was 17 years old, Warren's family moved South. He refused to go with them, choosing to remain in New York.

In twelfth grade, he quit school and was fired from his job, "for coming to work late." Immediately, he landed a job in a factory where, during the first week, he came to work late only once. During his second week, he came to work late and was fired.

After this experience he went South to join his family. He did not feel like working right away.

I was having too much fun. In Georgia, if you are from New York, you are like a celebrity. I had a radio and women just came to me. I didn't have a girlfriend because I wanted all of them. I just couldn't make my mind decide so I had them all. I didn't live with my parents then. I had my own room for \$20 per week.

Warren eventually took a job working "off the books" just

long enough to earn carfare back to New York. There he got a job and moved into his own apartment. After four months, a girlfriend moved in with him. Her welfare payments now had an address to come to which proved fortunate because, three months later, he had an argument with his boss and lost his job. He returned to work at the same supermarket he had worked in as a child in school. Again, he was fired for tardiness and attitude. "He would always be picking on me. His wife didn't want kids so he would be angry at me."

Warren then moved back down to Georgia and took a job with his stepfather as a laborer installing windows into makeshift, tin houses. He tired of that job within one month and quit. Soon, he found a position loading watermelons onto trucks, which paid him over \$100 a day, seven a week. It lasted only two weeks due to its seasonal nature. After this job ended, he obtained a similar job as an apple picker. But after three days, upon finding out that after room and board, he had only several dollars left, he quit.

I just left one day. I turned from the foot of the ladder I had been working on and just walked down the highway. I had no suitcase and no money.

He hitched to a local town and applied for welfare. He received, through Traveler's Aid, a bus ticket to New York City. In New York, he soon found a factory job. He took a

one room apartment and met a woman who moved in with him.

She was 33 years old and she didn't want to have sex. So, after two weeks, I told her to get me a bottle of vodka from the bootlegger on the corner. When she came back, she found her suitcase on the sidewalk. I snatched the vodka and slammed the door in her face.

Though he stayed at the factory job for nearly one year, he was eventually fired for continued lateness and for arguing with the boss's son. Warren received unemployment benefits and, instead of paying rent, spent it on movies, food, and clothing. "I could have paid rent but I didn't put my mind to it."

After being evicted from his apartment, he lived for three months on the F train, a Manhattan--Brooklyn subway line.

I would hang out until 11:30 or 12:00 with some guys I'd meet, getting high. Then, without telling them, I would board the train like I was going home. I would ride from one end to the other, from 179th street to Coney Island and back. Sometimes, at 179th Street, the police would take me off the train and put me on the third street bus {a special bus the city operates to take the homeless to the main referral center}. I would go down to the Bowery and stay around there for the night in some hotel. Once in awhile, I would get a summons for jumping turnstiles. As soon as the cop would turn away, I would rip it up and throw it away. How was I going to pay for it? Other times, I would get a summons for 'attempting to jostle others.' During rush hour only they would give me these. I would just be standing there, minding my own business, with a can of beer or rum in my pocket, and they would give me a ticket. A lot of times there would be warrants too.

It was then he entered the shelter system. For the first half year he was in a shelter, he participated in a stipend work program which supplemented his unemployment benefits. However, he was arrested for sneaking on a train. The arresting officer checked the computer and made note of outstanding warrants. Warren was sent to Rikers Island for six months under the charge of "jostling others."

It was okay there because I saw about 200 different people I knew from where I grew up. Some were there for murder, others were going upstate for something. Some of them said that they would rather be in Rikers than at a shelter because they got bigger portions of food there.

When he was released, he "toured" the shelter system getting welfare benefits through the emergency program of each of the social service departments. "They had no way of knowing because I would use different names and social security numbers and dates of birth."

He received welfare five different times. One check each time "just to help me get by. Then, I would miss the next appointment and they would cut me off. So, I would go to another shelter in a different borough."

During this period between the summers of 1983 and 1984, Warren had four jobs. Each lasted under one week. The first two involved picking potatoes in North Carolina. He went in a van with 15 others going South to work on various farms. In

both times, he did not like the conditions and quit after several days. "I left because the outdoor bathrooms were cold and there was no toilet paper or soap." The other two jobs were in factories, were found by shelter social workers, and lasted only three days each.

I quit the first factory job because they had rules like I couldn't go to the bathroom between breaks. And if you were late, they would send you home for the day.

The second job lasted for such a short time because he and the boss fought over his being late his first two days there. On the third, "I realized I would be late so I got there and started arguing with him. And, he fired me."

Right now, he is unable to get welfare for several more months. He would like to find work. He describes an incident which reflects his attitude about living amongst homeless people:

I was hanging out in the park with some girls I had seen around. We were drinking some rum and having a good time. This guy who knows me from the shelter approached and said to me, "Hey, don't you have to get back to the shelter and sign in for your bed?" I turned to him and told him to cool it but the time I got back to this girl, she was walking away. You can't let the women know where you are staying. You have to let them know you are working and living on your own.

Discussion:

This 44 year old, white Jewish, middle-class man, and this 23 year old, black, working-class man, are thematic brothers.

Transiency, impulsiveness, anger, drug involvement, the use of aliases, shattered family extremes, the abrupt and early ending of school, sporadic employment, and prison histories are just some of the ingredients that have brought, under the same roof, these two outwardly different men.

For both of these men, anger has wrought much.

In Twenty Thousand Homeless Men, Sutherland and Locke (1971) recorded the researcher's impressions of various personality modes of their subjects. Among much else, they found, "...that many of the men regarded bad tempers as a major source of their prior problems. Many jobs were abandoned because they 'got mad and quit.' Often, having no one depending on them, there would be no reason, they felt, to restrain their anger." (65)

While this study expresses a higher degree of rationality to this problem of temper control than is warranted, it does point out a personality trend quite common among many of the chronically sheltered homeless men of today.

In Irving Meyer's case for example, not only were employment opportunities lost but on two occasions, he shot a man after losing his temper. Both tantrums were rewarded with

prison sentences.

Warren Cummings has lost many jobs and ended many relationships due to an expansive array of what can be interpreted as "I am worth more than that," statements. Whenever his anger is aroused, he acts on it with a swiftness that immediately lays havoc to the more positive aspects of his life, that immediately causes him to lose a job that, in some other respects, he was performing well, or that causes him to be cut off from his benefits, or in some other way will lay to rest a relationship that almost began.

The fact of his being consistently impulsive over many years speaks also for some of his internal processes, that of acquiescence for example. His subjective experience of impulse is that of a passive person's. And, he seems to have little insight into this except for an occasional apology to himself, "I could have paid the rent, I didn't put my mind to it."

Irving himself spoke of feeling he had no choice, that he could do nothing about his impulses during his high school days. He gives the impression of being made to hit his schoolmates. During his Florida drug dealing days he experienced even more of those uncontrollable impulses.

Prematurely, both Irving and Warren quit school; neither were pressured to do so for economic reasons as, perhaps, Eduardo Valdez could claim. More likely, their quitting had

something to do with their struggles against the structure of school life itself. It was a place they had to be, a social institution whose rules they had to obey. In addition, they had to perform homework as well as demonstrate its completion; they even had to get along with others. Apparently, school was seen as no more than an enforced labor camp.

Unable to have satisfying social relationships in the schools they attended, they mingled on the outside with others who shared their perspective.

Neither was the obtaining of jobs difficult for them. On many occasions, each was legitimately working, earning a steady income in situations where they adequately fit the job descriptions and, where each had the necessary financial motivation to continue. In addition, concurrently, they lived in rooms or apartments of their own the rents of which were not unreasonable in relation to their incomes.

Presently, neither are in touch with their relatives, nor do they have friends of either sex. Neither are considered mentally ill nor are they pursuing significant lifestyle change. They are pursuing victory over the moment and are therefore seeking only minimal treatment for their ill-defined conditions.

In the shelter system, at the time of these interviews, for a combined total of eight and one-half years, they continue to mingle with those whose dilemma they share on the

outside of the main.

Both Irving and Warren enter and leave towns and states abruptly. They have traveled much, their transiency allowing for, even mitigating, interpersonal deception as both men use pseudonyms frequently, undermining as they do, any personal sense of responsibility as well as any chance of intimacy.

In the already mentioned study, Twenty Thousand Homeless Men, the authors wrote that "...the men as a whole do not want to be known and seem to desire only casual contacts. You can become acquainted with some yet never learn their names."(66)

The distance that the withholding of a name contributes to, has tremendous impact interpersonally. Many times, the reason given for the use of a pseudonym is also given, by the shelter resident, for being in the position he is in. Distance from his own identity is sought, and obtained.

The findings of the New York State Office of Mental Health fourteen years ago, similar to our findings today, was that "homelessness is apparently a well ingrained life style."(67) It concluded that

the thrust of the personal history data suggests that many of these men bring with them experiences of long standing non-achievement. If we knew nothing more than this we have reason to wonder about the internal transformations which occur in some of them or the internal makeup of others which stymie the effort to change the direction of their lives. It is, as one of our team members suggested, "as if someone had pulled the plug" on their lives.(68)

Chapter Two: Notes

1. Drawn from field-notes taken during a three-year, participant observation study in New York's Bowery, from Fall 1976 to Fall 1979. Along with Benedict Giamo, my fieldwork partner from the start, I had spent several hours weekly in conversation with one or another Bowery resident, individually or in groups. This quote was from a man named Sugar Hart who had been bragging that he had traveled all over the country, and he could pick up and go anytime he pleased. After he said this, our notes of November 6, 1977 read, "He stood silent as if to stand apart from his words. He leaned forward towards us with eagerness and intensity. 'Now wait a minute, wait a minute. If I go to a psychiatrist maybe he tells me I got a problem, but if I do have a problem I don't know nothin' about it.'"
2. This was taken from monthly overnight report of May 1996 prepared by the New York City Department of Homeless Services listing each shelter's bed capacity and the number of beds gone unused.
3. See Carl Cohen and Jay Sokolovsky's Old Men of the Bowery, page 116.
4. See Peter Rossi's Without Shelter, page 6.
5. See Stephen Crane's Experiment in Misery, page 17.
6. See John Griffin's Black Like Me, page 17.
7. See Harold Garfinkel's Status Degradation Ceremonies, page 420.
8. Ibid, page 420.
9. Ibid, page 420.
10. See Howard S. Becker's Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance, page 9.
11. This was contained in the preface to Nels Anderson's Hobo.
12. See Nels Anderson's Hobo, page 96.

13. Ibid, page 96.
14. Ibid, page 98.
15. See Elijah Anderson's A Place on the Corner, page 207.
16. See James Spradley's You Owe Yourself a Drunk, page 23.
17. See Benedict Giamo's On the Bowery, page 30.
18. In his 50 minute film, Lionel Rogosin shows us that many Bowery men still cling to a work ethic. He shows us that many were of good humor, that perhaps they were a varied lot, that certainly they were varied in temperament if not by shortcomings. However alone Ray may be, he remains a very social being. However passive he might ultimately prove to be towards his own destructive processes, he does not suffer for lack of beginnings. Time and time again, Ray, an apparent newcomer to the Bowery, resolves to turn things around, to give up drinking, to work his way out. Even as he tries one last time to put some money together, and is ironically helped by the very man who steals his belongings while lending him some of the very money he gains from their sale, he is unable to resist the undertow. He has reached the point where money, what he thought was his ticket out, burns a hole in his alcoholic pocket.

Rogosin teaches us to feel more than sympathy for the Bowery man and he does so not by lecturing us but by revealing to us life as it is actually lived. We care about the main character and can easily imagine caring for any one of them so singled out. Apparently, there is a personal struggle still being fought by each Bowery man. Each are, afterall, more human than we might have thought as we pressed our gas pedal feet to the floor, blurring past them in our cars, as we sped through the Bowery heading up or downtown. This is documentary film at its best. It allows us to develop our own ideas. It brings us in without putting us off. The music is sparse and powerful. It tells us something is happening worth paying attention to even as the film moves slowly, its black and white images showing us the gray pace of Bowery life. It is not alcohol which does Ray in, but rather his time spent 'On the Bowery'.
19. The bar in which this scene took place, was the same one in which I conducted some of my field work.
20. This was taken from my field notes, dated April, 1978.
21. Ibid, November, 1977.

22. Ibid, November, 1976.
23. Ibid, March, 1978.
24. See Charles Cooley's Social Organization, page 23.
25. See Nels Anderson's Hobo, page 53.
26. See George H. Mead, Mind, Self, & Society, pages 135-226.
27. See Elijah Anderson's A Place on the Corner, page 39.
28. See Brian Macrory's The Tavern and the Community, page 616.
29. See George Orwell's Down and Out in Paris and London, page 184.
30. Stephen Crane's Men in the Storm, page 23.
31. See Donald Goine's Dope Fiend, page 60.
32. See Peter Rossi's Down and Out in America, page 102.
33. See John Irwin's Jail, page 98.
34. See Robert Jay Lifton's Future of Immortality, page 18.
35. Ibid, page 118.
36. See Peter Rossi's Without Shelter, pages 27-28.
37. See Jeffrey Grunberg's The Social Life of Homelessness, page 134.
38. See Nels Anderson's Hobo, page 96.
39. Ibid, page 98.
40. See Robert Jay Lifton's The Protean Self, page 193.
41. Ibid, page 145, the parentheses are mine.
42. Ibid, page 210.
43. Ibid, page 210.
44. Ibid, page 193.

45. See Heinz Ansbacher's The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, page 181.
46. Ibid, page 173.
47. See the preface, page 181, of Harold Garfinkel's Studies in Ethnomethodologies.
48. See Heinz Ansbacher's The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, page 179.
49. See David Shapiro's Neurotic Styles, page 19.
50. See Samuel Wallace's Skid Row As a Way of Life, page 48.
51. This was an excerpt from notes taken while researching and writing The Mentally Ill Who Are Chronically Homeless, Chapter 30 in Betsy Varcarolis' Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing.
52. See the final report from the David Dinkins' Mayoral Commission, April, 1989.
53. See Ellen Bassuk's The Homelessness Problem, page 47.
54. These case studies were taken from part of chapter three: The Homeless of the 1980's: Case Reports from Clinicians' Notebooks, written by this author, in Carol Caton's Homeless in America, pages 36-46.
55. Taken from my field-notes, November 1977.
56. See Robert Straus' Alcohol and the homeless Men, page 366.
57. See Robert Straus' and Roger McCarthy's Non-addicted Pathological Drinking Patterns of Homeless Men, page 605.
58. See Brian Macrory's The Tavern and the Community, page 616.
59. Taken from my field-notes, November 1977.
60. See David Shapiro's Neurotic Style, page 136.
61. This is an edit from the version printed, page 40, Caton's Homeless in America.
62. Taken from my field-notes, November 1977.

63. For more on this topic, see Grunberg and Eagle's Shelterization.

64. Taken from my field-notes, November 1977.

65. See Edwin H. Sutherland's and Harold Locke's Twenty-Thousand Homeless Men, page 68.

66. See David Shapiro's Neurotic Styles, page 136.

67. See Edwin Sutherland's and Harold Locke's Twenty-Thousand Homeless Men, page 84.

68. Taken from "Who Are The Homeless?", a report authored by the New York State Office of Mental Health, James A. Prevost, MD., commissioner, page 30, May 1982.

69. Ibid, page 50.

CHAPTER THREE: ON THE STREETS AND AT RISK

"Outreach to people living in public spaces is critical to our ability to encourage people to seek services. It is a challenging task, requiring persistence."(1)

New York City mayoral report,
Reforming New York City's System of
Homeless Services, (May, 1994)

In The People of The Abyss, (1903), his autobiographical account of his own homelessness, Jack London commented on the social distance between people who live on the street and society's mainstream:

There is no place for them in the social fabric, while all the forces of society drive them downward till they perish. At the bottom of the Abyss they are feeble, besotted, and imbecile. The work of the world goes on above them, and they do not care to take part in it, nor are they able. Moreover, the work of the world does not need them. (2)

Unfortunately, streetlife is not without great danger. Streuning (1985) found a high level of victimization from a representative sample of 832 men and women interviewed while in the New York City Shelter system, with a mean age of 35.1 years: 26% had been robbed while on the streets, 59% had property stolen, 24% were threatened with a gun, knife, or

other weapon, and 18% reported having been beaten. Vladeck (1988), in a report commissioned by Congress, Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs, listed problems which resulted from homelessness as including, "...hypothermia; problems resulting from not being able to lie down, such as vascular and skin disorders of the legs and feet; and problems resulting from hazards of the homeless life-style, such as trauma from being mugged or raped on the streets."(3)

As Hibbs, et al. (1994) demonstrated in their study of the mortality of homeless adults, "Injuries, heart disease, liver disease, poisoning, and ill-defined conditions accounted for 73% of all the deaths among the homeless." They concluded that, "Homeless adults...have an age-adjusted mortality rate nearly four times that of...the general population."(4)

Near the end of 'Down and Out in Paris and London', Orwell (1930) listed what he referred to as "three especial evils"(5) associated with streetlife. The first was hunger, the second, perpetual celibacy, and the third, enforced idleness.

As for hunger, Orwell says: "...a man who has gone even a week on bread and margarine is not a man any longer, only a belly with a few accessory organs."(6) In 1989, Grand Central Partnership surveyed people living on the street in a fifty square-block area in midtown Manhattan. 75.7% of the people interviewed reported that they receive free meals, while 26.2%

reported they had been hungry for two days or more in the last thirty days.(7) Prior to the Grand Central study, Schiff (1987) studied soup kitchens and food lines, finding that "In the 1980s, hunger became the metaphor for poverty, and emergency programs a palliative for inadequate income."(8) He wrote that this occurred because of the belief that hunger is spreading. "That premise...does not apply with any great accuracy in New York City."(9) Apparently, while Grand Central Partnership showed hunger still does exist, it is on the decline as an evil.(10)

The second evil, derived partly from the nearly 6 to 1 ratio of single men to women who are homeless as much as their "besotted" condition, he described as resulting from his being virtually cut off from the opposite sex. Orwell wrote:

For of course it goes without saying that if a tramp finds no women at his own level, those above--even a very little above--are as far out of his reach as the moon...He is absolutely without hope of getting a wife, a mistress, or any kind of woman except--very rarely, when he can raise a few shillings--a prostitute.(11)

Apparently condemned to this evil, the homeless person must also cope with Orwell's third evil, enforced idleness. This may result in part from the fact of unemployment. In No Man Can Live With The Terrible Knowledge That He Is Not Needed, Liebow (1970) states:

In industrial societies, unemployment strikes deep at the heart of man. It can put a man 'out of it,' and can turn him into a caricature of himself, giving him the appearance of being stupid and lazy with no concern for the future. Faced with nothing to do, he has no place to go. He hangs around. He is superfluous, and he knows it.(12)

A lack of privacy is yet another cause and effect element within the array of street life factors, especially evident even indoors in the shelter system. The many reams of paperwork they have generated, the many social service oriented people who have interviewed, investigated, and treated them, their bed among so many other beds, their shared mailing address, their limited wardrobes, together serve to undermine the chances for a substantive personal life. They wait on lines for food, clothing, bed assignment, carfare, entrance and exit. Lines publicize their condition and their needs making them more a part of a large, needy crowd, and less of a recognizable individual.

In On Individuality and Social Forms (1971), Georg Simmel spoke of the "scale of relationships with the collectivity" which the poor person must endure:

Assistance, to which the community is committed in its own interest, but which the poor person in the large majority of cases has no right to claim, makes the poor person into an object of the activity of the group and places him at a distance from the whole, which at times makes him live as a **corpus vile** by the mercy of the whole and at times, because of this, makes him the bitter enemy.(13)

Embittered social distance from the mainstream, renders street life all the more concrete in nature, all that much harder to escape, and all the more dangerous.

Chapter Three: Notes

1. See New York City Mayor Giuliani's report, Reforming New York City's System of Homeless Services, page 15.
2. See Jack London's The People of The Abyss, (1903), page 26.
3. See Bruce Vladek's Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs, page 5.
4. See the Abstract to Jonathan Hibbs' study, page 304.
5. See George Orwell's Down and Out in Paris and London, page 202.
6. Ibid, page 203.
7. See the report prepared by Gregory Bavaso, in Appendix A.
8. See Arthur Schiff's report for the Welfare Research Institute, page 7.
9. Ibid, page 7.
10. Most people of course, eat free meals regularly, at their friend's houses or on a family member's tab. It would be important to control for this response by comparing the eating habits of the general population. The second statistic might have to do with hunger experienced during their first few days on the street before they learned where to eat. In either case, suffering related to hunger is unnecessary given the many food services available on the street level. There is always however, the need to educate those who live on the streets as to their service options.
 As stated above, it is likely that its ongoing existence can be attributed to a lack of knowledge by the homeless person living on the street. The Welfare Research Institute did show that the numbers of food pantries were on the rise. This they reported was due to the merging of interests of a disparate coalition, which included "the advocacy groups, which always understood the politics of leveraging hunger." See WRI report, page 9.

11. See George Orwell's Down and Out In Paris and London, page 204.

12. See Elliot Liebow's No Man Can Live With The Terrible Knowledge That He Is Not Needed, page 140.

13. See Georg Simmel's On Individuality and Social Forms, page 172.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRAIT-CENTERED OUTREACH

Social order exists because people stay in their places, and they do that because other people help keep them there.(1)

Elijah Anderson,
A Place on the Corner

Introduction

There are various stages to the outreach process. We can say that it begins upon first sighting. Immediately, the outreach worker assesses his or her strategy for engagement, which itself begins with first contact. A successful referral, often attempted early on, for a more relaxed sit down meeting with a social services professional, hinges upon the engagement process, something which may or may not be protracted. Outreach then, is conceived as the process by which we attempt to bring people indoors so that they may be then engaged in another process, that which entails the receipt of further services. By this conception, outreach begins on the street, and ends at the social service provider's desk. Once, or if, the person returns to outdoor life, the outreach process may need to begin again. The outreach effort, though linked with the social work effort, is not to be confused with it. The outreach worker is

responsible for trying to make that link.

Upon initial contact, if the person does not wish to be serviced, he can resist further engagement by leaving the area altogether or by staying but being otherwise inaccessible. Only by staying and interacting meaningfully with the outreach worker does he/she run a risk of a referral. Leaving the area, especially if the location is a desirable one, may not be practical. Outreach success, in the scenario where rejection of assistance has occurred, can only be achieved if contact is continuous. The outreach worker's empathic persistence, his "strategy" to "wear down" the resistance of the homeless person requires time. Outreach opportunity may be enhanced through the use of incentives meant to reward lack of movement: blankets, clothing, and food offered on the spot. Here one hopes that either the homeless person's tendency towards transiency, if it exists, or his desire to avoid the outreach worker(s) all together, if that exists, will be overridden by his desire for the goods being offered. The goal is to motivate him to continue to "meet" with the outreach worker who will in turn "wait" for him to accept the help he needs. The act of providing goods along with on-site services provides a secondary gain, i.e., to the extent that the homeless person may need the food or extra protection the clothing or blankets offer, his survival on the streets is aided.

Trained in the area of help that the initial assessment uncovered, knowledgeable about the many rehabilitation "stages" associated with the diagnosed areas of need, the professional outreach worker guides the homeless person over the many months this process may take until a referral for an indoor meeting with a social services provider is accepted.

This is the compassionate approach referred to here as the traditional, trait-centered approach to outreach. The length of time needed after initial contact before a referral occurs varies a great deal. The obvious hope is that the person will immediately accept help. Given the transient nature of street life and of the extremely poor people who live it, time is the enemy. As discussed, there may be many reasons why trait-centered outreach can become so prolonged.

Trait-Centered Outreach

'Trait-centered' outreach, which predominates modern-day outreach, treats homeless people upon first contact, as patients suffering from an illness or disability in need of treatment. Its tenets are not new. Humphreys and Rappaport (1993) wrote:

...much of our current approach to substance abuse uncritically reinforces the dominant political paradigm by emphasizing individual rather than social factors.(2)

They saw this tendency to organize our responses to social problems around individual deficits as ultimately tied to funding streams. They suggest that this is why programs for the homeless tend to focus on traits or an "internal defect" model, rather than on social factors.

Most outreach develops from an assessment of the traits of the individuals being considered, conducted by someone with specific academic skills, usually members of a medical or social services profession. Because it is thought they will relate best to those who have certain traits, specialists are assigned to perform the outreach. Most often, they involve teams who take great care to develop bonds sufficiently strong as to allow the homeless person to trust them. This trust, it is hoped, will give the homeless person the necessary courage to take the helping hand. This approach presupposes distrust, which is assumed to be the basis for the person's refusal to be swayed by the outreach effort.

Trust is something that, generally following rejection of an outreach effort, is seen to be missing. The homeless person is seen to be clearly in need and caring professional outreach workers have offered assistance, which speaks specifically to those areas of need. Given these facts, one can reasonably conclude that many homeless persons do not trust the outreach person or the outreach process. But trust is difficult to obtain when first meeting a homeless person

who may not even trust the people he has the most affinity with, as described by Grunberg (1978) in his Bowery field-notes:

He spends every night on the street and says that in the early morning, it always feels exceptionally chilly. He does not like the flophouses and instead, sleeps in hallways, under bridges, etcetera. In fact, during the previous night he slept with a man he was able to point out to me. "See that guy," he said, "I shared a doorway with him but I had to keep my eye open all night long. Do you think I could trust him? Nah. He would have taken something the minute I turned my back." He later said that he "...wouldn't consider any of these men friends. I call them chums, that's all."(3)

In a magazine cover story, Homeless in America (1984), Jonathan Alter et al. wrote, "...the homeless move outside the ordinary social structures that might help them, and often resist any effort to bring them in.(4) Two years later, in another cover story, Abandoned (1986), the problems associated with those who refuse mental health services were again examined.(5)

Outreach would not have to be persistent if it was an easy "sell". In part, outreach workers are limited to what they can offer, and know to be available in the way of services. Often, they are left with no choice but to persistently offer the same thing over and over again. As one outreach service provider put it, "If I can't make contact with someone on the first try, I certainly want to know where they'll be the next day or the next day so I can go back and

try and try again. Real outreach requires persistence."(6)

"Some advocates...argue that basic needs must be met before other specialized services...are provided. The sequencing of service provision requires clinical sensitivity and good judgement."(7)

Sometimes, professional outreach workers break down their goals into smaller steps, perhaps offering a cup of coffee at first or a blanket, such offerings part of a strategy to insure that if they do have to leave without the homeless person, they will find him right there again the next day. That way, they are hopeful to pick up close to where they left off and take it from there. They will do this day after day, funding permitting, with the goal of securing a "referral". Each day, contacts are made towards the goal of getting the homeless person to want to accept a referral, at the very least, to a place better than where they are currently. As one outreach director explains, "there may be times when the outreach worker can only convince a mentally disabled person to move from the middle of the street to a sidewalk, but that move to a safer (if not safe) location would be consistent with legitimate outreach objectives."(8)

It is hoped that this first "acceptance" of a "referral" will lead to others, all towards the desired end of the person's homelessness. As described by Levine, "Trained outreach staff gradually develop rapport with homeless persons

by approaching them in non-threatening ways over periods of months."(9)

In most instances, street-homeless people refuse the service offerings made by the professionals who reach out to them. One outreach program, Project H.E.L.P., considered innovative because of the power it was granted to "order the transport of a person judged to be at risk to a psychiatry emergency room"(10). The program was permitted to "provide services to both the voluntary and the involuntary patient", and reported the following results:

A study of initial contacts with patients has shown that 40% have refused to cooperate and thus were assessed by observation only; 40% consented to a partial interview, and 20% to a full interview. The difficulty in formulation a valid diagnosis and treatment plan is evident.(11)

In the case of Project H.E.L.P. however, it must be said that it is working with the most severely disabled people on the street. Its ability to transport people forcibly to a hospital provides a large portion of its successes.

Common to many outreach programs is a reliance on service professionals to perform the actual outreach service, with staffing patterns based on the diagnostic categories or traits of the target clients. This focus on traits sometimes leads to "strategic dishonesty", which may lead unwittingly to the program's being distrusted in the first place. This same

program described their method as follows:

One team member makes the overtures while the other two stand nearby. The team member introduces himself or herself by name, not by discipline, and identifies Project H.E.L.P. as a service for people "camping out," "having some difficulty in finding housing," etc. Words such as doctor, hospital, and homeless are rarely used in an initial encounter.(12)

This was a program described by its director as being staffed by psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers, who receive referrals on a telephone hot line and cruise throughout their catchment area in a radio-equipped van.(13)

In February, 1989, the commissioner of New York City's Human Resources Administration issued a report on its Homeless Outreach Program, which called for "Trained teams, capable of interacting with the most resistant population - the substance abusers, the chronically mentally ill."(14) In it, he listed the rates of acceptance, defined by the homeless person's willingness to board a bus headed for a shelter, which the programs experienced by location, as follows:

Table 3 RATES OF ACCEPTANCE

Grand Central Terminal	54%
Municipal Hospitals	41%
Subway	27%
Penn Station	12%
Port Authority	44%
Other (Parks)	2%

Of those who did accept transportation to an indoor

facility, "90% were estimated to be familiar with the shelter system and were probably occasional to regular users of shelter and of outreach's transportation efforts." (15) That is, they are succeeding with those who are usually housed anyway, and who utilize the program as a way to commute. Two months after the Human Resources Administrator issued the report, the New York Times carried a report:

William J. Grinker said that despite a variety of outreach efforts the city had made little progress in getting people off the streets in the last year. "We know at this point that many of the techniques that we have tried have not been all that successful," Mr. Grinker said in an interview. (16)

Typically, an outreach program, defined as an organized attempt to bring homeless street people indoors, will spend months, and sometimes years working to gain the trust of one individual. The program staff might begin by laying blankets at his or her feet, or by placing food or other products against a nearby lamppost or gutter, an effort they hope will lead to the person agreeing to accept a referral to their social services agency.

In 1982, one program's Executive Director described its technique in providing outreach:

Two team members approach individuals, engage them, and attempt to explain the nature of our work. The technique is a "brown bag" containing a sandwich, fruit, two cigarettes, and a flyer identifying the program. Coffee,

food, hygiene kits and clothing are also available at the Winnebago sites. Clients are encouraged to come to the Winnebago or to the office at designated hours to see their workers.(17)

Seven years later, some of the results of this program's efforts were reported in Cohen and Sokolovsky's (1989) Old Men On The Bowery. They found that "after many visits, about 25% of the street clients finally accepted an invitation to come to the project office where they received anything from a cup of coffee to a room, financial aid, or psychiatric care."(18)

As one agency recently stated in a six month summary of its outreach efforts in a city park, "...all of the homeless need clothing, toilet articles, food, hygiene items, which all the outreach workers seek to provide as a first step in their contact." Later in that same report, the agency indicated that it would continue to "stress long periods of outreach to build trust between client and worker."(19)

The 1994 year-end report of the same outreach program presents somewhat discouraging results. With an annual budget of \$125,000, the agency was charged with trying to bring in, during the spring and summer, up to 200 homeless people, and in the dead of winter, up to 50 men and woman, living in Riverside Park, on New York's Upper West-Side. In the first year and one-half however, it succeeded in bringing indoors just 35 people, only half of whom accepted referrals to

treatment. This was considered a good enough start and the program was refunded. Their work was not yet done, their supporters said. Apparently, the program's success rate met expectations, even if many of the same homeless people were living in the park at evaluation's end.

Separately funded and operated, five outreach programs had been serving Madison Square Park when a six-month review revealed 306 visits, 272 contacts made, and 42 referrals for a 16% success rate. It described the population as follows:

Very service resistant...interested only in sleeping and being left alone at night. All agencies that have outreach teams in the park find the park population difficult to convince to accept help. Many of the homeless population use alcohol and drugs.(20)

This was similar to the New York City Commissioner's had description of the homeless situation six years earlier:

Some individuals on the street make a rational choice because of their personal experiences and fears. Others may be mentally disturbed and unable or unwilling to seek services. Another portion of individuals find that the freedom of the streets is convenient for substance abuse, illicit activities or simply their individual preferences. Unfortunately, life on the streets tends to complicate an individual's ability to accept services. It is clear that programs need to develop additional approaches to engage this resistant population.(21)

In most of these programs, the outreach worker, or the program director, decides what kind of help the client needs,

often serving as the homeless individual's sole conduit to mainstream society. This is further legitimized by the assignment of one of the agency's staff as the client's 'case manager' or 'intensive case manager', a title which sometimes gives the case worker around-the-clock responsibility as well as the opportunity for responding in a timely fashion to the needs of the client. If the case manager and the client avoid any rifts, they will work together in relative isolation from others. The case manager, fearful of "negative influences" will try to keep the client away from his or her peers, away from other case managers and agencies, and consider any information gathered from his or her clients to be confidential and privileged.

In the "solutions" section of his report, the New York City Commissioner had called for more case management in his statement of program goals: "Staff must be trained and should be provided with a job description that expects substantive case management." (22)

Yet the 'doctor-patient' role-based relationship that outreach service professionals often mimic, is similar to the parent-child relationship. There is one authority, and the other acquiesces to it. The theories that follow will often, according to Whitaker (1978), create false feelings of power in the social worker.(23) In an interview, Peter Rossi had this to say about such traditional social service approaches

to homelessness:

Case management is a real scam, a marvelous way to keep social workers from dealing with clients. All they do is deal with the "case" and talk to each other as to how to manage it.(24)

During outreach, insistence that the client go along with the outreach professional's goals often results in a standoff. As this standoff may extend over time, it is seen as proof of the client's self-destructiveness, the inherent difficulty of outreach, the fragile nature of the homelessness, and the need to gain the client's trust slowly.

Perhaps an additional reason that outreach sometimes takes so long is due to the built-in contradictions of the approach discussed above. From the outset, the worker appears to be making efforts to increase the client's comfort and survivability on the street. He or she then tries to get the person to come off the street. In an effort to gain trust, something they feel is missing, they provide incentives for the person to stay on the streets, sacrificing the person's own safety in the end.

Whether from distrust or earned caution, an ongoing refusal to come indoors is seen as self-destructive and part of the "denial" process. These analyses, defensible as they may be, actually may serve to prolong the person's street life. For as the outreach worker "waits" for the homeless

person to become more trusting, time passes, and the person's street ties strengthen. This is something Snow and Anderson described in Down on Their Luck (1993) as one of "the factors that influence the careers of the homeless." (25)

Outsiders who frequently lack the ability to establish social ties, have by and large resolved this conflict in favor of street life and associates. They have become habituated to their daily routines and relationships and seldom engage in serious endeavors to extricate themselves. (26)

The efforts of the social services professional, expert in the trait areas most applicable, are frustrated even as their "theories" are proven "accurate". Their jobs as trait-centered outreach workers are not easy for as Snow and Anderson, the target population often has other concerns than escaping street life.

While they may still have a strong desire to get off the streets, their day-to-day behavior revolves more around the activities they share with their homeless associates than around efforts to get off the streets. (27)

However, if outreach recognizes that some suffer not from their traits so much as from a homeless lifestyle, or "career" as Snow and Anderson describe it, and as a result focuses on the homeless person's status within his peer group and his social standing with the larger society as the two factors

"moving" him through his life, it might stand a better chance in extricating him.

Chapter Four: Notes

1. See Elijah Anderson's A Place on the Corner, page 51.
2. See Keith Humphrey's and Julian Rappaport's From the Community Mental Health Movement to the War on Drugs, page 898.
3. From Jeffrey Grunberg's field notes, November, 1980.
4. See Jonathan Alter's article, Homeless in America, page 21.
5. See Tom Morganthau's article, Abandoned, pages 14-19.
6. This was taken from a report commissioned by the Grand Central Partnership, authored by Robert M. Hayes, Esq. The report studied the social services operations of the Partnership, August, 1995, page 41. Ten years earlier, in a Newsweek cover story, Homeless in America (1984), Jonathan Alter et al. concluded that the homeless move outside the ordinary social structures that might help them, and often resist any effort to bring them in, (pages 20-26).
7. See Robert Hayes Report, page 42.
8. See Levine, Lezak, and Goldman's study, page 30.
9. Ibid, page 31.
10. Project Help reports that in only 1% of their contacts with street people do they need to assert their authority of forced transport to hospitals.
11. See Jane F. Putnam, Neal L. Cohen, and Ann M. Sullivan's Innovative Outreach Services for the Homeless Mentally Ill, pp. 112-124.
12. Ibid, page 117.
13. Ibid, page 113.
14. See the Executive Summary, page 1, of the Grinker Report, 1989.

15. Ibid, page 7.

16. See New York Times article, April 15, 1989, "Ranks of the Homeless Grew Despite the Millions Spent."

17. See unpublished Prototype for Mobile and Street Outreach, by Bernard J. Wohl, Executive Director of Goddard Riverside Community Center, 161 West 87th Street, New York, page 2.

18. See Carl Cohen and Jay Sokolovsky's Old Men on The Bowery, page 213.

19. This was taken from a report on the outreach efforts of a program called Project on The Move (POTS), written by Ethel Scheffer, 1994.

20. This was taken from January 6, 1994 memo written by the director of outreach for the New York City Department of Homeless Services, Howard Salk, regarding efforts in Madison Square Park, near 28th street, lower-midtown manhattan.

21. See the Grinker Report, page 7.

22. Ibid, page 9.

23. See Carl Whitaker's The Hindrance of Theory in Clinical Work, page 163.

24. See Benedict Giomo's and Jeffrey Grubnerg's Beyond Homelessness, page 8.

25. See David Snow's and Leon Anderson's Down on Their Luck, page 293.

26. Ibid, page 293.

27. Ibid, page 291.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONSUMER STATUS

For the poorest of the poor...the choice is usually between living in someone else's home, living in a shelter, or living on the streets. Each of these alternatives has different costs. If we make one of these options less costly than before, more people will choose it.

Christopher Jencks, 1994(1)

Introduction

Our focus is on street homelessness. Based on work performed in midtown Manhattan from February 1992 to March 1994, we shall suggest and describe an alternate approach to outreach. We acknowledge that some people do not wish to live in any of the indoor locations they consider available to them. We can accept their decision to stay on the street, made in a world of descending choices, even if we strongly believe it is the wrong one. Our accepting it does not mean that we will halt our efforts to convince them otherwise. This is the primary reason we perform outreach: To convince people who would otherwise continue to live in the debilitating outdoor world, that they should instead live indoors.

Communal Life on the Outside

People living on the streets do so singly and in various combinations, often assembling into what are commonly referred to as encampments, i.e., where several or more cohabit in one specific area. The daily rigors of streetlife require adaptation, which includes frequent interaction with others in the same living situation.

Adler (1927) put great emphasis on psychological health as being connected to a person's level of social interest. "Character," he said, "is a social concept."

Character traits are not the expressions of inherited powers nor predispositions but they are acquired for the purpose of maintaining a particular habitus of life. Character is a psychic attitude, it is the quality and nature of an individual's approach to the environment in which he moves.(2)

He referred to the "iron logic of communal life" and regarded the individual as inextricably socially embedded: "We refuse to recognize and examine the isolated human being."(3)

If we are to focus then, on the person's "habitus of life," or the level of social interest, we may turn to the person's relationship with his or her reference group. This is what must be focused upon if he or she is to be aroused.

A consumer oriented approach does just that. By conferring consumer "status" upon each person within the entire reference group, the homeless person can feel other than a diagnostic target aimed at a treatment facility. Rather, he or she is a sales target with purchasing decisions to make in a situation dictated by choice. There can then be a positive context for reintegration into what had become a highly judgmental and isolating mainstream society.

As Blau (1989) points out, success in outreach has always been about perceived choice:

The issue...was...about their preferring to live on the street in the absence of other, more satisfactory choices. From this perspective, the choice of one bed among twenty-eight in the Bellevue Psychiatric Ward was no choice at all.(4)

And Jencks (1994) concurs:

When the government offers such services to the poor, it seldom gives clients the right to shop around for the best program they can find. Instead, it gives money to the providers and sends them clients. Sometimes the clients never show up, suggesting that they do not think they are getting anything of value. But we seldom know whether that means the clients do not want help or merely that they do not want the kind of help they have been offered.(5)

Clearly, Blau and Jencks insinuate that preferences and choices, might very make for the success or lack thereof in outreach. We agree, and it is in this specific direction that we look for a solution.

Goffman (1961), explains that in total institutions, the three main spheres of life, sleep, play and work, are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. This arrangement causes 'institutionalization' by breaking down the barriers, which ordinarily permit most of us to participate in these activities in different places. This relatively barrier-free existence creates a social intimacy not normally found in the more varied settings of mainstream living. In as much as streetlife, along with its paradoxical lack of physical barriers, renders a person psychologically and socio-economically bound to its perimeters, and generally in the company of their peers, the same might be said for that which constitutes the 'total institution' of the streets. First referred to by Sutherland and Locke (1941) as "shelterization", Grunberg and Eagle (1988) discussed how life in a shelter can encourage ambivalence towards the goal of obtaining housing. Understanding this process helps us speculate how the routines of everyday street life may impact on a person's chances for escape.

As Anderson noted in A Place on the Corner, (1976), often times, for those he studied on the street corner in Chicago, "their most important social and psychological supports are found in the company of peers on the corner."(6)

This helps us understand Snow and Anderson's (1993) observation that

While they may still have a strong desire to get off the streets, their day-to-day behavior revolves more around the activities they share with their homeless associates than around efforts to get off the streets.(7)

While it may seem to be a common-sense proposition that one would want to escape streetlife, an examination of the trust or lack of trust, which homeless street people have for outreach workers, offers some good reasons to be skeptical of the labels of "resistant" or "self-destructive" so often applied by unsuccessful outreach workers to those who "refuse" services. Assigning such labels in the end, affixes blame on a person for what might be his or her rational, even if ultimately misguided, outlook on life.

Volition, Personal Responsibility, and Homelessness

Problems of volition and autonomy, often the bailiwick of blame, need to be discussed mainly because of their central role in recovery.

In his Winter 1986 survey mentioned above, Rossi also found "that homeless persons interviewed in the street sample were more negative in their opinions of shelters than those interviewed as part of the shelter sample, differences that were statistically significant."(8)

Having already taken into consideration Rossi's finding that there are no significance differences between the traits

of the usually-homeless and the usually-housed, we recognize the problem to be related to decision-making. Usually-homeless people are on the street because they have decided it is preferable to indoor life, which they view significantly more negatively than do the usually-homeless. Their usually-housed peers, who do not substantially differ from them, have decided to live indoors. In either case however, the majority of both groups thought ill of the shelter system. Especially given the fact that the amount of available affordable housing is down, and that unemployment rates are high enough to render competition unwieldy, much comes down to the individual. As discussed by Shapiro (1981),

It is the problem, for example, of whether to conceive of an alcoholic individual as one who cannot stop drinking as much as he wants to, or as one who cannot want to stop drinking, much as he may think he should.(9)

The traditional approach to behavior, says Shapiro, "obscures the fact and the nature of the person's authorship of his own actions." (10) Instead, he writes,

virtually all action is to some extent self-directed and planned. It is not possible, even if one desired to do so, to act immediately, without anticipation, imagination, and some degree of consciousness of the self acting--except perhaps in the case of the most severe pathology. Needs, interests, wishes, the opportunities of circumstance generate interest in the possibilities of action. In the most articulated case, the imagination of possibilities of action culminates in a conclusive wish to act, in a choice or a decision, in an intention. This

process is the process which leads to action, which we call "volitional action."(11)

In his famous first person account of homelessness, "Down and Out in Paris and London" (1933), George Orwell talked of the freedom in not knowing where the next meal will come from.

Within certain limits, it is actually true that the less money you have, the less you worry. When you have a hundred francs in the world you are liable to the most craven panics. When you have only three francs you are quite indifferent; for three francs will feed you till tomorrow, and you cannot think further than that... the mind wanders to other topics. A bread and margarine diet does, to some extent, provide its own anodyne.(12)

Poverty then, might very well have built into its daily life, an insidious reinforcing agent, which Orwell describes as "...a feeling of relief, almost of pleasure at knowing yourself at last genuinely down and out. It takes off a lot of anxiety."(13) Orwell spoke of the "great redeeming feature of poverty: the fact that it annihilates the future."(14)

Stephen Crane (1925), having written extensively about homeless men, wrote in Red Badge of Courage, how his lead character found himself running into battle "...thus toward that which he had been at such pains to avoid."(15)

Increasing resignation, or learned helplessness, "is a likely result," says Seligman (1978) "of experiences in which we repeatedly find ourselves unable to control the

outcome."(16) This may also occur, even if accompanied by such a strong persona as would bring someone to "run into battle".

When discussing self-destructive life styles, Shapiro (1965) wrote that the neurotic person does not simply suffer neurosis as, essentially, one suffers tuberculosis or a cold, but actively participates in it, functions, so to speak, according to it, and in ways that sustain its characteristic experiences; he sees, at any point, no serious alternative to whatever particular act or interest has just this effect.(17) Not only does he not experience a point-in-time for decision-making, a pivot point, but he actively perpetuates his problems as well.

For the purposes of engagement, while we must understand the lifestyle themes of those who are usually homeless, we are not interested here in determining individual neuroses. In this case we can think of the situation, not the individual, as neurotic. Applying Shapiro's thinking, homelessness is a neurotic social situation. The person who is usually homeless and on the street, given his social problems, has little choice but to perpetuate his homelessness even as he wishes to escape it. We have looked at how survival strategy often precludes escape.

Here we understand people to be highly, even if not wholly, responsible for their choices, or for how their

lifestyle may be effecting them. We see responsibility as being inextricably tied, in a positive relationship, with choice. Along with Shapiro, we reject the marionette view:

It suggests that pieces of history intrude themselves into the contemporary behavior of the individual, by assessing his contemporary modes of functioning and leaving him, again, as a passive witness of his own manifest behavior and the victim of his history.(18)

As novelist Kosinski stated when interviewed in Giamo and Grunberg's Beyond Homelessness (1992), people who live on the street have accepted responsibility for their condition. "They are alive. They seek food and shelter; the basic conditions of the free enterprise system have been fulfilled."(19)

Decisions such as choosing to stand on a corner in wait for a loan from a friend who only might pass by, instead of taking the day to wait on a long line for a job application, are made every day. Expediency is measured in short-term outcome. Long term planning can be thought of as detrimental to survival.

Uncertainty, a highly personal feeling, grows in inverse proportions to a person's perceived ability to control an outcome. Despite our general acknowledgement that in life there is always a degree of uncertainty, we seek to control as much as we can. We do this via decision-making. Accruing

from this process is another process by which we assign to each situation, degrees of personal responsibility.

Uncertainty and a lack of a sense of personal responsibility increases as choice decreases. 'Blame' is directly related to predisposition of person and situation, as well as to actual size of choice-array. Therefore, as a concept in and of itself, 'blame' becomes useless. As Kosinski stated,

I have great respect for the homeless individual, whom I refuse to see as a victim of society and I refuse to see as a victim of his or her ownself. I see the homeless person as a chance being at the mercy of forces that he or she was not able to figure out or may not be able to figure out. And if he or she cannot figure out the state of homelessness, why should he or she when the state cannot figure it out either?(20)

To varying degrees daily, we each experience moments of relative clarity; moments when we recognize that we have a chance to change something. These moments can be thought of as 'pivot points' during which we may swivel in some new direction as well as not. In truth, this has more to do with our perception than reality. Every waking moment can be thought of as containing innumerable potential pivot-points. But here is where, as we understand the decision-maker's perspective, personal responsibility is born: During those moments when we experience conscious awareness of a particular opportunity for change. It is then we experience

a pivot point. If something we do has gone unexamined, for the moment as if on automatic pilot, then we are not experiencing a pivot-point pertaining to that behavior. It is the perception of opportunity that matters most here. The question is whether or not a person is aware of the opportunity for change. It is during these moments of clarity that personal responsibility for decision making is assumed. It is also during these moments therefore, that self-image is modified as well. As Lifton (1992) points out, a "decline in autonomy is accompanied by a loss of genuine agency, of the self's capacity to mobilize inner power, act effectively, and initiate constructive behavior."(21)

The work that occurs during each pivot point effects a person's sense of themselves as among other things, being able to take advantage of whatever opportunity is available; even to deal with the opportunistic elements of a crisis. Social affliction, i.e., homeless (and on the street), itself has a price: No matter to what degree the victim, homelessness is experienced as an extremely intimate matter.

Socially distant from stable people, the usually homeless person may no longer see himself as a capable protagonist, or even a potential agent-of-change. After awhile, usually when most alone, whether inside a cardboard box, atop a discomfoting bar or diner stool, in a hospital bed, or a toilet stall, this person will come to see that if they are to

have any chance at all in overcoming their defining problems, they must become personally involved in some sort of course of action. Having experienced several of these moments of awareness however, wherein these lost pivot-points, personal calls for action go unheeded, self-image can rather quickly deteriorate. In no time at all, personal responsibility becomes the major issue. Homelessness is an example. No matter how collectively caused, it is ultimately experienced by the homeless person as a matter relating to his or her personal responsibility. This understanding can be seen as grounded in Adler's statement (1964):

What appears as inner conflicts is derived from man's self-determination, including the freedom and necessity to choose between alternatives presented by the situation. It includes the freedom to make mistakes. (22)

Despite the fact that homeless people lie at our feet, homelessness remains a social *trompe-l'oeil*: Despite the visibility of so many, they remain figuratively invisible. They are therefore, both literal and figurative outsiders. Outside, they so offend or confuse that typecasting is encouraged. A social morass has developed, and through it all, social agreements are formed. In an ethnomethodological sense, collusion between bureaucracy and politics, the general public and the media, professionals and their patients, and outreach programs and their homeless clients is necessary for

street life to continue. They all have a job to do, roles to fulfill, and expectations to meet. At the same time, due in large measure the nature of their own participation, perhaps none are meeting their initial goals. Collusion is not only necessary, it is ongoing. As Garfinkel (1986) states,

The structural conditions of status degradation are universal to all societies. The question is not whether status degradation occurs. Instead, the question is: What program of communicative tactics will get the work of status degradation done?(23)

"It is not," Garfinkel states, "that the old object has been overhauled; rather it is replaced by another." The person so degraded "is not changed, he is reconstituted." A person can be the object of "degrading on limited scale." This depends on

whether the denunciation must be accomplished on a single occasion or is to be carried out over a sequence of "tries," factors like the territorial arrangements and movements of persons at the scene of the degradation, the numbers of persons involved as accused, degraders, and witnesses, status claims of the contenders, prestige and power allocations among participants, all should influence the outcome.(24)

How this may inform outreach is as follows: People who are usually homeless are people whose status has been degraded. What may be worse, as we have seen, they may no longer consider themselves as capable agents-of-change. To

overturn the effects of this process, and the negative proteanism which ensues, we must devise ways to alter the events which make up the degradation process, by altering the outreach "event" itself. We can achieve this most quickly by improving the homeless person "status claims." We suggest that outreach that is status-centered is relatively likely to be effective. It must be performed in ways which enhance the social standing of the homeless person most directly: In the eyes of his peer reference group and thusly from his own perspective. This can most quickly and most legitimately achieved by treating the target person as a consumer. Consumer status is typically conferred upon all those born into this country, and only "taken away" as a result of status degradation. Re-conferring consumer status upon homeless individuals will, especially in the life-saving stages of the outreach engagement process, transmute the outreach process into a "buying process." This will have the effect of "leveling the playing field," and will allow the usually homeless person to accrue the many benefits which accrue to most consumers, and which empower them as decision-makers or agents-of-change (purchasers).

There has been much work in the study of consumer behavior. In an effort to determine differences in consumption behavior between classes, Caplovitz (1968) determined that there is a tendency to neglect the lower

(class) in marketing planning because of the low purchasing power of the group and because of the lack of affinity which the rest of society has for this group.

Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell (1968) found that members of the lower classes "are much more likely to buy only when faced with an immediate need,"(25) and as with most consumer groups, a determination of how they are influenced to buy comes down to reference group analysis.

Every individual consciously or unconsciously is aware of other individuals within a social system. When those other individuals influence his behavior--either positively or negatively--they are part of the reference group for that individual.(26)

A reference group is any interacting aggregation of people that influences an individual's attitudes or behavior. A reference group influences the attitude of the individual by serving as a reference point for the individual. Social classes are the largest reference group, and families the smallest. A common type of reference group is a membership group which

are those aggregates of people to which a person is recognized by others (and himself) as belonging. A dissociative group is an aggregate of individuals with whose values or behavior an individual does not want to be associated. In both definitions there is implied the existence of functional interdependence rather than a mere statistical summation of individuals.(27)

For a homeless person, other homeless people can be thought of as simultaneously comprising a membership group and a dissociative group. Therein may lie two motivational forces impacting on the part of our target population. In the case of the former, the fact of their condition of great need, and in the latter, a desire to demonstrate that he or she ought not to be thought of as associated with others in their same situation.

In either case or in both, reference groups are considered central in the formation, maintenance, and change of attitudes.

Consumers learn to perceive not as an individual standing alone but on the basis of what their reference group sees. Hyman's (1942) reference group studies and Shibutani's (1955) studies of perspectives and reference groups placed a great deal of emphasis upon how people use the group as a standard or checkpoint with which to make judgements.

As Festinger (1950) has shown, such conforming behavior is at its highest when group membership is more stable, something already demonstrated by the 'usually homeless' status of our target population.

Peers who have succeeded in choosing a path up and away from the streets seem to be the type of 'sales' people Evans (1959) was referring to when, in his study of customer-salesman dyads, he found that "the more alike the salesman and

his prospect are, the greater the probability that a sale will occur. This is true for physical characteristics (age, height), economic and demographic characteristics."(28) That is, if a person is most influenced by those members of his same group, then therein lies the possibility that some of what is thought of as 'resistance' may be overcome.

Stafford (1966) found that "the higher the degree of brand loyalty exhibited by a group (leader), the more likely the other members are....to become brand loyal."(29) This suggests that, when a reference group member articulates that which worked for him in his quest to improve his situation, it may be a significant influencing factor. Homans (1961) found that the equation of human exchange is such that individuals arrange their social relations in such a way as to maximize total profit. Here we may speculate that even if the professional outreach worker can demonstrate the benefit which may accrue from treatment, the price (of compliance) may be considered too high for a referral to occur. In other words, the person may have good reasons for his "bad" decision to stay on the streets, i.e. to resist the outreach effort.

Garfinkel (1967) studied why for some very "good" reasons, medical clinics kept "bad" clinical records.(29) He found that certain imperatives good for the short term, would outweigh those better for the long term.

More important than discussing the causes of

homelessness, is the attempt to understand how homeless people themselves see things for they are the ones who must respond to what comes at them, i.e. to outreach efforts.

Based on Grunberg's field-notes(30), the list that follows represents a glimpse into street life from the homeless person's perspective. In Table 4, are ten reasons people have given for staying on the street.

Table 4

1. They want to remain anonymous for legal reasons.
2. They have mental health or severe substance abuse problems, and fear they will be institutionalized once discovered.
3. They are loners who are proud of their independence and gain satisfaction from street life.
4. They are waiting out a short-term problem, or for a welfare or unemployment check, and do not want to be further processed by "the system" (by any social service agency).
5. They are in a program or not, but choose to remain on the street with a close friend, rather than risk losing contact.
6. They believe that their previously negative experiences have demonstrated good reasons to stay away from programs.
7. They are unaware of the wide variety of available services from which they may choose.
8. They blame themselves for the mess they are in and remain on the street to brood.
9. They have been thrown out of one or more places, and think that no place will accept them.
10. They want jobs, but are being offered treatment 'instead of' rather than 'in addition to' employment or training opportunities.

We can speculate that reasons 4 through 10 are most

amenable to the consumerism approach; i.e. were they approached by more successful members of their reference group who, treating them as consumers, acting as salespeople, and offering them choices, many of these reasons would dissipate. It is likely that, given that such an approach would bring them in contact with their housed peers, who themselves may have once held fast to street life for reasons 1 through 3, they would find ways to resolve these problems as well.

As Jencks (1994) stated, "To say that people choose to become homeless seems indecent. But the homeless are not just passive victims. They make choices like everyone else. The choices open to the homeless are far worse than those open to most Americans, but still they choose." (31) Unfortunately, as Jencks further points out,

When the government offers services to the poor, it seldom gives clients the right to shop around for the best program they can find. Instead, it gives money to the providers and sends them clients. Sometimes the clients never show up, suggesting that they do not think they are getting anything of value. (32)

Street people must be treated as consumers each with individual needs, purchasing power, and degree of motivation. As Tower (1994) stated that:

...a solution to the discord of paternalism and self determination is to adopt a consumer-centered approach toward practice. When individuals redefine their role from that of patient, client, or recipient of goods and

services to that of consumer, their sense of control over their own lives is elevated.(33)

In her field experiment, in which she tested the effects of choice, Langer (1976) found:

It appears that inducing a greater sense of personal responsibility in people who may have virtually relinquished decision making, either by choice or necessity, produces improvement. 93% of the people who were encouraged to make decisions for themselves, given decisions to make, and given responsibility for something outside of themselves, actually showed overall improvement.(34)

In the case of the application of consumer status-centered outreach, the streets are considered a marketplace into which incentives are placed and products sold by credible sales people. Given the fact that 88.7% see employment related help as what they needed the most, we made the decision to employ people who in the past had lived on the street as homeless adults. As outreach workers, they can approach their less successful peers on the street, and "sell" the services of whichever program(s) is working for them. The very fact of their participation, unencumbered by the authority of social services professionals, it is posited here, would make the point that whatever help they were extending in the way of choice, not only worked for them, but was employment related. The fact that professionals were not present, perhaps has increased the credibility of these

various statements, spoken and unspoken.

As Winick (1991) stated, the use of ex-users (ex-substance abusers) to reach to other users is helpful in "Providing a role model that confirms the possibility of recovery..."(35) Gordon and Arbuthnot (1988) studied the best use of paraprofessionals as well. They found that by controlling for people whose attributes were enthusiasm and a belief in themselves, (attributes of the person in recovery), "paraprofessionals achieve results equal to or superior to those achieved by professionals."(36) Further, in reporting that, upon a review of the literature, they found that professional mental health education, training, and experience do not appear to be necessary prerequisites for an effective helping person, Christensen and Jacobson (1994) concluded the following:

The research summarized in this article suggests that paraprofessional, self-administered, and mutual-support group treatment may be as effective for some problems as professional psychology.(37)

In sum then, we see that the most responsible positions we can take as outreach workers, especially for those who reject initial attempts at a referral, is to help increase the homeless person's sense that change can and should occur. That the former leads to the latter. The most responsible outreach then, accelerates decision-making in a field of

increasing choice. It leads to the formation of our own operational definition of homelessness.

Operational Definition of Homelessness

In Without Shelter, Rossi drew from the literature on skid row a picture of homelessness, which included extreme poverty, disability, and social disaffiliation. To satisfy our more narrow concerns, we add a qualifying statement:

People who are unaware of an acceptable place to sleep other than the streets, or unable to access an acceptable place, and as a result are usually-homeless.

The definition of homelessness that is most useful for this investigation is a definition, which includes the perspective of the usually homeless person. We use the word "unaware" because of its functional equivalence to there actually being no alternative, even if there is one. We use the word "acceptable" because inevitably, once an alternative is known, whether or not it is accessed it will be partly subject to personal preference. Having reasons not to access an alternative, which others find acceptable, is common to the street life of the usually homeless. People with multiple problems are often forced to prioritize in ways that solve only some of their problems while exacerbating others.

Additionally, as choice and or access decreases, so too does the freedom-to-choose diminish. The term "unable to access" refers to situations where either traveling arrangements or application procedures inhibit access. We say they "do not respond to trait-centered outreach" when they do not come indoors to sit with a social services professional despite such efforts.

Chapter Five: Notes

1. See Christopher Jencks, The Homeless, page 106.
2. See Alfred Adler's Understanding Human Nature, page 133.
3. Ibid, pages 35-38.
4. See Joel Blau's The Visible Poor, page 153.
5. See Christopher Jencks, The Homeless, page 122.
6. See Elijah Anderson's A Place On the Corner, page 31.
7. See David Snow's and Leon Anderson's Down on Their Luck, page 291.
8. See Peter Rossi's, Down and Out in America, page 105.
9. See David Shapiro's Autonomy and The Rigid Character, page 7.
10. Ibid, page 10.
11. Ibid, page 17.
12. See George Orwell's Down and Out in Paris and London, page 20.
13. Ibid, page 12.
14. Ibid, page 20.
15. See Stephen Crane's Red Badge of Courage, page 55.
16. See James Seligman's Helplessness: On depression, development, and death. Also, see Mecca at al., The Social Importance of Self-Esteem, page 95: "Helplessness often represents the final phase in the process of demoralization that characterizes failure-acceptance."
17. See David Shapiro's Neurotic Styles, page 20.
18. Ibid, page 21.

19. See Giamo and Grunberg's Beyond Homelessness, Kosinski interview, page 44.
20. Ibid, page 34.
21. See Robert Jay Lifton's Protean Self, page 207.
22. See Alfred Adler's The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler, Ansbacher's Introuction, page xiii.
23. See Harold Garfinkel's Status Degredation Ceremonies, page 420.
24. Ibid, page 424.
25. See James Engle's, David Kallat's, and Roger Blackwell's Consumer Behavior, page 295.
26. Ibid, page 309.
27. Ibid, page 310.
28. See James Engle's Consumer Behavior, page 466.
29. Ibid, page 466.
30. See Harold Garfinkel's Studies in Ethnomethodology, page 186.
31. This list was put together after numerous conversations with people living on the street. In a formal sampling of 23 people after the list had been formed, statements #4 and #10 were chosen 13 times, #8 was chosen 10 times, #9 and #7 were chosen 8 and 7 times respectively, the others were chosen 6 or less times. In all, 23 people made 72 choices from the list. The category "other" was chosen 2 times; both times the respondent wrote "safety net".
32. See Christopher Jencks' The Homeless, page 106.
33. Ibid, page 122.
34. See Kristine Tower's Consumer-Centered Social Work Practice: Restoring Clinet Self-Determination, page 123.
35. See Ellen Langer's The Effects of Choice and Enhanced Personal Responsibility for the Aged: A Field Experiment in an Institutional Setting, page 37.

36. See Charles Winick's The Counselor in Drug User Treatment, 1991, parentheses mine.

37. See Donald Gordon, and Jack Arbuthnot's The Use of Paraprofessionals to Deliver Home-Based Family Therapy to Juvenile Delinquents, page 366.

38. See Andrew Christensen's and Neil Jacobson's Who (or what) Can Do Psychotherapy, page 13.

CHAPTER SIX: STATUS-CENTERED OUTREACH

Dependency causes low self-esteem, because chronic dependency is stigmatized in our society and because it contributes to feelings of helplessness and powerlessness.(1)

Andrew M. Mecca

The Social Importance of Self-Esteem

Introduction

Given all that we have discussed to this point, following the establishment of our operational definition of homelessness, we can now consider the operational methods, which must be added to the outreach process if we are to address those issues of utmost importance to the target population.

What we know about our target population, the usually-homeless, and their situation, can be summed up as follows:

- many people live on the streets
- they have many problems
- street life is dangerous
- trait-centered outreach has had limited success

Furthermore, upon examination of the socio-psychological condition of people living on the street, we have discovered

- their lifestyle undermines escape from homelessness
- their closest peers are downwardly mobile
- they have low self-esteem and blame themselves
- 88% are looking for jobs, only 15% for treatment
- they hold negative opinions of programs
- they have reasons for maintaining their homelessness
- social standing may prevent resolution of street life

While it has been established that outreach should embody the principles of compassion, empathy, and persistence, there are certain other general principles, which we believe need to be in place for outreach to be successful. They are as follows:

1. Homeless people must be understood as consumers each with consumer "status" and consumer "rights". At the very least, during the engagement phase, outreach should be based on consumerism principles.
2. Outreach must be based on the stated needs of the individuals being served.
3. Outreach should be conducted by members of the homeless person's peer reference group, i.e. formerly usually-homeless, now usually-housed and employed. They should be trained to talk about the programs that helped them the most in an effort to "sell" their peers on a referral.
4. Outreach workers should reframe "resistance" as being based on "good" reasons such as consumer naivete', skepticism, or lack of choice, all of which may be "treated" by encouraging decision-making.
5. The streets should be seen as a "marketplace" in which incentives are provided aimed at enticing the target population indoors where, in a peer-group setting, service options may be offered and professional service providers made available.

Given what we have learned of the effects of choice on behavior, and the role that decision-making plays in the everyday life of the homeless person, we suggest outreach adhere to certain consumerism procedures. Further, we believe that outreach should be (consumer) status-centered. Below, we have restated our outreach strategies to match them up with those strategies which, according to Engle, Kollat, and Blackwell's text, Consumer Behavior (1968), must be applied to the introduction of any product, for which rapid acceptance is desired:

Consumer Behavior:

1. Advertise in mass media to the potential user, showing the product in use by types of individuals known to be in the evaluative reference group of the potential users.(2)

Our Restatement:

Outreach should be conducted by formerly homeless, or usually-housed peers. (Their employment as outreach workers, injects their "success" into the process.) Fliers or brochures should be handed out to people on the streets speaking to them as potential customers.

Consumer Behavior:

2. Provide a personal salesman with persuasive messages that indicate to the potential user what is gained by the product that would be considered rewarding in his reference group.(3)

Our Restatement:

Housed and employed, having solved the two most central (self) defining themes, these formerly usually-homeless outreach workers will "sell" the programs, which have worked for them while showing their peers that there is room for hope. By bridging the "gap" between street and

mainstream life, they also address reference group issues, which may lie at the core of what is often seen as resistance.

Consumer Behavior:

3. Establish a reseller support program that enlists the aid of retailers to conduct "schools" or sessions in which potential users can discuss on a group basis the advantages of the new product.(4)

Our Restatement:

Outreach needs to be performed in a way, that is inclusive of group dynamics perhaps in a group setting to include their closest peers, along with more successful ones. Network Fairs, or their equivalent, should be set up at which a variety of service providers can "pool" their resources, offering a variety of choices to the homeless attendees in a large congregate area, with room "off to the side" for one on one meetings if necessary.

We can now see the application of Engle's (1968) description of the typical buying process:

When a consumer takes a particular course of action of interest to marketers, it is a result of many influences. Some are external, originating in the social environment. What the consumer does with these social stimuli involves basic psychological processes that are specific to him. It is possible that a combination of social influences and internal processes may evolve into a decision by a consumer to make a purchase, and yet a purchase may not occur. Among other reasons, this happens when the marketing system does not provide adequate resources to stimulate execution of the transaction.(5)

In ways relating to this "buying process", we have attempted to understand the roles which street life, (which involves interaction with outreach workers), and the usually

homeless individual play in decision-making. We have seen success fall far short of goals in the initial stages of outreach, the engagement phase, and believe it is, in part, due to the fact that incentives were either missing or improperly used. These incentives, we believe, need to speak directly to the homeless person's stated needs in the areas of housing and jobs. In short, we believe that outreach should be status-centered, i.e., should be performed in ways which enhance the social standing of the individual most directly: In the eyes of his peer reference group and thusly from his own perspective.

In this section we shall discuss the application of status-centered outreach, which starting February, 1992, and during a 30 month period, in midtown Manhattan embodied all of the principles and procedures outlined above.

During this period of time, surveys, peer outreach, Network Fairs, and follow-up were all a part of the "consumer" approach to people thought of as usually-homeless.

Network Fairs: A Consumer Status-Centered Approach

The establishment of a "status-centered" outreach approach developed in 1992 and discussed here, began with a consideration of the results of a "consumer" survey of street people held in midtown Manhattan in 1989, which inquired as to

the homeless person's understanding of their own needs, see Table 5.(6)

Table 5

Help Reportedly Needed Most

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Housing	95.2	4.8	166
Employment	88.7	11.3	194
Health Services	63.8	11.3	127
Mental Health Services	25.1	73.9	119
Public Entitlements	47.8	52.2	115
Education	60.3	39.7	116
Other	36.1	62.5	72

Who They Blame For Their Current Situation (n=168)

Self	73.2%
Relatives	6.5
Last Landlord	1.8
Last Employer	1.2
Other	16.7

Most importantly, we saw that 88.7% stated that employment was what reportedly was needed most. Secondly, we saw that they were holding themselves responsible for their current situation; they blamed themselves 73.2% of the time(7). Apparently, it comes down to a self-evaluative process, often involving much self-recrimination.

These two facts were taken together as indicating that they would be most responsive to peer outreach workers, who would be seen as having solved similarly defining problems on

terms satisfactory to them. Being shown hope in light of their self-recriminations in the person of the employed peer, they come literally face to face with proof that there is a path towards employment from the streets. The fact that they had been so willingly surveyed spoke favorably for two things, a communicative approach that valued their opinions, and the importance of incentives. Each person surveyed was offered a \$5 food certificate redeemable at one of two local delicatessens. This was highly effective as well in Martha Burt's study (1987) of shelter use among homeless people. When \$5 was promised homeless people who participated in her survey, they had 92% to 96% participation.(8)

Network Fairs

The outreach alternative described here often deals with whole group structures, taking advantage of or focusing on pre-existing relationships among the homeless and between them and their potential service providers. As Speck and Attneave (1972) described the functions of such social network interventions as,

rendering the network visible and viable, and by doing so, restoring its function. Thus the social network becomes the unit of intervention...setting in motion the forces of healing within the social fabric of people whose distress led society and themselves to label their behavior pathological. (9)

In thinking of individuals as members of social networks and so inviting the whole network together to discuss the problems that the individuals are having, Speck and Attneave believe that certain recuperative forces are unleashed.

Once we begin to conceptualize in this way, we began to get rid of the "sick" model for many patients. We also began to get rid of the "healer" model for the therapist. The network effect can scramble the cybernated pegboard, open up new feedback connections, and make everybody both an experimenter and a validator of new options. Suddenly, no one is sick.(10)

Homeless people who have been living on the street, who are approached in this fashion, experience a process of redefinition. Resulting from the type of peer interaction and the effects of role modeling engendered by such an intervention interrupts their routine grounds of everyday life(11). Relationships between homeless peers which might have become routine, or which may have come to feel stale, or which might have come to play a role in perpetuating their negative situations, now get redefined. The homeless person is able to "know" and "be known" by his peers differently. And through these shared experiences, from where now he can delineate from among his larger peer group, those with whom he has most in common. In effect then, he begins to better understand himself.(12)

A network is defined by Speck and Attneave as "a total relational field of a person and usually has space/time

representation. Most people have some contact with at least 40 or 50 people who are willing to be assembled in a crisis." In that it changes a person's frame-of-reference, they consider the process therapeutic. It becomes so by "redefining the behavior first presented, and describing it in terms of natural and orderly reactions to an inadequate social structure." (13)

As stated by Levine et al. (1986), "Far too often, we unsuccessfully attempt to make our patients conform to our service system rather than modify our system." The example they give, is one which exemplifies the approach studied here. They refer to an earlier study, by Segal and Baumohl (1985), which describes "a less threatening service setting called 'the community living room,' where...providers offer a multitude of services in one location." (14)

Network Fairs are social services 'sales meetings', to which people found the same morning to be sleeping in public places including street locations, transportation terminals, parks, and drop-in-centers are invited. Held over a three hour period on the same day the invitations are issued, formerly homeless people, and staff from a variety of programs around New York City, get together first for a meal, then in an effort to motivate and educate those who attend. Case-driven outreach follow-up is designed to track those people who have attended the Network Fair to see if they returned to

the location where first they were found.

The goals of the Network Fairs held during the period under study are listed below.

1. To attract to indoor programming, people who live outdoors for, "anything from a cup of coffee to a social services referral." (15)
2. To connect the neediest homeless people, those on the streets, to social service agencies of their choosing.
3. To create an organizational structure that encourages cooperation and engenders new channels of interagency cooperation among organizations that serve homeless people.
4. To test and model effective techniques which can be added to the mix of service possibilities.

Subjects:

Ethical considerations prevented us from, at any time, randomly assigning some people to Network Fairs while offering others no such opportunity at all. For that reason, we may consider the "treatment" group as consisting of all those we invited. On an individual basis, our decisions as to who to invite were random, insofar as we did not typically have advance demographic information about our subjects. This fact, plus the lack of enough outdoor street groups from which to choose randomly, prevented the formation of a scientific control group.

Jencks found that single adult homeless people who slept

outdoors did so in parks, on the streets, in doorways, abandoned buildings and public building.(16) In the case of the time period under study here, we invited individuals whom we believed to be most in need, i.e. those who were found to be sleeping outdoors at 5:00am.

There were 979 people, having been "found" sleeping in one of the following locations, who comprised our "treatment" group:

- A. PATH Trains Entrance
- B. Herald and Greeley Sq.
- C. Front of St. Francis Church (31st, between 6-7th Avenue)
- D. Behind Macy's Department Store
- E. One Penn Plaza
- F. Surrounding Streets (30th-36th Street, 5th-8th Avenue)
- G. 44th Street/2nd to 3rd Avenues
- H. First Avenue to East River/40th to 46th Streets

Date:

To avoid drawing people either onto the streets or into the vicinity, advance notice was not given for the dates of Network Fairs.

Location:

Because it was important that the site of the Network Fair be convenient for the Subjects to walk to from the sleeping places listed above, the event was held in one of two locations, based on the availability of date. These were either in the dayroom of the St. Francis Church, located at

129 West 31st street, NYC, or at the Church of the Covenant dayroom, located at 310 East 42nd street.

Participating Agencies:

Program managers of a variety of programs were contacted prior to each Network Fair. The goal, reached in all but six occasions, was to enlist the attendance of at least five different agencies.(17) This was achieved by placing telephone calls to approximately sixteen program managers two weeks prior to each Network Fair. Based on the target population (site and demographics), appropriate and available social service agencies were invited. Target agencies were chosen for their capacity to either serve people with multiple rehabilitative needs, or to make appropriate referrals to specialists, for their access to overnight facilities, and for their willingness and or ability to attend the Fairs to which they were invited.

Method

To those locations where homeless people were seen to be living on the streets in midtown Manhattan, we established a consumerism approach to outreach to include Network Fairs(18). Between March 11, 1992 and February 24, 1994, 28 Network Fairs were held in an effort to engage all those who were seen to be sleeping, at 5:00am, in the locations specified above. On

each occasion, there were approximately 10 to 50 people approached for services, or a total of 979 homeless people who were found to have been sleeping on the street.

The invitation process associated with the Network Fairs studied here began between 5:00am and 6:00am. Peer outreach teams, comprised of three to five formerly homeless people now housed and employed, approached people who were seen to be sleeping on the street. The peer outreach workers distributed the invitations to all those homeless street people they found in the areas assigned. They handed each person a flier, along with an encouraging "sales" pitch such as: "You should do this," or "Try to come, it will really help you just like it helped me," or "Its worth it, the food's good, and you'll get \$5.00 for just a little time." Conversations were kept to a minimum for practical reasons: The people being approached were just waking up and could not be expected to react favorably to extended conversation.

A. The Invitation

The invitations announced the offering of a variety of incentives carefully designed to entice the target population to attend the Fair. They read as presented below.

* * *

COME TO A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING

Lately, have you been down and out?

Maybe now is the best time for you to make some changes.
But you must make them on your terms.

You must make your own decisions. Stop letting other
people choose for you.

If you come to this breakfast meeting, held only a few
blocks away, three hours from now, you will get the
following:

1. free breakfast
2. guarantee of first month's rent, up to \$500, if you
find a place within six months
3. dozens of social service agencies to choose from
4. a five dollar stipend, if you stay for the full fair
(two to three hours)

(location, date, time, # to call if you can't make it)

* * *

B. The Event

The target population was expected to arrive at approximately 8:30 in the morning. Members of the peer outreach met the invitees at the intake table where they were asked to present their invitation. The flyer (location) number, was recorded and the person was then asked to sign-in.

The Invitees were then given a folder and two pencils. The folder contained the following:

- 1) a print-out of all participating "Network" agencies
- 2) a menu of agencies attending that particular day
- 3) an appointment sheet for each attending agency
- 4) a Network Fair activities chart (19)

Before they took their seat, they stopped off at the breakfast counter run by others of their peers who had food services jobs with one or more of the agencies participating. There they received a breakfast tray.(20)

The social service agency representatives, arriving at the same time as the homeless invitees, were also greeted at the intake table, and asked to sign-in. They were then shown their seating assignments and offered breakfast as well.

After co-mingling with a group of their peers informally during a thirty-minute breakfast, the Invitees were asked to focus on the presentations.

C. Presentations and Choices

After breakfast was served, the host delivered a short speech welcoming everybody, outlining the goals of the Network Fair, and challenging everyone to make the most of the event.

During the next segment, there were several short motivation speeches delivered by formerly homeless people who have been helped by previous Network Fairs, myself, and assigned staff people of the organizing agencies.(13) After this, and for the next hour, the host introduced various staff members of attending social service agencies, each of which made five to ten minute presentations over the next hour. The job of the host was to introduce each speaker and facilitate the questions which invariably followed.

The subjects were then instructed to move around the room, as if at a sales meeting, in an effort to choose and to make appointments with some of the presenting agencies. The host along with other staff moved from table to table offering assistance where needed.

At that time, an exit table was set up. There, the subjects showed their completed appointment sheet indicating how many agencies they made appointments with, were asked to sign-out, and then given five-dollars for attending the Fair.(21)

D. Follow-Up

It is at this point that outreach, driven by specifics, began. Based on the names of the subjects and their program choices, as well as their personal familiarity with each of the attendees, what with their having attended the fairs themselves, the peer Outreach Team began a focused search for specific people.

Additionally, calls were made to each of the attending agencies during the days following the Fair to determine whether appointments were kept. In those situations where necessary client information could not be obtained over the phone, arrangements were made for on-site visits whereby signed attendance sheets could be examined.

Also, on a monthly basis, follow-up meetings open to all agencies participating in the Network were held. The meetings served to identify and provide mutual assistance for particular areas of service need. During these meetings, besides a sharing of relevant information, program philosophies and strategies for intervention were compared. While many agency representatives were reluctant to share the names of their clients, they provided us with anecdotal information on the numbers of Fair attendees who kept subsequent appointments. Anecdotely, it was reported by several agencies, that "most come several times afterwards." And at one point in time, we had attempted to set up a

reimbursement program whereby each agency would report subsequent visits to their programs by Fair attendees in an effort to receive a \$15 per day per client visit.(22) The results mirrored the anecdotal information: Participating agencies put in a reimbursement request for 164 days of service for 44 different clients.

Additionally, most importantly, the peer Outreach Team visited those locations wherein contact with the subjects was first established. When they came into contact with people who had attended the Fair, they urged them to go to the programs they had chosen. They acted as escorts or mentors, and further assisted the person as well.

While the burden of continued outreach was added to the workload of the Grand Central and Thirty-Fourth Street Partnership's Outreach Staff, 90% of whom are formerly homeless people, for the purposes of this study, the formal follow-up period for each of the Network Fairs lasted for a period of one week following the fair itself. During this period, armed with lists of all participants and their program choices, outreach workers re-visited those locations where first they came in contact with program participants.

E. Results

The results of the status-centered approach studied here are shown in Table 6 below.

NETWORK CLIENT TALLIES

NETWORK DAY	CLIENTS INVITED	SITES	CLIENTS ATTENDED	AGENCIES ATTENDED	CLIENTS WHO CHOSE AGENCIES	CLIENTS ENCOUNTERED DURING FOLLOW-UP OUTREACH
1992						
March 11	50	a,b	50	10	27	6
April 15	50	a,b,c	50	5	49	4
May 20	50	a,b,c,d	50	9	47	3
June 24	50	a,b,c,d	50	11	44	3
July 29	50	a,b,c,d	49	10	36	0
September 2	23	c,d,f	17	6	17	0
October 14	50	a	50	6	27	2
October 20	12	a	12	3	12	0
November 17	10	c,e,g	10	5	10	5
November 24	15	c,e,g	12	3	8	0
December 23	15	a,b,c,e,g	15	5	15	3
1993						
January 5	15	b,c,e	12	5	10	0
January 20	15	b,c,d,f	14	4	12	3
February 23	15	a,b,c	15	4	14	1
March 17	15	a,b,c	9	5	8	3
March 31	19	c,e,g	18	4	16	6
April 14	20	c,e,g	16	4	15	4
April 28	30	c,e,g	18	6	12	1
May 26	25	a,c,e,g	13	5	11	5
June 15	50	c,d,e,f,g	42	8	34	6
July 22	30	d	30	6	19	5
August 10	50	f	75	6	39	10
September 15	50	c,d,f	39	6	15	4
October 4	50	Dag Hamm	30	12	30	15
November 9	50	b,c,e,g	26	7	26	6
December 22	50	Explanade	34	11	29	5
1994						
January 18	70	a,b	56	9	53	0
February 24	50	a,g	43	10	14	

TOTAL:	979	855 *	7	649 **	100
AVERAGE					

% Invited who attended:	83.96%
% Attending who connected:	75.88%
% Connected again encountered:	15.78%

* This figure represents 679 different people (as some attend more than one Fair).

** For the same reason as stated above, this figure represents 546 different people.

KEY: a=Penn Station; b=PATH Trains Entrance; c=Herald & Greeley Sq.; d=Front of St. Francis; e=back of Macy's; f=One Penn Plaza; g=surrounding streets.

An average of 7 primary and secondary social services agencies and other organizations, drawn from a pool of 62, attended 28 Network Fairs over the course of a 24 month period.(23) The types of participating organizations ranged from outreach to housing to employment training to drug and alcohol treatment to mental health services providers, educators, realtors, food service, and health care providers. Some 979 people were invited and approximately 84%, or 855 people attended. Of those who attended, 649 people, or 76% selected agencies, and made appointments with representatives of those agencies for follow-up services. During follow-up, 15.78% of those who connected with agencies, or 100 people, were seen again on the same streets during the 24 month period.

The numbers of those attending, and connecting, were higher for the first half of the period. Of the first 405 people invited, from March 11, 1992 through January 20, 1993, 96.5%, or 391 attended, while 80% or 314 people "connected" with agencies. This means that for the series of Network Fairs between February 23, 1993 and February 24, 1994, 80% of those invited attended, and 72% connected with agencies.

Discussion

Cronbach (1982) asserts "that generalizability is at least as important as any other design feature in applied social research." (24) One could say that because participation in our program was voluntary, self-selection bias was likely, i.e., those who attended were likely to be those who favor the consumerism model. However, there were no controls save for the time of day that initial outreach was performed, and the street itself. Everybody who was encountered at the outreach sites was invited. There was of course no penalty for repeat visitors; if they were on the streets in the target locations, they were invited again. As we set forth in Table 6, in the 'clients attended' column, 176 people fell into this category. Follow-up usually consisted of encouraging the persons to keep appointments made at previous fairs. They were not presented with a "consumer model" per se, even if they were treated as consumers. It can be said that the impact of this program has a high degree of generalizability; those who attended the fairs were responding to the program model.

However, as Rossi (1993) points out, in cases where the participants in a program are volunteers, the problem of "uncontrolled selection is almost inevitable." (25) That is,

the outcome of the program is ultimately seen as a product of selection rather than the intervention. If however, as in this case, the intervention was the offering of selections, then we must look to understand what would have occurred were the intervention of Network Fairs not offered. We can say that ecological events might have caused some to respond to the service offerings, i.e., the timing of our invitation was coincidental: No matter the outreach approach, they might have responded. Our examination of other outreach efforts however, leads us to believe that the results of our status-centered outreach efforts occurred at higher rates than would have occurred without them. As Rossi (1993) said, "determining impact requires comparing,"(26) and our rates were comparably very high. Because we worked without a control group, we lack formal experimental design. However, we can consider our model to have had demonstrable impact.

It is important therefore, to formally note that one of the goals of this study was to demonstrate that it is the type and fact of the attention that we pay to our subjects that mattered, and that its application would produce an intended effect, as opposed to the Hawthorne effect.

It was expected that the intervention would be shown to have produced a level of effect over and above what would have occurred either without the intervention or with an alternative intervention for several reasons, not the least of

which was the power of the consumerism approach. Were we to extend the practical thinking, which is related to the consumerism model, we may speculate that those relatively few who did not come, see Table 6 - 'clients invited' column and 'clients attended' column, 124 people, or 13%, perhaps had competing things on their agenda on the day they were invited to the fair. It is also possible they kept from attending due to a consumer skepticism that there might be some sort of catch or hidden downside, or perhaps they cynically believed it was too good to be true. In either case or in other possibilities, they were unconvinced that they should "shop" that day in our "store". They were our toughest hard-to-please customers. One caveat however, is the possibility that during the course of the 24 month period, the number of different people who attended, constituted everybody at least once. That is, the "no-show" of one Network Fair, came to one which followed.

One drawback to our ability to further examine the no-show, is the nature of street life itself, combined with our disinterest in being overly intrusive. Actually, while we began by surprising them with our presence as they awakened, our introductory chatter might have awakened others as well; it is there that our intrusiveness ended.

The percentages of people who came as invited, see Table 6 - % invited who attended, 855 people, or 83.96%, indicates

probably little else but that the incentives, most probably the short term ones such as the \$5.00 and the meal, motivated their attendance. However, we suggest that the influence of the peer reference group played an important factor throughout. As one or two showed interest in attending, they did so in the company of each other. As they had not been singled out, did not feel they were being worked on, and got to go with many others of their peer group, their more personal attributes such as curiosity, even their will, could be safely aroused. Instead of fearing they might have something to lose, such as the safety of their peers, they can decide they have nothing to lose. They know that the event is targeted to help them and that social service agencies will be there. This knowledge does not cause them to miss the event. Their resistance seems not to be a factor in at least getting them indoors "for anything from a cup of coffee..."

When they arrived, they were not greeted as needy persons who may be in need of social work, but with relative disinterest as to their traits. Instead, they were welcomed much the way an owner of a retail store will greet his potential customers, at worst with enlightened self-interest, at best with an air of hope and expectation. We speculate that these factors influenced the high numbers of people who sat, during the last thirty minutes of the event, after two hours of activities, to make appointments with the social

service professionals. While the \$5.00 was held off until the entire event was over and they were made to wait, they did not have to sit as they did, and talk one-on-one or in small groups with attending social workers. Instead, we speculate that they did so, in part, because so too did so many of their peers. Again, not feeling singled out as a receiver of trait-centered services, but instead part of a group action, their social status enhanced by their participation, they nevertheless went beyond what can now be called the perverbial cup of coffee. It should be added, that anytime a person demanded his or her \$5.00 before the event was over, was given the money and of course, allowed to leave. While this occurred once or twice each fair, it did not spur others to leave early.

Referring to these as "clients who chose agencies", see Table 6, we can see that we achieved a great deal from what can be considered the entry-level outreach strategy of networking. During the 26 month period, 855 people, or 84% of those who were found to be sleeping outdoors alone, or in groups, came indoors of their own free will, unaccompanied by escorting professionals. They were served an excellent breakfast and educated as to their many service options. In this alone, we were both responsible citizens, and highly successful outreach workers. If everyone invited left with just their bellies filled and the new program information

provided them, reducing the event as merely of educational value, we would have succeeded at rates higher than might have been expected. In Rossi's Evaluation, A Systematic Approach (1993), he writes that

the critical issue in impact evaluation is whether or not a program produces desired levels of effects over and above what would have occurred with or without the intervention or with an alternative intervention.(27)

We were able to motivate and educate an otherwise difficult-to-reach population. We accomplished this without long periods of waiting for what we might have labeled as trust, to develop. We accomplished this by arousing the will of people often thought of as reticent, i.e., they responded of their own volition. Even if they were back on the street the next evening, we can take comfort in their improved positions: They multiplied their knowledge of program choices. To understand our high rates of success, we can return to Langer (1976) who found somewhat similar results when she reported that "93% of the people who were encouraged to make decisions for themselves, given decisions to make, and given responsibility for something outside of themselves, actually showed overall improvement."(28)

However, looking at Table 6 - see 'clients who chose agencies', the results show that for 75% of those who attended, or 546 different people, much more was accomplished.

If they were to return to the streets, they would do so with several self-generated appointments set for future meetings with professionals at agencies of their own choosing.

Over the span of 28 Network Fairs, follow-up at the street locations where the invitations were first handed out, found approximately 16% of the total Fair attendees in residence, see Table 6 - 'clients encountered during follow-up outreach', because we chose not to continue to treat them as subjects, and because of our understanding of their life style, we did not rigorously examine their presence on the street. The fact of their attendance at the Fair was not however ignored. Some said that they lost information they had intended to use, others said they couldn't get to the appointment. In both of these cases, the fact that all present were consumers of services, peer-outreach workers included, and all had attended the Fair, formed the basis for continued work. While we don't know how many different people are being counted, there were 176 instances of repeat visits, see Table 6 - 'clients attended'.

Our study was designed to study the gross effect of the status centered model of outreach. It made no attempts to control for traits, though we can see the value in presenting surveys designed to uncover trait-response differences so as to refine our "sales techniques" or if one were inclined to attempt continued (more intrusive) study of Network Fair

attendees, more aggressive, incentive-based follow-up to determine types of success. The risk here is that by doing so in either case, the "price" of attendance goes up.

As we have noticed a measure of transiency, meeting the same people in different locations but seemingly always in the same geographic vicinity, "along the river", or "midtown east", we did not contrast outreach success by location. Nor, did we study our target group by sex, age, or ethnic status.(30) Our attempts were made to demonstrate the effects of our work as it relates to the general social status of usually homeless street people, not their net differences.(31)

We hope that the fact that our outreach approach was not simulated for experimental purposes, but actually performed, will speak for the intervention's reproducibility as well as for the benefits to the homeless, should it be reproduced.

Chapter Six: Notes

1. See Andrew M. Mecca's The Social Importance of Self-Esteem, page 14.
2. See James Engel, David Kollatand Roger Blackwell's Consumer behavior, page 466.
3. Ibid, page 467. For further reading on the efficacy of using people in the engagement (sales) process, but from a sociological as it pertains to treatment for the drug addict, see Charles Winick's The Counselor in Drug User Treatment (1991), in which he pointed out, "Providing a role model that confirms the possibility of recovery, he/she is considered less likely to be conned by the client." page 1483.
4. Ibid, page 467.
5. Ibid, page 7.
6. In March 1989, contracted by the Grand Central Partnership, a midtown business-improvement-district (BID), I conducted a survey, the results of which were computed by Gregory Bavaso, who was affiliated with City University's Graduate Center, with the help of Professor Robert Reiber, a professor at John Jay College and the Brain Function Institute. For the full write-up and listing of results please see Appendix A.
7. Here we can look at blame one of two ways. It can be said that 'victim' psychology is occurring whereby the victim blames him or herself for a specific process or event over which they had no control. In writing of blame among rape victims, Janoff-Bulman (1979) stated "that such assignment of blame to their own behavior is a way in which women try to re-establish their belief in their ability to control their own lives." Secondly, as Jerzy Kosinski pointed out in Benedict Giomo and Jeffrey Grunberg's Beyond Homelessness, a person who is homeless might blame themselves for their predicaments "just as a business person might who has invested wrongly."
8. See Christopher Jencks' The Homeless, page 10.
9. See Ross Speck and Carolyn Attneave's Family Networks, page 6.
10. Ibid, page 10.

11. See Harold Garfinkel's Studies in Ethnomethodologies, Chapter Two: Studies of the routine grounds of everyday activities. In it, he writes that one of the goals of sociology is to "make commonplace scenes visible." He referred to the familiar common sense world of everyday life as sociology's "essential preoccupation." The normal however unnoticed background expectancies of everyday situations, he reports, was looked upon by Alfred Schutz as "the attitude of daily life." At the Network Fair, the typical way that people who are usually homeless see their similarly situated peers, and the way they view themselves in the context of the streets, both of which impact, and perpetuate their homelessness, can be redefined. In this way, they may reinvent themselves and their situations.

12. See Charles Cooley's Social Organizations, 1909.

13. See Richard Speck and Carl Attneave's Family Networks, page 13.

14. See Sanford Segal and Jerome Baumohl's The Community Living Room, page 113.

15. See Carl Cohen and Jay Solokovsky's Old Men of the Bowery, page 213.

16. See Christopher Jencks' The Homeless, page 12.

17. See Appendix B, for a list of primary and secondary organizations, which participated in Network Fairs. Except for a brief experimental period, when incentives were offered the social service agencies involved, they received no compensation. The fact that they so freely participated speaks for their dedication as well as interest in networking activity.

18. In Spring 1988, I was contracted to perform consultancy work in an effort to reduce homelessness on midtown streets. This work led to my running a survey, see #1 above, and being hired first to work part time, then full time by the Grand Central Partnership, a non-profit corporation empowered to impose a special real estate tax upon its member corporations, who collectively spend the money on improvements relative to the tax base itself, the property in and around the midtown area. In 1992, similar work began with an affiliated Business Improvement District, the 34th Street Partnership, who asked that I focus my attention on the streets in their neighborhood. Taken together, the two BIDs comprise about 125 city blocks in midtown Manhattan. It was in early 1992, that

the Network Fair approach was designed and implemented first in the 34th Street area, from 30th street to 35 street, from 10th avenue to Park Avenue, and then in the Grand Central Partnership area, now due to recent expansion, running from 35th street to 53rd street, from east of Fifth avenue to Lexington Avenues.

19. For a example of a Network Social Services Fair Activity Chart, see Appendix C.

20. As the sponsoring agencies, Grand Central and 34th Street Partnerships paid for all Network Fair food, \$5 stipends, and covered the guarantee of first month's rent made in the invitation fliers.

21. The organizing agencies were Grand Central and 34th Street Partnerships. As the Vice-President for Social Services, I ran each Network Fair either directly or indirectly. These Fairs are still being run on a monthly basis.

22. The idea to pay for the agencies was a common sense proposition drawn from the fact that many agencies had stated that one of the reasons people were still on the street was that they, the programs, were under-funded. In researching this project, I noticed that in August 1982, in the "recommendations" section of Cruel Brinkmanship, the Coalition for the Homeless called for the following: Offer to reimburse any not-for-profit group will to provide emergency refuge to the homeless at a rate equivalent to the cost per person of public shelter.

We thought then, that such reimbursement would be required to obtain the involvement of various agencies. Instead, we found that not only did the reporting requirements put off several agencies, but they did not need this motivation. They were willing to come, once invited.

23. For a list of these agencies, see Appendix B.

24. See Peter Rossi and Howard Freeman's Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, page 255.

25. Ibid, page 223.

26. Ibid, page 222.

27. Ibid, page 220.

28. See Ellen Langer and Judith Rodin's The Effects of Choice and Enanced Personal Responsibility for the Aged: A Field Experiment in an Institutional Setting, (1976).

29. Most consumer surveys are, of course, trait-centered insofar as traits may be indicative of buying trends. We acknowledge that this would be a reasonable point for inquiry. Most interesting would be to see if there were any differences in either with willingness to choose an agency between men and women or if the younger ones were more likely to leave without choosing, etcetera. As for these traits, we have not seen significant differences as to the demographics of homelessness. See David Snow and Leon Anderson's Down on Their Luck, page 32 for a review of seven studies. They find men make up between 78%-90% of street population, and have a mean age of 35. See note #30 (below).

30. There were many factors, which went into the decision to ignore differences among our target population. While the outreach for Network Fairs was conducted, it was not treated as a research project. It had as its major goal, that of "introducing" homeless people to social services professionals. The outreach teams wanted to remain initially as non-intrusive as possible. In looking back upon this two year effort, we would have liked to take demographic note of some net differences. However, it may not be practical beyond what is observable. For example, we saw nothing which indicated that previous researchers such as those discussed in David Snow and Leon Anderson's Down on Their Luck were wrong in the areas of demographics. Men outnumbered women about 4 to 1, blacks outnumbered whites by about 6 to 1, and the average age seemed to be about 30 years. See Chapter 1: Notes #6, (above).

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The act of using peers and incentives brings usually-homeless people living on the street to indoors activities at rates three and four times higher than traditional approaches that use professionals and diagnostic tools. In both cases, the goal is to introduce the homeless person to the professional service provider. In the case of the latter, the best documented success rate is 25%. In the case of the former, the status-centered approach studied documented an 87% rate.

The conferring of consumer status, surveys, the use of credible "sales" people, i.e. peer outreach workers, service choices, and a relaxed business-like setting, one-on-one sales meetings and so forth, seems to more directly address that which previously ensured their homelessness: low self-esteem, social distance, misdiagnosis, i.e. as patients rather than as consumers.

The most important status conferred upon a person in a capitalist system is consumer status. A consumer made aware of his/her buying power is educated and empowered to shop.

Product choice caters to shopper idiosyncracies, making shopping easier and increases the chances that a purchase will be made.

The expression that the "customer is always right" follows from this understanding of how to run a service business, which starts with a consumer survey.

What the customer needs may be different from what he/she may be in the market for. Persistently offering them something other than what they are shopping for is a sales blunder. It is, we can then say, not the customer who is "resistant", but the salesperson. When performing outreach, one should consider the homeless person a legitimate consumer of social services products. This (consumer) status-centered outreach begins with a survey. Just such a survey of usually-homeless street people conducted by the Grand Central Partnership conveyed that only 15% felt they needed treatment for substance abuse; 89% reported they needed a job or job training opportunities. Yet outreach services continue to organize around substance abuse or mental health treatment. Their (patient) trait-centered outreach causes them to hire specialists, professionals who guide the efforts, trying to overcome "distrust" and "resistance". A 40 year old homeless man, during the last of the series of Network Fairs studied said:

One of the reasons I don't like talking to outreach workers is in the end they will hospitalize you or medicate you or maybe report something to child-welfare and you lose your kid or they just try to take your SSI. They talk down to you, thinking they know everything.

Conclusion

As Peter Rossi has written in Evaluation, A Systematic Approach, 1993, "Knowledge of program effectiveness is critical to decisions about whether a particular initiative should be supported in preference to competing social action efforts." In this spirit, the present study was undertaken.

There are at least three concluding statements we can now make:

- 1) homelessness is not an end product but an ongoing process, which is amenable to intervention,
- 2) street-life is often perpetuated by some of the very processes developed to treat it,
- 3) for these reasons, programming should emphasize 'social-networking' and the engagement process of outreach should be 'status-centered'

While armchair discussants can argue through the night the macro-level structural causes of homelessness, such arguments mean little to the person living on the street. They seem to understand that they might not have the time to wait for society to change even if it would. Instead, they

concur with those who argue more hopefully, that individual homelessness is often caused by their own bad decision making, behavioral problems, and inadequate income. These are things that they can have some measure of control over and that others can help them with. They seem to have a grassroots understanding of how daily life consists of many on-going contingent accomplishments, i.e., that we all do actively participate in and personally perpetuate our own highly social existences. The argument for structural change, often made at one time or another by all of us, falls flat on its face when contrasted with how the homeless person sees things.

Save for the waxing and waning of legislative intervention aimed at keeping pace with political demands, often made so strongly from all sides as to leave the homeless person at a virtual standstill, there is little reason to count on significant structural change. However, individual behavior can change, we see it all around us, and when it does change, opportunity can open up as never before.

For certain character types, some behavioral change can be achieved as a result of protracted and costly psychotherapy. For most people, however, real behavioral change occurs through life experiences. An excellent education can stamp out certain amounts of naivete. An unwanted outcome, if seen to be the result of personal passivity or procrastination, can turn a person into more of

a protagonist. A sudden death or other loss can add sadness to a person's character, serving perhaps to soften them, or render them more appreciative of what they still have. Bouts of victimization can make anger a formidable part of someone's character where perhaps it was not so prominent a feature before. Or it can seemingly lock a person into a pattern of self-fulfilling prophecies from which there seems no escape and they can become a less hopeful, less engaging person. A clustering of stressors, such as personal injuries, divorce, or traumatic victimization, can combine with characterological predispositions in such a way as to produce temporary or permanent mental health problems.

While these issues form the basis of highly informed outreach and rehabilitation efforts, some political advocates argue that they are irrelevant. They argue that the homeless person is part of an aggrieved group the members of which have a right, if not an imperative, to sit in wait to be rescued with what, in the end, is their just desserts. The controversy can be thought of as coming down to these questions: What will be the quickest way to help the homeless person go from being down-and-out to being up-and-in?

If the goal of outreach is to get everybody indoors where they can get real help and maybe survive their homelessness, then the approach should be aware of some facts: The persons lying on the ground are at society's feet. They cannot

believe any different, save for cognitive dissonance, but that they are failing as compared to everybody else around them. This includes the people who hand them a quarter as well as those who may pass them by on the way to an advocate's rally. If you wish to perform fast working outreach, not only must compassion exist, as evidenced primarily by persistence, but as regards group membership and the sense of opportunity, so too must credibility exist.

The most credible, persistent, and therefore most effective outreach people, are those who themselves have lived on the skids, who have been on the street filled with self-recrimination and a sense of hopelessness, but are on the upswing. Such outreach people will only promote the programs, which have worked for them. While these outreach workers show their peers that there is room for hope, they also give them the necessary knowledge required to restore their sense of themselves as responsible decision makers.

The most effective outreach teams will always consist therefore, of people who may themselves still be in the process of self-imposed behavioral change. Their outreach efforts will therefore have a self-help quality as well. Much the way that Alcoholics Anonymous encourages alcoholics to stand up and talk to each other, the most healing and successful of all outreach efforts will be based upon the concept of self-help therapeutics, with an emphasis on social-

networking.

The basic goal of this approach is an increase in the number of quality social contacts between homeless people (the Outsiders) and the mainstream (The Insiders); between homeless people and their more upwardly mobile peers, and between homeless people and their service providers. This approach begins by asking them to tell you what they want, you need only believe them. And believe this: Unless you can find a way to give them what they are looking for, they will not come indoors.

What are they looking for? In most cases, two things, and one of them is the same thing everyone else in society whose problems are income related is looking for: Jobs and job training. From this perspective, a major reason that people are on the street may very well come down to a failure of outreach programs to understand basic marketing principles. Homeless street people are "shopping" for jobs and job training while programs are (often parentally) "selling" drug and alcohol treatment. While the professional outreach workers may be correct in their analysis of each person's existing problems, and the need for them to receive certain types of professional help, they will continue to fail in their outreach efforts unless they can first offer to the person a clear and demonstrable pathway to employment. Each homeless person should be thought of as a legitimate consumer

who knows what they need.

The other thing that most everyone living on the street is looking for is housing. But without income, references, and social services support, which they will not obtain outdoors, and for which they will not come indoors unless a credible pathway to employment is offered, their quest for housing is likely to go unfulfilled. If however, your outreach is informed by their stated needs, you will be able to assist them in the areas of group membership, economic opportunity, and self-esteem, all of the ingredients necessary to effect productive, behavioral change. They will, in the end, attain housing and be back in charge of their lives.

If a person's behavior reflects the integration of appraisals of others, usually their peers, which themselves reflect their interpretation of his behavior, then self-appraisal itself is social in nature. Understanding the sociology of a person's psychology becomes crucial if the goal is to devise strategies to help them. The fact that the micro-sociology of chronic homelessness is rarely considered when developing programs is part of what reduces their effectiveness.

People, homeless and otherwise, are very difficult to change. They form attachments to their lives by ways of personal, family, and community ties that can be resilient and supportive. Everybody is dependent and depended upon by

others, in the work place, and in the home. Thus one of the hallmarks of psychological health is the existence of a positive social network, regardless of the degree to which it is accessed.

Just as survival on the street for an individual may be linked to his joining an encampment so that others may "watch his back", or performing small favors because "one hand washes the other" or because "what goes around comes around", so too must escape from street-life involve social networking.

In these on-going ways, homeless or otherwise, people modify their behavior as they monitor their social status among their peers. Maturity is measured by an understanding that our actions do affect others just as we learn how their actions affect us. We are more likely to change our behavior if those around us are assisting these changes. The understanding of these processes spawned group therapy and more recently, family network therapy.

A person's social coping attitude is relevant to his or her stability and chance at upward mobility, two highly valued outcomes of our everyday striving. The resolving of one or another disability will be shown to be less relevant than the development of positive social networks. Status-centered outreach begins with this understanding of the micro-sociology of street-life.

It is interesting to note that while social workers

correctly might assess their homeless client as needing substance abuse treatment, the client might be uninterested or unconvinced of that, instead wanting something else, such as a job or job training. The process of conversion to the social service ideal of solving primary problems such as drug abuse, takes time, needs continuity, and is best carried off indoors. The way to achieve this, is by performing consumer status-centered outreach.

Our work clearly shows that the consumerism model can be effectively applied in outreach. Thought of as outreach's first step, it can greatly enhance the hope for success. However, the implications may go beyond outreach service provision. The problems we attempted to address, that of consumer resistance, seem to be occurring elsewhere in the spectrum of service delivery. As Snow and Anderson (1993) pointed out:

Even if the homeless find their way to the appropriate agency, they may encounter another obstacle: the not infrequent inflexibility of the bureaucratic operatives themselves.(2)

It is very possible then, that an increased sense of self-determination, perhaps beyond that which is typically engendered in the social work model, embodied in the approach discussed and studied here, may be useful in order to properly engage the person who is usually homeless and hoping, however privately, to get up from the ground.

Chapter Seven: Notes

1. See Peter Rossi and Howard Freeman's Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, page 216.
2. See David Snow and Leon Anderson's Down on Their Luck, page 140.

Appendix A

A SURVEY OF INDIGENT NEW YORKERS IN THE GRAND CENTRAL AREA

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A SURVEY OF INDIGENT NEW YORKERS IN THE GRAND CENTRAL AREA

INTRODUCTION

The observations reported here are based on interviews conducted with apparently homeless people in the Grand Central area.¹ The report is based on an initial survey of approximately 200 homeless people, encountered in and around Grand Central Station. Our interviewers approached homeless people at random and administered a structured, 30-minute questionnaire in exchange for \$8.00 worth of food coupons. The questionnaire asked for information on a variety of aspects of the homeless person's life including family problems, residence history, and reasons for being homeless. Participants were also questioned on drug and alcohol abuse and specific social-service needs.

We found a high degree of cooperation among the survey subjects, many of whom took responsibility for their homelessness and expressed a desire to work towards finding education, drug/alcohol treatment, jobs, homes. In the fall we propose to take an additional 200 surveys, increasing our original sample to 400, as a means of learning more about the growing problem of homelessness and the life experiences of homeless people.

We hope that this data will form the basis for a more focused study which will help us gain insight into the dynamics of homelessness and the specific nature of the individuals comprising this complex group.

¹ The four attached appendices provide detailed information about the sample.

A Profile of the Homeless

The sample consisted largely of black males under age 40. The majority reported having lived in New York City for over 10 years, with over 50% reportedly having lived in the city for over 20 years. Approximately 40% reported being high school graduates, 16% reported some college education, and 6.4% reported being college graduates. The majority of the subjects reported being single (i.e., never married). Only 10% reported being currently married and about a fourth reported being divorced, separated or widowed. Approximately three fourths reported having at least one child, with approximately 10% having more than three children. Nearly two thirds reported having relatives in the New York City area, but only about one third reported that they could count on these relatives for help.

Approximately one third of the subjects reported having been in the military or reserve. Approximately one third of the subjects reported having been a patient in a detoxification or treatment center for alcohol or drug abuse. Nearly half reported having been in a city or county jail for more than three days and about one third reported that they were on probation by a court order. Nearly none reported having served time in a state or federal prison. Over half reported having been victims of a mugging, rape, robbery or other crime.

The Residency of the Homeless

The subjects mostly resided in Manhattan. Approximately one fourth of 183 respondents reported that they had some place in New York City that they considered their home. Of those 54 subjects reporting a home, approximately one third cited an apartment or room which they considered their home, and another fourth cited a public shelter as home. Approximately 20% of 37 subjects who replied when questioned, reported that they paid to stay in the place they considered their home. Approximately 20% of the 54 subjects who claimed to have homes cited a public place or the street as their home. Therefore, the homeless overwhelmingly have a concept of "home" which is congruent with the mainstream definition of a home. Very few consider public places a true home.

Although one fourth of 183 subjects claimed a place to call "home", 92.6% of 188 respondents considered themselves to be "homeless" and about 95.4% of 153 of the respondents were classified as such by the interviewers. Thus, a small portion of the sample, possibly one eighth, have a "home" about which they have ambivalent feelings as a home. Nearly half of the subjects reported that they had slept in a public or private shelter in the last 24 hours. Over half of the subjects reported that they had slept in Grand Central Station, the subway or some other public place. About one fourth of the subjects refused to report where they would sleep in the next 24 hours or reported that they did not know where they would

sleep. About one fourth reported that they would sleep in Grand Central Station or another public place. About one third reported that they would sleep in a public shelter.

Nearly 20% reported having last had a home in an apartment, room or house in the last three months. Nearly half last had such a home in the past year. Approximately one third had last had a home in the past one to three years. About a fourth had last had such a home in over three years. Over two thirds of the respondents had last lived with others, mostly spouses and parents. Less than 3% reported having last lived with their children, although, as mentioned, approximately 75% of the respondents reported having children.

Employment Status

Overall, about 75% of the respondents had held a job in the past three years. Approximately one third of the subjects reported having a steady job in the past week or month and approximately 20% reported presently having a steady job. Nearly half had held a steady job in the last year.

The sample reported receiving income from a variety of sources. Approximately one fifth received income either from welfare or from begging, approximately one fourth received income either from working at a job or from handouts. Relatives, friends, and trading things were somewhat less commonly reported sources of income. Very few reported income from SSI, social security pensions, or disability. A sizeable portion (17.1%) received income from "other" unspecified

sources.

Over half of the subjects reported having received less than \$100.00 in income in the last 30 days. Approximately one fourth received between \$100 and \$400 in the last 30 days.

Approximately one fifth reported monthly incomes between \$400 and \$1500. A small portion, 1.2%, reported monthly incomes over \$2000.

Assistance to the Homeless

About one third of the homeless had received free clothing, and about one fifth received food stamps. Nearly two thirds received free meals but approximately one fourth reported having been hungry for more than two days out of the last 30 days.

Nearly all the subjects reported that housing and employment were the help which they needed most. Over half reported that they most needed health services and education. Slightly under a half reported that they needed public entitlements.

Approximately one fourth reported that they needed mental health services.

Approximately two thirds of the subjects blamed themselves for their current situation. A small portion blamed family members. Nearly none blamed their last employer or last landlord. About 15% blamed other unspecified sources.

Conclusion

If the sample reported here is truly representative of the population, then the preceding observations permit the following generalizations about the homeless in the Grand Central area.

The homeless are predominantly young adult black males with children from whom they are estranged. They are predominantly New York residents rather than itinerants. Their education, regardless of whether or not it has been completed, has not prepared them for regular employment. This may reflect either a failure of the educational system or the personal problems of the subjects which limit their educational and occupational functioning. Most accept personal responsibility for their current homelessness and feel they need help, especially with housing and employment.

The problems of this homogenous population are diverse, including substance abuse, mental health problems, and incomplete or ineffective education. Further analysis of the data is necessary to establish different categories within the homogenous homeless population identified here. This categorization would involve identifying the extent and types of problems which impair the functioning of the members of this population and thereby contribute to their homelessness. Many of these problems may be compounded with each other, such as family problems and substance abuse. Other problems, such as mental illness, may be specific to subpopulations.

A Profile of the Homeless

Male	89.6%
Female	10.4

White	14.6%
Black	71.4
Hispanic	13.5
Other	.5

under 18	.5%
under 21	2.6
under 30	36.3%
between 30 - 39	30.0
between 40 - 49	15.0
between 50 - 59	4.6
60 and over	2.1

Grades 0 - 7	3.7%
Grades 8 -11	31.4
High School Graduate	41.0
Some College	16.5
College Graduate	6.4
Post Graduate	.5

U.S.A.	85.3%
Puerto Rico	6.3
Carribean	2.6
South America	.5
Other	5.2

U.S.	.2%
Foreign	1.1
Immigrant - papers	4.2
Immigrant - no papers	.5

Appendix 1 (continued)A Profile of the HomelessTime lived in New York (n=187)

1 year or less	12.8%
2 years or less	15.5
3 years or less	20.9
4 years or less	22.5
5 year or less	27.3
Between 6 - 10 years	10.0
Between 10 - 20 years	10.0
Over 20 years	53.5%

Marital Status (n=189)

Presently married	10.6%
Divorced or separated	22.2
Widowed	3.7
Single (never married)	62.4

Children (n=180)

none	34.4%
1	25.6
2	18.9
3	11.7
4	3.3
5	4.4
6	1.1

Relatives in New York City area (n=188)

Yes	68.6%
No	31.4

Crime Victim

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
53.3	46.7	194

<u>Institutionalization</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Military	33.2%	66.3%	190
Drug treatment	28.6	70.9	189
Prison	2.1	77.4	190
Local Jail	46.8	52.7	188
Probation	30.2	69.3	189
Admitted overnight to a mental hospital	20.8	78.6	168

Appendix 2The Residency of the HomelessA place they call home (n=183)

Yes	24.0%
No	75.4

The place they called homeBorough (n=53)

Manhattan	75.5%
Bronx	7.5
Queens	3.8
Brooklyn	13.2

Location (n=54)

A room	11.1
An apartment	25.9
A house	5.6
a public place	9.3
A Shelter	24.1
The street	11.1
A car or truck	1.9
Other	11.1

Who pays for home (n=37)

Own Place	18.9
Someone else	75.7
Dont know	2.7
Refuse	2.7

Where they slept

<u>Location</u>	<u>last 24 hrs.</u> <u>(n=182)</u>	<u>next 24 hrs.</u> <u>(n=191)</u>
Municipal shelter	11.5%	34.6%
Private (church) Shelter	30.4	----
Grand Central Station	15.4	13.1
Penn Station	2.7	-----
Port Authority	1.6	-----
Subway	15.9	-----
Other public place	4.4	1.6
Street (doorway, park, etc.)	12.6	11.0
Hotel/motel	3.3	-----
Someone' home	----	2.6
Don't know	----	12.6
Refused	----	18.3

Appendix 3Employment Status of the HomelessCurrent Employment

Worked a job for pay in the last week	28.8%
Has not worked a job for pay in the last week	69.6 (n=191)
Worked a job for pay in the last month	38.7%
Has not worked a job for pay in the last month	60.7 (n=191)

Presently employed at a steady job (n=38)

	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>
Yes	47.4%	18
No	31.6	12

Months since their last steady job (n=158)

0 - 3 months	13.3%
4 - 6	12.0
7 - 9	11.4
10 - 12	17.2
13 - 24	12.6
25 - 35	8.2
3 years and more	25.3

Sources of Income

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Relatives	11.2%	87.1%	178
Friends	15.6	82.7	179
Unemployment Insurance	.6	98.9	178
SSI	3.4	95.5	179
Welfare	22.0	76.4	182
Social Security or pension	2.2	96.1	178
Disability	1.1	97.8	179
Working a job	25.7	73.2	179
Trading things	11.9	73.2	177
Handouts	24.9	74.0	177
Begging	20.1	78.8	177
Other	17.1	80.0	140

Income from all sources in last 30 days (n=165)

less than \$100.00	55.2%
\$100.00 - \$199.00	9.6
\$200.00 - \$399.00	15.1
\$400.00 - \$800.00	13.3
\$900.00 - \$1500.00	5.4
over \$2000.000	1.2

Appendix 4Assistance to the HomelessCount on relatives for help (n=171)

Yes	34.5
No	65.5

Types of Assistance Received

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Food Stamps	22.3%	76.6%	188
Free Clothing	33.0	66.5	188
Free Meals	75.7	23.8	189
Offers to Share Lodging	8.6	90.3	185

Hungry for two days or more in the last 30 days (n=191)

Yes	26.2%
No	72.8

Help reportedly needed most

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Housing	95.2	4.8	166
Employment	88.7	11.3	194
Health Services	63.8	11.3	127
Mental Health Services	26.1	73.9	119
Public Entitlements	47.8	52.2	115
Education	60.3	39.7	116
Other	36.1	62.5	72

Who they blame for their current situation (n=168)

Self	73.2%
Relatives	6.5
Last landlord	1.8
last employer	1.2
Other	16.7

Appendix B

NETWORK AGENCIES

Primary Linkages

The following are social service agencies and other organizations that provide direct and/or in-kind services to our clients and/or to the Network Agencies. The majority of them regularly attend either or both the Network Social Services Fairs and the monthly Agencies' meetings.

AGENCY

ADAPT
Church of St. Francis of Assisi
Connections
Cosmic Coffee Shop
Covenant House
Create House
Dorot Homeless Prevention
The Dwelling Place
Employment Program for
 Recovering Alcoholics
Grand Central Partnership
Harlem Hospital Center
Harriet Tubman Family Center
Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen
The HOPE Program
Housing Works
Jewish Board of Family and
 Children's Services
Manhattan Bowery Corporation
Manhattan Bowery Corp. Outreach
Matthew Bender
MBC Residential Care Center
Neighborhood Artists
NYC Dept. of Health
NYC Div. of AIDS Services
NYC Human Resources Admin.

NYC TAP Center #8

NYC TAP Center #9
The Open Door
Samaritan Village
Stratford Arms Residence
Traveler's Aid
Traveler's Aid / Job Access
Vanderbilt YMCA

SERVICE(S)

Drug-related Workshops
Site
Outreach / Referrals
Breakfasts
Youth Services
Transitional Housing for Men
Transitional Housing for Seniors
Shelter for Older Women

Employment Training
Drop-in Services/Work Training
Health Consultations
Shelter
Lunch for PTE
Employment Training
Housing for People w/ AIDS

Eviction Prevention
Drop-in Services
Outreach/Psychiatric Evals.
Volunteers
Transitional Housing
Housing Development
Day Room Presentations
Day Room Presentations
Entitlements Assistance /
Shelter & SRO Referrals
Day Room Presentations /
Employment Information
Day Room Presentations
Drop-in Services
Drug Services Referrals
Transitional Res. for Seniors
Travel Assistance
Job Preparation
Basketball Tournament Site

34th Street Partnership / Social Services
November 1994

Visiting Nurses
Volunteers of America
Women in Need

Outreach / Referrals
Mentally Ill Transition Housing
Drug and Alcohol Services

Total: 35

Secondary Linkages

The following are social service agencies, businesses, and other organizations that on which the Network depends for client services, staff training, information and referrals, volunteers, and donations.

AGENCY

SERVICE(S)

Access Development Fund
Bellevue CSS/MICA Program
Bellevue Hospital Center/TLC
Castle Hill Realty
CUCS
Columbia University
School of Social Work
Cross Bronx Realty
Day-Top
Emmaus House
Gay Men's Health Crisis
HANAC Mobile RAP Van
Harlem Restoration Thrift Shop
Housing and Services
The Jericho Residence
Lamb's Center for Health Services
Literacy Volunteers of NYC
Lutheran Medical Center
Medical Arts Detox
Metro 5000
New Castle Realty
NYC Relief
NYS Ofc. of Alcoholism and
Substance Abuse Services
Novelty Realty
Olivieri Center
P.K. Realty
Related Realty
SRO Provider's Group

Housing Referrals
Mentally ill Men's shelter
Accepts referrals
Realtor
Housing Information

Student Interns
Realtor
Information / Referrals
Shelter
Information / Referrals
Employment Info. / Referrals
Donations
Information on SRO vacancies
Drug Rehabilitation
Health Services / Lunches
Literacy Classes
Drug Detoxification
Drug Detoxification
Realtor
Realtor
Food Van

Information
Realtor
Drop-in Services for Women
Realtor
Realtor
Information

Total: 27

Appendix C

34th Street Partnership / Social Services
October 1983

NETWORK SOCIAL SERVICES FAIR ACTIVITIES CHART

5:00	9:00	9:30	10:30	11:30
Distribute Invitation Flyers (PTE Outreach Team) Distribution Sites: - Macy's - Penn Station - Home Svcs Bk - 1,2,3, & F Stations - PATH - Greeley Sq. - Herald Sq. - West 31st St.	Registration Breakfast (PTE Food Services) Orientation (34th St. Part. Staff) Client Survey	Agency Presentations (EPRA GCP ARC Harlem Hospital HOPE Program JBFC MBC Open Door Samaritan Village Traveler's Aid Visiting Nurses VOA WIN)	One-on-one Agency/Client Consultations Schedule follow-up appointments	Check-out & \$5 COMPENSATION On-going Tracking and Follow-up: - Day Room Attendance - Agency Progress Reports - Membership Cards

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Homelessness and Status Centered Outreach
Selected Bibliography

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