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### Harbor Light: Organization on Skid Row Today

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HARBOR LIGHT: ORGANIZATION ON SKID ROW TODAY

by

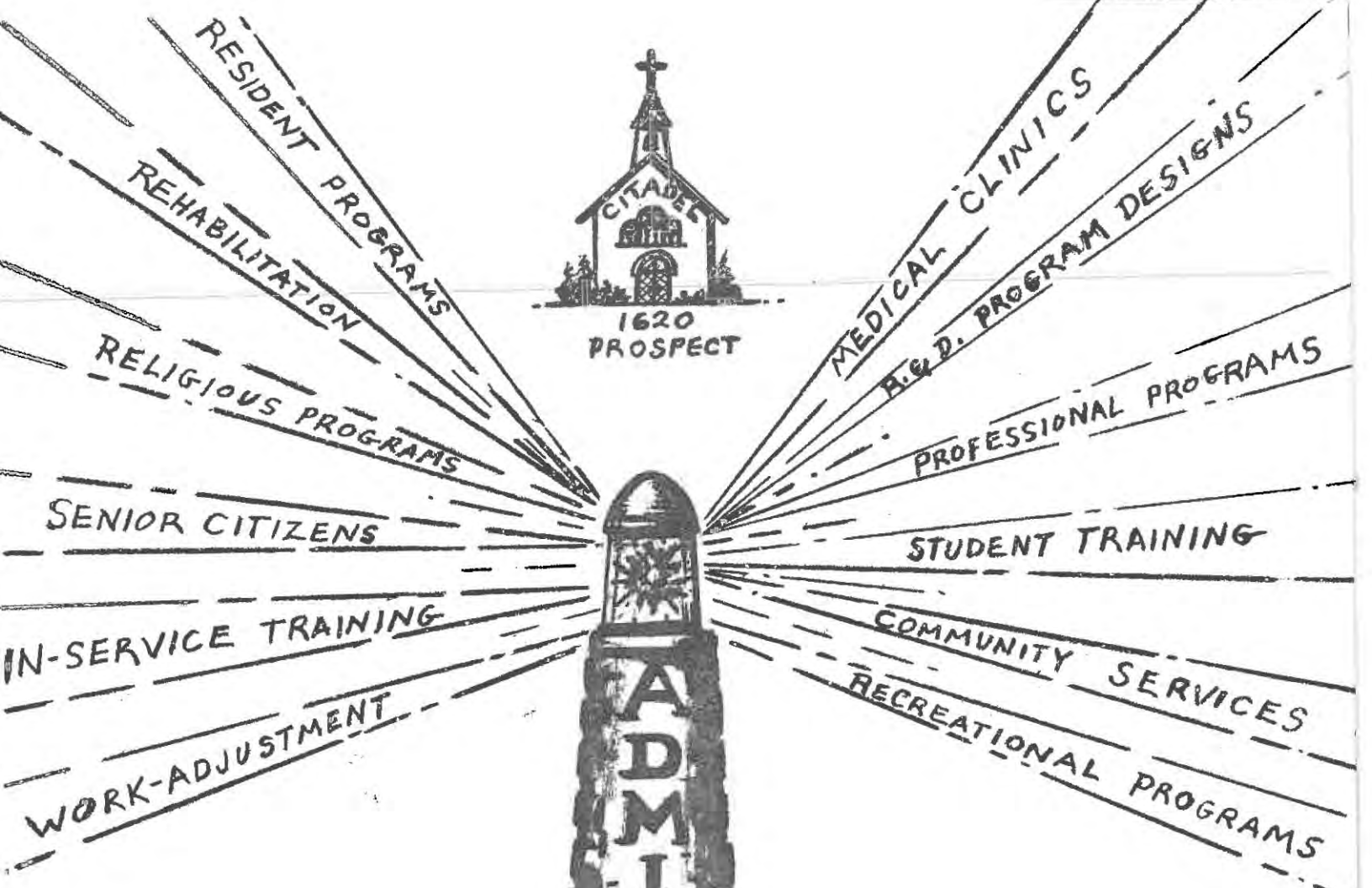
Alison Evelyn Woodward

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirement for the degree Master of Arts to the Department of Sociology of Oberlin College.

OBERLIN COLLEGE

Oberlin, Ohio

1973



**ADMINISTRATION**



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**HARBOR LIGHT COMPLEX**

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CLEVELAND OHIO 44115

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This study of interaction was aided immeasurably by interaction with the supportive communities of Oberlin and Cleveland. Major support has come from the sociology-anthropology faculty of Oberlin College. J. Milton Yinger originally encouraged me to undertake this project. He helped shape my ideas about the role of religion and served as a most inspiring professional role model. Stephen Cutler, ever-responsive to my persistent pounding on his door, served as the best of advisers. His discipline and rigor directed my formulation and expression of rambling and unfocused thoughts. Without his firm support, this project would never have reached completion. Marc Bernstein pointed me down the trail of organizational literature, while Albert McQueen left an imprint on the social-psychological aspects of the project. My theoretical perspectives were powerfully molded by the high teaching standards of the department.

The support of Oberlin College and the Committee on Graduate Studies made my off-campus research possible, as well as my on-campus survival.

The social welfare community of Cleveland offered overwhelming cooperation. Major Edward Dimond and Doug Hodges of the Salvation Army are to be especially thanked for opening so many doors. My appreciation goes to the men of Harbor Light and the staff who gave willingly of their time to a "nosy researcher." The many agencies who offered hospitality and information are heartily thanked. Doug McGraw of the Federation for Community Planning helped mightily in introducing me to these generous people.

Finally thanks go to the friends who put up with my endless stories of interviewing and strange skid row experiences. Mr. William March, through his drafting skills, knowledge of Cleveland and continuing personal support, ranks first among them.

## PREFACE

The homeless man has always been a visible portion of America's urban life, and a most intriguing portion. My own interest in the homeless began through historical research done on the rise of the American city and the place of the hobo in American life. Through urban sociology I developed additional concerns about the place of the skid row community in the life of the central business districts of cities.

The place of the homeless man raises questions of both deviancy and social control. The attempts of society to rehabilitate the homeless and the special interaction of society at large with the more limited community of the skid row man through the rehabilitation agency serve as the focus of this paper.

I introduce the work in Chapter I with background information on the skid row area and the homeless man. Chapter II, a review of the literature, follows this, including major theoretical perspectives on the problem. It summarizes some of the major quantitative studies and ethnographies on the area.

Subsequent sections deal with the research setting of the Cleveland skid row area, and the specific organizational setting and its suitability to my proposed research. Chapter IV of the thesis deals with some special methodological consider-

ations and the techniques used to investigate the problem. My hypotheses are applied to a specific study of problems presented at The Harbor Light Center in Cleveland, an agency devoted to treatment of the skid row man, and are presented in the fifth Chapter.

The remainder of the work is devoted to a presentation of the results of the research. Four chapters are devoted to an analysis of the available social welfare services, of the specific clientele using the Harbor Light Center, and of the program and officers at the Harbor Light Center. Conclusion of the thesis presents a summary of the results presented and general discussion, with brief consideration of the implications of the study for the Harbor Light Center and for the field.

An appendix presents specifics on measures used in the study, complete information on the social welfare agency interviews, and copies of the two questionnaires, as well as follow-up letters employed in the mail portion of the research.

This thesis attempts to describe the interaction between the men of Harbor Light and the management of that organization, both in terms of the ecological setting of the city and the internal situation of the particular agency.

### SKID ROW AND ITS MEN: AN INTRODUCTION

The skid rower does not bathe, eat regularly, dress respectably, marry or raise children, attend school, vote, own property or regularly live in the same place. He does little work of any kind, and does not even steal. The skid rower does nothing, he just is. He is everything all the rest of us try not to be...and perhaps because the terms of his existence challenge our most basic values, we respond by calling him derelict and using other expressions of contempt. (Wallace, 1965, p.144)

The homeless man is an outlander to the stable social system of work, family, community, and church. He congregates on skid row. Economically at the bottom of the social order, he is usually unemployed, and sometimes living on welfare and disability payments. He works only on a temporary or spot basis. His area and his needs have been a chronic concern of cities. Sociologists of the Chicago school, such as Nels Anderson (1923) were among the first to study these men who deviate from and reject the existing social order. Often these sociological descriptions were colored with distaste. The skid row area has always been the city's least desirable in terms of housing and population. While the location is close to the center of town and the major transportation lines, it is always to the side of the major business district, leering at the normal world.

The skid row area has undergone major changes. In the past the depression and economic cycles changed skid row. Today urban renewal practices and improvements in the social welfare system have effects. Skid row men have evolved from the returning

and unemployed veterans of the twenties, to the migrant and hobo of the thirties and forties, to the lost and aimless, disabled and disaffiliated who live there today. While at first romanticized as the home of the hobo and the radical intellectual, the row today is no longer a street of dreams and legends. Nels Anderson reported:

The hobo belongs with the pre-Hollywood cowboys and the lumberjacks of the Paul Bunyan legends. He has a place too with the prospector who used to roam the hills, leading a burrow and expecting always to strike a pick into a lode of rich ores. (Anderson, 1940, p.21)

Just as the population has changed, so has the location and atmosphere. Urban renewal has ripped out whole blocks of old hotels, and the skid rows simply relocate in nearby deteriorating neighborhoods. Yet even with change in the picture, much remains the same. A description of the population and the housing available would be applicable with few changes to almost every major city in the country.

There are few young on skid row other than crippled remnants of war and the occasional drug addict. The young labor force has been replaced by the elderly disabled and the retired. Stable employment and the disappearance of seasonal labor opportunities have robbed the area of the younger migrant and steady, although occasional, worker. The row no longer functions as a pool of unskilled labor. Those jobs are gone with automation and unionization. Pension and relief benefits enable some to find other housing than skid row, although many of the area regulars are pensioners. The physical condition and size of skid row seems to vary with the stability of the nation's economy and the social benefits available to the misfits of society. When welfare pays



enough for better housing, many of the pensioners will leave the area.

Several characteristics are commonly held by the skid row man. Donald Bogue, who wrote a study on the Chicago skid row area (Bogue, 1963) provides the greatest amount of quantitative information available on the skid row man. He worked with a sample of 613 men. He noted that three conditions are held commonly by the skid row man: They are first of all homeless, and often migrate between residences within a city and between cities. Secondly, the men are poor, working irregularly or at low rates of pay and subsisting on welfare. Thirdly, the men often have social problems which the society at large does not share. Drinking, marital difficulties, criminal backgrounds and assorted health problems are all found in surprising degrees on skid row. Whether it is these problems that bring men to skid row or whether the problems are created later could be the subject of another thesis. Indeed, much of the work on the area focuses on the motivations bringing a man to skid row life.

Whether the men come to skid row because of economic considerations as Bogue suggests, or in search of complementary community, as Spradley suggests, (Spradley, 1971) when they arrive, they find a neighborhood and community life which parallels, if perverts, the neighborhood found for instance among Herbert Gans' Boston Italians. (Gans, 1962) Much as the street serves as a center of activity for other lower class groups, as those studied by Whyte and Liebow, (Whyte, 1955; Liebow, 1967) so it is the center for life on skid row. Anthropologists who have



studied the area, passing as members of the community note the public nature of interaction there.

Skid row is a community, if for no other reason than that life must go on even if one is on skid row...it is a distinct and recognizable way of life, a special community with its own subculture that leads to the definition of the skid rower as a member of the skid row community...the institutional complex--the low lodging housing, the itinerant laborers, the relief and welfare systems, and the law... (Wallace, 1965,p.142)

are there, providing common situations from city to city with only regional variation. The street relationships are fairly anonymous, usually only on a first name or nickname basis, but nonetheless provide a human interaction of regular sort.

In most towns the men who really utilize the community's resources are the locals, who were called in the thirties, the "home guard." They now make up the majority of men utilizing agencies on skid row. The transient no longer plays the large role he once did. The area has become more stable.

The skid row man and his community form a kind of eco-social system with the rest of the city. As several researchers have pointed out, both elements of the system need each other.<sup>1</sup> The skid row area provides anonymous drinking places for the rest of the city. The skid row man and his community provide clients for the social welfare system. The larger community, through the social welfare system is often responsible for the skid row man's continued survival. The relationship is an interlocking one. In the area where the larger society and the skid row community

<sup>1</sup> H. Warren Dunham (1953) and Samuel E. Wallace (1965) are among the authors who have used a systems theory in describing skid row. There seems to be a continuing and ongoing relationship which provides needs for both parties or elements in the system, thereby supporting this interpretation.

most frequently interact, the social welfare agency, the system is to be seen most clearly. While one might think that the man reaped all the benefit of the association, in actuality, the agency depends on clients for survival. Skid row

institutions have trouble because they are often dependent on the free labor offered by the men. An institution without clients would have to close down. Institutions must maintain a certain client load, or budget allocations will be jeopardized. (Wiseman, 1970)

The relationship of the man and the services of the city has best been studied by Shirley Wiseman, who described the pattern of agency usage of the skid row habitué, and called it the "loop."

This paper will investigate the relationship of the skid row man to his environment by an intensive study of men at one particular agency, and the interactions between the men and management at that agency which help to promote the survival of each. Each member of the interaction between the agency and man defines the situation, as W. I. Thomas (1923) would say, towards his own particular ends, and knows the proper manipulations to achieve his ends. As in any systematic relationship, there is a delicate balance present. At times one or the other participant will stand to gain. When an organization adds a new staff member, for example, clients can exploit that new member's naiveté and unfamiliarity with the rules for their own benefit.

Many different sorts of agencies serve the area, varying from the national organizations serving the homeless, such as the Salvation Army, to the local crop of variations on themes of treatment for the derelict. The theories of treatment are developed through analysis of the causation of homelessness. For

example, a Christian mission organization might focus primarily on Bible study classes for treatment, as it believes spiritual weakness at the bottom of the problem, whereas a hospital believing in disease causation, would treat medically.

While fulfilling the needs of the skid row man, the agencies also fulfill the needs of the larger society for charitable activity. Each agency is supported by a shadowy group of donors who provide food and clothing, work and donations for on-going programs. Most agencies have boards of trustees and ladies' auxiliaries involved in securing this support. Thus, by providing opportunities for community service, the small community within skid row becomes part of a larger social-ecological system.

The agencies in turn contribute to the formation of the skid row community. The men in a city who habitually use one agency or another come to know each other. The agencies may be seen as providing communication centers, where men may get together to share information on surviving both within this organization and in others on skid row. Whereas relations on the street are numerous, they are also fairly anonymous, but once in a rehabilitation society, he gets to know the other men more intimately, eating and working with them. Men who are encountered in agency situations may become drinking companions.

The men on skid row deviate from standard social goals and norms. Separated from the larger society, the men create a sub-culture, with values and norms in opposition, if not outright rebellion to the society at large. While their values seem to retreat from normal society, rather than consistently

rebelling, thereby placing them midway on the continuum between subculture and contraculture (Yinger, 1960), many of their behavioral norms affront the society at large when visible, such as their public drinking habits. As the skid row community becomes less transient, and its members more stably situated in the community, the subculture becomes richer and more supportive. Wallace (1965), the best ethnographer of the skid row "way of life" explains the necessity of an emergent life style in the ecological system of skid row. He sees the sense of community identity and subcultural values arising not only in reaction to society in Merton's (1957) sense of retreatism (and perhaps rebellion?) but also through the natural processes of interaction within a small and sharply defined area:

One effect of the self- and community-imposed isolation has been the emergence of a skid row subculture. Skid rowers share a similar problem of adjustment to their deviance and are in effective interaction with each other. (Wallace, 1965, p. 149)

The man defines situations defensively on his own behalf. For the most part, the man is aware of the stigma associated with his status. The rest of the community makes clear his low status through various signs of distaste. (Goffman, 1963) He receives pathological descriptions of his behavior at every door. As Wiseman points out, most treatment facilities operate

with a social background of middle class decency. Skid row is a prime manifestation of social pathology--the physical area is called blighted, and the residents are seen as pathological. Professionals see life there from their own sociological mirror, as having attenuated social relations, and as boring and insecure ways of life. (Wiseman, 1970, p.5)

The man realizes his society, and the agencies that serve him



are out of bounds for normal citizens. For instance, a man with a home could not turn to the Men's Social Service Center for help. The man feels the efforts of the groups who aid him are

at the same time admired and looked down upon for catering to hopeless cases. Their efforts on behalf of the skid row man are considered to be voluntary acts of pity above and beyond the customary call of social duty. (Bogue, 1963, p. 407)

One of the main ways that the skid row man has contact with outside society is through panhandling. The skid row man here receives messages of dislike and distaste, even from "marks" who cooperatively give him his "seven cents to make up the cost of a beer." The skid row panhandler sees himself in the mirrors of other men, and modifies his performances so that he can maintain his own life style with support from the outside community.<sup>2</sup>

Every man on skid row is aware that there are other ways of life. No man starts life in the all-male society of skid row. This consciousness of status loss does not ease the problems of adjustment. Yet the atmosphere is warm there, and hostile community attitudes are neutralized by the men through rejection of social values and blatant use of social benefits, much as the juvenile delinquent neutralizes societal disapproval through appropriate group behavior (Sykes, and Matza, 1957)

To reject society, as Wallace points out, the men glorify skid row. When they contact outside agencies, they use the tactic of demand as right on every contact, so that the social agency from the established group is theoretically on the defense.

---

<sup>2</sup>The relationship involved in panhandling is subtle and highly dependent on dramatic presentation. Interesting insights are available in Gilmore, 1940; Goffman, 1959; and less directly, in Strauss, 1959.

"Whether the agency is public or private, the homeless man when appealing for aid, appears to expect it as a right." (Wallace, 1965, p. 149) Likewise, when researchers or "tourists" visit the area, the skid row man is prone to exalt his past. Spradley (1971) and Straus (1948) have both devoted large portions of their work to describing intelligent guides to skid row who "bamboozle" the researcher in their glorification of past.<sup>4</sup>

The skid row man cloaks his hostility toward his external environment and the beneficent nature of his social arena through extolations of his existence and its peculiar customs, such as "great drunks" and easy "marks." Ways of cleverly "getting by" are the ideal on skid row. "Getting by" involves the utilization of agencies for shelter and food with minimal work and loss of independence. While minimizing his own work, the man must maximize his appearance of cooperation so as to extend his welcome at the agency. Likewise involved in "getting by" on skid row is the exploitation of skid row living situations. Men glorify clever ways of finding free shelter.

More than one type of skid row man utilizes the resources of the area, which is seldom clarified in the literature. Not all who use skid row institutions are typical skid row residents. While Bogue (1963) emphasizes the individual differences, those who speak of skid row life styles often fail to point out that many are unfamiliar with ways of "getting by", surviving, and

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<sup>3</sup> The chapter on methodology will consider ways of avoiding being taken in by self-glorifying respondents, although this problem is very difficult to totally avoid in research with the group because of this subcultural norm.

the aforementioned "loop". Some men, like those focused upon by Wallace and Wiseman, are true habitués of skid row. Others, however, are still adjusting to the life. In this period of adjustment, their utilization of resources is different than when they are fully acclimated to the environment. They are less "cynical" in their usage, perhaps, than men who have been through the agencies many times, and know the procedures.

Wiseman points out that the men on skid row have an ambivalent attitude about their situation. She describes the stages of acquiescence to the "seductive qualities of skid row." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 43) The men who have recently come to the row are still close enough to their old environment to remember what it was like. Not having developed the support of the skid row sub-cultural norms and the friendships necessary on skid row, they may have some desire to regain what was lost. However, their every contact with social welfare personnel makes them more aware of the easy alternatives in the skid row community. If they lose their independence, they may find it possible to pass on skid row, to become used to the way of life, running for food and shelter, but somehow always "getting by." These men are the men still in a no-man's land between normal society and skid row.

Historically, skid row has always had its residents. They change and are in various stages of adjustment to the situation, but the environment remains the same. It is a matter of interpretation as to whether it is a place of dirt, blight, and filth as reported by Bogue, or one of rich social contacts and easy ways of living, as reported by Wiseman and Wallace. There are definite environmental interactions that take place in this

setting, as two separate groups, the larger society represented by the social agency, and the subcultural grouping meet, each attempting to reach particular ends. The social agency hopes eventually to eradicate the skid row alcoholic. The skid row man seeks temporary shelter, food, and a possible few days of sobriety. He has little thought of long-range reform, unless still a newcomer attached to his old social goals. It is this situation of environmental interaction that will be examined in this paper, both on the microscopic level of an individual agency in the Cleveland area, and on the macroscopic level of other agencies in the environment providing varied alternatives for the skid row man.



I

Two major sociological questions are raised on any visit to the skid row environment. First- Why does skid row exist? Second- Is the skid row environment a social or asocial environment? A third concern often raised is with treatment and rehabilitation on skid row. This question is tied inextricably with the first. When one knows why the problem of skid row exists, its eradication becomes easier. This is a form of ameliorative sociology, but unfortunately, most of the theorists have been unable to propose a successful treatment program.

There are several theoretical schools on the causation of skid row. The first, which might be called the economic grouping, also appeared first historically. The second may be called the sociological group, claiming that under- or de-socialization brings men to skid row. A third group, often intermingled with the sociological group might be called psychological. Concomitant to the last two groups is the alcoholism theory which posits that improper social uses of alcohol because of personality defects or lack of socialization brings men to skid row. A brief review of these major areas is helpful in understanding the professional perspective which many treatment agencies hold about skid row. In the main, all these theories suggest that there is a pathological nature to the existence of skid row, although some of the theorists, (Wallace, 1965; & Wiseman, 1970) are careful to cloak this aspect of their approach.

Bogue is perhaps the major proponent of the economic theory

today, although the work of Minehan and Anderson in the late twenties (Minehan, 1934 & Anderson, 1923) also used variations on themes of economic privation to support their thoughts about skid existence. As Bogue points out,

almost 80% of the men interviewed came to skid row under economic duress, with no motive other than to get a job, live in a cheap place or to seek temporary help from a mission. Only about 11% said the reason for coming was to drink without the inhibiting influence of friends and relatives. As would be expected, almost all who came to skid row for this reason were chronic alcoholics at the time of the interview. (Bogue, 1963, p.308)

During the depression men flocked to skid row as a center of casual labor employment, and there was a shelter for the man who was a helpless victim of social circumstance. In Minehan's sample of 400 homeless children, 387 had left home because of hard times. (Minehan, 1934, p.xiv) Another variation on the economic theme is that of Dunham. He presents an ecological theory that the low rent districts select a certain population through economics. Therefore, skid rows appear because there are men who cannot afford anything better. They own no other home than the streets. This theory is easily criticized in that other low rent districts in the city do not necessarily become skid rows with a majority of homeless in their population. (See Dunham, 1953)

Such theories suggest that the skid row resident chooses skid row in a search for an affordable and congenial environment. For the most part social and psychological theories work not on this premise of economic choice but rather suggest those on skid row seek shelter there because of abnormality. These theories support the prevailing community attitudes that skid row men are disturbed or ill.

The men are assumed to be suffering from personality disorganiz-

ation, which results from, for example, status loss. The men may betray a basic dependency pattern which is reflected in a refusal to accept responsibility. They may be alienated from society's basic values and thereby forced into either rebellion or retreat, as Merton suggests. (Merton, 1957, p.133) Finally, they may lack social integration, as would seem to be the case in any examination of the life patterns of mobility and failure. (Wallace, 1965, p.166)

Demographic data seems to support undersocialization theories which state that the men are undersocialized to normal ways of life and therefore seek an easier form of adjustment through either alcohol or the skid row community, to the demands of everyday life. They have an uneven employment record, showing an inability to deal with the demands of job situations, or perhaps a lack of socialization to the Protestant work ethic. Likewise, the skid row men are either never married, or in some stage of marital disintegration, either divorce or separation. This could indicate a lack of socialization to the ideal of the nuclear family, or an incapability to cope with the role demands on the American husband.

They trade stability in society for freedom from responsibility and cares, those things which most people accept as inextricable parts of society. This suggests that the skid row man may be a dependent sort, looking for the easy way out habitually. Alcohol, as will be discussed later, is often an important part of this easy way out, as is the use of social welfare institutions, which encourage in their very treatment programs, an ongoing dependency on institutionalized care.

The undersocialization of these men begins at an early age. Many have lost parents in childhood.<sup>1</sup> Some have begun institution-  
alization after this loss. These children were left without  
equipment for establishing normal social relationships. Many are  
also failures in school situations. Many drop out short of com-  
pleting the educational ladder, missing graduation at one level  
or another. For Pittman and Gordon, this indicates an inability to  
finish things. (Pittman and Gordon, 1958, p.110) The undersociali-  
zation theory basically assumes that the men are in some way infer-  
ior to the rest of society before they reach skid row.

Theorists such as Wallace (1965), Rooney (1961), Wiseman (1970),  
and Rubbington (1958) sharply contest the undersocialization  
theory. They feel that certain people may be more likely than  
others to live on skid row, such as mobile workers, welfare  
clients and those looking for an area congenial to the preserva-  
tion of anonymity. (Wallace, 1965, p.166) Men are not under-  
socialized, according to this group, but rather desocialized.  
They learn to function in their new environment by shedding the  
patterns that helped them get along, however feebly, in the old.  
Not everyone who has traits of the undersocialized man becomes  
a skid row resident. According to the desocialization theory,  
a man on skid row loses socialization patterns he once had.  
While the undersocialization theory suggests the man has lacked  
ways of getting along since childhood, desocialization says:

From the viewpoint of respectable society, the skid row  
becomes desocialized, that is educated outside the main-  
stream of American society and unable to live within it.  
Once he has been labeled a deviant, self-awareness is forced  
upon the individual. He must face the fact that now he

---

<sup>1</sup>Some statistics on parental loss of skid row men are to be  
found in Minehan, 1934; Sutherland, 1936; Pittman and Gordon,  
1958; Straus, 1946.



is indeed on skid row. The same label increases his separation from the wider society and encourages him to enter into the ever-closer participation with those similarly isolated. Thus he is pushed still further into deviance, additional arrests, workhouse socialization and complete isolation until he is finally a full and complete member of the deviant community. (Wallace, 1965, p. 174)

Two arguments support the desocialization school. First, not all those undersocialized end up on skid row. Second, undersocialization suggests that skid row society is lacking in complexity. The desocialization proponents demonstrate that skid row has many complex social features. An undersocialized person would thus face social stress of a different sort in the skid row environment, but nonetheless social situations would be present. By turning to skid row, a man is not escaping social relationships, but rather dissolving old ones, and discovering that life on skid row is full of semi-organized and organized groups, stable friendships and satisfying social relationships. The desocialization process opens the option that some men are on skid row because they prefer to be there. Not because they are economic, social, or psychological misfits, but because they can find the companionship and interaction on skid row unavailable to them in other arenas of society. The men on skid row are socialized to the extent that they can enjoy and initiate meaningful personal interactions. Skills necessary for finding and holding employment are not unknown (as the undersocialization theory suggests,) but rather simply lost through lack of application. (Wallace, 1965, p. 164)

Perhaps some synthesis of the two theories is possible, for surely the demographic data of the undersocialization group is hard to disprove. However, the desocialization theory seems more compelling.

I would suggest an integrative theory. Many of the men on skid row have the characteristics described in the undersocialization theory, characteristics that have made them lonely and unhappy in the larger society. By choosing the society of skid row, and picking up the ways of that community, they no longer have to operate in a milieu in which they are uncomfortable. Therefore, they drop the old habits, (as the desocialization school suggests) to pick up the new ones. They find a form of anonymity and warm companionship unknown to them before, because of the easier social ways of the skid row group and the easing presence of alcohol.

Another group of theorists posits that there are particular personality types on skid row. Because of their fall from larger society, these men have a view of life shaped by their intake of alcohol, a "how" orientation, a feeling of powerlessness coupled with a sense of the need for guile in a hostile world, an ability to adjust to permanent impermanence, extreme independence from others coupled with an ability to accept institutional dependency from time to time. These several characteristics, presented by Wiseman, and supported by Wallace are psychological characteristics ferreted out by direct observation, but unvalidated by any extensive formalized research. (Wiseman, p.5)

Vanderpool likewise points out that while it is generally agreed that there is no "alcoholic personality per se" there is a general assertion that alcoholics feel inadequate, they lack self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-acceptance. Vanderpool shows that the alcoholic has even greater negative self-conception

while drinking than when not. (Vanderpool, 1969, p.60) For a man on skid row, the self-concept would be even lower than for his middle class peers because all ordinary status rights have been deprived of the skid row alcoholic. All he has are the new rights conferred upon him by his drinking buddies, and long experience has shown him that the only trust one can have for these "friends" is while the bottle is still passing. (Interview with Harbor Light men, March, 1973)

None of the above theories even begin to cope with the problems of the means of social adjustment on skid row. The prime elixir of life on skid row is alcohol. None of the above accounts for the heavy use of alcohol on skid row in deviant patterns, although some, such as the desocialization approach, are more frank in relating its importance than others, such as Bogue's work which seems calculated to show alcohol's lack of importance.

Not every man drinks on skid row, but those that do, do so in a public pattern that seems pathological to the rest of society. It is often this pattern that provokes the established society to step in and try to rehabilitate the men. The lack of social adjustment and lack of stable employment could be allowed to continue, but the public patterns of life and drinking make the men socially unacceptable, especially given their visible position in the downtown area. It is primarily because of drinking that the skid row man and his society at large end up interacting.

II

While some, especially those such as Dunham and Wallace who propose ecological and desocialization theories for skid row's existence, might feel that skid row will never disappear, it is difficult to convince officials of this. One researcher suggested that vitamin pills and therapy be handed out with the drinks in the local tavern, as treatment facilities are not the most popular areas of congregation on skid row. (Dumont, 1967) Few public officials would buy this encouragement of patterns. Most feel public funds should continue to go to rehabilitation services, no matter how failure-ridden, rather than to ameliorative services in the neighborhoods themselves which might be used to a greater extent by the population affected.

Many non-professionals are convinced that skid row exists to support the poor drunks of the town. A more reasonable explanation for the use of alcohol on skid row is that it provides a pleasant and reliable form of social adjustment and is used in ritual reinforcement of personal relations, as for example in the bottle gang, so well described by Wallace. (1965, p.186) While Bogue, in his survey of Chicago, was convinced that only 10% of the residents were there because of alcoholism, many are nonetheless heavy drinkers, whether chronically alcoholic or not. For Bogue there were also many teetotalers or highly moderate drinkers. Other studies however, demonstrate that alcohol is an important factor in skid row, whether used by the chronic alcoholic or by the steady excessive drinker. Strauss, working from a Salvation Army intake center, was able to classify 57.7% of his sample of



201 people as steady excessive drinkers. 20.9% were irregular excessives, and 9.4% were unclassified excessive. 12% of his sample however, even though taken from a group of drinkers, were moderate drinkers, or known to teetotal. Even in this sample, not all drinkers were alcohol abusers. (Straus, 1946) Bogue makes the point that it is not correct to generalize that all men are on skid row because of alcohol. However, alcohol remains one of the things that seems to tie the society together. Stories about experiences with whiskey and wine rank next to crime exploits and women in popularity, according to one Cleveland administrator who was formerly a skid row alcoholic. (Stella Maris, March 1973 interview.)

A study by Straus and McCarthy indicated that,

While large proportions of homeless men exhibit pathological drinking and resort to alcohol for the relief of severe discomforts arising from the social environment, psychological adjustments and physical condition, a significant segment of this population, perhaps half, does not exhibit the criteria of alcohol addiction, such as insatiability and lack of control over drinking. (Straus and McCarthy, 1951, p.604)

There is a difference between the pathological alcoholic and the heavy social drinker which skid row harbors. The pathological drinker is virtually an addict, seeking relief from discomfort through the effects of alcoholic beverages. The striving for alcoholic intoxication is insatiable, and the control of drinking level is lost to the true alcoholic. This alcoholic usually prefers to drink alone. Only 12% of those interviewed by Straus indicated preference for drinking alone, while a sample of members of Alcoholics Anonymous indicated that 82% preferred solitary drinking. (Straus, 1946, p. 372) The addictive drinker does not look for participation in drinking groups, because he wants the whole bottle

to himself. He needs to maintain a steady alcohol level in his bloodstream. The typical skid row drinker, on the other hand, according to Straus and McCarthy, goes on infrequent bouts with the bottle.

In an impressive number of cases, the pattern of drinking seemed relatively flexible and was determined primarily by the availability of funds and their particular working conditions. Many reported that when working on jobs where they were paid every day, they drank to excess to the extent of funds every night. When paid less frequently, prolonged drinking with a certain degree of regulation was more common than the all out bender. (Straus & McCarthy, 1951, p.608)

Reasons for drinking on skid row are similar to those presented to explain skid row's existence. Pittman and Gordon, for example, suggest undersocialization is the reason for heavy skid row drinking, as the situations of drinking on skid row

were less demanding of interpersonal skills. Alcohol depressed the anxieties. Drinking situations for the future chronic inebriate were rewarding experiences in the emotional sense and at first in the psychological sense, but undemanding in the social and cultural realm. The drinking situation was one in which he could feel subjectively competent, skillful, and resourceful. (Pittman and Gordon, 1958, p.105)

However, reasons for drinking given by the men themselves seldom suggest personal maladjustment as the cause. For most men, according to Bogue's findings, drinking is used to forget troubles. Making men at home in social situations was seldom given as a reason for excessive drinking, although it may be a latent function which is unrecognized by the men.

Promoters of the desocialization school, on the other hand, suggest that drinking on skid row is not anti-social, as the undersocialization hypothesis would have it. Rather, drinking has definite social functions. As the men are not alcoholics in the strict use of the term, alcohol must have another use

than simple anaesthetization. As there are few places to gather on skid row, given that the hotel lobbies are more conducive to rats than men, most go to the neighborhood tavern. Recreational facilities such as television, continual card games, pool, and pinball are usually present in the tavern. (Clinard, 1962; Dumont, 1967) The tavern is the institutional center of skid row, and a social gathering place second only to the street. If one lives on skid row and wishes to associate with others, it is difficult not to use alcohol.

At all levels of society, alcohol is used to make situations smoother. Its use on skid row is not unusual in its occurrence, but in its setting. Whereas most drinking among economically secure groups occurs within private homes or in restaurants where food is an essential part of the entertainment, the skid row resident does not have a home to go to. Alcohol must be consumed either in the street or in the bar.

Because drinking is conducted in a group competitive situation, the men on the row usually drink more than would be normal. They must overindulge to maintain their social standing and remain in the group. Drink may not be the reason a man ends up on skid row, but it definitely serves to make life more comfortable there, and perhaps serves to keep him there too.

### III

The larger society becomes concerned with the skid row man because of his drinking style. The agents of society explain skid row in terms of alcoholic use. The programs and policies of the society at large are aimed specifically at the problems of alcoholism, with the ulterior motive of eliminating the row by

rehabilitating the drunk.

It is through the door of alcoholism that the second set of institutions enters the skid row environment. While the tavern provides one sort of institutional setting for companionship, the rehabilitation institution servicing the area provides another. There are many sorts of treatment agencies on skid row, but they share a common goal, to eliminate skid row and the men on it. They are generally motivated, or say they are motivated, by "A strong desire to help human beings to a better way of life." (Salvation Army, 1960, 7:3:1) Such groups spend large amounts of money on chronic care for men who are still physically able to take care of themselves.

Two sectors are involved in this care, the public and the private. The average community has a duplication of services only to be matched by the bureaucracy of the government. By any objective standard, such as percent of re-entrance into "normal" life, these treatment programs are failures. The men return again and again either to the original treatment facility, or to a duplicate service. Many participate in a process described by Wiseman as making the "loop," utilizing almost all of the available services repeatedly. (Wiseman, 1970, pp. 46-62) However, the organizations do succeed in one way. By failing to solve the problem, or to reach their goals, their own continued existence, feeding off the problem, will be assured.

Despite the seeming failure of so many of these endeavors, most have had fairly long lives, and are finding that with increasing governmental interest in the problems of urban renewal and alcoholism, that funding is available for the continuation and improve-



ment of their programs. This funding is available for both aesthetic purposes of cleaning up the city and for humanitarian purposes of rehabilitation. While it is not plentiful, it is enough to fund several new programs in each community, which serve to replace the dying wild cat missions and other institutions which cannot keep up with sophisticated social welfare practices.

The perspectives of organizational sociology are applicable here. As J.D. Thompson points out (Thompson, 1967, p.26-29), every organization must establish what can be termed a "domain" within its environment, an area which it services as its own. Those areas of the larger environment which are relevant to achievement of goals may be called the task environment, and include clients, agency competitors, and funding sources. The organization and task environment are in continual interaction and exchange, resting upon consensus with the larger environment as to the extent of the organization's domain. What has occurred within the skid row community is that domain has changed with changing population and changing treatment modes. To survive, an organization must develop in reaction to change in its environment.

As Thompson and McEwen point out, each organization must have a succession of goals:

As each goal is achieved, or subsumed in the environment, the organization must change its goals in keeping with the environment. (Thompson and McEwen, 1958, p.26)

An organization that survives uses bargaining, cooptation, coalition, and competition in the environment to achieve continued survival. The older forms of missions were unable to

set new and different types of goals and means for survival. They lacked sufficient environmental support both from clientele and funders to continue. New organizations adopt their rhetoric to governmental goals, and thus have gotten support for their programs by setting goals and methods in coordination with the funding available, and popular secular treatment plans.

The treatment used in skid row rehabilitation programs has three main types. There are programs offering rehabilitation through physiological and psychological treatment, as those in medical facilities do; those which offer work and spiritual therapy, as missions and halfway houses; and those that offer containment and criminal correction, as in jails. Theoretically, a man may be filtered through a screening mechanism to the type of treatment most suitable for his case. However, as Wiseman (1970, 153) points out in San Francisco, if the lack of even moderate degrees of success and the massive rates of recidivism are any indication, there is a duplication of services and effort on a wide scale. The loop she describes so well is thus accomplished only informally, rather than as the formal and structured process it might be. While she suggests that the agencies themselves are responsible for much referral work, I think that that the informal community also shares responsibility for the recycling of the men. The men on the row suggest the most suitable agencies to their friends. There is "complicated inter-institutional linking through informal interaction." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 57)

Pittman and Gordon (1958) have also described the phenomenon of agency re-use, calling it the "revolving door."

Both observers point to continual revisitation of agencies, with continual lack of success for the agency. The men may feel they are passive actors in the rehabilitation rag, and the agencies are forced to set lower goals internally to ease staff frustration, while maintaining to the supporting external environment that the goal remains total rehabilitation.

As agencies and men interact, there is a mutual process of judgment that occurs. An agency judges a man as potential for successful rehabilitation under whatever orientation that agency happens to employ. The men rate the institutions on a scale of preference based on the convenience of and treatment available at a particular stop. They are often forced to utilize agencies because of public laws or private necessities, and therefore judge rehabilitation not on its success as rehabilitation, but on its success in housing and feeding. The men are aware of behavior which will earn them a more comfortable stay, and use different behavior according to different agencies. Their attitude toward agencies as presented to peers is far different from that presented to the agency involved. The agency is considered as "outsider" to the subcultural world of skid row. Much like the deviants described by Becker (1963), the men have a different way when dealing with those outside their own special world, a way of presenting themselves which will be most beneficial to their own particular ends, while maintaining status within their peer group.

The institutions which rate highest in the eyes of the homeless are those in the therapeutic mode, such as hospitals with specialized alcoholism wards, according to Wiseman. (1970, p.59)

These groups are at least theoretically interested in the problems of the skid row man, and there is usually sufficient staff to give the man individualized attention. Additionally, the client is treated as a sick patient, and not expected to work to support himself. The staff is often young, and specialists in alcohol. The attitude of the professionals in these places is usually more considerate than that to be found in the jails and the life is often easier. Experimental programs are frequently developed for the men in these programs, making them feel important or significant. In San Francisco, Wiseman found the state mental facility offered pretty nurses, young professionals, and federal money to make such a milieu attractive. In Cleveland, the same sort of atmosphere is to be found at the Veteran's Administration Hospital and at Exodus Hall. Sometimes, it is these therapeutic milieu which seem to have the highest rate of success. However, the clientele served must be carefully examined before claims for success can be verified. The more sophisticated treatment facilities often include the middle class man with family in their target populations. With these men included, the success rate naturally rises, for this group has family support after it leaves the hospital setting.

Few treatment centers of any sophistication serve solely the homeless. This would frustrate the staffs of trained psychologists and social workers. The low rate of success with the homeless encourages the institution to increase its task environment to include other sectors of alcoholics, or men with personality problems. As Thompson expresses it,



The organization facing so many constraints, and unable to achieve power in other sectors of its task environment will seek to change and enlarge that task environment. (Thompson, 1967, p. 37)

Organizations totally devoted to skid row have few trained social and psychological workers, not from lack of desire for these workers, but from lack of money. Many therapy clinics, when frustrated by the recidivism of the chronic drinkers on skid row, therefore, expand either into drug rehabilitation, or work with the middle class. Organizations hoping to rehabilitate skid row alcoholics to the middle class face a difficult task, as most skid row alcoholics have never been in the middle class.

Wiseman cites the case of a jail clinic set up specifically to work with skid row alcoholics which soon widened its scope to include other cases more amenable to treatment. Likewise in Cleveland, the Center on Alcoholism changed its name to the Center on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and sees no skid row alcoholics any more.

Interestingly, most of the literature demonstrates that while sophisticated treatment is available to the homeless man, and appreciated by him, he seldom uses it. When treatment is attractive but involves effort to partake of it, few do. When centers are geographically far from skid row, for example, few men avail themselves of their services.

Straus, in his work at the Salvation Army, often encouraged respondents to use the Yale Plan Clinic, yet out of fifty offered the service, only ten were sufficiently interested to make the first visit, and none continued long enough to allow for effective diagnosis and treatment. (Straus and Bacon, 1951, p.237) Out-patient

clinics seem virtually out of the question for the skid row resident.

Less popular with the skid row are the halfway houses, and the agencies which promise work therapy. For many of these agencies, the problem of staying afloat financially while providing service is foremost. This type of treatment is not analyzed by Wiseman or any other author except through the example of the Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center (Wiseman, 1970; and Struass, 1946), which is a cross between a sheltered workshop and a mission treatment.

Many halfway houses have only a minimal work schedule, but often they are used by men who are nowhere near half-way down the road to recovery. The treatment in these settings ranges from professionally oriented to therapeutic housing. Often funded with welfare moneys or private grants, the houses make up costs in maintenance by having the men work on janitorial services in the guise of work therapy. For some of the men, this is helpful, as it keeps them busy. Others feel exploited, and would, if they could, live in much shabbier, independent flophouses. Of course, welfare might not pay for that form of rehabilitation.

The least popular agency form is the mission. This ranges from the clean and desirable settings of the Salvation Army to the less desirable all-night-flops offered by the independent missions. This form of rehabilitation has a spiritual emphasis. Other agencies only discuss spiritual matters under the guise of Alcoholics Anonymous, exhorting the man to put his faith in a power greater than himself. Generally, the labor aspect of

missions is promoted to the point that some practices are slave-like. In certain of these spiritual settings, the men must "take a dive" in order to find acceptance. This means that the client must claim to have been saved by the Lord, thereby listing himself on the reports to the mission auxiliary as a "saved soul."

Men who consistently use missions and stand up at testimony ceremonies are said to become mission stiff, and occupy the lowest rung on the skid row ladder. (Wallace, 1965) Evidently, the Salvation Army is not considered a mission, per se. Neither Wiseman (1970) nor my informants (Pretests, Jan. 1973) noted any derogatory connotations to using the Salvation Army.<sup>2</sup>

The last type of therapy, which is often an element in treatment programs, is Alcoholics Anonymous. AA members, in a secular evangelistic fashion, seek to help all other alcoholics, and participate actively in most of the skid row service centers, running meetings at least once a week in many treatment facilities, and at times providing a buddy sponsorship for individual counseling and care. The Twelve Step program of AA is designed to reach the addictive drinker, and may have a middle class bias, although Bogue (1963, p. 297) indicates that Alcoholics Anonymous has helped many men achieve sobriety.

An AA meeting is directed by a lead (speaker) who talks about his alcoholism, and how he fights it through AA. Often these leads have had experiences which are not comparable to the skid row experience. As only the most verbal are qualified to make leads, they are often drawn from a more educated group.

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<sup>2</sup> Although, of course a group using the Salvation Army is self-selected, and might not wish to think of themselves derogatorily.

As one man said, "Why should I have to listen to some other guy's troubles? I got enough of my own." (Harbor Light, 1973) Most of the skid row men are too independent to develop the camaraderie necessary in a successful AA group.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, most of the men come from lower social groups less likely to be active participants in voluntary associations. Participation in formal organized groups is one aspect of society probably left behind in the move to skid row. AA provides no substitute for alcohol except the association of the "dry drunk" or the "AA virgin." Sometimes these people make a man feel more like having a drink than walking past a bar would. (Bales, 1962, p. 575) Likewise, AA meetings outside of the rehabilitation agency lack the fellowship of the people the man knows, people of the skid row community. Attending an AA meeting in a non-skid row community makes a man conspicuous. Few skid row men achieve AA membership. A new AA member theoretically attends meetings several nights a week. A skid row man without transportation becomes totally dependent on his sponsor, and this total dependence makes some of the men shrink from the relationship. Still, AA is a prevalent form of therapy, and has respect from most of the men of skid row. Even while they reveal it has not been effective for them, they can cite cases of friends who have succeeded.

All four types of treatment are available in Cleveland, some in the skid row area, and others in outlying districts. The focus of this study will be on the mission type.

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<sup>3</sup>It is unfortunate that there is not more literature available on AA as a social movement. It has quasi-religious elements in its Twelve steps somewhat comparable to the ten commandments and its evangelical tone. Some studies on social status and AA have been done by Loffland (1970) and Trice (1957, 1959).



IV

There is a limited amount of literature on the role of the spiritual community of therapy on skid row. Some of it has been written by the mission people themselves, and less by the sociological community. Wallace (1965) and Wiseman (1970) both had members of their research teams stay in missions, but little long-term or deep study has been done on these institutions. Perhaps the institutions have been uncooperative because of fear of exposure to the public media, or perhaps the more sophisticated treatment centers are most appealing to the researcher, but only the Salvation Army Men's Social Centers have seen significant outside research.

The most interesting of the institutions offering spiritual as well as physical rehabilitation is the Salvation Army. It is surely one of the oldest groups working with homeless men, taking from its founder, Booth, the commandment to "love the unloved." Widely imitated, the Army has existed for over a century, while many of its imitators have fallen apart. In the twenties, itinerant missions such as the Christian Army, the Samaritan Army, the Saved Army, and the Volunteer Rescue Army appeared. (Dees, 1948, p. 46) Another competitor which has endured longer is the Volunteers of America, founded by a close relation to the Salvation Army founders.

The Salvation Army managed to make a successful transition from its rather sect-like origins to one of church-like solidarity and establishment. It is an almost perfect example of the Weber-Troeltsch ideal type. (Clark, 1948) Changing from a struggling and highly evangelistic sect it became an institution

in the community. Their missionary work with the homeless is strongly supported by firm congregations. Other missions lacked this sort of support, which has helped the Army to survive over the years, in an era when spiritual treatment of alcoholism seems anachronistic.

The Army shares the sense of mission of other such rehabilitation agencies, with a decidedly salvationist cast in philosophy. In the words of General Booth, the founder,

Seeing that neither governments nor society have stood forward to undertake what God has made to us to appear so vitally important a work, and as he has given us the willingness and in many important senses, the ability, we are prepared to make a determined effort not only to undertake, but to carry it forward to a triumphant success. (Search, p. 167, 1956)

For almost all its history, the Salvation Army has been known as a haven for the homeless. The Men's Social Service Centers, in all cities of any size, and the Harbor Lights, serving skid row areas almost exclusively, both work with homeless men. In these centers, reclamation is the major task, and the early days saw heavy emphasis on the spiritual aspect.

The purpose of these centers is the rehabilitation of men, spiritually, physically, and mentally. These are not residential hotels or jobs, but treatment centers for men. Physical relief is just one of the minor considerations, although an important one. We look upon our job as the salvaging of wrecked humanity. Just as we pick up old wrecked stoves and furniture and shoes, and rebuild them into articles once more usable, so we pick up wrecked, discarded men, and recondition them so that they may once more become useful, happy members of society. Above all we try to save their souls. (Chesham, 1965, p. 128)

With their evangelical approach and good food, the Army earned a highly respected reputation among the community. It drew wide support from both the skid row community and the outside community. Donations at Christmas and Easter, as well as con-



tributions of food, and furniture have always been high. As Anderson pointed out in 1923,

The Salvation Army does more good for the hobo than any other agency. In every city or town of the country, it is the good samaritan for the down and outs. Not only is it interested in the hearts of men, but it seeks to help people to walk alone. ( Anderson, 1923, p.180)

The ultimate goal of all Salvation Army soul saving is not the creation of another snivelling "mission stiff," but rather a good, middle-class, church-going man, returned to his family.

The evangelical cast has left many of the Army facilities. However, Harbor Lights and Social Service Centers are much influenced by the officers-in-charge. Some officers recommended with seriousness at a recent conference on Harbor Light treatment that the Army is at its most successful when saving souls by pulling them in from the streets. A return to street-preaching was urged. (November 1972 Eastern Territory Harbor Light Conference.) Obviously, those centers with evangelically oriented officers-in-charge will have that aura about their rehabilitation programs.

Today, the Salvation Army is not really in the forefront of treatment institutions. Approach varies from officer to officer, with some favoring a more secular approach than others. Most are hampered by a lack of resources. They run full scale hotels-cum employment bureaus-cum rehabilitation agencies on slender training and even more slender resources. Some of the major cities feature gleaming Harbor Lights in fancy establishments. Others have little more than storefronts with officers offering counselling and sympathy. An expert on alcoholic rehabilitation has commented that the effectiveness of the Salvation Army

is difficult to evaluate because there are striking differences of approach due to personality of officers in-charge. Despite the military and hierarchical structure of the Army, some officers have remarkable success. Conceptions of alcoholism within the Army range from the moralism of the mission-type to an attitude of enlightenment which regards alcoholism as a sickness. (Clinebell, 1956, p. 86)

Alcoholism is regarded as a sin by officers in the Army, who neither smoke nor drink. But many do not have a naive sense of sin that blames it on the personal failure of the individual alcoholic. There is a definite fall from grace doctrine which is held by Salvation Army officers, who are also ordained ministers. One of the eleven tenets of Salvation Army doctrine is:

V. We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God. (Chesham, 1965, p. 267)

The fall from grace doctrine provides an alternative excuse for the high failure rates unavailable to the secular institution. The Salvation Army can allow recidivism with this fall-from-grace philosophy. Backsliding is seen as almost inevitable and endless compassion is the goal of the officer, who knows that to "err is human," while to forgive emulates the divine. This outlook, available to missions, may in part explain their continued willingness to work with the homeless as contrasted to the ways of their secular brothers.

This outlook on morality, combined with some rather sophisticated social and psychological thought on the nature of the homeless as promulgated in the Men's Social Service Handbook (1960) (which suggests that the homeless man is a dependent personality

and is under-socialized) creates an interesting treatment environment.

The Salvation Army offers an exceedingly structured and sheltered environment, protecting the man from the outside world. While in comparison to the secular institution, they offer a benevolent and authoritarian approach; compared to the traditional mission, most programs are progressive.

Part of the structure and authoritarianism in the Salvation Army residences is bolstered by strict rules and regulations. As the Salvation Army was modelled on the military, this regimentation is to be expected. Most centers employ an ex-alcoholic "sniffer" or other precautions at the door to check incoming inmates for the smell of alcohol which could end his residency there. He may have to leave the program entirely, if caught drinking, or take severe cutbacks in his "gratuity rates" (pay). Room and locker inspections are frequent in some centers. Likewise, physicals, haircuts, etc., are provided in the building. Some men become institutional dependents with this type of "shelter" provided by the agency. The similarities between such a facility, and mental hospitals and army training base camps are readily apparent. The support system is complete within the building, and there are regulations as to access to the outside. It forms an example of Goffman's total institution, although, since it is voluntary, escape from total loss of identity is possible. (Goffman, 1961) A man sheds his identity as a skid row regular when he enters the program, to take on the character of the institutional beneficiary, grateful and willing to work for his keep. Hours of waking and sleeping, as well as entering and leaving are

regulated. Of course, a man may check out at any time, and many take this option within the first two weeks. The man who can stand this institutionalization loses all independence and becomes "shelterized." The Cleveland Men's Social Service Center, for example, has several men who have not left the building in many years. (Men's Social Service Staff interviews, Jan., 1973) Shelter in the Salvation Army holds the potential of a bland and boring oblivion, and for some men on skid row, this oblivion is the only escape possible from death by alcohol.

The skid row man values the warmth and security offered him by the Salvation Army, and yet resents the rules that attend it. Clinebell sees the pivotal conflict in the chronic inebriate of the need for and resentment of dependency as central in mission-type therapy.

It would seem to be a safe assumption that a high percentage of converts are never assimilated into normal social living. Many of these remain institutionalized, living at the mission and doing its work. They have capitulated to the dependent relationship...others slip back into the maelstrom of skid row. If the individual succeeds in leaving the Bowery and making the difficult break from homelessness, the mission has no structure for continuing the group support he will need. (Clinebell, 1956, p. 82)

In the Salvation Army Centers, typically the man will find a community of men, all theoretically dedicated to maintaining sobriety (although this is highly theoretical in some settings). When he leaves, he loses the support of this group, support which is sometimes the prime treatment element, and there is usually little substitution made for it.

Because of the structure, rules, and regulations of the Salvation Army program, only the most weakened of men can survive in the powerless situation created within the institution.



Some mission workers admit there is little they can do to help an alcoholic until he has hit bottom and is desperate enough for a change...and at this point, any one of a number of programs might be effective. (Bogue, 1963,p.422)

The Army itself realizes that the only men who can truly accept their help are those who are low enough to be almost totally broken. (Officer, interview November, 1972) However, they continue to reaccept men, even though they are aware of their high rate of failure, because they hope at some point each of these men will reach the bottom. The staff sets "scaled down and intermediate goals of success." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 185) and through this and theology, reconciles continual objective failure.

For instance, the agency is well aware of the existence of recidivism.

It is estimated in some parts of the country that 40% of the applications for admission are by men who have previously been in the same center. They present a problem for which there is no quick and easy solution. He may be using the center...so that the center becomes merely the instrument for the perpetuation of his irresponsible and shiftless habits. (Salvation Army, 1960, p. 7:5:5)

Yet they are capable of dealing with it because of their philosophy of hope, and short range feeling that any maintained sobriety is worthwhile, no matter how short-lived.

There are scores of instances in which men have left and returned three and four times and sometimes more, and then suddenly have found themselves and become splendid Christians and staunch citizens. (Salvation Army, 1960, p. 7:5:5)

The Salvation Army has its own particular ways of eradicating homelessness through spiritual, physical, and social-psychological reclamation. It has its means of reaching those goals through a well-established organizational hierarchy which in its own rigid structure acts as much upon the individual officers as the



total institution acts upon the client. Because so much of each individual Harbor Light and Social Service Center program is the responsibility of the individual officer, their personalities are an important element to consider in evaluating a program.

The Salvation Army officer group is almost a family in its closeness. Chesham (1965, p. 11) reports that in ten years prior to her history, that more than 51% of the officer trainees were children of Salvationists. These men do not have to go to college, but are accepted following high school graduation in officer training comparable to a seminary experience. Officers are encouraged to take post-training study, if they have time. The officers who endure training and learn all the doctrine of the Salvation Army Church show a phenomenally low attrition rate of between two and three percent internationally. It is the personalities of these men that gives each center its atmosphere.

Officers are subject to transfer at the whim of the parent organization, and change frequently between posts. It is uncommon for an ambitious officer to remain in one city for long periods of years. Likewise, because of this policy, men often enter commands for which they are little prepared by training, such as the administration of programs directed at the alcoholic. This may create a certain amount of insecurity, as the management of such a center requires a battery of managerial skills as well as knowledge of therapeutic treatment. The only training some of these officers have is of a theological nature.

Harbor Light and other such institutions offer a sheltered and structured environment of varying degrees of therapeutic effectiveness. Primarily, a Salvation Army facility provides

a place where sobriety is strictly enforced and the man is protected from the temptations of skid row and from the necessity to scrounge to get by in his daily life. Under the proper administration, the Salvation Army can offer much more within its structural limitations. A true Salvation Army experience must share with other mission approaches a spiritual basis, and the spiritual basis of the Army is common knowledge on skid row. However, it is also known that one does not have to take "a dive" to get the shelter and protection of the Army. If one is properly cooperative, one can "get by" even with the Salvation Army.

### THE RESEARCH SETTING: CLEVELAND'S SKID ROW

Research supporting the hypotheses which follow was conducted in the Cleveland area. While lacking a concentrated skid row section such as those described by Bogue (1963) in Chicago, and Wallace (1965) in Minneapolis, the characteristics of skid row are present in two separate sections of the city; one bordering on the southeast segment of the downtown area, and the other directly across the bridge from downtown, in an area called the Near West Side. In these two areas can be found the cheap rooming hotels, the barber colleges, the taverns and the beer and wine stores characteristic of skid rows across the nation. In the maps that follow, buildings marked as rooming, tavern, barber college, spot labor and rehabilitation facilities are noted. It can be seen that the rudiments of a skid row support system are present in both districts.

The character of skid row areas has changed over the years according to those who have lived in the areas. (Interviews at Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center and Cleveland City Planning, 1973). The Near West Side, which had once been almost totally white, now serves Puerto Ricans and Negroes as well as the homeless man. The eastern sector of the "row" has shifted southward under the threat of urban renewal and university expansion, and now includes many X-rated movie theaters and adult book stores. The public using these areas are varied and

are not only searching for alcohol, but other more various forms of entertainment.

The skid row area of Cleveland is scattered, and not all the services necessary to survival are right within walking distance, to the extent they are in Bogue's Chicago. The facilities are there, but one has to be knowledgeable to exploit them, as they are not as centrally located. Several major agencies devoted to helping the single homeless man are close to the area, though. They provide rooming services, like the hotels, but are usually of better quality and lesser cost. Of course, these agencies require that a man submit to treatment in order to partake of the housing. Among the agencies located very near the skid row areas are Stella Maris, the Harbor Light Center, the City Mission, and the Volunteers of America. (all marked in red on the maps.) These offer overnight lodging in the agency, and extended care in a rehabilitation community of sorts. Two hospitals serve the area population with inexpensive care. Cleveland Psychiatric Institute, the state mental health facility, includes skid row in its catchment area.

The housing in the area outside the agency setting is characterized by multiple dwellings. While both sections of skid row include heavy commercial development, there is much rooming above stores and taverns, and the rents are surprisingly cheap. In addition there are cheap hotels which range from third rate transient facilities to flophouses.

The skid row districts of town are noticeably seedy and visibly different. The housing is run down, and even if the exteriors show no visible housing code violations, the interiors

are often warrens of roaches, rats, and subdivision.

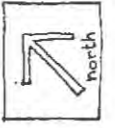
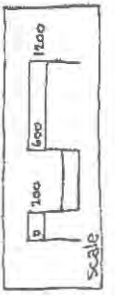
A walking tour of the area shows the most visible inhabitants to be males, over 30 years of age, in various stages of dishevelment in dress and disablement in body. Many of these men are not drinkers, as pointed out by Bogue ( 1963, p. 48 ), but rather on disability pensions of some sort. Skid row does provide cheap, if unattractive housing, and places men close to the medical and public care they need. Very few family groups are to be seen on skid row. Those that are there often talk with the twang of the Ohio River Valley about their longings to go back home where the air is clean and a man can hunt and fish. What few women are seen in the area are either the mothers of these impoverished families, or are the forlorn elderly, carrying shopping bags full of their dearest possessions. The streets are not crowded, but there are more spectators and conversational groupings than could be found in a middle class area of similar population density. An observer can find, if looking sharply, small congregations of men participating in the ritual of the bottle gang, passing the bottle back and forth with their stories. Other men sit on the front steps and watch the passing groups. On the east side are students from the nearby university. On the west side, the local ethnic population uses the area on their way to the central outdoor market. A sense of community is present within the most anonymous section of town, the central business district. Many of the men know each other or recognize each other from bottle gang encounters or from the various hotels and social agencies serving the area. Most of the men are not transients. The day of the migratory skid row is gone. These men live and treat the





skid row service areas: downtown  
 base: city of cleveland department of community development

- liquor stores ★
- rooming houses ●
- bars/taverns ○
- beer/wine stores ●
- barber colleges ■
- spot labor agencies ■
- rehab. institutions ■





area as their neighborhood. I, for one, was used to finding the walk down Euclid Avenue, the main street of town, very anonymous. Near the completion of the interviewing, I increasingly encountered familiar faces. The men use the area heavily, and dwell externally, as their rooms are much worse than the street. They look for companionship and friends on the streets of downtown just as a middle class suburbanite might look for friends at the local supermarket.

The skid row resident in Cleveland differs substantially from the rest of the community in which he lives. Surrounded by the central business district, with people dressed for work in white collar occupations, the skid row habitué is usually tattered and dirty. His ways of living differ. Ethnographers report he conducts his life with a public front unseen among the middle class and the achievement oriented blue-collar groups. (Wallace, 1965) The rest of the downtown area sees the man as the most deviant in the community.

Thus, the skid rower creates a community of his own, without women except those to be found in taverns, without kin; he maintains an isolated status, and yet enjoys the amenities of a highly companionable existence when he wants it. The society of skid row offers companionship, and the support of a special milieu, including service agencies and commercial facilities especially designed to serve their needs. The skid row man may be isolated in the sense that he lacks kin, but he finds more friendship groups in acquaintanceships than many. Anonymity is present in skid row, but there is also superficial friendship. A newcomer to the city, who for instance checks into Harbor Light finds a circle of

fifty or so faces who become familiar. He will know them when he sees them on the outside, and feel free to borrow money from them or bum drinks. (Observation at Harbor Light, 1973) Men on skid row, especially in the tavern and bottle gang context provide a kind of welcome wagon. Many of the new men at Harbor Light found out about its services from drinking companions on the row. Yet these acquaintances are not deep, and most of the men do not feel drinking companions are real friends. (Data in Harbor Light sample, 1973, question # 63E)

Here is one place where every man's past is his own secret. Only in the case of the very old or the very young is there any attempt to learn something of an individual's past. They live closed lives, and grant newcomers the same privilege. (Anderson, 1923, p. 20)

When a man runs out of money, or sobriety, one of the most popular free housing agencies on skid row is Harbor Light. The facilities there are much better than those at other institutions also located close to the area, as each man has a single room after a period of residence, and is allowed to hold outside employment, if capable. This facility is appealing to the skid row man because of its 24 hour open admission policy also. The man is allowed about a week to rest and get over his drunk, before he is expected to help out with work on the building. Another attraction, besides rest and housing, is relatively pleasant eating conditions, and the companionship of others in the same situation.

Harbor Light is also appealing to the researcher, as it is working to develop new ways of combatting the chronic homeless inebriate.



## THE RESEARCH SETTING: THE HARBOR LIGHT CENTER

Salvation Army Harbor Lights started in Detroit around the turn of the century, and are devoted to the men of skid row, as they are located right on the row, and immediately accessible to those it serves. The original Harbor Light program had a definite evangelistic cast to it, with recruitment made by officers going out on the streets and asking men to come to the services and participate in the free meals. Presently there are some seventeen Harbor Light Centers in the United States, and several more in Canada. These range in sophistication from a program including vocational and psychiatric counselling in San Francisco, to drop-in-day care lounges with referrals for overnight housing, in Pittsburgh. In Cleveland, the Harbor Light Center has been established for about 25 years. Originally located in an old building at Ninth Street and Eagle, it included both a hotel and a rudimentary alcoholic rehabilitation program. In 1969 it moved to a new building at Eighteenth Street and Prospect. Located between an x-rated movie theater and a flea-bag bar and grill, the Harbor Light Center looks like a dark stone fortress. The eight story building's doors are kept locked all day and night. A guard admits people to the building, checking for drinking upon entrance. The building is virtually in the center of the eastern skid row area.

The new building is a source of great pride to the staff, as it includes room for private housing as well as sports facilities and classrooms. However, the building also has served a burden, as it is much larger than the old facility, and makes much greater maintenance demands. The hoped for increase in enrollees in the program has not yet been sufficient to entirely cover the



costs of the facility. Thus the management of the agency is continually pressed to find ways to help the building survive financially, through increased enrollment in programs, restaurant facilities and other money-making schemes. This financial pressure occasionally can affect the program, as will be discussed later.

Given its virtually open admission policy and its location in the skid row area, Harbor Light is one of the most likely places for a skid row alcoholic to turn in search of help. Thus, for any researcher concerned with this clientele, it provides a rich setting. About ten to thirteen men a week seek to enter. Not all men who come in are severely intoxicated, but a great percentage of them are sick from the effects of over-indulgence. The men are encouraged to participate in a rehabilitation program which is currently undergoing changes and redesign. Presently the men pass through stages as they continue in the program, called classes, and somewhat analogous to classes in a high school. A man stays in the freshman stage for one month, the sophomore stage for two months, the junior stage for three months, and the senior stage for three months, with a three month holding period before he is considered a graduate of the program, with a year's continuous residence. During his stay in the building the man may participate in a variety of work-therapy programs which are designed not only for therapeutic purposes, but also to absorb some of the cost of the man's room and board, if he is not providing welfare payments.

Besides public relief, there are 3 types of work programs available. The men may be sent out on spot type labor, where they are given \$2.50 an hour. According to the length of stay in the program and staff evaluation, a certain amount is deducted

from this take-home pay for the man's support. He is allowed to keep the rest. These spot labor jobs are generally yard work and house work for families in the area. The call for spot labor is generally less in the winter than in the summer; but generally, the man doing this sort of work can earn about as much as he wants. Only the most reliable men are generally called for spot labor, as the employer pays the man directly, and some men do not come back to the building after being paid. Only a small minority of the men in the program participate in the spot jobs.

Another sort of work assignment available to the men is work in the building. Pay on this work is somewhat lower, and again hourly. According to the type of job, and again, the length of stay in the program, the pay is allotted. There is more resentment about the pay scale in the building than on spot jobs, as it is so much lower, and the pressure from internal politics is so much greater. Men work in the buildings as kitchen and maintenance workers. Also included in building work are staff jobs, such as admissions clerks, security men, counselors, social and chaplain duties, and cooks. Personnel on the payroll are not necessarily men in the program, but can be. About three-fourths of the staff jobs are taken by program or program graduate men.

These jobs in the building are the source of much friction and unhappiness. Because the nature of the program engenders quick turnover, often men who have been trained to do jobs, for example, in the kitchen, leave. Therefore, elements of the program, such as the food, suffer while replacements are being

found. Since the building is running under full capacity, sometimes eminently unqualified personnel are so placed in desperation. Additional tension develops between the salaried staff and their "employees", since they are all "drunks" in the first place. Jealousy and backbiting develop as a result of this situation.

The third source of work therapy is through an outside job. Many of the men's regular employers know that the men use Harbor Light as a sort of halfway or rooming house. Some of these employers accept the man back, even if he slips off the wagon, as long as he returns to Harbor Light. These men pay room and board from their paychecks, and often can eat in a restaurant facility within the building if they prefer.

There are some who because of disabilities and welfare eligibility are not required to participate in the work program. The Soldier's and Sailor's Relief commission pays for room and board for the men as an alcoholic rehabilitation program. At present the County Welfare will only pay for lodging there if the man has a medical disability, or is there for emergency lodging. Some of the men have other sorts of relief payments which help defray the costs of keeping them. Men who do not quite come up to the total cost of room and board must try to contribute in labor whatever they lack in welfare payments.

In addition to the various forms of work therapy, the Harbor Light program offers a class room therapy program which is presently only fully formulated on paper. At night men in the various "classes" are expected to attend sessions on music therapy, social adjustment, Bible study, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

These sessions vary in quality and popularity, as well as utility to the men. However, the activities give them something to do, and thus are a way of preventing drinking.

As a man progresses through the program, he is given a certificate for each grade completed. Length of stay ensures better and better rooming situations. Various floors are set aside for each grade, and some rooms are more comfortable than others. High seniority in the program gives the man a choice of a better room.

While the man is in the intake center, he has the care of a podiatric clinic. Nurse's services are available about once a week. Also the man may be transported to a hospital in the area for help. There is no other source of medical care.

In the appendix can be found a diagram of an idealized picture of Harbor Light services. In addition to the alcoholic unit are facilities for the elderly, swimming for community groups and a hotel for graduates of the rehabilitation program. The staff in charge try to see the facility as a multi-service unit in an effort to support their program financially. They are trying to diversify to bring in different service recipients, since the alcoholic client group has not increased sufficiently.

The research was conducted primarily on the sixth floor of the building where new men are admitted to the program. New men are confined here so that they will not distract more successful men in the program while coming off their drunks, and so that they may be observed. The men are allowed off the floor only for meals or work. While in intake, the men are theoretically recovering from the effects of alcohol. However, sometimes they

are given work assignments because of the great maintenance needs of the building. As there is little programming in intake, many of the men are eager for such work assignments to keep busy.

I had to catch men after they had sobered up enough to feel comfortable for an hour at a time, and before they were given a work assignment. There is no medical care for withdrawal from alcohol on the intake floor. One or two staff members are generally present and keeping an eye on things to assure that emergencies do not occur, although they are not present all the time.

In the intake office, exceptionally detailed records are kept on the clients, and this enhanced the research setting. Evaluation forms are kept each time a man uses the program, and additionally, a detailed personal history is kept on each man in the program. These were invaluable in cross-checking information.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about this particular setting was its ongoing change. Organizations that are involved in rehabilitation with this group face a phenomenal failure rate, and often must reset their goals to maintain stability. (See Chapter Two for references to J.D. Thompson, 1967) The Harbor Light is not different in finding that it must set both short and long range goals, the long range goals for the public at large, and the short range ones satisfying the internal needs of the organization. However, even achievement of a short range goal of perhaps one or two months of sobriety seems difficult in this setting. The organization is undergoing continuous program revision and restructuring in an attempt to



increase its success. The agency has hired an applied sociologist who works with the staff in evaluating and making program changes. The staff of the center is unusual in its openness to suggestions and to research, and welcomed my presence, opening its files and environment to observation willingly.

I was allowed to serve as a member of the intake staff to a limited extent, often taking information on the client for the Salvation Army files while conducting my own interview. By working closely with the staff, it was possible to see the problems they faced, but as I was not officially connected with the Army, it was also possible to obtain a relatively objective analysis of the program from the clients, when they were assured of anonymity.

Harbor Light provided one of the more advanced programs dealing exclusively with skid row men in the Cleveland area. While the men that entered the program were by in large self-selected, they also seemed to be fairly representative of the skid row alcoholics as described in several other works, so that some generalization from the population was possible.

Harbor Light provided size suitable for completion of data collection within a short time, a program of sufficient content to provide material for analysis, and a staff willing to cooperate with the researcher. Additionally, because of its ties with a national network of Harbor Lights, it was possible to get background information about other officers involved in the same type of work. Harbor Light provided a rich research setting, both practically and historically for a project of this scope on the skid row man.

## METHODS USED AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Any exploration of a wide organizational environment and intensive investigation within a single agency necessitates the consideration of several research methods to attain a fully dimensional picture.<sup>1</sup> I studied the social welfare environment of skid row through rather informal research techniques, and utilized more formal means in the investigation of the Harbor Light facility itself. Among the methods utilized were informal walking tours and observer-participation on skid row; formal interviewing both by mail and directly, and participant observation in the setting itself.

Initial exploration of the agencies and services of skid row was undertaken in 1972. I lived for two weeks on East 18th Street, and through conversations with the men who lived in the same building and observation, began formulation of the project. During the course of the research, I made several walking tours of the area, and was aided in the mapping of services through the Cleveland city planning offices, the health department and the Federation for Community Planning, a welfare coordination agency. At this point I narrowed my focus to the Harbor Light center and the agencies that competed and complemented it in its environment.

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<sup>1</sup> For thorough discussions of considerations in organizational research, please see work by Denzin, 1970, pp. 297-313; Barnes, 1967, pp. 57-113; and the work of Peter Blau, 1967, pp.18-58.

The key information for this thesis is derived from formal interviews with the clients of Harbor Light. They served as chief informants on the agencies of Cleveland, and also provided the information necessary to test my hypotheses about agency selectivity and an informal reputational network. An interview schedule was used to gather this information.

The schedule was developed both from measures used in existing studies, and from questions designed especially for this project, and is reprinted in full in the Appendix. It was pretested at the Men's Social Service Center in Cleveland, another Salvation Army agency dealing with men roughly comparable to those entering Harbor Light. The eligibility regulations are virtually the same at the two agencies. The men at Men's Social Service were, like those at Harbor Light, both homeless and jobless, although they were less likely to admit an alcohol problem. Approximately 23 pretests were completed, each taking about an hour and fifteen minutes. The men were told that I was conducting an independent research project, and that all information would be considered confidential. If they had additional questions, I explained simply the nature of my project and purposes. Several questions were eliminated as a result of the pretest, as they seemed irrelevant to the study as a whole, or improperly engineered.

At Harbor Light, a total of eighty interviews were completed. One respondent was too sick to complete an interview and had left the program when I returned to finish it with him. The men were interviewed soon after they had entered intake, and it was explained to them that I was collecting additional statistical information. Again, if they had further questions, I explained

the project to them. I had no refusals from the group. However, because the research was geared to talking to the men as they entered the program, I occasionally missed men. They did not enter the situation steadily, but came in groups. Often a large group would come in over the week-end and leave on Monday. Even though I was working on Saturday, some of these men were too sick to be interviewed. Even with diligent efforts, not all who entered were covered. However, in comparison with other intake data that the Harbor Light has gathered, it seems that the sample drawn is fairly representative of those that use the Harbor Light Center. (Appendix, pr. C) Also excluded from interviewing were men from the seventh floor geriatric residence who were sometimes interred on six after drinking episodes. As these men never participated in the program, they were not interviewed.

While approximately ten to thirteen men entered the center during a given week, by the middle of the research, repeaters had begun to appear who were of course, ineligible. The research took eleven weeks in this phase.

A second group of men was chosen from the first sample. All those who remained in the program for thirty days or longer were re-interviewed with a shortened schedule, but a more intensive informal conversation about the problems and atmosphere of the program. These interviews took about 45 minutes each as opposed to the more lengthy initial interviews which lasted an average of an hour and a half.

The interviews were generally well-accepted, although the length received a lot of complaints. The schedules consisted of

two sections: a personal history form to gather demographic data, which was provided by the Salvation Army, and a schedule of my own design. The personal history form provides relevant information on marriages, education, nationality, occupational history, and alcoholic history. I occasionally administered this section for the Salvation Army by making carbon copies of my information, but for the most part conducted my interviewing separate from their procedures. Therefore, I usually omitted questions dealing with names, wages, and financial obligations which I felt would jeopardize the comfort of the interviewing situation. (Omitted questions are starred in the Appendix)

The information gathered on occupation included the last job held of any sort, as well as jobs held for longer than one month in the past to provide some information on mobility. Jobs were coded as being White Collar Managerial and Professional, White Collar-Clerical and Sales, Blue Collar-Skilled, foreman; Blue Collar-Skilled, Blue Collar-Unskilled, and Spot Labor. These designations were aided by classifications by Hatt, and Reiss, ( 1961 ).

The interview was conducted by subject area, and therefore, my questions were interspersed with those of the personal history form. I chose my measures, (which are described in detail in the appendix on measures) according to the following criteria. Conscious of the educational level and physical state of the clientele, I designed an interview with an eye towards brevity and simplicity. Many men came to the interview in stages of withdrawal from alcohol, and found it difficult to concentrate for the length of the interview. Additionally, comprehension was especially low among some respondents. Two choice, rather



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than four choice and Likert-style items were therefore preferable. They had trouble conceptualizing abstractions and degrees as is necessary with the use of scalar items. Only in phrasings using time, such as "most of the time" and "not too often" could this group survive a one-to-five scale. An example of this difficulty with abstractions may be seen in the use of the Butler-Haigh Q-sort technique, which I was planning to use as a cross check on information gathered on self-concept. Involving a task of sorting cards with personality characteristics on a scale ranging from "Most Like Me" to "Least Like Me", and then on a scale ranging from "Most Like my Ideal Self" to "Least Like My Ideal Self", the Q-sort is a widely used technique. However, even with coaching and interminable explanations, many of the men were almost incapable of coping with this task. It was excluded after about the thirtieth interview. Not only did the men have trouble with the five place scale, but also with the conception of the Ideal Self, and words such as "tolerant."

Thus only short item scales with a minimum of questions were chosen to test hypotheses such as those about religion and personal competence. While those chosen may not be the most sophisticated and effective ways of measuring the concepts, they were the most preferable for this particular interviewing situation.<sup>1</sup>

The early and objective sections of the interview went quickly.

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It seems appropriate at this point to discuss the most widely known quantitative study done on skid row, that of Donald Bogue, (1963). I must raise one major methodological question about his study. He maintains his average interview was 2.5 hours in length. (p.512) If this is so, I doubt his coverage of the skid row habitué, for generally, an hour and a half was the outside limit of their concentration, even in an interview situation of semi-official constraint.

Later sections were more conversational. Especially well-liked and provocative were the sections on the evaluation of area agencies and evaluation of Harbor Light Centers. I often probed intensively to gather longer answers, which were documented as open-ended comments. Another section that went particularly well was the section on drinking history. Contrary to expectations that the men might be ashamed of, or unwilling to talk about their drinking patterns, most were very open. However, they likewise demonstrated that they had given little thought to the problem previously.

Few of the men had encountered similar research situations and questionnaires, so most were quite cooperative. In addition they were flattered by my presence as a female researcher in the traditionally all-male floor. This leads me to a discussion of my status as a researcher in the environment.

As Wiseman points out,

While there were a great many scenes I could observe, it became apparent that as a woman, or as a researcher, access was denied to some areas of the loop. (Wiseman, 1970, p.276)

She solved her observational problems by hiring participant observers who lived in the situations. Since such resources were unavailable to me, I anticipated some difficulties. This was, after all, an all-male community, the members of which had either severed or never initiated ties with females. I faced the problem of interviewer-interviewee anxiety about establishing rapport, expecting that as an "outsider" not only to the world of alcoholism, but also to skid row, I would have trouble getting "honest" answers. However, as Arlene Kaplan Daniels has demon-

strated, (1971) as a "High caste" stranger to the group and an obvious outsider, the men were more open about some things than they might have been with others of their own sex. While there were occasions when the men would attempt to exaggerate their backgrounds or histories for my benefit, for the most part they seemed to look upon me as a sympathetic observer, and were more willing to confide in me than they were in the staff interviewers who were all ex-alcoholics.

The men would pull me aside to tell me stories about their lives on skid row for my "book". Because of the necessity to explain subcultural details to me, the information gathered in conversations at the dinner table and in the coffee lounge was very rich. While I know I lost certain perspectives present in the situation, such as an insight into the all-male bull session, I feel I also gained certain other information which might have been privileged to a male outsider.

Perhaps competition and pride prevented the men from giving good answers to the male interviewing staff, as well as fear of exposure of details of their life, and the desire for anonymity which, as previously stated, is a part of skid row life. Generally, Salvation Army staff personal histories were composed of vague and general answers and they often commented on the difficulties of getting the men to talk. Experience as an interviewer, as well perhaps, as my role as an outsider, enabled me to gather richer data.

There are many problems inherent in the role of the female researcher in an all-male setting which it is not the role of this thesis to examine,



Because it was impossible to "pass" or become "one of the guys," a certain amount of information was necessarily lost. However, I believe that a female researcher is able to gain some information which may be privileged to a male outsider, or even insider.

An additional consideration in the research was that of role expectations. Precisely because I was female, there were certain things I was expected to conform to. Language on the floor was notably toned down when it was known that I was around, and I was not expected to swear myself. Additionally, I found it was necessary to be "feminine" in dress and action. After wearing pants on one work day, I was told by several staff members that the men had commented unfavorably on it. I allowed them to open doors for me, and to take my tray back because non-cooperation in these small matters would have endangered my standing and perceived place in the setting. By behaving in the traditional and expected manner, I was able to reassure the men in their conception of my role, and take some threat out of the interview situation.

Another methodological consideration that the setting provoked was the question of respondent honesty. As previously mentioned, I became at times aware of embroidering and glorification during the course of the interview. It was necessary that I not imperil the man's self-esteem, but still gain truthful responses. I used attitudes of friendly disbelief and display of knowledgeability about skid row to dispel this. Minor errors in chronology and job history were corrected by checking with Army files and then approaching the man and telling him that there seemed to be a mistake in our record-



keeping. However, if massive lying on the part of a newcomer to Harbor Light occurred, there was little way to check against it. I feel quite confident from the quality and atmosphere of the interviews, as well as the strong correlation with past records, that the majority of the interviews were sincere.

Besides the formal interviewing situation with the men, which engenders the above considerations, more informal observations and conversations were also conducted. Many of these encounters and the events that prompted them were recorded in a research notebook, which I kept sporadically during the course of the project.

## II

The second portion of the research concerned observation of the interaction between the men and the officers and staff in the setting. The most important part of this section of the research was accomplished through participation-observation. As a "pseudo-staff" member, I was able to attend staff meetings and classes with the men, as well as to initiate evaluative conversations with all the staff. Again, I used the research notebook to keep records of these interactions.

A second tool was also utilized to give background to the place of the Salvation Army officer in such a setting. I sent a mail questionnaire to Harbor Light officers in the United States. This instrument was pretested with officers in Cleveland, who helped immeasurably in refining the questions. The religious section was pruned somewhat because of their reactions to what they considered to be overly simplistic statements. Four and five item scales were used as answers to most of the objective

questions, as the officers raised objections to forced answers.

The mail questionnaire was less successful than the personal interviews as many of the questions were left unanswered. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the Appendix. A total of eighteen of the 25 surveys distributed were returned. One set of follow-up letters was issued about three weeks after the surveys were distributed, and several personal follow-ups were conducted by Salvation Army officers. Los Angeles and New York both failed to return information, which slants the information in the direction of the smaller cities.

The sketchiness of the returned forms and the low percentage of return may indicate in part the heavy administrative duties of the group. In fairness, many of the questionnaires returned were quite excellent, and included appended information, however not enough were of that quality to provide information for more than background testing of hypotheses about the officers in charge of the facilities. Of those who responded to the survey, most were favorably impressed with it. Some however, completed the hour survey in less than 35 minutes. Therefore, the overall quality of the return is not necessarily reflected in the quantity.

While a number of scale items similar to those included in the Men's questionnaire were included in the officer version, the main focus of this questionnaire was in the items dealing with professional plans, and policies at their individual centers. This information was gathered in open-ended forms, although a few questions about different types of treatment were presented with scales. Again, criteria in designing the questionnaire included a necessity for easy to answer questions and brevity to

ensure high returns.

-III-

The third element examined in this study was the social-welfare community. This was accomplished both through evaluative questions in the interviews with the men and also through interviews and tours at the agencies themselves. This had the advantage of providing the user's perspective, as well as the management's on the settings. The agency interviews usually took about half the day. Not every agency which worked with the homeless was included, as many were not well-established at the time of study, or worked with such a small percentage in their total clientele that they had little expertise in the field. Two major agencies excluded were the West Side community service center and Orca House, a group working primarily with Blacks. Also excluded was a facility which had just begun to operate as a half-way home for women with alcohol problems. These three agencies were started recently, and I was referred to them as the study was nearing completion.

A total of fifteen different agency interviews was completed. One and sometimes two administrators were contacted in each setting. Basically an informal and conversational interview was conducted, although it was structured with an outline of questions geared to gather the factual data presented in the appendix. My primary interests were in the agency attitudes toward skid row, and their eligibility requirements. Most of the interviews included tours of facilities and contact with the men and other staff personnel. These elements were excluded in the mental facilities and at the jail setting. At most of the agencies, my reception was very warm.

The agencies seemed flattered that someone was studying them. They were also aware of the wide lack of coordination and information between agencies, and were grateful for anything which provided information about their "competition." They were willing to converse on a professional and open level about the problems faced in their particularly failure-prone service.

One of the most interesting facets of this particular portion of the research was the contrast in perceptions of services between the agencies and the men. Several of the agencies seemed to present a paper version of their program. With the insights of the users, a more realistic perspective could be gained. While the agency interviews intended to portray the eligibility spectrum in treatment programs in Cleveland, they also provided information on available resources, available treatment philosophies and success ratios.

Through these interviews, Wiseman's treatment loop was seen. Many of the administrators mentioned the problem of the "repeater," or the "rounder". Several even mentioned the same man, whom the interviewer had seen, as a typical example of this. While proving the existence of the loop was not a main purpose of the interviewing, it was one of the fringe benefits of the experience.

The agency interviews provided rich background on the environmental context of skid row. While each interview was brief, thereby limiting profound insights into the various agencies, basic data on target population and treatment philosophy were gathered.

IV

The battery of methods used was intended to aid in getting a multi-faceted picture of the nature of the inter-action between the men of skid row and the agencies that served them. Although I was continually aware that no single researcher could attain total verstehen of such a large picture, an attempt was made to gain as deep an understanding of the situation as the limited amount of time made possible. The six month period between initial contact with the agency and completion of interviews with the men was much too short to develop a complete picture of an agency that had been in existence for 25 years. Therefore this study is very time-specific. The changes that Harbor Light was undergoing at the time of observation in staff and program may well be resolved by the time of completion. However, the problems the observed changes and interactions raised seem typical of any organization attempting to survive in a hostile task environment. Hopefully, the chosen methods will serve to highlight the problems and nature of this particular organizational interaction. An attempt was made to gain the perspectives of both the client and the administrative staff, as well as to investigate the atmosphere and organizational structure in which these two participants interacted. How successful this attempt is rests not only upon the limitations of even the most widely chosen of methodologies, but also upon the limitations of a single observer among one hundred fifty people.



## PRESENTATION OF HYPOTHESES

This research concerns a group of excessive drinkers whose shelter or health situations have brought them to the Salvation Army Harbor Light Center. Their choice of this institution and their life within it will be seen in the context of the Cleveland social welfare environment. This organization serves the skid row area, and competes to some extent for clientele with other organizations providing similar services. Therefore, the inter-relationships within the setting must be seen in terms of the Harbor Light's organizational survival--both in its task environments locally, and at the national level. The relationships within the internal environment contribute greatly to this organization's success or failure. It will be seen that it selects clients by presenting an image of its services to the community it serves. Therefore, it sets up what Thompson (1967, p.27) calls "domain" by attracting clients suitable for its treatment. However, once the treatment phase begins, the accomplishment of long-range goals is not achieved. Therefore, intermediate goals and services are created so that the organization can continue without staff demoralization. With constant changes both in program offered, and emphasis on particular elements of programming, the organization can cover its failure to successfully rehabilitate men. The staff remains more concerned with matters of organizational procedure than with the

client himself, as will be shown by description of the program.

Studying this organization from the perspectives of both management and client will help explain how each, through his own special interpretation or definition of situation, is able to survive in what must be objectively seen as a frustrating situation. For the client, he must live in an authoritarian and restricting environment. The management is faced with rehabilitation of an unresponsive clientele. Yet the relationship continues despite these problems.

The men who turn for help are by no means in the majority of skid row residents. Clearly, any study of men within institutions is not dealing with a subsample of the homeless on skid row, but with a selectively chosen group who have entered the agency by choice. Very few enter from referrals by other agencies. Most find out about agencies like Harbor Light from their friends and companions.

For this study, the following hypotheses about the relationships within and without the Harbor Light setting are proposed:

I. An organization attempting to be successful limits its domain and clientele to areas in which it can achieve success, through both formal and informal methods. A formal screening process and informal reputational networks influenced by agency services serve to screen skid row men to certain agencies treating alcoholics. More formal, institutionally initiated screening methods include location, eligibility criterion, and costs. The informal reputational network is created by the clients themselves, to inform the community of

available and preferable treatment settings. Rough information is passed evaluating services and accommodations, and serves as an informal map to Wiseman's (1970) "loop" as it exists in Cleveland.

Data to test Hypothesis I : An examination of different agencies used by the skid row men will demonstrate that these agencies have the potential to be client specific, even though no central referral system exists. Criteria of eligibility limit clients to those which each agency feels best prepared to serve. An informal reputational rating system which is influenced by these formal methods will be shown to exist among the men who use Harbor Light by analysis of their answers to questions of evaluation on area agencies.

II. The Harbor Light agency has created its own reputation on skid row as an agency which provides services of clean shelter, food and varied working opportunities. Through this reputation, it attracts a group of men to the service because it meets their particular needs. Their own personal status at the time of admission is an element in their choice, as is their knowledge that services offered will be available to them.

Data to test Hypothesis II: Men's reasons for coming to Harbor Light will be examined to demonstrate that their are specific factors of Harbor Light services known to users before they are oriented to these services, demonstrating reputation as a factor in their choice.

IIA: A local referral system is responsible for most of the users at Harbor Light, as the majority of men using the service are local, and became aware of services from ac-

acquaintances rather than from agencies or the welfare system.

IIB. Men of Harbor Light are not typical of skid row men as a whole, as they are in better health than those from skid row at large. This may be because Harbor Light has a reputation as a work place where work is hard but pay is slightly higher than at the sheltered workshops. Many of the men who come to Harbor Light choose it as a shelter where they can use their able bodies to earn and keep more of their money.

Data to test Hypothesis IIB: Brief comparison will be made between the data gathered by Bogue on health, and that gathered at Harbor Light. Information from open-ended and occupational questions will be used to demonstrate that work conditions were a factor in choice of Harbor Light for some.

IIC. A high proportion of those who come to Harbor Light are single; either through divorce, widowhood, or permanent bachelorhood. They are used to survival without women, and adapt to the all-male institutional environment with only limited complaint. Again, the men coming to Harbor Light are well-suited to treatment offered.

II D. Among the men who choose Harbor Light are a core of regulars who use the agency as a residence center and form a reliable clientele who can be counted on to return again and again. These men, especially, are attracted by what they know about Harbor Light and feel it meets their needs well-enough to re-use the institution. This group forms the backbone of the organization, and the staff count on their reap-

pearance to fill certain responsible jobs.

Data to test II D.: A high proportion of those interviewed were repeaters and a special open-ended conversation about changes needed and likes and dislikes of the agency was conducted with each in addition to the regular interview.

II.E. Some of the men who come to Harbor Light are attracted by the religious nature of the services, and have strong feelings about the importance of religion and private devotions. These Christians are often close to the Salvation Army theological interpretation.

Data to test II E.: While there is little comparative information available on non-church members, some national material exists in a sample taken by Glock and Stark in 1964. The Glock and Stark index of orthodoxy, discussed in detail in Appendix B, was used with both a national sample of officers and with the men of Harbor Light to compare the men to the officers and to the nation at large, in orthodoxy, found to be the fundamental dimension of religious faith by Glock and Stark (1966). The private dimension of religion, which was examined since so few of the men participated in public church rituals, was measured through the King-Hunt series (1969) to demonstrate the degree of commitment to personal devotion as compared to the officers of the center.

A series of questions taken from the Dynes (1955) church-sect work was used as a short form means of measuring several issues of religious orientation, and was used for comparison with the officers in charge.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix B for additional notes on all measures cited herein.



IIF. Most of the men who check into Harbor Light are recovering from a recent bout with alcohol, and may feel at a low ebb of personal esteem after their experiences on the outside, as suggested by Vanderpool, (1969) However, because of the companionship of other men in similar situations in the detoxification section of Harbor Light, low self-esteem is countered, as there is no higher level mirror to reflect back a depressing picture. If, as Mead and Cooley, and symbolic interactionism suggests, much of man's self opinion is what he sees reflected of himself by others, then the group of drunks admitted to Harbor Light send back a picture of the man which includes, if not elements of approval, at least, acceptance. A response which the man would not expect from his old reference groups or society at large would be this one of approval.

Thus, through providing a positive mirror of companionship, the center can serve to raise, or at least stabilize a man's self-esteem. The community of Harbor Light fosters a bravura as many of the men know each other from the outside. The group at Harbor Light is often an important reason in a man's choice, for he knows that his peers will raise his confidence.

Data to test Hypothesis IIF: The Rosenberg (1965) Scale of Self-esteem, designed for use with high school students is employed here as a measure of self-esteem. Data from a follow-up of ten interviews will be used to show the power of Harbor Light to raise self-esteem. Information from interviews will show that the peer group is an important reason in choosing Harbor Light.

II G. The recent bout with alcoholism and failure that brings a man to Harbor Light may leave him with a low sense of the future, and of efficacy in dealing with his world. He turns to Harbor Light to shift his responsibility for tomorrow temporarily to the management, and easily accepts institutionalization while it suits his needs. He sees things in the perspective of "now" and "today" much like his lower class compatriots (Rainwater, 1959 ; and Lewis, 1961; Bittner, 1967). This man worries only minimally about tomorrow.

Data to test Hypothesis IIG: The competency scale used by Angus Campbell (1960) was used to measure personal efficacy because the nature of the questions touched on the now orientation, as well as on powerlessness, and competence. The direction of scalability demonstrates the lack of future surety among the men that come to Harbor Light. The questions themselves were especially suitable to the criteria of shortness and simplicity.

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS II: The men who use Harbor Light are specific to the agency, a large proportion having been attracted by a reputation promising services that would satisfy certain of their needs, such as the need for a peer group, shelter, and religious comfort. They are suited to take advantage of these services because of characteristic demographic factors such as health and marital status.

III. For an organization to survive successfully in a competitive environment, it must present an image of successful attainment of goals to its reference groups in the task environment upon whom it is dependent for support and resources.

Harbor Light must respond to pressures from elements in its task environment, including other competing and cooperating agencies, its parent organization, and community and governmental fund sources. This need for response results in the following actions:

IIIA. The organization spends much of its time in attempting to reach its stated goal of the rehabilitation of the alcoholic homeless man through manipulation and discussion of the program intended to accomplish that goal. In addition the organization has a sub-goal of financial stability, and other organizational resources are devoted to the accomplishment of this goal.

Data to Test Hypothesis III A: Observation at staff meetings and of staff activities and actions indicated that much of the time of the organization was entering into manipulation of programming procedures essentially directed at increasing organizational success at its two main goals.

III B. In addition to attempting to reach its stated goals, the organization will attempt to define new goals, including both functions which it is achieving success in at the time, as well as the addition of new functions. It will therefore legitimize short term actions, such as detoxification, and add new long term goals such as half-way housing.

Just as the organization itself must respond to pressures in its task environment, so must the administrative staff answer to pressures in their situation. The Salvation Army officer is already equipped when he comes with strong religious beliefs and a vocation to serve. These help mitigate some of

the pressures from both the parent organization and other elements of his task environment, as well as shaping his perception of his role. Additionally, the officers demonstrate authoritarian responses in some cases, which well equip him to operate within the hierarchically structured setting of the Harbor Light command post. This quality of authoritarianism may increase in the officer over time, or he may come to the service with this quality, but no longitudinal data was available for comparison.

IV. In response to pressures from competing agencies in their task environment as well as in a search for funds and referrals, the officer perceives his role as professional, and takes action to attain this standing in the eyes of his community, and to command more successfully in his environment.

IVA. The officers see their place as professional, with a strong component of counselling, even if in actual practice much of their time must be spent in administration. The parent organization encourages this orientation to ministering, even if in actual fact the officer has little time for it.

Data to test Hypothesis IVA: Officer's testimony as to the percentage of time spent in counselling, as well as their opinion as to their most important task will be used to test the hypothesis. Evidence that the officers may not have much time to spend in this area of their role is taken from the men's opinion of officer's duties, and encounters with officers in counselling situations.

IV B. In response to pressures from other agencies in their environment to use secular methods in treating alcoholics,

as well as response to situations within the institution which call for additional training, the officer will attempt to gain further professional training of a non-ecclesiastical sort.

IV C. Again, in working in his community, the officer may find it necessary to increase his professional stature by joining various professional groups. These groups not only provide the officer with treatment ideas, but also involve him in sharing with other agencies involved in the same sort of work, and help him spread his agency's professional reputation

IV D. The officer may wish to experiment with his program to serve unmet needs within the community he serves. The parent organization is flexible on this point so that the officer can experiemnt and attain funding for secular as well as sacred aspects of programming unprovided by other community groups.

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS IV: The officer as well as organization must adapt his behavior to achieve success in his particular environment. Many officers seem to find professionalization a useful response to the pressures to achieve within their community, and also helpful to them in administering the agency under their charge.

The major intent of this thesis is the demonstration of the necessity of adaptive behavior and organization in this institutional setting. The development of a program of skid row treatment occurs through the interaction of client and officer. While there are several different elements in



the client group with differing motivations in seeking treatment, common methods of cooperation with the institutional regulations and attitudes of gratitude develop, changing their behavior from their skid row drunkenness to institutional dependence for short periods of time.

The men change their behavior and chose an institution which suits their particular needs at a given time. While officially, the center provides alcoholic rehabilitation, it is known in the community as a good place to find shelter. The men who come to Harbor Light are professing to seek sobriety, but this is a temporary goal, if at all. Each comes with an awareness that Harbor Light offers certain services and has certain requirements for those who wish to use the service including a loss of independence. The men give up the independence and strive to fulfill the requirements as long as they need the service. Some have goals which require service longer than others, and they stay over thirty days. These men have begun to achieve success in terms of length of stay.

V. Men who have goals which require long-term services of the institution, are able to define the situation within the institution to fit their own particular needs. By staying for long periods of time, they both gain prestige within the organization and attain their goals, as well as serving the organization by providing "success-stories."

V.A. Successful men adapt their behavior to the institutional setting, cooperating with the group norms and regulations, and thereby insuring their survival within the walls.

V.B. Successful men will have longer range goals than those who stay for short periods of time, and will have an orientation to their future. Their express purposes in using Harbor Light, either as a permanent employer, or as a safe haven while awaiting external rewards demonstrate that their goals are often dependent upon remaining within the shelter. Benefits at this agency accrue after longer stays, making the long-term stay more rewarding.

VC. Those who stay for long periods of time will show some personal changes over time, such as improved personal esteem and religiosity in some cases, indicating that the organization is not totally ineffective in promoting rehabilitation.

Data to test Hypotheses V.A., B, & C: Follow-up material was gathered from those who had stayed over thirty days, replicating some of the earlier interview, and asking questions about what made men drop out, and how new men differed from old.

This study intends to offer perspectives on the interaction within one particular skid row setting, which is religious in its approach to treatment, but changes in reaction to changing situations in its environment. The clientele using Harbor Light has changed over the years, and so have other available social services. If it is to survive, it must change also, or face the fate of the wild-cat missions of the thirties, extinction.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NETWORK OF AGENCIES AND REPUTATIONS

This chapter presents results testing the first hypothesis, that agencies, through formal and informal screening mechanisms, attempt to limit their clientele to those they can best serve. Their effectiveness at this task is examined through an analysis of the reputational network seen in the Harbor Light users. Those agencies which are best known turn out to be those who are also most willing to serve the skid row man.

Additionally, this chapter serves to portray the social welfare community which benefits the homeless man, and which provides the setting for Harbor Light. Harbor Light, a work therapy organization, is excluded from this section, although obviously also a part of this network, known to all respondents.

### THE NETWORK OF AGENCIES AND REPUTATIONS

There are six different types of welfare services available to skid row alcoholics in the Cleveland area. These are: welfare administration, hospital agencies, medical and psychological treatment facilities, half-way houses, work therapy operations, and Alcoholics Anonymous. These treatments range from complete out-patient care to intensive medical programs. All of those investigated were theoretically open to the skid row man, but various formal and informal screens often limited the number of skid row men partaking of treatments.

These screens included cost, initial interviewing, testing of client sincerity, geographical location either far from the skid row area, or in dangerous neighborhoods, and rules on recidivism. These screens serve to limit clientele to those who are willing to make a strong commitment to the treatment.

The least client-specific and least sophisticated of the helping agencies are those in welfare administration. The skid row alcoholic is just one small part of their case-load, and while, as a single person, the man receives specialized treatment, his alcoholism gains him few special favors. A man in Cleveland who has lived in the county long enough to establish eligibility may receive relief either from the county or from the Soldiers' and Sailors Relief commission, if he is a veteran. This relief is usually given in the form of room and board checks. A man may receive emergency relief from the county for only one month,

and must have a medical disability to qualify for further aid, or be over age 65.

There are some specific services for the skid row alcoholic. While the room and board system, by virtue of their low amount, encourage sojourns at the least expensive hotels in town. welfare will on occasion pay for alcoholic rehabilitation services. County Welfare approves three such services, while Soldiers' and Sailors' approves four, including Harbor Light. While \$93 is the maximum monthly payment a man can get for room and board, as high as \$145 is paid to a rehabilitation agency to meet their costs in keeping a man.

The county service also has a second aid for the alcoholic; the Cuyahoga County Alcoholic Rehabilitation Unit. The unit provides educational introductions to Alcoholics Anonymous. Only a small percentage who seek this counselling service are skid row alcoholics. Most have a family to return to and are using the service for advice and an introduction to AA. The unit is located several blocks away from the Salvation Army Men's Social Service, but far from skid row, and is in close association with the Fresh Start halfway house programs.

Another general service which also treats the man as a part of a general case load is the hospital service. Both Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital and St. Vincent's Charity Hospital see alcoholics in emergency cases of withdrawal, or as a result of violence in the streets. Many of these men have received treatment from the hospitals for falls, fights, and D. T.'s with no charge.

The skid row men are not the most popular patients, as they



are unreliable about showing up for treatment, and often ungrateful. (Harbor Light, Conference, Nov. 1972) Nonetheless, the city hospitals are the only medical facilities available. Health care is one of the more serious problems the skid row man faces, and as the most sophisticated alcoholic treatment facilities are generally closed to him because of cost or location, he receives the limited care available as he can get it. The skid row man faces, with other indigent patients, the problems of ever-expanding needs for health care versus ever-expanding costs to the hospital. Emergency situations such as coronary attacks are well-handled by the hospitals. One man from Harbor Light spent several weeks in an intensive coronary care unit in the Metropolitan Hospital. However, more routine cuts, scrapes, bruises and dental care are handled less competently because of the press of economics and staffing. The skid row men are not persuasive enough, or reliable enough to have their needs for care effectively met. They compete with other needy people for a limited amount of available services. Most of the residential centers which are available to the homeless have no medical staff, and therefore medical care is handled on an ad-hoc and impersonal basis in the city's medical facilities.

Likewise, psychological care for the skid row alcoholic is handled non-specifically. Neither of the two mental facilities investigated had sophisticated and special programs for alcoholics. Both housed alcoholics on the same ward with other patients, and only offered one or two hours per week of specialized care in group therapy settings for the patient with alcoholic problems.

Again, these facilities did not specialize in the homeless, although the homeless, as residents of the county were eligible to enter the facility. Because the programs were not specifically designed for alcoholics, but rather for mental patients with alcoholic problems, there was again, as in the hospital facilities, some staff hostility towards the alcoholic. As the director of one ward reported,

under these conditions, the staff doesn't like working with alcoholics. These are unfavorable conditions to work with the problem, because they have no program support. It is very difficult to treat an alcoholic on the same ward with psychotics and neurotics. It is hard to deal with someone who has no job and can anticipate no family support. Many of these people drink again, and this discourages the staff. (Cleveland Psychiatric Institute, 1973)

A chief social worker had these comments about staff unwillingness to work with alcoholics in this setting:

The staff sometimes feels hostile because of the repeating syndrome. No one likes failures. A lot of them feel that the alcoholic should be able to control his drinking. Many of the alcoholics are manipulative and brain-wash the staff. No one likes to be tricked, and so the staff becomes suspicious. The men project their problems with drinking onto the staff, and are domineering, dependent, and unappreciative. (Fairhill Psychiatric Institute, 1973)

The mental facilities claim about a 40-50% rate of success with limited sobriety of six months or so, but this rather high rate of success should be regarded in light of a rather inefficient follow-up program, and the fact that involuntary admissions are excluded. Additionally, the hospitals serve a catchment area which includes people with families and other support. Many of the skid row men who come to the facilities enter involuntarily, and leave within a few days. It is not these men that the state mental facilities have success with.

The hospitals and the welfare services are generally available

to all members of the community, whether alcoholic or not. However, the other services are more and more specifically oriented toward treatment of the alcoholic and the skid row man. Oriented most specifically to the alcoholic, although not necessarily dealing with the problem of homelessness, are the agencies which offer sophisticated medical and psychological treatment facilities. Among these in Cleveland are Rosary Hall, Exodus Hall, Serenity Hall and the Brecksville Veteran's Administration Hospital. Both Rosary Hall and Serenity Hall have high rates of admission, and thus their costs serve as effective screens against the skid row man. Therefore, when a man has utilized these services, he has usually been in a higher status in life, with steady employment and health insurance. Both Rosary and Serenity are located within larger hospital facilities, but offer a specialized ward for alcoholics with an average stay of from 8 to 14 days, including treatment and alcoholic education. Exodus Hall, which is connected with the Workhouse, includes a thirty day stay if one volunteers from the outside community for the service. Workhouse men may also participate in the facility, but their stay is often governed by their length of sentence. All medical and psychiatric treatment is provided by the workhouse. The Veteran's Administration facility has access to the resources of the entire complex. Therefore, all these facilities have the capacity to deal with alcoholism on a medical basis. However, these facilities have several screening mechanisms, such as location and strenuousness of program which reduce skid row use. Of the eighty men at Harbor Light, only eight had been to Exodus Hall, only eleven to Brecks-

ville, and only seventeen to Rosary Hall. Rosary Hall is more familiar and better used because of its long establishment. Even though there is little skid row usage of the facility, some of the men did utilize the facility before coming to skid row.

These facilities are all professionally committed to achieving sobriety for the patient. A good deal of work is demanded of the patient in terms of class and therapy attendance. Only a man who is fairly sincere about his goals of beating alcoholism can survive easily in such a setting. The purposes and programs of the places are made quite clear to the client upon entrance. The personnel are professional, and a wide socio-economic group of clients utilize these four services. Additionally, the facilities most open to the men, Exodus Hall, and the Veterans' facility are located far from skid row environment. Rosary Hall, located on skid row and established for over twenty years is much better known to the men than Exodus Hall. The Veterans' hospital, which has been established for many years, but is also far away, was also unfamiliar. Thus a place where most of the men were ineligible for treatment was as well known or better known as a place where most of them were eligible, primarily because of length of foundation and location on skid row. Obviously, then, time in operation and locational familiarity contribute to whether an agency appears in the skid row reputational network system. Fifty-four percent of the men knew Rosary Hall, but only 16% knew of the Exodus facility because of these factors. Eligibility seems to be a lesser factor in familiarity than these other screening elements. As previously pointed out, Wiseman demonstrated that the sophisti-



cated alcoholic treatment centers were most popular with the men. However, even though they may be popular, these agencies are under-utilized in Cleveland, even where the men are eligible because of the additional factors of unfamiliarity and locational inaccessability. Less sophisticated agencies, such as those to be studied later are far more familiar and more widely used than those agencies that rely on psychological therapy and sophisticated medical techniques to reach the skid row man. He may worry about the other clients of higher social status, or about unfamiliar and sophisticated treatments, so that even while the situation of no work is appealing, there are drawbacks to these agencies for him. The agencies themselves believe that the man does not come to their facility because he is unwilling to put forth the effort for a complete cure:

The average guy living under bridges is there by his own choice. This is the life style he is used to. We only get 10-20% from the flophouse type environment, and those who see how much work this is are often amazed and want to leave. (Exodus Hall, April, 1973)

Most also feel their length of stay is too short to really reach the skid row man. "They are hopelessly pathetic about themselves, about recovery, and about life. I don't feel that you can turn him upside down and around in 12 or 30 days." (Exodus Hall, 1973) The men partly agree with this. One, commenting on Rosary Hall said, "I feel it could help a skid row alcoholic, but twelve days is too short. It takes six months." (Interview 20)

Even at the Exodus program, which allows extended stays, the staff believes that its program is too short to really help the skid row man. These agencies are aware of the need for restructuring the man's life style in order to combat the problem



of alcohol. "You must first restore his sense of worth and belonging." (V.A., April, 1973)

Besides insufficient times of stay, the treatment at these facilities foster social skills which the skid row man may have dropped. The Veteran's Administration, for example, offers self-government to all patients in the program. The patients are responsible for all affairs which affect them, including disciplinary matters. They even handle a good deal of the clerical work. They are also responsible for much of the counselling, although guided by the staff. A group made up totally of skid row men would not have had the needed interpersonal skills to handle this sort of responsibility effectively, although at least partial responsibility might be better than the total dependency fostered at the other agencies.

The men occasionally indicate why they shy away from these sophisticated facilities, even when like Wiseman, they give them high reputational ratings. One man commented that he felt offended by the intensive group therapy sessions which compelled men to discuss their drinking problems and confess their faults in front of their peers (thereby violating what Wallace has described as a code of personal anonymity of the streets.) The skid row man is not ready yet to let his guard down totally, especially before middle class others who are sharing the facility with him.

Some men evaluate the services materialistically, balancing costs to themselves against their benefits. They are concerned about the actual value of the treatment they receive. One respondent, commenting on a hospital treatment he had taken, said,

I didn't like it because I was pretty sick, and they made me wait four hours between drinks, and there are three meetings a day and a lot of lip service. The bill is preposterous for what you get, it's just awful. You get two bottles of whiskey and a lot of talk. (Interview 38)

Thus, several sophisticated facilities are available to the alcoholic in the Cleveland Area. Two, Rosary Hall, and Serenity Hall, may have been utilized by skid row men in their downward careers, but are not now available to them because of their prohibitive costs. Two, located far from skid row, are open to almost all men, but because of their newness, and their unfamiliarity on the grape vine of skid row, and also because of their location and sophisticated programs, are under-utilized by a clientele they could well serve.

Another under-utilized group of services open to the skid row man is the half-way house group. Fresh-Start, Matt Talbott, and Now House are examples of these facilities, but again through a screening mechanism of location and admission procedures, skid row use is limited. The avowed aim of these houses is to achieve sobriety through a peaceful, alcohol-free and home-like atmosphere. The atmosphere is buttressed with one and often two or more Alcoholics Anonymous meetings a week. Welfare, and Soldiers' and Sailors' Relief generally pick up the tabs for these agency services. Therefore there is no cost for these agency services. Intensive screening limits the number of inhabitants to six through twenty-five men at each facility. At Fresh Start a potential client must pass the director's scrutiny for evidence of sincerity. At Matt Talbott, a priest at the workhouse provides 85% of the accepted clients through referral. Now House also has a director who examines each man as to his sincerity in the search for

sobriety. Now House is the only true half-way house, as a man must work at an outside job there, to pay his fifteen dollar weekly rent.

Stays at these facilities generally are about thirty days or longer, perhaps because of the scrutinization for sincerity, as well as the strict rules about recidivism. Fresh Start does not allow a repeater until a year has elapsed, and Matt Talbott limits repeaters to 6 months turn-around time. Even so, Matt Talbott finds that 50% of its clients are repeaters. The success rate seems lower at these agencies than at the sophisticated hospital facilities, perhaps in part because the majority of the clients are homeless. Again, reliability of success rates is low because of the lack of any sophisticated follow-up procedure. Most agencies count their successes by the number of clients who return to the former residence still in a state of sobriety. (Nonetheless, few agencies were reticent about success rates, and the appendix includes notations on success for each)

The main problem these agencies face is their location in undesirable neighborhoods, where it is impossible for the man to leave at night. One client said, " I don't like the neighborhood, it's like walking into a death trap." (58) The administrators are aware of the men's fears, and one talks of opening a facility in the country and using the city houses only for men who have employment in town. A second Fresh Start has opened in the skid row neighborhood, which may make the half-way type facility more accessible and better-known to the skid row clientele.

Generally, at present, the halfway facilities were unknown to the men of Harbor Light. All have been established within the

last five years, whereas places such as the Salvation Army have been in existence for over fifty. Fully 71% of the men were unable to evaluate Fresh Start. Another 66% could give no opinion on Matt Talbott Inn. Those who did make evaluations gave high ones, however. Of the twenty-six evaluating Matt Talbott, only two gave it an average or lower evaluation. In the case of Fresh Start, sixteen of twenty-two evaluators rated it above average.<sup>1</sup>

Despite high recommendations few men had actually utilized either service. Only nine had been at Matt Talbott, and seven had been at Fresh Start. Thus, while the half-way facilities offer residence for the homeless, and home-like treatment, few of the Harbor Light users were familiar with the services, and fewer had utilized them. The reputation of the groups was high among those who had heard of them. Again, location out of the skid row environment as well as recency of foundation and specificity of screening procedures to eliminate insincerity seems to limit in part the usage by skid row men.

Thus, two of the six welfare services available most specifically for alcoholics are under utilized by the clients of Harbor Light. The men are more knowledgeable and utilize more universally a fourth group of agencies. These agencies are directly on skid row or within easy travelling distance of the area, and offer work and spiritual therapy programs. Employed and lower and middle class clients with families are not included in their clientele.<sup>1</sup> Now House began housing men in November, and had no full-time staff, so was not included in ratings in the questionnaire.

The target population is specifically the skid row alcoholic. Not only is the skid row homeless man eligible for the program, but he is basically the only element of the population to be eligible. To participate in these services, a man need only be homeless and profess to be in need of help. Cooperation with the work or spiritual program is required for shelter and services to continue.

Not only are the skid row men more familiar with these services, they are also quicker to criticize them. Whereas the hospitals and half-way houses require little work for their treatment, the skid row agency requires the man to work to earn his room and board. Therefore, the man can accuse them of mercenary aims. In agencies such as Exodus Hall, the patients were responsible for some routine maintenance and their own self-governance. In Stella Maris or the Men's Social Service Center, the man is not only responsible for the maintenance of living facilities, but also must put in a forty hour or longer week in some form of "work therapy." This work is paid at the level of the state sheltered workshop scale or lower. If it is paid at the sheltered workshop scale, then room and board are subtracted from the amount paid. Men in such programs, including Harbor Light are lucky to have ten dollars in their pockets at the end of a work week.

There are five agencies which specifically fit this category in Cleveland. They include: The Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center, The Volunteers of America, City Mission, Stella Maris, and Harbor Light. All have some religious orientation, although this feature is strongest at City Mission. As discussed



earlier, the religious orientation is helpful in operating in this field of failure, as there is an explanation provided for failure in the inherent fallibility of man. The treatment facility blames the man, not the treatment, in failures.

Unlike the more sophisticated treatment facilities, there are no monetary costs to the man for participation in the services. Therefore, however, there are limits to the sophistication of treatment given the man. Most of the facilities offer one or more church services a week for the men, an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, and the work therapy program as their treatment package. A man who is using the facility primarily for shelter does not have to worry about groups of meetings devoted to probing his personality and his alcoholic history. The treatment at these agencies is often so rudimentary as to be almost non-existent. Many of the facilities are quite frank in admitting that they provide more shelter than treatment for the man. One has gone so far as to provide housing for transients five nights a month, and a separate residency program, with more extensive counselling. Other agencies are aware that many men will only use the program for shelter for two weeks or less. The agencies do not actively discourage these users, so long as they participate in the work phase of the program.

Since all the agencies professed to me that they were interested in the rehabilitation of alcoholics, I was interested in seeing how the men perceived these claims. About the same percentage of men had used the four agencies (excluding Harbor Light), Between fifty and sixty percent had been at each agency, and another 20-30% was willing to evaluate the agency without having been actually present at it. While all four

agencies evaluated presented similar pictures of both treatment and success to me, they were not so similarly evaluated by the men. Volunteers of America, and City Mission were criticized by clients because of their insincerity and hypocrisy. While "no drinking" is the ground rule at all agencies, both of the Volunteers and the Mission seemed to allow drinking on the premises. I saw men intoxicated on the grounds and in the doorways of the Volunteers premises, which underlined the truth of what the men said. The men frowned upon a program which professes to help the alcoholic, but is not hard on drinking. They also felt that the Volunteers program was mercenary-minded, and that the Mission was hypocritical. My interview time at Volunteers was indeed more business-oriented than at other facilities. Likewise, the interview at the Mission was full of sanctimonious success stories of 'typical' clients who had been salvaged through religion. Yet the presentations of the administrations in no way hinted at the far-ranging criticisms of the men they had served.

Of the 31 men who had used Volunteer's services, 97% rated it as average or below. And of those who had not been there, another 31 cases, 90% rated it as average or below in helping the alcoholic. There was thus very great agreement between the users and the non-users as to the worth of the services there. The comments that probing elicited about the agency indicated that the drinking on the premises, and the mercenary nature of the program were at the seat of the clients' dislike.

One man, when asked if they allowed drinking at Volunteers, had this to say:

It's a hell hole over there. They allow drinking, they drink right upstairs in the dorms. Bottles are all over. That's a lie that they don't allow drinking. She's got a

business to run. She don't care if they drink, as long as they do a job. They got a bunch of regulars over there. (Interview 18)

Another commented:

If you don't drink when you go over there, you will when you get out--they want their men to drink, as long as they make money. (Interview 14)

While the administrator at Volunteers had stated that they allowed a man re-entrance after "little slips", I was unprepared for the tales of massive drinking the men returned. They were indeed, as the administrator had said, "a little more lenient in this than many organizations."

Likewise unfavorable were the reports on the shelter and treatment offered by the City Mission program to both transients and skid row men down on their luck. While the mission felt that they were "fulfilling Cleveland's Christian responsibility of providing a last chance to its share of the 5½ million on skid row today," the men felt that it was not much of a chance.

City Mission, that's about on the same level as 21st and Payne (City Jail). It was dirty and an all-around hole. The other folks and the sheets were dirty. When it is freezing outside, and you are broke, though, anything is good that has a roof. (interview 38)

Another man explained,

It's dirty, and the food is poor, and you have to go through a whole process to get a bed (meaning church services and delousing) and I might as well sleep under a bridge to get peace of mind. (Interview 40)

As a final disparaging comment, one man complained,

You can hit the lice with a whip there. It's disastrous and the director has a mean, mercenary attitude. (Interview 45)

That these comments are not isolated resentments is reflected in evaluation figures. Of the men who had stayed in the facility, 90% felt that it was average or below in services. Of those

who evaluated it on reputation alone, 89% felt it was average or below. Further, fully 25% of the men felt the services there were Very Poor, the lowest rating available.

Yet despite this low estimation of the services offered, City Mission was the most widely utilized of any of the agencies evaluated. So even if the quality is low, its completely open admission, and service of temporary and commitment-free housing is attractive to the men, and provides a necessary service.

The other agencies utilizing work therapy and religious programs, Stella Maris and Men's Social Service seem to be better managed than the above. Like Volunteers of America, both offer furniture salvage operations as the basis of their work therapy. The men sleep in dormitory facilities at the centers. However, the agencies are much stricter in terms of drinking than either Volunteers or City Mission. Additionally, Stella Maris and Men's Social Service have a group of regulars who promote a particular type of agency community feeling that is appreciated and known by the other men. Of the men who evaluated Stella Maris, over 80% said it was above average in services. While 31 men gave Volunteers a very poor rating, no one gave Stella Maris that low an evaluation. Social Service fared less well, with those using it giving it lower ratings than those who had never used it. While 71% of the men who evaluated the service on reputation alone gave it an above average rating, only 53% of those who had used the service gave it that high a rating. Most however, who gave it another rating, gave it an average, rather than poor or very poor. This indicates, perhaps, that the high national reputation of the Salvation Army may offset a particular local agency's failings with skid row men. Actual



experience in the setting can knock the ratings down.

Perhaps part of the reason for the Social Service's unpopularity among users may be in its size. While Stella Maris provides housing for about 40-45 men, the Social Service Center carries between 100 and 130 men. The building is large and institutional and the directors are far from the men. While the administrators at Stella Maris know most of the clients by their names, this is seldom the case at Men's Social Service.

Despite the fact that Stella Maris has an evident mercenary orientation, running a private alcoholic clinic in addition to the salvage operation to stay afloat financially, the facility enjoys a much higher estimation than the Salvation Army. The mercenary charge was raised frequently against the Army, but not against Stella Maris. The wages are higher at Stella Maris, which may partially explain this phenomenon. At Men's Social Service, the men are "asked to repay what they get," and are then given a "gratuity, which we think of as a gift," for use in the snack bar. This ranges from three to twelve dollars a week depending on the length of a man's stay. However, whenever a man steps out of line, even slightly, his gratuity is docked again. At Stella Maris, on the other hand, the men are paid under the sheltered workshop provisions of the state of Ohio, earning sixty-seven cents an hour for the first one hundred forty hours of work, and then eighty cents an hour, which rises to a dollar an hour. Additionally, Stella Maris encourages a search for outside employment, whereas Men's Social makes it difficult, if not impossible to make a smooth transition to the outside world.



Time off to find outside employment is virtually unheard of. A man may continue in residence at Stella Maris for a short time after finding outside employment, but such an option is not really available at Men's Social. As one counselor explained, "that problem doesn't really arise." (Men's Social Service, Nov. 1972)

One of the men commented on the employment policies at Men's Social Service when explaining his low estimation of their services, saying,

They have nothing but slave labor out there. They repealed the fourteenth amendment. That gratuity is too low, and there is no possible way to get off the treadmill. (Interview 37)

The only reason another liked Men's Social was because, "the guys get to steal good clothes off the trucks." (Interview 39) Most of the comments, however, were fairly neutral, or reflected liking for the place. One man preferred it next to Harbor Light,

I liked it when I was there. It's probably the best place in town other than this. There's more activity there. You get lots of work and play. (Interview 43)

Interestingly, the picture presented of Men's Social virtually mirrors the picture of the Christian Missionaries drawn by Shirley Wiseman, (1970). Evidentially, the program is much the same across the country.

The work program at Stella Maris and the therapy offered, as well as living facilities are comparable to those at Social Service, yet the program has a much higher evaluation. The main element of the program which received comment from respondents was the unmeasurable thing, the atmosphere. The regular clients and the general conditions were much better at Stella Maris than at the other three services.

"A man is trusted there, and it is a fine place to stay, as they treat you with respect and feed you well. What

more could you want? (Interview, 49)

While clients are aware of the mercenary aspects of the operation, they dismiss these aspects with greater charity than they do for the Salvation Army or Volunteers. As one man put it,

The people that run it are sincere. They are there to make money, but they want to help you on the side. (Interview 78)

Perhaps this sincerity is communicated because all of the administrators of Stella Maris are ex-alcoholics. This is not true of any of the other facilities. They are also exceptionally severe about drinking. "You have to come in sober, that's for sure, or they would throw you out on the street, no matter how bad the weather was." (Interview 26)

These facilities all offer free housing and food to the man, for nothing more than forty hours of labor a week. The men know more about these four groups than any other facility, and utilize them widely. However, just because they utilize an agency, they do not necessarily develop gratitude towards the agency. The men who use these agencies are connoisseurs, and very sensitive to the attitudes with which help is given. They rate these agencies and these ratings are shared by their peers. Ratings given by users are virtual mirrors for ratings given by non-users, indicating that the reputational network about agencies on skid row is wide and well-established, especially for those agencies where men are both eligible and able to easily reach them. However, the reputational net does not seem to stretch to agencies which are not close to skid row. Both the sophisticated agencies and the half-way houses described above are only loosely covered by the reputational net.

The sixth element involved in treatment of skid row alcoholics is Alcoholics Anonymous. Almost every agency, except City Mission, uses Alcoholics Anonymous programming. Some, such as Matt Talbott and Fresh Start, emphasize it more than others such as the Salvation Army. Nonetheless, AA is a very prevalent part of skid row treatment programs. Therefore, I included a section on AA evaluation in my questionnaire.

As AA people themselves point out, skid row drunks form only three percent of all alcoholics in the United States. Most literature, as mentioned previously, demonstrates that alcoholics on skid row are frequently excessive rather than addictive drinkers. Still, AA feels it has a definite place on skid row, and the members provide free services and programming for almost all the agencies on skid row. Only two men in the sample had never heard of AA, and only one man had so little information about it he was unable to evaluate it. Almost two-thirds had at least attended meetings, and another twenty-nine percent claimed that they had at one time been members of AA. Thus Alcoholics Anonymous is well-known to the men of skid row who utilize Harbor Light.

Not only is Alcoholics Anonymous well-known, but it is widely respected by the men. Only thirteen of the seventy-seven who rated the service rated it as below average in services to help the alcoholic. Most of the men agreed that AA helped many. However, an interesting phenomenon occurred, for while the men formally rated AA as good or excellent, and claimed that it helped many, most of them also claimed that it did not work for them personally.

Perhaps foremost in the reasons for AA's failure with these men is the inability of the men to identify with the speakers and programs that AA provides. To become a member of AA, one "must devote six months to a year just going to meetings. This is the most important job you have to do. Everyone can't make AA, and most of them don't,"(Interview, Cuyahoga County Welfare Unit, March, '73) Few of the men who utilize Harbor Light are stable enough in employ and family situation to devote themselves to such a program. While there is a plethora of meetings at all times in the Cleveland area, as John Lofland has demonstrated, these meetings are class stratified; and most of the Harbor Light derelicts would be most uncomfortable walking into a higher class meeting. (Lofland, 1970, p. 109) To travel to compatible meetings might be difficult within the context of the skid row man's limited transportation and unstable employment situation. As one man said about the AA groups,

No, I've never really used their methods for myself. They are different people than me, and I feel they are better than me. The leads (speakers) are boring, and besides, I don't like to be reminded about drinking. (Interview 60)

Besides, when you have to work at seven A.M., it's tough to stay out all night going to meetings. (Interview 40)

The men who lead AA meetings, generally, are capable speakers, and therefore better educated at times than the men they speak to. Often their experiences are not as harrowing as those the skid row man has been through. "They don't tell me nothing I don't know. They can't tell you nothing you haven't done. It's only once in a while you run into a good one."(Interview 41)

Thus, for the men at Harbor Light, avoidance of AA comes because of the strain of class and experience differences, as well as an



inability to make the kind of commitment that AA membership requires. Most of them are just not willing to listen to "depressing stories." They find "It just doesn't help me to go to those meetings. They can't tell you anything new. The only advantage is that from the time you go to the time you get back, you are not in a bar." (Interview 43) There seems to be room on skid row for treatment which does not push AA as a requirement. Most of the men who have rejected AA agree that "they do good for the ones that believe in it." (Interview 25) The institutional AA meeting that the man is forced to attend makes the men feel that

they try to push it as if it was a religion, and make us attend. If it was voluntary at these places it might be better. (Interview 65)

While there is no class difference in the institutional meeting, except that between the lead and the group, the cover of anonymity which is available at outside AA meetings is withdrawn within the institution. This has the consequence that the freedom of personal exposure which anonymity provides is withdrawn in the institution, as all the men are known to one another. The men at institutional AA meetings see each other all day long. Men at Harbor Light who had used AA previously said that if the men could attend outside meetings it might be better than the institutional and compulsory meetings offered within the setting.

AA remains the only national organization with a high rate of successful treatment. No other method has matched AA's power in reaching the alcoholic. This accounts for its widespread usage. However, it is clear from these findings that simply because AA has had a high success rate does not mean that it is the most successful treatment to be used with all skid row men.



The men themselves recognize AA as an excellent and sincere organization, but realize that it cannot work for a man who either does not want it, or does not feel comfortable in its meetings.

The meetings of AA provide only temporary shelter for the skid row man. While a middle class or working class man might return to home and family after a meeting, the skid row man finds that "outside AA you return to the same jungle." (Interview 57) Perhaps the group feeling that AA promotes can be used in the skid row setting, but if so, it must be done carefully, so that its status specificity and middle class origins do not color presentations made to the men. Presently AA in insititruonal settings is not reaching the men of Harbor Light.

It is proper to conclude this survey of the six types of agency services with a quick summary of the foregoing. In demonstrating that as stated in Hypothesis one, agencies limit their clientele to those they can best serve, a number of formal and informal screening mechanisms were observed. One of the most important of the informal screening mechanisms is the reputational network that develops through the interaction of the men and the agencies. The men become aware of both the services offered and the eligibility criteria and other formal factors which might limit their access to these agencies, and this reputational network matches men and services together in the absence of any formalized referral service. While this sort of network has been suggested in the literature, especially

by Wiseman (1970), nowhere has the congruence between those who have used agencies, and those who know it only by reputation been pointed out. This network indicates the need for an institution serving this function. In terms of larger society, the development of this network to serve a need informally where it is not being met by the formal super-structure is much like for example the development of ad-hoc and experimental courses in an educational situation where the established institution is no longer fulfilling the needs of its clients.

Another implication of this reputational network is for policy as a whole in this area. Clearly, many of the men could benefit from some of the more sophisticated treatment facilities available for the alcoholic, and these facilities are well respected by the men. However, because only the informal referral network exists, it tends to have a conservative effect, directing men only toward the traditional and conveniently located facilities. This reputational network speaks directly to the orientation of the skid row subculture. A social welfare system aimed at rehabilitating this group would attempt to formally compete with this reputational network, by making the more sophisticated facilities easily accessible through transportation and encouraging their use. Presently, it seems that the sophisticated facilities would prefer to avoid heightened skid row usage.

In addition to the reputational screening network, the agencies also have other screening mechanisms, such as the ecological screening mechanism which locationally puts some services out of the skid row man's reach, or desire.

Economic screening systems which price the facility out of the skid row man's realm, and motivational screening systems which through interviewing limit the number of skid row men. Those organizations which claim a high rate of success with alcoholics generally have one or more of these formal screening mechanisms (which of course influence the more informal ones) operating to limit the number of skid row cases they deal with.

Thus, the organizations attempt both formally, and through the aid of the informal reputational network, to limit those clients to those who it can best serve. These other organizations are competitors for clients who are served by Harbor Light, and form a significant element of Harbor Light's task environment. By making their services more accessible to skid row men, they draw clients from Harbor Light; by screening skid row men, they may increase their own successes while sending the unrehabilitatable to less sophisticated services such as City Mission and the Salvation Army.

Harbor Light is also an organization covered by the reputational network, although it was not included in this section as obviously all respondents had already chosen it. Clients using the reputational network have taken information about the services offered by Harbor Light from that network and decided that it would suit their needs at a particular moment. Many of the men using the reputational network are not looking for extensive treatment and commitment to long-term sobriety, and therefore, specifically seek out close shelters which require little work for their benefits. They choose a compatible organization according to the reputation of its clientele (for companionship) and shelter. The next section deals with those men who have been attracted to Harbor Light.

HARBOR LIGHT: ORGANIZATION ON SKID ROW TODAY

by

Alison Evelyn Woodward

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirement for the degree Master of Arts to the Department of Sociology of Oberlin College.

OBERLIN COLLEGE

Oberlin, Ohio

1973



RESIDENT PROGRAMS  
 REHABILITATION  
 RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS  
 SENIOR CITIZENS  
 IN-SERVICE TRAINING  
 WORK-ADJUSTMENT

MEDICAL CLINICS  
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This study of interaction was aided immeasurably by interaction with the supportive communities of Oberlin and Cleveland. Major support has come from the sociology-anthropology faculty of Oberlin College. J. Milton Yinger originally encouraged me to undertake this project. He helped shape my ideas about the role of religion and served as a most inspiring professional role model. Stephen Cutler, ever-responsive to my persistent pounding on his door, served as the best of advisers. His discipline and rigor directed my formulation and expression of rambling and unfocused thoughts. Without his firm support, this project would never have reached completion. Marc Bernstein pointed me down the trail of organizational literature, while Albert McQueen left an imprint on the social-psychological aspects of the project. My theoretical perspectives were powerfully molded by the high teaching standards of the department.

The support of Oberlin College and the Committee on Graduate Studies made my off-campus research possible, as well as my on-campus survival.

The social welfare community of Cleveland offered overwhelming cooperation. Major Edward Dimond and Doug Hodges of the Salvation Army are to be especially thanked for opening so many doors. My appreciation goes to the men of Harbor Light and the staff who gave willingly of their time to a "nosy researcher." The many agencies who offered hospitality and information are heartily thanked. Doug McGraw of the Federation for Community Planning helped mightily in introducing me to these generous people.

Finally thanks go to the friends who put up with my endless stories of interviewing and strange skid row experiences. Mr. William March, through his drafting skills, knowledge of Cleveland and continuing personal support, ranks first among them.

## PREFACE

The homeless man has always been a visible portion of America's urban life, and a most intriguing portion. My own interest in the homeless began through historical research done on the rise of the American city and the place of the hobo in American life. Through urban sociology I developed additional concerns about the place of the skid row community in the life of the central business districts of cities.

The place of the homeless man raises questions of both deviancy and social control. The attempts of society to rehabilitate the homeless and the special interaction of society at large with the more limited community of the skid row man through the rehabilitation agency serve as the focus of this paper.

I introduce the work in Chapter I with background information on the skid row area and the homeless man. Chapter II, a review of the literature, follows this, including major theoretical perspectives on the problem. It summarizes some of the major quantitative studies and ethnographies on the area.

Subsequent sections deal with the research setting of the Cleveland skid row area, and the specific organizational setting and its suitability to my proposed research. Chapter IV of the thesis deals with some special methodological consider-



ations and the techniques used to investigate the problem. My hypotheses are applied to a specific study of problems presented at The Harbor Light Center in Cleveland, an agency devoted to treatment of the skid row man, and are presented in the fifth Chapter.

The remainder of the work is devoted to a presentation of the results of the research. Four chapters are devoted to an analysis of the available social welfare services, of the specific clientele using the Harbor Light Center, and of the program and officers at the Harbor Light Center. Conclusion of the thesis presents a summary of the results presented and general discussion, with brief consideration of the implications of the study for the Harbor Light Center and for the field.

An appendix presents specifics on measures used in the study, complete information on the social welfare agency interviews, and copies of the two questionnaires, as well as follow-up letters employed in the mail portion of the research.

This thesis attempts to describe the interaction between the men of Harbor Light and the management of that organization, both in terms of the ecological setting of the city and the internal situation of the particular agency.

### SKID ROW AND ITS MEN: AN INTRODUCTION

The skid rower does not bathe, eat regularly, dress respectably, marry or raise children, attend school, vote, own property or regularly live in the same place. He does little work of any kind, and does not even steal. The skid rower does nothing, he just is. He is everything all the rest of us try not to be...and perhaps because the terms of his existence challenge our most basic values, we respond by calling him derelict and using other expressions of contempt. (Wallace, 1965, p.144)

The homeless man is an outlander to the stable social system of work, family, community, and church. He congregates on skid row. Economically at the bottom of the social order, he is usually unemployed, and sometimes living on welfare and disability payments. He works only on a temporary or spot basis. His area and his needs have been a chronic concern of cities. Sociologists of the Chicago school, such as Nels Anderson (1923) were among the first to study these men who deviate from and reject the existing social order. Often these sociological descriptions were colored with distaste. The skid row area has always been the city's least desirable in terms of housing and population. While the location is close to the center of town and the major transportation lines, it is always to the side of the major business district, leering at the normal world.

The skid row area has undergone major changes. In the past the depression and economic cycles changed skid row. Today urban renewal practices and improvements in the social welfare system have effects. Skid row men have evolved from the returning

and unemployed veterans of the twenties, to the migrant and hobo of the thirties and forties, to the lost and aimless, disabled and disaffiliated who live there today. While at first romanticized as the home of the hobo and the radical intellectual, the row today is no longer a street of dreams and legends. Nels Anderson reported:

The hobo belongs with the pre-Hollywood cowboys and the lumberjacks of the Paul Bunyan legends. He has a place too with the prospector who used to roam the hills, leading a burrow and expecting always to strike a pick into a lode of rich ores. (Anderson, 1940, p.21)

Just as the population has changed, so has the location and atmosphere. Urban renewal has ripped out whole blocks of old hotels, and the skid rows simply relocate in nearby deteriorating neighborhoods. Yet even with change in the picture, much remains the same. A description of the population and the housing available would be applicable with few changes to almost every major city in the country.

There are few young on skid row other than crippled remnants of war and the occasional drug addict. The young labor force has been replaced by the elderly disabled and the retired. Stable employment and the disappearance of seasonal labor opportunities have robbed the area of the younger migrant and steady, although occasional, worker. The row no longer functions as a pool of unskilled labor. Those jobs are gone with automation and unionization. Pension and relief benefits enable some to find other housing than skid row, although many of the area regulars are pensioners. The physical condition and size of skid row seems to vary with the stability of the nation's economy and the social benefits available to the misfits of society. When welfare pays

enough for better housing, many of the pensioners will leave the area.

Several characteristics are commonly held by the skid row man. Donald Bogue, who wrote a study on the Chicago skid row area (Bogue, 1963) provides the greatest amount of quantitative information available on the skid row man. He worked with a sample of 613 men. He noted that three conditions are held commonly by the skid row man: They are first of all homeless, and often migrate between residences within a city and between cities. Secondly, the men are poor, working irregularly or at low rates of pay and subsisting on welfare. Thirdly, the men often have social problems which the society at large does not share. Drinking, marital difficulties, criminal backgrounds and assorted health problems are all found in surprising degrees on skid row. Whether it is these problems that bring men to skid row or whether the problems are created later could be the subject of another thesis. Indeed, much of the work on the area focuses on the motivations bringing a man to skid row life.

Whether the men come to skid row because of economic considerations as Bogue suggests, or in search of complementary community, as Spradley suggests, (Spradley, 1971) when they arrive, they find a neighborhood and community life which parallels, if perverts, the neighborhood found for instance among Herbert Gans' Boston Italians. (Gans, 1962) Much as the street serves as a center of activity for other lower class groups, as those studied by Whyte and Liebow, (Whyte, 1955; Liebow, 1967) so it is the center for life on skid row. Anthropologists who have

studied the area, passing as members of the community note the public nature of interaction there.

Skid row is a community, if for no other reason than that life must go on even if one is on skid row...it is a distinct and recognizable way of life, a special community with its own subculture that leads to the definition of the skid rower as a member of the skid row community...the institutional complex--the low lodging housing, the itinerant laborers, the relief and welfare systems, and the law... (Wallace, 1965,p.142)

are there, providing common situations from city to city with only regional variation. The street relationships are fairly anonymous, usually only on a first name or nickname basis, but nonetheless provide a human interaction of regular sort.

In most towns the men who really utilize the community's resources are the locals, who were called in the thirties, the "home guard." They now make up the majority of men utilizing agencies on skid row. The transient no longer plays the large role he once did. The area has become more stable.

The skid row man and his community form a kind of eco-social system with the rest of the city. As several researchers have pointed out, both elements of the system need each other.<sup>1</sup> The skid row area provides anonymous drinking places for the rest of the city. The skid row man and his community provide clients for the social welfare system. The larger community, through the social welfare system is often responsible for the skid row man's continued survival. The relationship is an interlocking one. In the area where the larger society and the skid row community

<sup>1</sup> H. Warren Dunham (1953) and Samuel E. Wallace (1965) are among the authors who have used a systems theory in describing skid row. There seems to be a continuing and ongoing relationship which provides needs for both parties or elements in the system, thereby supporting this interpretation.



most frequently interact, the social welfare agency, the system is to be seen most clearly. While one might think that the man reaped all the benefit of the association, in actuality, the agency depends on clients for survival. Skid row

institutions have trouble because they are often dependent on the free labor offered by the men. An institution without clients would have to close down. Institutions must maintain a certain client load, or budget allocations will be jeopardized. (Wiseman, 1970)

The relationship of the man and the services of the city has best been studied by Shirley Wiseman, who described the pattern of agency usage of the skid row habitué, and called it the "loop."

This paper will investigate the relationship of the skid row man to his environment by an intensive study of men at one particular agency, and the interactions between the men and management at that agency which help to promote the survival of each. Each member of the interaction between the agency and man defines the situation, as W. I. Thomas (1923) would say, towards his own particular ends, and knows the proper manipulations to achieve his ends. As in any systematic relationship, there is a delicate balance present. At times one or the other participant will stand to gain. When an organization adds a new staff member, for example, clients can exploit that new member's naiveté and unfamiliarity with the rules for their own benefit.

Many different sorts of agencies serve the area, varying from the national organizations serving the homeless, such as the Salvation Army, to the local crop of variations on themes of treatment for the derelict. The theories of treatment are developed through analysis of the causation of homelessness. For

example, a Christian mission organization might focus primarily on Bible study classes for treatment, as it believes spiritual weakness at the bottom of the problem, whereas a hospital believing in disease causation, would treat medically.

While fulfilling the needs of the skid row man, the agencies also fulfill the needs of the larger society for charitable activity. Each agency is supported by a shadowy group of donors who provide food and clothing, work and donations for on-going programs. Most agencies have boards of trustees and ladies' auxiliaries involved in securing this support. Thus, by providing opportunities for community service, the small community within skid row becomes part of a larger social-ecological system.

The agencies in turn contribute to the formation of the skid row community. The men in a city who habitually use one agency or another come to know each other. The agencies may be seen as providing communication centers, where men may get together to share information on surviving both within this organization and in others on skid row. Whereas relations on the street are numerous, they are also fairly anonymous, but once in a rehabilitation society, he gets to know the other men more intimately, eating and working with them. Men who are encountered in agency situations may become drinking companions.

The men on skid row deviate from standard social goals and norms. Separated from the larger society, the men create a sub-culture, with values and norms in opposition, if not outright rebellion to the society at large. While their values seem to retreat from normal society, rather than consistently

rebelling, thereby placing them midway on the continuum between subculture and contraculture (Yinger, 1960), many of their behavioral norms affront the society at large when visible, such as their public drinking habits. As the skid row community becomes less transient, and its members more stably situated in the community, the subculture becomes richer and more supportive. Wallace (1965), the best ethnographer of the skid row "way of life" explains the necessity of an emergent life style in the ecological system of skid row. He sees the sense of community identity and subcultural values arising not only in reaction to society in Merton's (1957) sense of retreatism (and perhaps rebellion?) but also through the natural processes of interaction within a small and sharply defined area:

One effect of the self- and community-imposed isolation has been the emergence of a skid row subculture. Skid rowers share a similar problem of adjustment to their deviance and are in effective interaction with each other. (Wallace, 1965, p. 149)

The man defines situations defensively on his own behalf. For the most part, the man is aware of the stigma associated with his status. The rest of the community makes clear his low status through various signs of distaste. (Goffman, 1963) He receives pathological descriptions of his behavior at every door. As Wiseman points out, most treatment facilities operate

with a social background of middle class decency. Skid row is a prime manifestation of social pathology--the physical area is called blighted, and the residents are seen as pathological. Professionals see life there from their own sociological mirror, as having attenuated social relations, and as boring and insecure ways of life. (Wiseman, 1970, p.5)

The man realizes his society, and the agencies that serve him

are out of bounds for normal citizens. For instance, a man with a home could not turn to the Men's Social Service Center for help. The man feels the efforts of the groups who aid him are

at the same time admired and looked down upon for catering to hopeless cases. Their efforts on behalf of the skid row man are considered to be voluntary acts of pity above and beyond the customary call of social duty. (Bogue, 1963, p. 407)

One of the main ways that the skid row man has contact with outside society is through panhandling. The skid row man here receives messages of dislike and distaste, even from "marks" who cooperatively give him his "seven cents to make up the cost of a beer." The skid row panhandler sees himself in the mirrors of other men, and modifies his performances so that he can maintain his own life style with support from the outside community.<sup>2</sup>

Every man on skid row is aware that there are other ways of life. No man starts life in the all-male society of skid row. This consciousness of status loss does not ease the problems of adjustment. Yet the atmosphere is warm there, and hostile community attitudes are neutralized by the men through rejection of social values and blatant use of social benefits, much as the juvenile delinquent neutralizes societal disapproval through appropriate group behavior (Sykes, and Matza, 1957)

To reject society, as Wallace points out, the men glorify skid row. When they contact outside agencies, they use the tactic of demand as right on every contact, so that the social agency from the established group is theoretically on the defense.

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<sup>2</sup>The relationship involved in panhandling is subtle and highly dependent on dramatic presentation. Interesting insights are available in Gilmore, 1940; Goffman, 1959; and less directly, in Strauss, 1959.



"Whether the agency is public or private, the homeless man when appealing for aid, appears to expect it as a right." (Wallace, 1965, p. 149) Likewise, when researchers or "tourists" visit the area, the skid row man is prone to exalt his past. Spradley (1971) and Straus (1948) have both devoted large portions of their work to describing intelligent guides to skid row who "bamboozle" the researcher in their glorification of past.<sup>4</sup>

The skid row man cloaks his hostility toward his external environment and the beneficent nature of his social arena through extolations of his existence and its peculiar customs, such as "great drunks" and easy "marks." Ways of cleverly "getting by" are the ideal on skid row. "Getting by" involves the utilization of agencies for shelter and food with minimal work and loss of independence. While minimizing his own work, the man must maximize his appearance of cooperation so as to extend his welcome at the agency. Likewise involved in "getting by" on skid row is the exploitation of skid row living situations. Men glorify clever ways of finding free shelter.

More than one type of skid row man utilizes the resources of the area, which is seldom clarified in the literature. Not all who use skid row institutions are typical skid row residents. While Bogue (1963) emphasizes the individual differences, those who speak of skid row life styles often fail to point out that many are unfamiliar with ways of "getting by", surviving, and

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<sup>3</sup> The chapter on methodology will consider ways of avoiding being taken in by self-glorifying respondents, although this problem is very difficult to totally avoid in research with the group because of this subcultural norm.



the aforementioned "loop". Some men, like those focused upon by Wallace and Wiseman, are true habitués of skid row. Others, however, are still adjusting to the life. In this period of adjustment, their utilization of resources is different than when they are fully acclimated to the environment. They are less "cynical" in their usage, perhaps, than men who have been through the agencies many times, and know the procedures.

Wiseman points out that the men on skid row have an ambivalent attitude about their situation. She describes the stages of acquiescence to the "seductive qualities of skid row." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 43) The men who have recently come to the row are still close enough to their old environment to remember what it was like. Not having developed the support of the skid row sub-cultural norms and the friendships necessary on skid row, they may have some desire to regain what was lost. However, their every contact with social welfare personnel makes them more aware of the easy alternatives in the skid row community. If they lose their independence, they may find it possible to pass on skid row, to become used to the way of life, running for food and shelter, but somehow always "getting by." These men are the men still in a no-man's land between normal society and skid row.

Historically, skid row has always had its residents. They change and are in various stages of adjustment to the situation, but the environment remains the same. It is a matter of interpretation as to whether it is a place of dirt, blight, and filth as reported by Bogue, or one of rich social contacts and easy ways of living, as reported by Wiseman and Wallace. There are definite environmental interactions that take place in this

setting, as two separate groups, the larger society represented by the social agency, and the subcultural grouping meet, each attempting to reach particular ends. The social agency hopes eventually to eradicate the skid row alcoholic. The skid row man seeks temporary shelter, food, and a possible few days of sobriety. He has little thought of long-range reform, unless still a newcomer attached to his old social goals. It is this situation of environmental interaction that will be examined in this paper, both on the microscopic level of an individual agency in the Cleveland area, and on the macroscopic level of other agencies in the environment providing varied alternatives for the skid row man.

I

Two major sociological questions are raised on any visit to the skid row environment. First- Why does skid row exist? Second- Is the skid row environment a social or asocial environment? A third concern often raised is with treatment and rehabilitation on skid row. This question is tied inextricably with the first. When one knows why the problem of skid row exists, its eradication becomes easier. This is a form of ameliorative sociology, but unfortunately, most of the theorists have been unable to propose a successful treatment program.

There are several theoretical schools on the causation of skid row. The first, which might be called the economic grouping, also appeared first historically. The second may be called the sociological group, claiming that under- or de-socialization brings men to skid row. A third group, often intermingled with the sociological group might be called psychological. Concomitant to the last two groups is the alcoholism theory which posits that improper social uses of alcohol because of personality defects or lack of socialization brings men to skid row. A brief review of these major areas is helpful in understanding the professional perspective which many treatment agencies hold about skid row. In the main, all these theories suggest that there is a pathological nature to the existence of skid row, although some of the theorists, (Wallace, 1965; & Wiseman, 1970) are careful to cloak this aspect of their approach.

Bogue is perhaps the major proponent of the economic theory

today, although the work of Minehan and Anderson in the late twenties (Minehan, 1934 & Anderson, 1923) also used variations on themes of economic privation to support their thoughts about skid existence. As Bogue points out,

almost 80% of the men interviewed came to skid row under economic duress, with no motive other than to get a job, live in a cheap place or to seek temporary help from a mission. Only about 11% said the reason for coming was to drink without the inhibiting influence of friends and relatives. As would be expected, almost all who came to skid row for this reason were chronic alcoholics at the time of the interview. (Bogue, 1963, p.308)

During the depression men flocked to skid row as a center of casual labor employment, and there was a shelter for the man who was a helpless victim of social circumstance. In Minehan's sample of 400 homeless children, 387 had left home because of hard times. (Minehan, 1934, p.xiv) Another variation on the economic theme is that of Dunham. He presents an ecological theory that the low rent districts select a certain population through economics. Therefore, skid rows appear because there are men who cannot afford anything better. They own no other home than the streets. This theory is easily criticized in that other low rent districts in the city do not necessarily become skid rows with a majority of homeless in their population. (See Dunham, 1953)

Such theories suggest that the skid row resident chooses skid row in a search for an affordable and congenial environment. For the most part social and psychological theories work not on this premise of economic choice but rather suggest those on skid row seek shelter there because of abnormality. These theories support the prevailing community attitudes that skid row men are disturbed or ill.

The men are assumed to be suffering from personality disorganiz-

ation, which results from, for example, status loss. The men may betray a basic dependency pattern which is reflected in a refusal to accept responsibility. They may be alienated from society's basic values and thereby forced into either rebellion or retreat, as Merton suggests. (Merton, 1957, p.133) Finally, they may lack social integration, as would seem to be the case in any examination of the life patterns of mobility and failure. (Wallace, 1965, p.166)

Demographic data seems to support undersocialization theories which state that the men are undersocialized to normal ways of life and therefore seek an easier form of adjustment through either alcohol or the skid row community, to the demands of everyday life. They have an uneven employment record, showing an inability to deal with the demands of job situations, or perhaps a lack of socialization to the Protestant work ethic. Likewise, the skid row men are either never married, or in some stage of marital disintegration, either divorce or separation. This could indicate a lack of socialization to the ideal of the nuclear family, or an incapability to cope with the role demands on the American husband.

They trade stability in society for freedom from responsibility and cares, those things which most people accept as inextricable parts of society. This suggests that the skid row man may be a dependent sort, looking for the easy way out habitually. Alcohol, as will be discussed later, is often an important part of this easy way out, as is the use of social welfare institutions, which encourage in their very treatment programs, an ongoing dependency on institutionalized care.



The undersocialization of these men begins at an early age. Many have lost parents in childhood.<sup>1</sup> Some have begun institution-  
alization after this loss. These children were left without  
equipment for establishing normal social relationships. Many are  
also failures in school situations. Many drop out short of com-  
pleting the educational ladder, missing graduation at one level  
or another. For Pittman and Gordon, this indicates an inability to  
finish things. (Pittman and Gordon, 1958, p.110) The undersociali-  
zation theory basically assumes that the men are in some way infer-  
ior to the rest of society before they reach skid row.

Theorists such as Wallace (1965), Rooney (1961), Wiseman (1970),  
and Rubbington (1958) sharply contest the undersocialization  
theory. They feel that certain people may be more likely than  
others to live on skid row, such as mobile workers, welfare  
clients and those looking for an area congenial to the preserva-  
tion of anonymity. (Wallace, 1965, p.166) Men are not under-  
socialized, according to this group, but rather desocialized.  
They learn to function in their new environment by shedding the  
patterns that helped them get along, however feebly, in the old.  
Not everyone who has traits of the undersocialized man becomes  
a skid row resident. According to the desocialization theory,  
a man on skid row loses socialization patterns he once had.  
While the undersocialization theory suggests the man has lacked  
ways of getting along since childhood, desocialization says:

From the viewpoint of respectable society, the skid row  
becomes desocialized, that is educated outside the main-  
stream of American society and unable to live within it.  
Once he has been labeled a deviant, self-awareness is forced  
upon the individual. He must face the fact that now he

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<sup>1</sup>Some statistics on parental loss of skid row men are to be  
found in Minehan, 1934; Sutherland, 1936; Pittman and Gordon,  
1958; Straus, 1946.

is indeed on skid row. The same label increases his separation from the wider society and encourages him to enter into the ever-closer participation with those similarly isolated. Thus he is pushed still further into deviance, additional arrests, workhouse socialization and complete isolation until he is finally a full and complete member of the deviant community. (Wallace, 1965, p. 174)

Two arguments support the desocialization school. First, not all those undersocialized end up on skid row. Second, undersocialization suggests that skid row society is lacking in complexity. The desocialization proponents demonstrate that skid row has many complex social features. An undersocialized person would thus face social stress of a different sort in the skid row environment, but nonetheless social situations would be present. By turning to skid row, a man is not escaping social relationships, but rather dissolving old ones, and discovering that life on skid row is full of semi-organized and organized groups, stable friendships and satisfying social relationships. The desocialization process opens the option that some men are on skid row because they prefer to be there. Not because they are economic, social, or psychological misfits, but because they can find the companionship and interaction on skid row unavailable to them in other arenas of society. The men on skid row are socialized to the extent that they can enjoy and initiate meaningful personal interactions. Skills necessary for finding and holding employment are not unknown (as the undersocialization theory suggests,) but rather simply lost through lack of application. (Wallace, 1965, p. 164)

Perhaps some synthesis of the two theories is possible, for surely the demographic data of the undersocialization group is hard to disprove. However, the desocialization theory seems more compelling.

I would suggest an integrative theory. Many of the men on skid row have the characteristics described in the undersocialization theory, characteristics that have made them lonely and unhappy in the larger society. By choosing the society of skid row, and picking up the ways of that community, they no longer have to operate in a milieu in which they are uncomfortable. Therefore, they drop the old habits, (as the desocialization school suggests) to pick up the new ones. They find a form of anonymity and warm companionship unknown to them before, because of the easier social ways of the skid row group and the easing presence of alcohol.

Another group of theorists posits that there are particular personality types on skid row. Because of their fall from larger society, these men have a view of life shaped by their intake of alcohol, a "how" orientation, a feeling of powerlessness coupled with a sense of the need for guile in a hostile world, an ability to adjust to permanent impermanence, extreme independence from others coupled with an ability to accept institutional dependency from time to time. These several characteristics, presented by Wiseman, and supported by Wallace are psychological characteristics ferreted out by direct observation, but unvalidated by any extensive formalized research. (Wiseman, p.5)

Vanderpool likewise points out that while it is generally agreed that there is no "alcoholic personality per se" there is a general assertion that alcoholics feel inadequate, they lack self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-acceptance. Vanderpool shows that the alcoholic has even greater negative self-conception

while drinking than when not. (Vanderpool, 1969, p.60) For a man on skid row, the self-concept would be even lower than for his middle class peers because all ordinary status rights have been deprived of the skid row alcoholic. All he has are the new rights conferred upon him by his drinking buddies, and long experience has shown him that the only trust one can have for these "friends" is while the bottle is still passing. (Interview with Harbor Light men, March, 1973)

None of the above theories even begin to cope with the problems of the means of social adjustment on skid row. The prime elixir of life on skid row is alcohol. None of the above accounts for the heavy use of alcohol on skid row in deviant patterns, although some, such as the desocialization approach, are more frank in relating its importance than others, such as Bogue's work which seems calculated to show alcohol's lack of importance.

Not every man drinks on skid row, but those that do, do so in a public pattern that seems pathological to the rest of society. It is often this pattern that provokes the established society to step in and try to rehabilitate the men. The lack of social adjustment and lack of stable employment could be allowed to continue, but the public patterns of life and drinking make the men socially unacceptable, especially given their visible position in the downtown area. It is primarily because of drinking that the skid row man and his society at large end up interacting.



II

While some, especially those such as Dunham and Wallace who propose ecological and desocialization theories for skid row's existence, might feel that skid row will never disappear, it is difficult to convince officials of this. One researcher suggested that vitamin pills and therapy be handed out with the drinks in the local tavern, as treatment facilities are not the most popular areas of congregation on skid row. (Dumont, 1967) Few public officials would buy this encouragement of patterns. Most feel public funds should continue to go to rehabilitation services, no matter how failure-ridden, rather than to ameliorative services in the neighborhoods themselves which might be used to a greater extent by the population affected.

Many non-professionals are convinced that skid row exists to support the poor drunks of the town. A more reasonable explanation for the use of alcohol on skid row is that it provides a pleasant and reliable form of social adjustment and is used in ritual reinforcement of personal relations, as for example in the bottle gang, so well described by Wallace. (1965, p.186) While Bogue, in his survey of Chicago, was convinced that only 10% of the residents were there because of alcoholism, many are nonetheless heavy drinkers, whether chronically alcoholic or not. For Bogue there were also many teetotalers or highly moderate drinkers. Other studies however, demonstrate that alcohol is an important factor in skid row, whether used by the chronic alcoholic or by the steady excessive drinker. Strauss, working from a Salvation Army intake center, was able to classify 57.7% of his sample of



201 people as steady excessive drinkers. 20.9% were irregular excessives, and 9.4% were unclassified excessive. 12% of his sample however, even though taken from a group of drinkers, were moderate drinkers, or known to teetotal. Even in this sample, not all drinkers were alcohol abusers. (Straus, 1946) Bogue makes the point that it is not correct to generalize that all men are on skid row because of alcohol. However, alcohol remains one of the things that seems to tie the society together. Stories about experiences with whiskey and wine rank next to crime exploits and women in popularity, according to one Cleveland administrator who was formerly a skid row alcoholic. (Stella Maris, March 1973 interview.)

A study by Straus and McCarthy indicated that,

While large proportions of homeless men exhibit pathological drinking and resort to alcohol for the relief of severe discomforts arising from the social environment, psychological adjustments and physical condition, a significant segment of this population, perhaps half, does not exhibit the criteria of alcohol addiction, such as insatiability and lack of control over drinking. (Straus and McCarthy, 1951, p.604)

There is a difference between the pathological alcoholic and the heavy social drinker which skid row harbors. The pathological drinker is virtually an addict, seeking relief from discomfort through the effects of alcoholic beverages. The striving for alcoholic intoxication is insatiable, and the control of drinking level is lost to the true alcoholic. This alcoholic usually prefers to drink alone. Only 12% of those interviewed by Straus indicated preference for drinking alone, while a sample of members of Alcoholics Anonymous indicated that 82% preferred solitary drinking. (Straus, 1946, p. 372) The addictive drinker does not look for participation in drinking groups, because he wants the whole bottle

to himself. He needs to maintain a steady alcohol level in his bloodstream. The typical skid row drinker, on the other hand, according to Straus and McCarthy, goes on infrequent bouts with the bottle.

In an impressive number of cases, the pattern of drinking seemed relatively flexible and was determined primarily by the availability of funds and their particular working conditions. Many reported that when working on jobs where they were paid every day, they drank to excess to the extent of funds every night. When paid less frequently, prolonged drinking with a certain degree of regulation was more common than the all out bender. (Straus & McCarthy, 1951, p.608)

Reasons for drinking on skid row are similar to those presented to explain skid row's existence. Pittman and Gordon, for example, suggest undersocialization is the reason for heavy skid row drinking, as the situations of drinking on skid row

were less demanding of interpersonal skills. Alcohol depressed the anxieties. Drinking situations for the future chronic inebriate were rewarding experiences in the emotional sense and at first in the psychological sense, but undemanding in the social and cultural realm. The drinking situation was one in which he could feel subjectively competent, skillful, and resourceful. (Pittman and Gordon, 1958, p.105)

However, reasons for drinking given by the men themselves seldom suggest personal maladjustment as the cause. For most men, according to Bogue's findings, drinking is used to forget troubles. Making men at home in social situations was seldom given as a reason for excessive drinking, although it may be a latent function which is unrecognized by the men.

Promoters of the desocialization school, on the other hand, suggest that drinking on skid row is not anti-social, as the undersocialization hypothesis would have it. Rather, drinking has definite social functions. As the men are not alcoholics in the strict use of the term, alcohol must have another use

than simple anaesthetization. As there are few places to gather on skid row, given that the hotel lobbies are more conducive to rats than men, most go to the neighborhood tavern. Recreational facilities such as television, continual card games, pool, and pinball are usually present in the tavern. (Clinard, 1962; Dumont, 1967) The tavern is the institutional center of skid row, and a social gathering place second only to the street. If one lives on skid row and wishes to associate with others, it is difficult not to use alcohol.

At all levels of society, alcohol is used to make situations smoother. Its use on skid row is not unusual in its occurrence, but in its setting. Whereas most drinking among economically secure groups occurs within private homes or in restaurants where food is an essential part of the entertainment, the skid row resident does not have a home to go to. Alcohol must be consumed either in the street or in the bar.

Because drinking is conducted in a group competitive situation, the men on the row usually drink more than would be normal. They must overindulge to maintain their social standing and remain in the group. Drink may not be the reason a man ends up on skid row, but it definitely serves to make life more comfortable there, and perhaps serves to keep him there too.

### III

The larger society becomes concerned with the skid row man because of his drinking style. The agents of society explain skid row in terms of alcoholic use. The programs and policies of the society at large are aimed specifically at the problems of alcoholism, with the ulterior motive of eliminating the row by

rehabilitating the drunk.

It is through the door of alcoholism that the second set of institutions enters the skid row environment. While the tavern provides one sort of institutional setting for companionship, the rehabilitation institution servicing the area provides another. There are many sorts of treatment agencies on skid row, but they share a common goal, to eliminate skid row and the men on it. They are generally motivated, or say they are motivated, by "A strong desire to help human beings to a better way of life." (Salvation Army, 1960, 7:3:1) Such groups spend large amounts of money on chronic care for men who are still physically able to take care of themselves.

Two sectors are involved in this care, the public and the private. The average community has a duplication of services only to be matched by the bureaucracy of the government. By any objective standard, such as percent of re-entrance into "normal" life, these treatment programs are failures. The men return again and again either to the original treatment facility, or to a duplicate service. Many participate in a process described by Wiseman as making the "loop," utilizing almost all of the available services repeatedly. (Wiseman, 1970, pp. 46-62) However, the organizations do succeed in one way. By failing to solve the problem, or to reach their goals, their own continued existence, feeding off the problem, will be assured.

Despite the seeming failure of so many of these endeavors, most have had fairly long lives, and are finding that with increasing governmental interest in the problems of urban renewal and alcoholism, that funding is available for the continuation and improve-



ment of their programs. This funding is available for both aesthetic purposes of cleaning up the city and for humanitarian purposes of rehabilitation. While it is not plentiful, it is enough to fund several new programs in each community, which serve to replace the dying wild cat missions and other institutions which cannot keep up with sophisticated social welfare practices.

The perspectives of organizational sociology are applicable here. As J.D. Thompson points out (Thompson, 1967, p.26-29), every organization must establish what can be termed a "domain" within its environment, an area which it services as its own. Those areas of the larger environment which are relevant to achievement of goals may be called the task environment, and include clients, agency competitors, and funding sources. The organization and task environment are in continual interaction and exchange, resting upon consensus with the larger environment as to the extent of the organization's domain. What has occurred within the skid row community is that domain has changed with changing population and changing treatment modes. To survive, an organization must develop in reaction to change in its environment.

As Thompson and McEwen point out, each organization must have a succession of goals:

As each goal is achieved, or subsumed in the environment, the organization must change its goals in keeping with the environment. (Thompson and McEwen, 1958, p.26)

An organization that survives uses bargaining, cooptation, coalition, and competition in the environment to achieve continued survival. The older forms of missions were unable to



set new and different types of goals and means for survival. They lacked sufficient environmental support both from clientele and funders to continue. New organizations adopt their rhetoric to governmental goals, and thus have gotten support for their programs by setting goals and methods in coordination with the funding available, and popular secular treatment plans.

The treatment used in skid row rehabilitation programs has three main types. There are programs offering rehabilitation through physiological and psychological treatment, as those in medical facilities do; those which offer work and spiritual therapy, as missions and halfway houses; and those that offer containment and criminal correction, as in jails. Theoretically, a man may be filtered through a screening mechanism to the type of treatment most suitable for his case. However, as Wiseman (1970, 153) points out in San Francisco, if the lack of even moderate degrees of success and the massive rates of recidivism are any indication, there is a duplication of services and effort on a wide scale. The loop she describes so well is thus accomplished only informally, rather than as the formal and structured process it might be. While she suggests that the agencies themselves are responsible for much referral work, I think that that the informal community also shares responsibility for the recycling of the men. The men on the row suggest the most suitable agencies to their friends. There is "complicated inter-institutional linking through informal interaction." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 57)

Pittman and Gordon (1958) have also described the phenomenon of agency re-use, calling it the "revolving door."

Both observers point to continual revisitation of agencies, with continual lack of success for the agency. The men may feel they are passive actors in the rehabilitation rag, and the agencies are forced to set lower goals internally to ease staff frustration, while maintaining to the supporting external environment that the goal remains total rehabilitation.

As agencies and men interact, there is a mutual process of judgment that occurs. An agency judges a man as potential for successful rehabilitation under whatever orientation that agency happens to employ. The men rate the institutions on a scale of preference based on the convenience of and treatment available at a particular stop. They are often forced to utilize agencies because of public laws or private necessities, and therefore judge rehabilitation not on its success as rehabilitation, but on its success in housing and feeding. The men are aware of behavior which will earn them a more comfortable stay, and use different behavior according to different agencies. Their attitude toward agencies as presented to peers is far different from that presented to the agency involved. The agency is considered as "outsider" to the subcultural world of skid row. Much like the deviants described by Becker (1963), the men have a different way when dealing with those outside their own special world, a way of presenting themselves which will be most beneficial to their own particular ends, while maintaining status within their peer group.

The institutions which rate highest in the eyes of the homeless are those in the therapeutic mode, such as hospitals with specialized alcoholism wards, according to Wiseman. (1970, p.59)

These groups are at least theoretically interested in the problems of the skid row man, and there is usually sufficient staff to give the man individualized attention. Additionally, the client is treated as a sick patient, and not expected to work to support himself. The staff is often young, and specialists in alcohol. The attitude of the professionals in these places is usually more considerate than that to be found in the jails and the life is often easier. Experimental programs are frequently developed for the men in these programs, making them feel important or significant. In San Francisco, Wiseman found the state mental facility offered pretty nurses, young professionals, and federal money to make such a milieu attractive. In Cleveland, the same sort of atmosphere is to be found at the Veteran's Administration Hospital and at Exodus Hall. Sometimes, it is these therapeutic milieu which seem to have the highest rate of success. However, the clientele served must be carefully examined before claims for success can be verified. The more sophisticated treatment facilities often include the middle class man with family in their target populations. With these men included, the success rate naturally rises, for this group has family support after it leaves the hospital setting.

Few treatment centers of any sophistication serve solely the homeless. This would frustrate the staffs of trained psychologists and social workers. The low rate of success with the homeless encourages the institution to increase its task environment to include other sectors of alcoholics, or men with personality problems. As Thompson expresses it,

The organization facing so many constraints, and unable to achieve power in other sectors of its task environment will seek to change and enlarge that task environment. (Thompson, 1967, p. 37)

Organizations totally devoted to skid row have few trained social and psychological workers, not from lack of desire for these workers, but from lack of money. Many therapy clinics, when frustrated by the recidivism of the chronic drinkers on skid row, therefore, expand either into drug rehabilitation, or work with the middle class. Organizations hoping to rehabilitate skid row alcoholics to the middle class face a difficult task, as most skid row alcoholics have never been in the middle class.

Wiseman cites the case of a jail clinic set up specifically to work with skid row alcoholics which soon widened its scope to include other cases more amenable to treatment. Likewise in Cleveland, the Center on Alcoholism changed its name to the Center on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and sees no skid row alcoholics any more.

Interestingly, most of the literature demonstrates that while sophisticated treatment is available to the homeless man, and appreciated by him, he seldom uses it. When treatment is attractive but involves effort to partake of it, few do. When centers are geographically far from skid row, for example, few men avail themselves of their services.

Straus, in his work at the Salvation Army, often encouraged respondents to use the Yale Plan Clinic, yet out of fifty offered the service, only ten were sufficiently interested to make the first visit, and none continued long enough to allow for effective diagnosis and treatment. (Straus and Bacon, 1951, p.237) Out-patient



clinics seem virtually out of the question for the skid row resident.

Less popular with the skid row are the halfway houses, and the agencies which promise work therapy. For many of these agencies, the problem of staying afloat financially while providing service is foremost. This type of treatment is not analyzed by Wiseman or any other author except through the example of the Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center (Wiseman, 1970; and Struass, 1946), which is a cross between a sheltered workshop and a mission treatment.

Many halfway houses have only a minimal work schedule, but often they are used by men who are nowhere near half-way down the road to recovery. The treatment in these settings ranges from professionally oriented to therapeutic housing. Often funded with welfare moneys or private grants, the houses make up costs in maintenance by having the men work on janitorial services in the guise of work therapy. For some of the men, this is helpful, as it keeps them busy. Others feel exploited, and would, if they could, live in much shabbier, independent flophouses. Of course, welfare might not pay for that form of rehabilitation.

The least popular agency form is the mission. This ranges from the clean and desirable settings of the Salvation Army to the less desirable all-night-flops offered by the independent missions. This form of rehabilitation has a spiritual emphasis. Other agencies only discuss spiritual matters under the guise of Alcoholics Anonymous, exhorting the man to put his faith in a power greater than himself. Generally, the labor aspect of



missions is promoted to the point that some practices are slave-like. In certain of these spiritual settings, the men must "take a dive" in order to find acceptance. This means that the client must claim to have been saved by the Lord, thereby listing himself on the reports to the mission auxiliary as a "saved soul."

Men who consistently use missions and stand up at testimony ceremonies are said to become mission stiff, and occupy the lowest rung on the skid row ladder. (Wallace, 1965) Evidently, the Salvation Army is not considered a mission, per se. Neither Wiseman (1970) nor my informants (Pretests, Jan. 1973) noted any derogatory connotations to using the Salvation Army.<sup>2</sup>

The last type of therapy, which is often an element in treatment programs, is Alcoholics Anonymous. AA members, in a secular evangelistic fashion, seek to help all other alcoholics, and participate actively in most of the skid row service centers, running meetings at least once a week in many treatment facilities, and at times providing a buddy sponsorship for individual counseling and care. The Twelve Step program of AA is designed to reach the addictive drinker, and may have a middle class bias, although Bogue (1963, p. 297) indicates that Alcoholics Anonymous has helped many men achieve sobriety.

An AA meeting is directed by a lead (speaker) who talks about his alcoholism, and how he fights it through AA. Often these leads have had experiences which are not comparable to the skid row experience. As only the most verbal are qualified to make leads, they are often drawn from a more educated group.

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<sup>2</sup> Although, of course a group using the Salvation Army is self-selected, and might not wish to think of themselves derogatorily.

As one man said, "Why should I have to listen to some other guy's troubles? I got enough of my own." (Harbor Light, 1973) Most of the skid row men are too independent to develop the camaraderie necessary in a successful AA group.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, most of the men come from lower social groups less likely to be active participants in voluntary associations. Participation in formal organized groups is one aspect of society probably left behind in the move to skid row. AA provides no substitute for alcohol except the association of the "dry drunk" or the "AA virgin." Sometimes these people make a man feel more like having a drink than walking past a bar would. (Bales, 1962, p. 575) Likewise, AA meetings outside of the rehabilitation agency lack the fellowship of the people the man knows, people of the skid row community. Attending an AA meeting in a non-skid row community makes a man conspicuous. Few skid row men achieve AA membership. A new AA member theoretically attends meetings several nights a week. A skid row man without transportation becomes totally dependent on his sponsor, and this total dependence makes some of the men shrink from the relationship. Still, AA is a prevalent form of therapy, and has respect from most of the men of skid row. Even while they reveal it has not been effective for them, they can cite cases of friends who have succeeded.

All four types of treatment are available in Cleveland, some in the skid row area, and others in outlying districts. The focus of this study will be on the mission type.

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<sup>3</sup>It is unfortunate that there is not more literature available on AA as a social movement. It has quasi-religious elements in its Twelve steps somewhat comparable to the ten commandments and its evangelical tone. Some studies on social status and AA have been done by Loffland (1970) and Trice (1957, 1959).

IV

There is a limited amount of literature on the role of the spiritual community of therapy on skid row. Some of it has been written by the mission people themselves, and less by the sociological community. Wallace (1965) and Wiseman (1970) both had members of their research teams stay in missions, but little long-term or deep study has been done on these institutions. Perhaps the institutions have been uncooperative because of fear of exposure to the public media, or perhaps the more sophisticated treatment centers are most appealing to the researcher, but only the Salvation Army Men's Social Centers have seen significant outside research.

The most interesting of the institutions offering spiritual as well as physical rehabilitation is the Salvation Army. It is surely one of the oldest groups working with homeless men, taking from its founder, Booth, the commandment to "love the unloved." Widely imitated, the Army has existed for over a century, while many of its imitators have fallen apart. In the twenties, itinerant missions such as the Christian Army, the Samaritan Army, the Saved Army, and the Volunteer Rescue Army appeared. (Dees, 1948, p. 46) Another competitor which has endured longer is the Volunteers of America, founded by a close relation to the Salvation Army founders.

The Salvation Army managed to make a successful transition from its rather sect-like origins to one of church-like solidarity and establishment. It is an almost perfect example of the Weber-Troeltsch ideal type. (Clark, 1948) Changing from a struggling and highly evangelistic sect it became an institution

in the community. Their missionary work with the homeless is strongly supported by firm congregations. Other missions lacked this sort of support, which has helped the Army to survive over the years, in an era when spiritual treatment of alcoholism seems anachronistic.

The Army shares the sense of mission of other such rehabilitation agencies, with a decidedly salvationist cast in philosophy. In the words of General Booth, the founder,

Seeing that neither governments nor society have stood forward to undertake what God has made to us to appear so vitally important a work, and as he has given us the willingness and in many important senses, the ability, we are prepared to make a determined effort not only to undertake, but to carry it forward to a triumphant success. (Search, p. 167, 1956)

For almost all its history, the Salvation Army has been known as a haven for the homeless. The Men's Social Service Centers, in all cities of any size, and the Harbor Lights, serving skid row areas almost exclusively, both work with homeless men. In these centers, reclamation is the major task, and the early days saw heavy emphasis on the spiritual aspect.

The purpose of these centers is the rehabilitation of men, spiritually, physically, and mentally. These are not residential hotels or jobs, but treatment centers for men. Physical relief is just one of the minor considerations, although an important one. We look upon our job as the salvaging of wrecked humanity. Just as we pick up old wrecked stoves and furniture and shoes, and rebuild them into articles once more usable, so we pick up wrecked, discarded men, and recondition them so that they may once more become useful, happy members of society. Above all we try to save their souls. (Chesham, 1965, p. 128)

With their evangelical approach and good food, the Army earned a highly respected reputation among the community. It drew wide support from both the skid row community and the outside community. Donations at Christmas and Easter, as well as con-



tributions of food, and furniture have always been high. As Anderson pointed out in 1923,

The Salvation Army does more good for the hobo than any other agency. In every city or town of the country, it is the good samaritan for the down and outs. Not only is it interested in the hearts of men, but it seeks to help people to walk alone. ( Anderson, 1923, p.180)

The ultimate goal of all Salvation Army soul saving is not the creation of another snivelling "mission stiff," but rather a good, middle-class, church-going man, returned to his family.

The evangelical cast has left many of the Army facilities. However, Harbor Lights and Social Service Centers are much influenced by the officers-in-charge. Some officers recommended with seriousness at a recent conference on Harbor Light treatment that the Army is at its most successful when saving souls by pulling them in from the streets. A return to street-preaching was urged. (November 1972 Eastern Territory Harbor Light Conference.) Obviously, those centers with evangelically oriented officers-in-charge will have that aura about their rehabilitation programs.

Today, the Salvation Army is not really in the forefront of treatment institutions. Approach varies from officer to officer, with some favoring a more secular approach than others. Most are hampered by a lack of resources. They run full scale hotels-cum employment bureaus-cum rehabilitation agencies on slender training and even more slender resources. Some of the major cities feature gleaming Harbor Lights in fancy establishments. Others have little more than storefronts with officers offering counselling and sympathy. An expert on alcoholic rehabilitation has commented that the effectiveness of the Salvation Army



is difficult to evaluate because there are striking differences of approach due to personality of officers in-charge. Despite the military and hierarchical structure of the Army, some officers have remarkable success. Conceptions of alcoholism within the Army range from the moralism of the mission-type to an attitude of enlightenment which regards alcoholism as a sickness. (Clinebell, 1956, p. 86)

Alcoholism is regarded as a sin by officers in the Army, who neither smoke nor drink. But many do not have a naive sense of sin that blames it on the personal failure of the individual alcoholic. There is a definite fall from grace doctrine which is held by Salvation Army officers, who are also ordained ministers. One of the eleven tenets of Salvation Army doctrine is:

V. We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God. (Chesham, 1965, p. 267)

The fall from grace doctrine provides an alternative excuse for the high failure rates unavailable to the secular institution. The Salvation Army can allow recidivism with this fall-from-grace philosophy. Backsliding is seen as almost inevitable and endless compassion is the goal of the officer, who knows that to "err is human," while to forgive emulates the divine. This outlook, available to missions, may in part explain their continued willingness to work with the homeless as contrasted to the ways of their secular brothers.

This outlook on morality, combined with some rather sophisticated social and psychological thought on the nature of the homeless as promulgated in the Men's Social Service Handbook (1960) (which suggests that the homeless man is a dependent personality

and is under-socialized) creates an interesting treatment environment.

The Salvation Army offers an exceedingly structured and sheltered environment, protecting the man from the outside world. While in comparison to the secular institution, they offer a benevolent and authoritarian approach; compared to the traditional mission, most programs are progressive.

Part of the structure and authoritarianism in the Salvation Army residences is bolstered by strict rules and regulations. As the Salvation Army was modelled on the military, this regimentation is to be expected. Most centers employ an ex-alcoholic "sniffer" or other precautions at the door to check incoming inmates for the smell of alcohol which could end his residency there. He may have to leave the program entirely, if caught drinking, or take severe cutbacks in his "gratuity rates" (pay). Room and locker inspections are frequent in some centers. Likewise, physicals, haircuts, etc., are provided in the building. Some men become institutional dependents with this type of "shelter" provided by the agency. The similarities between such a facility, and mental hospitals and army training base camps are readily apparent. The support system is complete within the building, and there are regulations as to access to the outside. It forms an example of Goffman's total institution, although, since it is voluntary, escape from total loss of identity is possible. (Goffman, 1961) A man sheds his identity as a skid row regular when he enters the program, to take on the character of the institutional beneficiary, grateful and willing to work for his keep. Hours of waking and sleeping, as well as entering and leaving are

regulated. Of course, a man may check out at any time, and many take this option within the first two weeks. The man who can stand this institutionalization loses all independence and becomes "shelterized." The Cleveland Men's Social Service Center, for example, has several men who have not left the building in many years. (Men's Social Service Staff interviews, Jan., 1973) Shelter in the Salvation Army holds the potential of a bland and boring oblivion, and for some men on skid row, this oblivion is the only escape possible from death by alcohol.

The skid row man values the warmth and security offered him by the Salvation Army, and yet resents the rules that attend it. Clinebell sees the pivotal conflict in the chronic inebriate of the need for and resentment of dependency as central in mission-type therapy.

It would seem to be a safe assumption that a high percentage of converts are never assimilated into normal social living. Many of these remain institutionalized, living at the mission and doing its work. They have capitulated to the dependent relationship...others slip back into the maelstrom of skid row. If the individual succeeds in leaving the Bowery and making the difficult break from homelessness, the mission has no structure for continuing the group support he will need. (Clinebell, 1956, p. 82)

In the Salvation Army Centers, typically the man will find a community of men, all theoretically dedicated to maintaining sobriety (although this is highly theoretical in some settings). When he leaves, he loses the support of this group, support which is sometimes the prime treatment element, and there is usually little substitution made for it.

Because of the structure, rules, and regulations of the Salvation Army program, only the most weakened of men can survive in the powerless situation created within the institution.

Some mission workers admit there is little they can do to help an alcoholic until he has hit bottom and is desperate enough for a change...and at this point, any one of a number of programs might be effective. (Bogue, 1963,p.422)

The Army itself realizes that the only men who can truly accept their help are those who are low enough to be almost totally broken. (Officer, interview November, 1972) However, they continue to reaccept men, even though they are aware of their high rate of failure, because they hope at some point each of these men will reach the bottom. The staff sets "scaled down and intermediate goals of success." (Wiseman, 1970, p. 185) and through this and theology, reconciles continual objective failure.

For instance, the agency is well aware of the existence of recidivism.

It is estimated in some parts of the country that 40% of the applications for admission are by men who have previously been in the same center. They present a problem for which there is no quick and easy solution. He may be using the center...so that the center becomes merely the instrument for the perpetuation of his irresponsible and shiftless habits. (Salvation Army, 1960, p. 7:5:5)

Yet they are capable of dealing with it because of their philosophy of hope, and short range feeling that any maintained sobriety is worthwhile, no matter how short-lived.

There are scores of instances in which men have left and returned three and four times and sometimes more, and then suddenly have found themselves and become splendid Christians and staunch citizens. (Salvation Army, 1960, p. 7:5:5)

The Salvation Army has its own particular ways of eradicating homelessness through spiritual, physical, and social-psychological reclamation. It has its means of reaching those goals through a well-established organizational hierarchy which in its own rigid structure acts as much upon the individual officers as the



total institution acts upon the client. Because so much of each individual Harbor Light and Social Service Center program is the responsibility of the individual officer, their personalities are an important element to consider in evaluating a program.

The Salvation Army officer group is almost a family in its closeness. Chesham (1965, p. 11) reports that in ten years prior to her history, that more than 51% of the officer trainees were children of Salvationists. These men do not have to go to college, but are accepted following high school graduation in officer training comparable to a seminary experience. Officers are encouraged to take post-training study, if they have time. The officers who endure training and learn all the doctrine of the Salvation Army Church show a phenomenally low attrition rate of between two and three percent internationally. It is the personalities of these men that gives each center its atmosphere.

Officers are subject to transfer at the whim of the parent organization, and change frequently between posts. It is uncommon for an ambitious officer to remain in one city for long periods of years. Likewise, because of this policy, men often enter commands for which they are little prepared by training, such as the administration of programs directed at the alcoholic. This may create a certain amount of insecurity, as the management of such a center requires a battery of managerial skills as well as knowledge of therapeutic treatment. The only training some of these officers have is of a theological nature.

Harbor Light and other such institutions offer a sheltered and structured environment of varying degrees of therapeutic effectiveness. Primarily, a Salvation Army facility provides



a place where sobriety is strictly enforced and the man is protected from the temptations of skid row and from the necessity to scrounge to get by in his daily life. Under the proper administration, the Salvation Army can offer much more within its structural limitations. A true Salvation Army experience must share with other mission approaches a spiritual basis, and the spiritual basis of the Army is common knowledge on skid row. However, it is also known that one does not have to take "a dive" to get the shelter and protection of the Army. If one is properly cooperative, one can "get by" even with the Salvation Army.

### THE RESEARCH SETTING: CLEVELAND'S SKID ROW

Research supporting the hypotheses which follow was conducted in the Cleveland area. While lacking a concentrated skid row section such as those described by Bogue (1963) in Chicago, and Wallace (1965) in Minneapolis, the characteristics of skid row are present in two separate sections of the city; one bordering on the southeast segment of the downtown area, and the other directly across the bridge from downtown, in an area called the Near West Side. In these two areas can be found the cheap rooming hotels, the barber colleges, the taverns and the beer and wine stores characteristic of skid rows across the nation. In the maps that follow, buildings marked as rooming, tavern, barber college, spot labor and rehabilitation facilities are noted. It can be seen that the rudiments of a skid row support system are present in both districts.

The character of skid row areas has changed over the years according to those who have lived in the areas. (Interviews at Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center and Cleveland City Planning, 1973). The Near West Side, which had once been almost totally white, now serves Puerto Ricans and Negroes as well as the homeless man. The eastern sector of the "row" has shifted southward under the threat of urban renewal and university expansion, and now includes many X-rated movie theaters and adult book stores. The public using these areas are varied and

are not only searching for alcohol, but other more various forms of entertainment.

The skid row area of Cleveland is scattered, and not all the services necessary to survival are right within walking distance, to the extent they are in Bogue's Chicago. The facilities are there, but one has to be knowledgeable to exploit them, as they are not as centrally located. Several major agencies devoted to helping the single homeless man are close to the area, though. They provide rooming services, like the hotels, but are usually of better quality and lesser cost. Of course, these agencies require that a man submit to treatment in order to partake of the housing. Among the agencies located very near the skid row areas are Stella Maris, the Harbor Light Center, the City Mission, and the Volunteers of America. (all marked in red on the maps.) These offer overnight lodging in the agency, and extended care in a rehabilitation community of sorts. Two hospitals serve the area population with inexpensive care. Cleveland Psychiatric Institute, the state mental health facility, includes skid row in its catchment area.

The housing in the area outside the agency setting is characterized by multiple dwellings. While both sections of skid row include heavy commercial development, there is much rooming above stores and taverns, and the rents are surprisingly cheap. In addition there are cheap hotels which range from third rate transient facilities to flophouses.

The skid row districts of town are noticeably seedy and visibly different. The housing is run down, and even if the exteriors show no visible housing code violations, the interiors

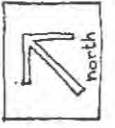
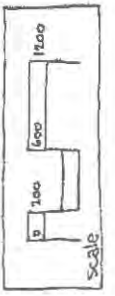
are often warrens of roaches, rats, and subdivision.

A walking tour of the area shows the most visible inhabitants to be males, over 30 years of age, in various stages of dishevelment in dress and disablement in body. Many of these men are not drinkers, as pointed out by Bogue ( 1963, p. 48 ), but rather on disability pensions of some sort. Skid row does provide cheap, if unattractive housing, and places men close to the medical and public care they need. Very few family groups are to be seen on skid row. Those that are there often talk with the twang of the Ohio River Valley about their longings to go back home where the air is clean and a man can hunt and fish. What few women are seen in the area are either the mothers of these impoverished families, or are the forlorn elderly, carrying shopping bags full of their dearest possessions. The streets are not crowded, but there are more spectators and conversational groupings than could be found in a middle class area of similar population density. An observer can find, if looking sharply, small congregations of men participating in the ritual of the bottle gang, passing the bottle back and forth with their stories. Other men sit on the front steps and watch the passing groups. On the east side are students from the nearby university. On the west side, the local ethnic population uses the area on their way to the central outdoor market. A sense of community is present within the most anonymous section of town, the central business district. Many of the men know each other or recognize each other from bottle gang encounters or from the various hotels and social agencies serving the area. Most of the men are not transients. The day of the migratory skid row is gone. These men live and treat the



skid row service areas: downtown  
 base: city of cleveland department of community development

- liquor stores ★
- rooming houses ●
- barber colleges ■
- bars/taverns ○
- spot labor agencies ■
- beer/wine stores ●
- rehab. institutions ■



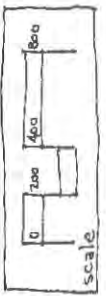




skid row service areas: near west side

base: city of cleveland planning commission

- liquor stores ★
- bars/taverns ○
- beer/wine stores ●
- rooming houses ●
- spot labor agencies ●
- rehab institutions ●
- barber colleges ■
- colleges ■
- rehab institutions ■



area as their neighborhood. I, for one, was used to finding the walk down Euclid Avenue, the main street of town, very anonymous. Near the completion of the interviewing, I increasingly encountered familiar faces. The men use the area heavily, and dwell externally, as their rooms are much worse than the street. They look for companionship and friends on the streets of downtown just as a middle class suburbanite might look for friends at the local supermarket.

The skid row resident in Cleveland differs substantially from the rest of the community in which he lives. Surrounded by the central business district, with people dressed for work in white collar occupations, the skid row habitué is usually tattered and dirty. His ways of living differ. Ethnographers report he conducts his life with a public front unseen among the middle class and the achievement oriented blue-collar groups. (Wallace, 1965) The rest of the downtown area sees the man as the most deviant in the community.

Thus, the skid rower creates a community of his own, without women except those to be found in taverns, without kin; he maintains an isolated status, and yet enjoys the amenities of a highly companionable existence when he wants it. The society of skid row offers companionship, and the support of a special milieu, including service agencies and commercial facilities especially designed to serve their needs. The skid row man may be isolated in the sense that he lacks kin, but he finds more friendship groups in acquaintanceships than many. Anonymity is present in skid row, but there is also superficial friendship. A newcomer to the city, who for instance checks into Harbor Light finds a circle of

fifty or so faces who become familiar. He will know them when he sees them on the outside, and feel free to borrow money from them or bum drinks. (Observation at Harbor Light, 1973) Men on skid row, especially in the tavern and bottle gang context provide a kind of welcome wagon. Many of the new men at Harbor Light found out about its services from drinking companions on the row. Yet these acquaintances are not deep, and most of the men do not feel drinking companions are real friends. (Data in Harbor Light sample, 1973, question # 63E)

Here is one place where every man's past is his own secret. Only in the case of the very old or the very young is there any attempt to learn something of an individual's past. They live closed lives, and grant newcomers the same privilege. (Anderson, 1923, p. 20)

When a man runs out of money, or sobriety, one of the most popular free housing agencies on skid row is Harbor Light. The facilities there are much better than those at other institutions also located close to the area, as each man has a single room after a period of residence, and is allowed to hold outside employment, if capable. This facility is appealing to the skid row man because of its 24 hour open admission policy also. The man is allowed about a week to rest and get over his drunk, before he is expected to help out with work on the building. Another attraction, besides rest and housing, is relatively pleasant eating conditions, and the companionship of others in the same situation.

Harbor Light is also appealing to the researcher, as it is working to develop new ways of combatting the chronic homeless inebriate.

## THE RESEARCH SETTING: THE HARBOR LIGHT CENTER

Salvation Army Harbor Lights started in Detroit around the turn of the century, and are devoted to the men of skid row, as they are located right on the row, and immediately accessible to those it serves. The original Harbor Light program had a definite evangelistic cast to it, with recruitment made by officers going out on the streets and asking men to come to the services and participate in the free meals. Presently there are some seventeen Harbor Light Centers in the United States, and several more in Canada. These range in sophistication from a program including vocational and psychiatric counselling in San Francisco, to drop-in-day care lounges with referrals for overnight housing, in Pittsburgh. In Cleveland, the Harbor Light Center has been established for about 25 years. Originally located in an old building at Ninth Street and Eagle, it included both a hotel and a rudimentary alcoholic rehabilitation program. In 1969 it moved to a new building at Eighteenth Street and Prospect. Located between an x-rated movie theater and a flea-bag bar and grill, the Harbor Light Center looks like a dark stone fortress. The eight story building's doors are kept locked all day and night. A guard admits people to the building, checking for drinking upon entrance. The building is virtually in the center of the eastern skid row area.

The new building is a source of great pride to the staff, as it includes room for private housing as well as sports facilities and classrooms. However, the building also has served a burden, as it is much larger than the old facility, and makes much greater maintenance demands. The hoped for increase in enrollees in the program has not yet been sufficient to entirely cover the



costs of the facility. Thus the management of the agency is continually pressed to find ways to help the building survive financially, through increased enrollment in programs, restaurant facilities and other money-making schemes. This financial pressure occasionally can affect the program, as will be discussed later.

Given its virtually open admission policy and its location in the skid row area, Harbor Light is one of the most likely places for a skid row alcoholic to turn in search of help. Thus, for any researcher concerned with this clientele, it provides a rich setting. About ten to thirteen men a week seek to enter. Not all men who come in are severely intoxicated, but a great percentage of them are sick from the effects of over-indulgence. The men are encouraged to participate in a rehabilitation program which is currently undergoing changes and redesign. Presently the men pass through stages as they continue in the program, called classes, and somewhat analogous to classes in a high school. A man stays in the freshman stage for one month, the sophomore stage for two months, the junior stage for three months, and the senior stage for three months, with a three month holding period before he is considered a graduate of the program, with a year's continuous residence. During his stay in the building the man may participate in a variety of work-therapy programs which are designed not only for therapeutic purposes, but also to absorb some of the cost of the man's room and board, if he is not providing welfare payments.

Besides public relief, there are 3 types of work programs available. The men may be sent out on spot type labor, where they are given \$2.50 an hour. According to the length of stay in the program and staff evaluation, a certain amount is deducted



from this take-home pay for the man's support. He is allowed to keep the rest. These spot labor jobs are generally yard work and house work for families in the area. The call for spot labor is generally less in the winter than in the summer; but generally, the man doing this sort of work can earn about as much as he wants. Only the most reliable men are generally called for spot labor, as the employer pays the man directly, and some men do not come back to the building after being paid. Only a small minority of the men in the program participate in the spot jobs.

Another sort of work assignment available to the men is work in the building. Pay on this work is somewhat lower, and again hourly. According to the type of job, and again, the length of stay in the program, the pay is allotted. There is more resentment about the pay scale in the building than on spot jobs, as it is so much lower, and the pressure from internal politics is so much greater. Men work in the buildings as kitchen and maintenance workers. Also included in building work are staff jobs, such as admissions clerks, security men, counselors, social and chaplain duties, and cooks. Personnel on the payroll are not necessarily men in the program, but can be. About three-fourths of the staff jobs are taken by program or program graduate men.

These jobs in the building are the source of much friction and unhappiness. Because the nature of the program engenders quick turnover, often men who have been trained to do jobs, for example, in the kitchen, leave. Therefore, elements of the program, such as the food, suffer while replacements are being

found. Since the building is running under full capacity, sometimes eminently unqualified personnel are so placed in desperation. Additional tension develops between the salaried staff and their "employees", since they are all "drunks" in the first place. Jealousy and backbiting develop as a result of this situation.

The third source of work therapy is through an outside job. Many of the men's regular employers know that the men use Harbor Light as a sort of halfway or rooming house. Some of these employers accept the man back, even if he slips off the wagon, as long as he returns to Harbor Light. These men pay room and board from their paychecks, and often can eat in a restaurant facility within the building if they prefer.

There are some who because of disabilities and welfare eligibility are not required to participate in the work program. The Soldier's and Sailor's Relief commission pays for room and board for the men as an alcoholic rehabilitation program. At present the County Welfare will only pay for lodging there if the man has a medical disability, or is there for emergency lodging. Some of the men have other sorts of relief payments which help defray the costs of keeping them. Men who do not quite come up to the total cost of room and board must try to contribute in labor whatever they lack in welfare payments.

In addition to the various forms of work therapy, the Harbor Light program offers a class room therapy program which is presently only fully formulated on paper. At night men in the various "classes" are expected to attend sessions on music therapy, social adjustment, Bible study, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

These sessions vary in quality and popularity, as well as utility to the men. However, the activities give them something to do, and thus are a way of preventing drinking.

As a man progresses through the program, he is given a certificate for each grade completed. Length of stay ensures better and better rooming situations. Various floors are set aside for each grade, and some rooms are more comfortable than others. High seniority in the program gives the man a choice of a better room.

While the man is in the intake center, he has the care of a podiatric clinic. Nurse's services are available about once a week. Also the man may be transported to a hospital in the area for help. There is no other source of medical care.

In the appendix can be found a diagram of an idealized picture of Harbor Light services. In addition to the alcoholic unit are facilities for the elderly, swimming for community groups and a hotel for graduates of the rehabilitation program. The staff in charge try to see the facility as a multi-service unit in an effort to support their program financially. They are trying to diversify to bring in different service recipients, since the alcoholic client group has not increased sufficiently.

The research was conducted primarily on the sixth floor of the building where new men are admitted to the program. New men are confined here so that they will not distract more successful men in the program while coming off their drunks, and so that they may be observed. The men are allowed off the floor only for meals or work. While in intake, the men are theoretically recovering from the effects of alcohol. However, sometimes they

are given work assignments because of the great maintenance needs of the building. As there is little programming in intake, many of the men are eager for such work assignments to keep busy.

I had to catch men after they had sobered up enough to feel comfortable for an hour at a time, and before they were given a work assignment. There is no medical care for withdrawal from alcohol on the intake floor. One or two staff members are generally present and keeping an eye on things to assure that emergencies do not occur, although they are not present all the time.

In the intake office, exceptionally detailed records are kept on the clients, and this enhanced the research setting. Evaluation forms are kept each time a man uses the program, and additionally, a detailed personal history is kept on each man in the program. These were invaluable in cross-checking information.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about this particular setting was its ongoing change. Organizations that are involved in rehabilitation with this group face a phenomenal failure rate, and often must reset their goals to maintain stability. (See Chapter Two for references to J.D. Thompson, 1967) The Harbor Light is not different in finding that it must set both short and long range goals, the long range goals for the public at large, and the short range ones satisfying the internal needs of the organization. However, even achievement of a short range goal of perhaps one or two months of sobriety seems difficult in this setting. The organization is undergoing continuous program revision and restructuring in an attempt to

increase its success. The agency has hired an applied sociologist who works with the staff in evaluating and making program changes. The staff of the center is unusual in its openness to suggestions and to research, and welcomed my presence, opening its files and environment to observation willingly.

I was allowed to serve as a member of the intake staff to a limited extent, often taking information on the client for the Salvation Army files while conducting my own interview. By working closely with the staff, it was possible to see the problems they faced, but as I was not officially connected with the Army, it was also possible to obtain a relatively objective analysis of the program from the clients, when they were assured of anonymity.

Harbor Light provided one of the more advanced programs dealing exclusively with skid row men in the Cleveland area. While the men that entered the program were by in large self-selected, they also seemed to be fairly representative of the skid row alcoholics as described in several other works, so that some generalization from the population was possible.

Harbor Light provided size suitable for completion of data collection within a short time, a program of sufficient content to provide material for analysis, and a staff willing to cooperate with the researcher. Additionally, because of its ties with a national network of Harbor Lights, it was possible to get background information about other officers involved in the same type of work. Harbor Light provided a rich research setting, both practically and historically for a project of this scope on the skid row man.



## METHODS USED AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Any exploration of a wide organizational environment and intensive investigation within a single agency necessitates the consideration of several research methods to attain a fully dimensional picture.<sup>1</sup> I studied the social welfare environment of skid row through rather informal research techniques, and utilized more formal means in the investigation of the Harbor Light facility itself. Among the methods utilized were informal walking tours and observer-participation on skid row; formal interviewing both by mail and directly, and participant observation in the setting itself.

Initial exploration of the agencies and services of skid row was undertaken in 1972. I lived for two weeks on East 18th Street, and through conversations with the men who lived in the same building and observation, began formulation of the project. During the course of the research, I made several walking tours of the area, and was aided in the mapping of services through the Cleveland city planning offices, the health department and the Federation for Community Planning, a welfare coordination agency. At this point I narrowed my focus to the Harbor Light center and the agencies that competed and complemented it in its environment.

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<sup>1</sup> For thorough discussions of considerations in organizational research, please see work by Denzin, 1970, pp. 297-313; Barnes, 1967, pp. 57-113; and the work of Peter Blau, 1967, pp.18-58.

The key information for this thesis is derived from formal interviews with the clients of Harbor Light. They served as chief informants on the agencies of Cleveland, and also provided the information necessary to test my hypotheses about agency selectivity and an informal reputational network. An interview schedule was used to gather this information.

The schedule was developed both from measures used in existing studies, and from questions designed especially for this project, and is reprinted in full in the Appendix. It was pretested at the Men's Social Service Center in Cleveland, another Salvation Army agency dealing with men roughly comparable to those entering Harbor Light. The eligibility regulations are virtually the same at the two agencies. The men at Men's Social Service were, like those at Harbor Light, both homeless and jobless, although they were less likely to admit an alcohol problem. Approximately 23 pretests were completed, each taking about an hour and fifteen minutes. The men were told that I was conducting an independent research project, and that all information would be considered confidential. If they had additional questions, I explained simply the nature of my project and purposes. Several questions were eliminated as a result of the pretest, as they seemed irrelevant to the study as a whole, or improperly engineered.

At Harbor Light, a total of eighty interviews were completed. One respondent was too sick to complete an interview and had left the program when I returned to finish it with him. The men were interviewed soon after they had entered intake, and it was explained to them that I was collecting additional statistical information. Again, if they had further questions, I explained

the project to them. I had no refusals from the group. However, because the research was geared to talking to the men as they entered the program, I occasionally missed men. They did not enter the situation steadily, but came in groups. Often a large group would come in over the week-end and leave on Monday. Even though I was working on Saturday, some of these men were too sick to be interviewed. Even with diligent efforts, not all who entered were covered. However, in comparison with other intake data that the Harbor Light has gathered, it seems that the sample drawn is fairly representative of those that use the Harbor Light Center. (Appendix, pr. C) Also excluded from interviewing were men from the seventh floor geriatric residence who were sometimes interred on six after drinking episodes. As these men never participated in the program, they were not interviewed.

While approximately ten to thirteen men entered the center during a given week, by the middle of the research, repeaters had begun to appear who were of course, ineligible. The research took eleven weeks in this phase.

A second group of men was chosen from the first sample. All those who remained in the program for thirty days or longer were re-interviewed with a shortened schedule, but a more intensive informal conversation about the problems and atmosphere of the program. These interviews took about 45 minutes each as opposed to the more lengthy initial interviews which lasted an average of an hour and a half.

The interviews were generally well-accepted, although the length received a lot of complaints. The schedules consisted of

two sections: a personal history form to gather demographic data, which was provided by the Salvation Army, and a schedule of my own design. The personal history form provides relevant information on marriages, education, nationality, occupational history, and alcoholic history. I occasionally administered this section for the Salvation Army by making carbon copies of my information, but for the most part conducted my interviewing separate from their procedures. Therefore, I usually omitted questions dealing with names, wages, and financial obligations which I felt would jeopardize the comfort of the interviewing situation. (Omitted questions are starred in the Appendix)

The information gathered on occupation included the last job held of any sort, as well as jobs held for longer than one month in the past to provide some information on mobility. Jobs were coded as being White Collar Managerial and Professional, White Collar-Clerical and Sales, Blue Collar-Skilled, foreman; Blue Collar-Skilled, Blue Collar-Unskilled, and Spot Labor. These designations were aided by classifications by Hatt, and Reiss, ( 1961 ).

The interview was conducted by subject area, and therefore, my questions were interspersed with those of the personal history form. I chose my measures, (which are described in detail in the appendix on measures) according to the following criteria. Conscious of the educational level and physical state of the clientele, I designed an interview with an eye towards brevity and simplicity. Many men came to the interview in stages of withdrawal from alcohol, and found it difficult to concentrate for the length of the interview. Additionally, comprehension was especially low among some respondents. Two choice, rather

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than four choice and Likert-style items were therefore preferable. They had trouble conceptualizing abstractions and degrees as is necessary with the use of scalar items. Only in phrasings using time, such as "most of the time" and "not too often" could this group survive a one-to-five scale. An example of this difficulty with abstractions may be seen in the use of the Butler-Haigh Q-sort technique, which I was planning to use as a cross check on information gathered on self-concept. Involving a task of sorting cards with personality characteristics on a scale ranging from "Most Like Me" to "Least Like Me", and then on a scale ranging from "Most Like my Ideal Self" to "Least Like My Ideal Self", the Q-sort is a widely used technique. However, even with coaching and interminable explanations, many of the men were almost incapable of coping with this task. It was excluded after about the thirtieth interview. Not only did the men have trouble with the five place scale, but also with the conception of the Ideal Self, and words such as "tolerant."

Thus only short item scales with a minimum of questions were chosen to test hypotheses such as those about religion and personal competence. While those chosen may not be the most sophisticated and effective ways of measuring the concepts, they were the most preferable for this particular interviewing situation.<sup>1</sup>

The early and objective sections of the interview went quickly.

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It seems appropriate at this point to discuss the most widely known quantitative study done on skid row, that of Donald Bogue, (1963). I must raise one major methodological question about his study. He maintains his average interview was 2.5 hours in length. (512) If this is so, I doubt his coverage of the skid row habitué, for generally, an hour and a half was the outside limit of their concentration, even in an interview situation of semi-official constraint.

Later sections were more conversational. Especially well-liked and provocative were the sections on the evaluation of area agencies and evaluation of Harbor Light Centers. I often probed intensively to gather longer answers, which were documented as open-ended comments. Another section that went particularly well was the section on drinking history. Contrary to expectations that the men might be ashamed of, or unwilling to talk about their drinking patterns, most were very open. However, they likewise demonstrated that they had given little thought to the problem previously.

Few of the men had encountered similar research situations and questionnaires, so most were quite cooperative. In addition they were flattered by my presence as a female researcher in the traditionally all-male floor. This leads me to a discussion of my status as a researcher in the environment.

As Wiseman points out,

While there were a great many scenes I could observe, it became apparent that as a woman, or as a researcher, access was denied to some areas of the loop. (Wiseman, 1970, p.276)

She solved her observational problems by hiring participant observers who lived in the situations. Since such resources were unavailable to me, I anticipated some difficulties. This was, after all, an all-male community, the members of which had either severed or never initiated ties with females. I faced the problem of interviewer-interviewee anxiety about establishing rapport, expecting that as an "outsider" not only to the world of alcoholism, but also to skid row, I would have trouble getting "honest" answers. However, as Arlene Kaplan Daniels has demon-

strated, (1971) as a "High caste" stranger to the group and an obvious outsider, the men were more open about some things than they might have been with others of their own sex. While there were occasions when the men would attempt to exaggerate their backgrounds or histories for my benefit, for the most part they seemed to look upon me as a sympathetic observer, and were more willing to confide in me than they were in the staff interviewers who were all ex-alcoholics.

The men would pull me aside to tell me stories about their lives on skid row for my "book". Because of the necessity to explain subcultural details to me, the information gathered in conversations at the dinner table and in the coffee lounge was very rich. While I know I lost certain perspectives present in the situation, such as an insight into the all-male bull session, I feel I also gained certain other information which might have been privileged to a male outsider.

Perhaps competition and pride prevented the men from giving good answers to the male interviewing staff, as well as fear of exposure of details of their life, and the desire for anonymity which, as previously stated, is a part of skid row life. Generally, Salvation Army staff personal histories were composed of vague and general answers and they often commented on the difficulties of getting the men to talk. Experience as an interviewer, as well perhaps, as my role as an outsider, enabled me to gather richer data.

There are many problems inherent in the role of the female researcher in an all-male setting which it is not the role of this thesis to examine,

Because it was impossible to "pass" or become "one of the guys," a certain amount of information was necessarily lost. However, I believe that a female researcher is able to gain some information which may be privileged to a male outsider, or even insider.

An additional consideration in the research was that of role expectations. Precisely because I was female, there were certain things I was expected to conform to. Language on the floor was notably toned down when it was known that I was around, and I was not expected to swear myself. Additionally, I found it was necessary to be "feminine" in dress and action. After wearing pants on one work day, I was told by several staff members that the men had commented unfavorably on it. I allowed them to open doors for me, and to take my tray back because non-cooperation in these small matters would have endangered my standing and perceived place in the setting. By behaving in the traditional and expected manner, I was able to reassure the men in their conception of my role, and take some threat out of the interview situation.

Another methodological consideration that the setting provoked was the question of respondent honesty. As previously mentioned, I became at times aware of embroidering and glorification during the course of the interview. It was necessary that I not imperil the man's self-esteem, but still gain truthful responses. I used attitudes of friendly disbelief and display of knowledgeability about skid row to dispel this. Minor errors in chronology and job history were corrected by checking with Army files and then approaching the man and telling him that there seemed to be a mistake in our record-



keeping. However, if massive lying on the part of a newcomer to Harbor Light occurred, there was little way to check against it. I feel quite confident from the quality and atmosphere of the interviews, as well as the strong correlation with past records, that the majority of the interviews were sincere.

Besides the formal interviewing situation with the men, which engenders the above considerations, more informal observations and conversations were also conducted. Many of these encounters and the events that prompted them were recorded in a research notebook, which I kept sporadically during the course of the project.

## II

The second portion of the research concerned observation of the interaction between the men and the officers and staff in the setting. The most important part of this section of the research was accomplished through participation-observation. As a "pseudo-staff" member, I was able to attend staff meetings and classes with the men, as well as to initiate evaluative conversations with all the staff. Again, I used the research notebook to keep records of these interactions.

A second tool was also utilized to give background to the place of the Salvation Army officer in such a setting. I sent a mail questionnaire to Harbor Light officers in the United States. This instrument was pretested with officers in Cleveland, who helped immeasurably in refining the questions. The religious section was pruned somewhat because of their reactions to what they considered to be overly simplistic statements. Four and five item scales were used as answers to most of the objective



questions, as the officers raised objections to forced answers.

The mail questionnaire was less successful than the personal interviews as many of the questions were left unanswered. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the Appendix. A total of eighteen of the 25 surveys distributed were returned. One set of follow-up letters was issued about three weeks after the surveys were distributed, and several personal follow-ups were conducted by Salvation Army officers. Los Angeles and New York both failed to return information, which slants the information in the direction of the smaller cities.

The sketchiness of the returned forms and the low percentage of return may indicate in part the heavy administrative duties of the group. In fairness, many of the questionnaires returned were quite excellent, and included appended information, however not enough were of that quality to provide information for more than background testing of hypotheses about the officers in charge of the facilities. Of those who responded to the survey, most were favorably impressed with it. Some however, completed the hour survey in less than 35 minutes. Therefore, the overall quality of the return is not necessarily reflected in the quantity.

While a number of scale items similar to those included in the Men's questionnaire were included in the officer version, the main focus of this questionnaire was in the items dealing with professional plans, and policies at their individual centers. This information was gathered in open-ended forms, although a few questions about different types of treatment were presented with scales. Again, criteria in designing the questionnaire included a necessity for easy to answer questions and brevity to

ensure high returns.

-III-

The third element examined in this study was the social-welfare community. This was accomplished both through evaluative questions in the interviews with the men and also through interviews and tours at the agencies themselves. This had the advantage of providing the user's perspective, as well as the management's on the settings. The agency interviews usually took about half the day. Not every agency which worked with the homeless was included, as many were not well-established at the time of study, or worked with such a small percentage in their total clientele that they had little expertise in the field. Two major agencies excluded were the West Side community service center and Orca House, a group working primarily with Blacks. Also excluded was a facility which had just begun to operate as a half-way home for women with alcohol problems. These three agencies were started recently, and I was referred to them as the study was nearing completion.

A total of fifteen different agency interviews was completed. One and sometimes two administrators were contacted in each setting. Basically an informal and conversational interview was conducted, although it was structured with an outline of questions geared to gather the factual data presented in the appendix. My primary interests were in the agency attitudes toward skid row, and their eligibility requirements. Most of the interviews included tours of facilities and contact with the men and other staff personnel. These elements were excluded in the mental facilities and at the jail setting. At most of the agencies, my reception was very warm.

The agencies seemed flattered that someone was studying them. They were also aware of the wide lack of coordination and information between agencies, and were grateful for anything which provided information about their "competition." They were willing to converse on a professional and open level about the problems faced in their particularly failure-prone service.

One of the most interesting facets of this particular portion of the research was the contrast in perceptions of services between the agencies and the men. Several of the agencies seemed to present a paper version of their program. With the insights of the users, a more realistic perspective could be gained. While the agency interviews intended to portray the eligibility spectrum in treatment programs in Cleveland, they also provided information on available resources, available treatment philosophies and success ratios.

Through these interviews, Wiseman's treatment loop was seen. Many of the administrators mentioned the problem of the "repeater," or the "rounder". Several even mentioned the same man, whom the interviewer had seen, as a typical example of this. While proving the existence of the loop was not a main purpose of the interviewing, it was one of the fringe benefits of the experience.

The agency interviews provided rich background on the environmental context of skid row. While each interview was brief, thereby limiting profound insights into the various agencies, basic data on target population and treatment philosophy were gathered.

IV

The battery of methods used was intended to aid in getting a multi-faceted picture of the nature of the inter-action between the men of skid row and the agencies that served them. Although I was continually aware that no single researcher could attain total verstehen of such a large picture, an attempt was made to gain as deep an understanding of the situation as the limited amount of time made possible. The six month period between initial contact with the agency and completion of interviews with the men was much too short to develop a complete picture of an agency that had been in existence for 25 years. Therefore this study is very time-specific. The changes that Harbor Light was undergoing at the time of observation in staff and program may well be resolved by the time of completion. However, the problems the observed changes and interactions raised seem typical of any organization attempting to survive in a hostile task environment. Hopefully, the chosen methods will serve to highlight the problems and nature of this particular organizational interaction. An attempt was made to gain the perspectives of both the client and the administrative staff, as well as to investigate the atmosphere and organizational structure in which these two participants interacted. How successful this attempt is rests not only upon the limitations of even the most widely chosen of methodologies, but also upon the limitations of a single observer among one hundred fifty people.

## PRESENTATION OF HYPOTHESES

This research concerns a group of excessive drinkers whose shelter or health situations have brought them to the Salvation Army Harbor Light Center. Their choice of this institution and their life within it will be seen in the context of the Cleveland social welfare environment. This organization serves the skid row area, and competes to some extent for clientele with other organizations providing similar services. Therefore, the inter-relationships within the setting must be seen in terms of the Harbor Light's organizational survival--both in its task environments locally, and at the national level. The relationships within the internal environment contribute greatly to this organization's success or failure. It will be seen that it selects clients by presenting an image of its services to the community it serves. Therefore, it sets up what Thompson (1967, p.27) calls "domain" by attracting clients suitable for its treatment. However, once the treatment phase begins, the accomplishment of long-range goals is not achieved. Therefore, intermediate goals and services are created so that the organization can continue without staff demoralization. With constant changes both in program offered, and emphasis on particular elements of programming, the organization can cover its failure to successfully rehabilitate men. The staff remains more concerned with matters of organizational procedure than with the



client himself, as will be shown by description of the program.

Studying this organization from the perspectives of both management and client will help explain how each, through his own special interpretation or definition of situation, is able to survive in what must be objectively seen as a frustrating situation. For the client, he must live in an authoritarian and restricting environment. The management is faced with rehabilitation of an unresponsive clientele. Yet the relationship continues despite these problems.

The men who turn for help are by no means in the majority of skid row residents. Clearly, any study of men within institutions is not dealing with a subsample of the homeless on skid row, but with a selectively chosen group who have entered the agency by choice. Very few enter from referrals by other agencies. Most find out about agencies like Harbor Light from their friends and companions.

For this study, the following hypotheses about the relationships within and without the Harbor Light setting are proposed:

I. An organization attempting to be successful limits its domain and clientele to areas in which it can achieve success, through both formal and informal methods. A formal screening process and informal reputational networks influenced by agency services serve to screen skid row men to certain agencies treating alcoholics. More formal, institutionally initiated screening methods include location, eligibility criterion, and costs. The informal reputational network is created by the clients themselves, to inform the community of

available and preferable treatment settings. Rough information is passed evaluating services and accommodations, and serves as an informal map to Wiseman's (1970) "loop" as it exists in Cleveland.

Data to test Hypothesis I : An examination of different agencies used by the skid row men will demonstrate that these agencies have the potential to be client specific, even though no central referral system exists. Criteria of eligibility limit clients to those which each agency feels best prepared to serve. An informal reputational rating system which is influenced by these formal methods will be shown to exist among the men who use Harbor Light by analysis of their answers to questions of evaluation on area agencies.

II. The Harbor Light agency has created its own reputation on skid row as an agency which provides services of clean shelter, food and varied working opportunities. Through this reputation, it attracts a group of men to the service because it meets their particular needs. Their own personal status at the time of admission is an element in their choice, as is their knowledge that services offered will be available to them.

Data to test Hypothesis II: Men's reasons for coming to Harbor Light will be examined to demonstrate that their are specific factors of Harbor Light services known to users before they are oriented to these services, demonstrating reputation as a factor in their choice.

IIA: A local referral system is responsible for most of the users at Harbor Light, as the majority of men using the service are local, and became aware of services from ac-

acquaintances rather than from agencies or the welfare system.

IIB. Men of Harbor Light are not typical of skid row men as a whole, as they are in better health than those from skid row at large. This may be because Harbor Light has a reputation as a work place where work is hard but pay is slightly higher than at the sheltered workshops. Many of the men who come to Harbor Light choose it as a shelter where they can use their able bodies to earn and keep more of their money.

Data to test Hypothesis IIB: Brief comparison will be made between the data gathered by Bogue on health, and that gathered at Harbor Light. Information from open-ended and occupational questions will be used to demonstrate that work conditions were a factor in choice of Harbor Light for some.

IIC. A high proportion of those who come to Harbor Light are single; either through divorce, widowhood, or permanent bachelorhood. They are used to survival without women, and adapt to the all-male institutional environment with only limited complaint. Again, the men coming to Harbor Light are well-suited to treatment offered.

IID. Among the men who choose Harbor Light are a core of regulars who use the agency as a residence center and form a reliable clientele who can be counted on to return again and again. These men, especially, are attracted by what they know about Harbor Light and feel it meets their needs well-enough to re-use the institution. This group forms the backbone of the organization, and the staff count on their reap-

pearance to fill certain responsible jobs.

Data to test II D.: A high proportion of those interviewed were repeaters and a special open-ended conversation about changes needed and likes and dislikes of the agency was conducted with each in addition to the regular interview.

II.E. Some of the men who come to Harbor Light are attracted by the religious nature of the services, and have strong feelings about the importance of religion and private devotions. These Christians are often close to the Salvation Army theological interpretation.

Data to test II E.: While there is little comparative information available on non-church members, some national material exists in a sample taken by Glock and Stark in 1964. The Glock and Stark index of orthodoxy, discussed in detail in Appendix B, was used with both a national sample of officers and with the men of Harbor Light to compare the men to the officers and to the nation at large, in orthodoxy, found to be the fundamental dimension of religious faith by Glock and Stark (1966). The private dimension of religion, which was examined since so few of the men participated in public church rituals, was measured through the King-Hunt series (1969) to demonstrate the degree of commitment to personal devotion as compared to the officers of the center.

A series of questions taken from the Dynes (1955) church-sect work was used as a short form means of measuring several issues of religious orientation, and was used for comparison with the officers in charge.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix B for additional notes on all measures cited herein.

IIF. Most of the men who check into Harbor Light are recovering from a recent bout with alcohol, and may feel at a low ebb of personal esteem after their experiences on the outside, as suggested by Vanderpool, (1969) However, because of the companionship of other men in similar situations in the detoxification section of Harbor Light, low self-esteem is countered, as there is no higher level mirror to reflect back a depressing picture. If, as Mead and Cooley, and symbolic interactionism suggests, much of man's self opinion is what he sees reflected of himself by others, then the group of drunks admitted to Harbor Light send back a picture of the man which includes, if not elements of approval, at least, acceptance. A response which the man would not expect from his old reference groups or society at large would be this one of approval.

Thus, through providing a positive mirror of companionship, the center can serve to raise, or at least stabilize a man's self-esteem. The community of Harbor Light fosters a bravura as many of the men know each other from the outside. The group at Harbor Light is often an important reason in a man's choice, for he knows that his peers will raise his confidence.

Data to test Hypothesis IIF: The Rosenberg (1965) Scale of Self-esteem, designed for use with high school students is employed here as a measure of self-esteem. Data from a follow-up of ten interviews will be used to show the power of Harbor Light to raise self-esteem. Information from interviews will show that the peer group is an important reason in choosing Harbor Light.



II G. The recent bout with alcoholism and failure that brings a man to Harbor Light may leave him with a low sense of the future, and of efficacy in dealing with his world. He turns to Harbor Light to shift his responsibility for tomorrow temporarily to the management, and easily accepts institutionalization while it suits his needs. He sees things in the perspective of "now" and "today" much like his lower class compatriots (Rainwater, 1959 ; and Lewis, 1961; Bittner, 1967). This man worries only minimally about tomorrow.

Data to test Hypothesis IIG: The competency scale used by Angus Campbell (1960) was used to measure personal efficacy because the nature of the questions touched on the now orientation, as well as on powerlessness, and competence. The direction of scalability demonstrates the lack of future surety among the men that come to Harbor Light. The questions themselves were especially suitable to the criteria of shortness and simplicity.

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS II: The men who use Harbor Light are specific to the agency, a large proportion having been attracted by a reputation promising services that would satisfy certain of their needs, such as the need for a peer group, shelter, and religious comfort. They are suited to take advantage of these services because of characteristic demographic factors such as health and marital status.

III. For an organization to survive successfully in a competitive environment, it must present an image of successful attainment of goals to its reference groups in the task environment upon whom it is dependent for support and resources.

Harbor Light must respond to pressures from elements in its task environment, including other competing and cooperating agencies, its parent organization, and community and governmental fund sources. This need for response results in the following actions:

IIIA. The organization spends much of its time in attempting to reach its stated goal of the rehabilitation of the alcoholic homeless man through manipulation and discussion of the program intended to accomplish that goal. In addition the organization has a sub-goal of financial stability, and other organizational resources are devoted to the accomplishment of this goal.

Data to Test Hypothesis III A: Observation at staff meetings and of staff activities and actions indicated that much of the time of the organization was entering into manipulation of programming procedures essentially directed at increasing organizational success at its two main goals.

III B. In addition to attempting to reach its stated goals, the organization will attempt to define new goals, including both functions which it is achieving success in at the time, as well as the addition of new functions. It will therefore legitimize short term actions, such as detoxification, and add new long term goals such as half-way housing.

Just as the organization itself must respond to pressures in its task environment, so must the administrative staff answer to pressures in their situation. The Salvation Army officer is already equipped when he comes with strong religious beliefs and a vocation to serve. These help mitigate some of

the pressures from both the parent organization and other elements of his task environment, as well as shaping his perception of his role. Additionally, the officers demonstrate authoritarian responses in some cases, which well equip him to operate within the hierarchically structured setting of the Harbor Light command post. This quality of authoritarianism may increase in the officer over time, or he may come to the service with this quality, but no longitudinal data was available for comparison.

IV. In response to pressures from competing agencies in their task environment as well as in a search for funds and referrals, the officer perceives his role as professional, and takes action to attain this standing in the eyes of his community, and to command more successfully in his environment.

IVA. The officers see their place as professional, with a strong component of counselling, even if in actual practice much of their time must be spent in administration. The parent organization encourages this orientation to ministering, even if in actual fact the officer has little time for it.

Data to test Hypothesis IVA: Officer's testimony as to the percentage of time spent in counselling, as well as their opinion as to their most important task will be used to test the hypothesis. Evidence that the officers may not have much time to spend in this area of their role is taken from the men's opinion of officer's duties, and encounters with officers in counselling situations.

IV B. In response to pressures from other agencies in their environment to use secular methods in treating alcoholics,

as well as response to situations within the institution which call for additional training, the officer will attempt to gain further professional training of a non-ecclesiastical sort.

IV C. Again, in working in his community, the officer may find it necessary to increase his professional stature by joining various professional groups. These groups not only provide the officer with treatment ideas, but also involve him in sharing with other agencies involved in the same sort of work, and help him spread his agency's professional reputation

IV D. The officer may wish to experiment with his program to serve unmet needs within the community he serves. The parent organization is flexible on this point so that the officer can experiemnt and attain funding for secular as well as sacred aspects of programming unprovided by other community groups.

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS IV: The officer as well as organization must adapt his behavior to achieve success in his particular environment. Many officers seem to find professionalization a useful response to the pressures to achieve within their community, and also helpful to them in administering the agency under their charge.

The major intent of this thesis is the demonstration of the necessity of adaptive behavior and organization in this institutional setting. The development of a program of skid row treatment occurs through the interaction of client and officer. While there are several different elements in

the client group with differing motivations in seeking treatment, common methods of cooperation with the institutional regulations and attitudes of gratitude develop, changing their behavior from their skid row drunkenness to institutional dependence for short periods of time.

The men change their behavior and chose an institution which suits their particular needs at a given time. While officially, the center provides alcoholic rehabilitation, it is known in the community as a good place to find shelter. The men who come to Harbor Light are professing to seek sobriety, but this is a temporary goal, if at all. Each comes with an awareness that Harbor Light offers certain services and has certain requirements for those who wish to use the service including a loss of independence. The men give up the independence and strive to fulfill the requirements as long as they need the service. Some have goals which require service longer than others, and they stay over thirty days. These men have begun to achieve success in terms of length of stay.

V. Men who have goals which require long-term services of the institution, are able to define the situation within the institution to fit their own particular needs. By staying for long periods of time, they both gain prestige within the organization and attain their goals, as well as serving the organization by providing "success-stories."

V.A. Successful men adapt their behavior to the institutional setting, cooperating with the group norms and regulations, and thereby insuring their survival within the walls.



V.B. Successful men will have longer range goals than those who stay for short periods of time, and will have an orientation to their future. Their express purposes in using Harbor Light, either as a permanent employer, or as a safe haven while awaiting external rewards demonstrate that their goals are often dependent upon remaining within the shelter. Benefits at this agency accrue after longer stays, making the long-term stay more rewarding.

VC. Those who stay for long periods of time will show some personal changes over time, such as improved personal esteem and religiosity in some cases, indicating that the organization is not totally ineffective in promoting rehabilitation.

Data to test Hypotheses V.A., B, & C: Follow-up material was gathered from those who had stayed over thirty days, replicating some of the earlier interview, and asking questions about what made men drop out, and how new men differed from old.

This study intends to offer perspectives on the interaction within one particular skid row setting, which is religious in its approach to treatment, but changes in reaction to changing situations in its environment. The clientele using Harbor Light has changed over the years, and so have other available social services. If it is to survive, it must change also, or face the fate of the wild-cat missions of the thirties, extinction.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NETWORK OF AGENCIES AND REPUTATIONS

This chapter presents results testing the first hypothesis, that agencies, through formal and informal screening mechanisms, attempt to limit their clientele to those they can best serve. Their effectiveness at this task is examined through an analysis of the reputational network seen in the Harbor Light users. Those agencies which are best known turn out to be those who are also most willing to serve the skid row man.

Additionally, this chapter serves to portray the social welfare community which benefits the homeless man, and which provides the setting for Harbor Light. Harbor Light, a work therapy organization, is excluded from this section, although obviously also a part of this network, known to all respondents.

### THE NETWORK OF AGENCIES AND REPUTATIONS

There are six different types of welfare services available to skid row alcoholics in the Cleveland area. These are: welfare administration, hospital agencies, medical and psychological treatment facilities, half-way houses, work therapy operations, and Alcoholics Anonymous. These treatments range from complete out-patient care to intensive medical programs. All of those investigated were theoretically open to the skid row man, but various formal and informal screens often limited the number of skid row men partaking of treatments.

These screens included cost, initial interviewing, testing of client sincerity, geographical location either far from the skid row area, or in dangerous neighborhoods, and rules on recidivism. These screens serve to limit clientele to those who are willing to make a strong commitment to the treatment.

The least client-specific and least sophisticated of the helping agencies are those in welfare administration. The skid row alcoholic is just one small part of their case-load, and while, as a single person, the man receives specialized treatment, his alcoholism gains him few special favors. A man in Cleveland who has lived in the county long enough to establish eligibility may receive relief either from the county or from the Soldiers' and Sailors Relief commission, if he is a veteran. This relief is usually given in the form of room and board checks. A man may receive emergency relief from the county for only one month,

and must have a medical disability to qualify for further aid, or be over age 65.

There are some specific services for the skid row alcoholic. While the room and board system, by virtue of their low amount, encourage sojourns at the least expensive hotels in town. welfare will on occasion pay for alcoholic rehabilitation services. County Welfare approves three such services, while Soldiers' and Sailors' approves four, including Harbor Light. While \$93 is the maximum monthly payment a man can get for room and board, as high as \$145 is paid to a rehabilitation agency to meet their costs in keeping a man.

The county service also has a second aid for the alcoholic; the Cuyahoga County Alcoholic Rehabilitation Unit. The unit provides educational introductions to Alcoholics Anonymous. Only a small percentage who seek this counselling service are skid row alcoholics. Most have a family to return to and are using the service for advice and an introduction to AA. The unit is located several blocks away from the Salvation Army Men's Social Service, but far from skid row, and is in close association with the Fresh Start halfway house programs.

Another general service which also treats the man as a part of a general case load is the hospital service. Both Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital and St. Vincent's Charity Hospital see alcoholics in emergency cases of withdrawal, or as a result of violence in the streets. Many of these men have received treatment from the hospitals for falls, fights, and D. T.'s with no charge.

The skid row men are not the most popular patients, as they

are unreliable about showing up for treatment, and often ungrateful. (Harbor Light, Conference, Nov. 1972) Nonetheless, the city hospitals are the only medical facilities available. Health care is one of the more serious problems the skid row man faces, and as the most sophisticated alcoholic treatment facilities are generally closed to him because of cost or location, he receives the limited care available as he can get it. The skid row man faces, with other indigent patients, the problems of ever-expanding needs for health care versus ever-expanding costs to the hospital. Emergency situations such as coronary attacks are well-handled by the hospitals. One man from Harbor Light spent several weeks in an intensive coronary care unit in the Metropolitan Hospital. However, more routine cuts, scrapes, bruises and dental care are handled less competently because of the press of economics and staffing. The skid row men are not persuasive enough, or reliable enough to have their needs for care effectively met. They compete with other needy people for a limited amount of available services. Most of the residential centers which are available to the homeless have no medical staff, and therefore medical care is handled on an ad-hoc and impersonal basis in the city's medical facilities.

Likewise, psychological care for the skid row alcoholic is handled non-specifically. Neither of the two mental facilities investigated had sophisticated and special programs for alcoholics. Both housed alcoholics on the same ward with other patients, and only offered one or two hours per week of specialized care in group therapy settings for the patient with alcoholic problems.



Again, these facilities did not specialize in the homeless, although the homeless, as residents of the county were eligible to enter the facility. Because the programs were not specifically designed for alcoholics, but rather for mental patients with alcoholic problems, there was again, as in the hospital facilities, some staff hostility towards the alcoholic. As the director of one ward reported,

under these conditions, the staff doesn't like working with alcoholics. These are unfavorable conditions to work with the problem, because they have no program support. It is very difficult to treat an alcoholic on the same ward with psychotics and neurotics. It is hard to deal with someone who has no job and can anticipate no family support. Many of these people drink again, and this discourages the staff. (Cleveland Psychiatric Institute, 1973)

A chief social worker had these comments about staff unwillingness to work with alcoholics in this setting:

The staff sometimes feels hostile because of the repeating syndrome. No one likes failures. A lot of them feel that the alcoholic should be able to control his drinking. Many of the alcoholics are manipulative and brain-wash the staff. No one likes to be tricked, and so the staff becomes suspicious. The men project their problems with drinking onto the staff, and are domineering, dependent, and unappreciative. (Fairhill Psychiatric Institute, 1973)

The mental facilities claim about a 40-50% rate of success with limited sobriety of six months or so, but this rather high rate of success should be regarded in light of a rather inefficient follow-up program, and the fact that involuntary admissions are excluded. Additionally, the hospitals serve a catchment area which includes people with families and other support. Many of the skid row men who come to the facilities enter involuntarily, and leave within a few days. It is not these men that the state mental facilities have success with.

The hospitals and the welfare services are generally available

to all members of the community, whether alcoholic or not. However, the other services are more and more specifically oriented toward treatment of the alcoholic and the skid row man. Oriented most specifically to the alcoholic, although not necessarily dealing with the problem of homelessness, are the agencies which offer sophisticated medical and psychological treatment facilities. Among these in Cleveland are Rosary Hall, Exodus Hall, Serenity Hall and the Brecksville Veteran's Administration Hospital. Both Rosary Hall and Serenity Hall have high rates of admission, and thus their costs serve as effective screens against the skid row man. Therefore, when a man has utilized these services, he has usually been in a higher status in life, with steady employment and health insurance. Both Rosary and Serenity are located within larger hospital facilities, but offer a specialized ward for alcoholics with an average stay of from 8 to 14 days, including treatment and alcoholic education. Exodus Hall, which is connected with the Workhouse, includes a thirty day stay if one volunteers from the outside community for the service. Workhouse men may also participate in the facility, but their stay is often governed by their length of sentence. All medical and psychiatric treatment is provided by the workhouse. The Veteran's Administration facility has access to the resources of the entire complex. Therefore, all these facilities have the capacity to deal with alcoholism on a medical basis. However, these facilities have several screening mechanisms, such as location and strenuousness of program which reduce skid row use. Of the eighty men at Harbor Light, only eight had been to Exodus Hall, only eleven to Brecks-

ville, and only seventeen to Rosary Hall. Rosary Hall is more familiar and better used because of its long establishment. Even though there is little skid row usage of the facility, some of the men did utilize the facility before coming to skid row.

These facilities are all professionally committed to achieving sobriety for the patient. A good deal of work is demanded of the patient in terms of class and therapy attendance. Only a man who is fairly sincere about his goals of beating alcoholism can survive easily in such a setting. The purposes and programs of the places are made quite clear to the client upon entrance. The personnel are professional, and a wide socio-economic group of clients utilize these four services. Additionally, the facilities most open to the men, Exodus Hall, and the Veterans' facility are located far from skid row environment. Rosary Hall, located on skid row and established for over twenty years is much better known to the men than Exodus Hall. The Veterans' hospital, which has been established for many years, but is also far away, was also unfamiliar. Thus a place where most of the men were ineligible for treatment was as well known or better known as a place where most of them were eligible, primarily because of length of foundation and location on skid row. Obviously, then, time in operation and locational familiarity contribute to whether an agency appears in the skid row reputational network system. Fifty-four percent of the men knew Rosary Hall, but only 16% knew of the Exodus facility because of these factors. Eligibility seems to be a lesser factor in familiarity than these other screening elements. As previously pointed out, Wiseman demonstrated that the sophisti-

cated alcoholic treatment centers were most popular with the men. However, even though they may be popular, these agencies are under-utilized in Cleveland, even where the men are eligible because of the additional factors of unfamiliarity and locational inaccessability. Less sophisticated agencies, such as those to be studied later are far more familiar and more widely used than those agencies that rely on psychological therapy and sophisticated medical techniques to reach the skid row man. He may worry about the other clients of higher social status, or about unfamiliar and sophisticated treatments, so that even while the situation of no work is appealing, there are drawbacks to these agencies for him. The agencies themselves believe that the man does not come to their facility because he is unwilling to put forth the effort for a complete cure:

The average guy living under bridges is there by his own choice. This is the life style he is used to. We only get 10-20% from the flophouse type environment, and those who see how much work this is are often amazed and want to leave. (Exodus Hall, April, 1973)

Most also feel their length of stay is too short to really reach the skid row man. "They are hopelessly pathetic about themselves, about recovery, and about life. I don't feel that you can turn him upside down and around in 12 or 30 days." (Exodus Hall, 1973) The men partly agree with this. One, commenting on Rosary Hall said, "I feel it could help a skid row alcoholic, but twelve days is too short. It takes six months." (Interview 20)

Even at the Exodus program, which allows extended stays, the staff believes that its program is too short to really help the skid row man. These agencies are aware of the need for restructuring the man's life style in order to combat the problem



of alcohol. "You must first restore his sense of worth and belonging." (V.A., April, 1973)

Besides insufficient times of stay, the treatment at these facilities foster social skills which the skid row man may have dropped. The Veteran's Administration, for example, offers self-government to all patients in the program. The patients are responsible for all affairs which affect them, including disciplinary matters. They even handle a good deal of the clerical work. They are also responsible for much of the counselling, although guided by the staff. A group made up totally of skid row men would not have had the needed interpersonal skills to handle this sort of responsibility effectively, although at least partial responsibility might be better than the total dependency fostered at the other agencies.

The men occasionally indicate why they shy away from these sophisticated facilities, even when like Wiseman, they give them high reputational ratings. One man commented that he felt offended by the intensive group therapy sessions which compelled men to discuss their drinking problems and confess their faults in front of their peers (thereby violating what Wallace has described as a code of personal anonymity of the streets.) The skid row man is not ready yet to let his guard down totally, especially before middle class others who are sharing the facility with him.

Some men evaluate the services materialistically, balancing costs to themselves against their benefits. They are concerned about the actual value of the treatment they receive. One respondent, commenting on a hospital treatment he had taken, said,



I didn't like it because I was pretty sick, and they made me wait four hours between drinks, and there are three meetings a day and a lot of lip service. The bill is preposterous for what you get, it's just awful. You get two bottles of whiskey and a lot of talk. (Interview 38)

Thus, several sophisticated facilities are available to the alcoholic in the Cleveland Area. Two, Rosary Hall, and Serenity Hall, may have been utilized by skid row men in their downward careers, but are not now available to them because of their prohibitive costs. Two, located far from skid row, are open to almost all men, but because of their newness, and their unfamiliarity on the grape vine of skid row, and also because of their location and sophisticated programs, are under-utilized by a clientele they could well serve.

Another under-utilized group of services open to the skid row man is the half-way house group. Fresh-Start, Matt Talbott, and Now House are examples of these facilities, but again through a screening mechanism of location and admission procedures, skid row use is limited. The avowed aim of these houses is to achieve sobriety through a peaceful, alcohol-free and home-like atmosphere. The atmosphere is buttressed with one and often two or more Alcoholics Anonymous meetings a week. Welfare, and Soldiers' and Sailors' Relief generally pick up the tabs for these agency services. Therefore there is no cost for these agency services. Intensive screening limits the number of inhabitants to six through twenty-five men at each facility. At Fresh Start a potential client must pass the director's scrutiny for evidence of sincerity. At Matt Talbott, a priest at the workhouse provides 85% of the accepted clients through referral. Now House also has a director who examines each man as to his sincerity in the search for

sobriety. Now House is the only true half-way house, as a man must work at an outside job there, to pay his fifteen dollar weekly rent.

Stays at these facilities generally are about thirty days or longer, perhaps because of the scrutinization for sincerity, as well as the strict rules about recidivism. Fresh Start does not allow a repeater until a year has elapsed, and Matt Talbott limits repeaters to 6 months turn-around time. Even so, Matt Talbott finds that 50% of its clients are repeaters. The success rate seems lower at these agencies than at the sophisticated hospital facilities, perhaps in part because the majority of the clients are homeless. Again, reliability of success rates is low because of the lack of any sophisticated follow-up procedure. Most agencies count their successes by the number of clients who return to the former residence still in a state of sobriety. (Nonetheless, few agencies were reticent about success rates, and the appendix includes notations on success for each)

The main problem these agencies face is their location in undesirable neighborhoods, where it is impossible for the man to leave at night. One client said, " I don't like the neighborhood, it's like walking into a death trap." (58) The administrators are aware of the men's fears, and one talks of opening a facility in the country and using the city houses only for men who have employment in town. A second Fresh Start has opened in the skid row neighborhood, which may make the half-way type facility more accessible and better-known to the skid row clientele.

Generally, at present, the halfway facilities were unknown to the men of Harbor Light. All have been established within the

last five years, whereas places such as the Salvation Army have been in existence for over fifty. Fully 71% of the men were unable to evaluate Fresh Start. Another 66% could give no opinion on Matt Talbott Inn. Those who did make evaluations gave high ones, however. Of the twenty-six evaluating Matt Talbott, only two gave it an average or lower evaluation. In the case of Fresh Start, sixteen of twenty-two evaluators rated it above average.<sup>1</sup>

Despite high recommendations few men had actually utilized either service. Only nine had been at Matt Talbott, and seven had been at Fresh Start. Thus, while the half-way facilities offer residence for the homeless, and home-like treatment, few of the Harbor Light users were familiar with the services, and fewer had utilized them. The reputation of the groups was high among those who had heard of them. Again, location out of the skid row environment as well as recency of foundation and specificity of screening procedures to eliminate insincerity seems to limit in part the usage by skid row men.

Thus, two of the six welfare services available most specifically for alcoholics are under utilized by the clients of Harbor Light. The men are more knowledgeable and utilize more universally a fourth group of agencies. These agencies are directly on skid row or within easy travelling distance of the area, and offer work and spiritual therapy programs. Employed and lower and middle class clients with families are not included in their clientele.<sup>1</sup> Now House began housing men in November, and had no full-time staff, so was not included in ratings in the questionnaire.

The target population is specifically the skid row alcoholic. Not only is the skid row homeless man eligible for the program, but he is basically the only element of the population to be eligible. To participate in these services, a man need only be homeless and profess to be in need of help. Cooperation with the work or spiritual program is required for shelter and services to continue.

Not only are the skid row men more familiar with these services, they are also quicker to criticize them. Whereas the hospitals and half-way houses require little work for their treatment, the skid row agency requires the man to work to earn his room and board. Therefore, the man can accuse them of mercenary aims. In agencies such as Exodus Hall, the patients were responsible for some routine maintenance and their own self-governance. In Stella Maris or the Men's Social Service Center, the man is not only responsible for the maintenance of living facilities, but also must put in a forty hour or longer week in some form of "work therapy." This work is paid at the level of the state sheltered workshop scale or lower. If it is paid at the sheltered workshop scale, then room and board are subtracted from the amount paid. Men in such programs, including Harbor Light are lucky to have ten dollars in their pockets at the end of a work week.

There are five agencies which specifically fit this category in Cleveland. They include: The Salvation Army Men's Social Service Center, The Volunteers of America, City Mission, Stella Maris, and Harbor Light. All have some religious orientation, although this feature is strongest at City Mission. As discussed



earlier, the religious orientation is helpful in operating in this field of failure, as there is an explanation provided for failure in the inherent fallibility of man. The treatment facility blames the man, not the treatment, in failures.

Unlike the more sophisticated treatment facilities, there are no monetary costs to the man for participation in the services. Therefore, however, there are limits to the sophistication of treatment given the man. Most of the facilities offer one or more church services a week for the men, an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, and the work therapy program as their treatment package. A man who is using the facility primarily for shelter does not have to worry about groups of meetings devoted to probing his personality and his alcoholic history. The treatment at these agencies is often so rudimentary as to be almost non-existent. Many of the facilities are quite frank in admitting that they provide more shelter than treatment for the man. One has gone so far as to provide housing for transients five nights a month, and a separate residency program, with more extensive counselling. Other agencies are aware that many men will only use the program for shelter for two weeks or less. The agencies do not actively discourage these users, so long as they participate in the work phase of the program.

Since all the agencies professed to me that they were interested in the rehabilitation of alcoholics, I was interested in seeing how the men perceived these claims. About the same percentage of men had used the four agencies (excluding Harbor Light), Between fifty and sixty percent had been at each agency, and another 20-30% was willing to evaluate the agency without having been actually present at it. While all four



agencies evaluated presented similar pictures of both treatment and success to me, they were not so similarly evaluated by the men. Volunteers of America, and City Mission were criticized by clients because of their insincerity and hypocrisy. While "no drinking" is the ground rule at all agencies, both of the Volunteers and the Mission seemed to allow drinking on the premises. I saw men intoxicated on the grounds and in the doorways of the Volunteers premises, which underlined the truth of what the men said. The men frowned upon a program which professes to help the alcoholic, but is not hard on drinking. They also felt that the Volunteers program was mercenary-minded, and that the Mission was hypocritical. My interview time at Volunteers was indeed more business-oriented than at other facilities. Likewise, the interview at the Mission was full of sanctimonious success stories of 'typical' clients who had been salvaged through religion. Yet the presentations of the administrations in no way hinted at the far-ranging criticisms of the men they had served.

Of the 31 men who had used Volunteer's services, 97% rated it as average or below. And of those who had not been there, another 31 cases, 90% rated it as average or below in helping the alcoholic. There was thus very great agreement between the users and the non-users as to the worth of the services there. The comments that probing elicited about the agency indicated that the drinking on the premises, and the mercenary nature of the program were at the seat of the clients' dislike.

One man, when asked if they allowed drinking at Volunteers, had this to say:

It's a hell hole over there. They allow drinking, they drink right upstairs in the dorms. Bottles are all over. That's a lie that they don't allow drinking. She's got a

business to run. She don't care if they drink, as long as they do a job. They got a bunch of regulars over there. (Interview 18)

Another commented:

If you don't drink when you go over there, you will when you get out--they want their men to drink, as long as they make money. (Interview 14)

While the administrator at Volunteers had stated that they allowed a man re-entrance after "little slips", I was unprepared for the tales of massive drinking the men returned. They were indeed, as the administrator had said, "a little more lenient in this than many organizations."

Likewise unfavorable were the reports on the shelter and treatment offered by the City Mission program to both transients and skid row men down on their luck. While the mission felt that they were "fulfilling Cleveland's Christian responsibility of providing a last chance to its share of the 5½ million on skid row today," the men felt that it was not much of a chance.

City Mission, that's about on the same level as 21st and Payne (City Jail). It was dirty and an all-around hole. The other folks and the sheets were dirty. When it is freezing outside, and you are broke, though, anything is good that has a roof. (interview 38)

Another man explained,

It's dirty, and the food is poor, and you have to go through a whole process to get a bed (meaning church services and delousing) and I might as well sleep under a bridge to get peace of mind. (Interview 40)

As a final disparaging comment, one man complained,

You can hit the lice with a whip there. It's disastrous and the director has a mean, mercenary attitude. (Interview 45)

That these comments are not isolated resentments is reflected in evaluation figures. Of the men who had stayed in the facility, 90% felt that it was average or below in services. Of those

who evaluated it on reputation alone, 89% felt it was average or below. Further, fully 25% of the men felt the services there were Very Poor, the lowest rating available.

Yet despite this low estimation of the services offered, City Mission was the most widely utilized of any of the agencies evaluated. So even if the quality is low, its completely open admission, and service of temporary and commitment-free housing is attractive to the men, and provides a necessary service.

The other agencies utilizing work therapy and religious programs, Stella Maris and Men's Social Service seem to be better managed than the above. Like Volunteers of America, both offer furniture salvage operations as the basis of their work therapy. The men sleep in dormitory facilities at the centers. However, the agencies are much stricter in terms of drinking than either Volunteers or City Mission. Additionally, Stella Maris and Men's Social Service have a group of regulars who promote a particular type of agency community feeling that is appreciated and known by the other men. Of the men who evaluated Stella Maris, over 80% said it was above average in services. While 31 men gave Volunteers a very poor rating, no one gave Stella Maris that low an evaluation. Social Service fared less well, with those using it giving it lower ratings than those who had never used it. While 71% of the men who evaluated the service on reputation alone gave it an above average rating, only 53% of those who had used the service gave it that high a rating. Most however, who gave it another rating, gave it an average, rather than poor or very poor. This indicates, perhaps, that the high national reputation of the Salvation Army may offset a particular local agency's failings with skid row men. Actual

experience in the setting can knock the ratings down.

Perhaps part of the reason for the Social Service's unpopularity among users may be in its size. While Stella Maris provides housing for about 40-45 men, the Social Service Center carries between 100 and 130 men. The building is large and institutional and the directors are far from the men. While the administrators at Stella Maris know most of the clients by their names, this is seldom the case at Men's Social Service.

Despite the fact that Stella Maris has an evident mercenary orientation, running a private alcoholic clinic in addition to the salvage operation to stay afloat financially, the facility enjoys a much higher estimation than the Salvation Army. The mercenary charge was raised frequently against the Army, but not against Stella Maris. The wages are higher at Stella Maris, which may partially explain this phenomenon. At Men's Social Service, the men are "asked to repay what they get," and are then given a "gratuity, which we think of as a gift," for use in the snack bar. This ranges from three to twelve dollars a week depending on the length of a man's stay. However, whenever a man steps out of line, even slightly, his gratuity is docked again. At Stella Maris, on the other hand, the men are paid under the sheltered workshop provisions of the state of Ohio, earning sixty-seven cents an hour for the first one hundred forty hours of work, and then eighty cents an hour, which rises to a dollar an hour. Additionally, Stella Maris encourages a search for outside employment, whereas Men's Social makes it difficult, if not impossible to make a smooth transition to the outside world.



Time off to find outside employment is virtually unheard of. A man may continue in residence at Stella Maris for a short time after finding outside employment, but such an option is not really available at Men's Social. As one counselor explained, "that problem doesn't really arise." (Men's Social Service, Nov. 1972)

One of the men commented on the employment policies at Men's Social Service when explaining his low estimation of their services, saying,

They have nothing but slave labor out there. They repealed the fourteenth amendment. That gratuity is too low, and there is no possible way to get off the treadmill. (Interview 37)

The only reason another liked Men's Social was because, "the guys get to steal good clothes off the trucks." (Interview 39) Most of the comments, however, were fairly neutral, or reflected liking for the place. One man preferred it next to Harbor Light,

I liked it when I was there. It's probably the best place in town other than this. There's more activity there. You get lots of work and play. (Interview 43)

Interestingly, the picture presented of Men's Social virtually mirrors the picture of the Christian Missionaries drawn by Shirley Wiseman, (1970). Evidentially, the program is much the same across the country.

The work program at Stella Maris and the therapy offered, as well as living facilities are comparable to those at Social Service, yet the program has a much higher evaluation. The main element of the program which received comment from respondents was the unmeasurable thing, the atmosphere. The regular clients and the general conditions were much better at Stella Maris than at the other three services.

"A man is trusted there, and it is a fine place to stay, as they treat you with respect and feed you well. What



more could you want? (Interview, 49)

While clients are aware of the mercenary aspects of the operation, they dismiss these aspects with greater charity than they do for the Salvation Army or Volunteers. As one man put it,

The people that run it are sincere. They are there to make money, but they want to help you on the side. (Interview 78)

Perhaps this sincerity is communicated because all of the administrators of Stella Maris are ex-alcoholics. This is not true of any of the other facilities. They are also exceptionally severe about drinking. "You have to come in sober, that's for sure, or they would throw you out on the street, no matter how bad the weather was." (Interview 26)

These facilities all offer free housing and food to the man, for nothing more than forty hours of labor a week. The men know more about these four groups than any other facility, and utilize them widely. However, just because they utilize an agency, they do not necessarily develop gratitude towards the agency. The men who use these agencies are connoisseurs, and very sensitive to the attitudes with which help is given. They rate these agencies and these ratings are shared by their peers. Ratings given by users are virtual mirrors for ratings given by non-users, indicating that the reputational network about agencies on skid row is wide and well-established, especially for those agencies where men are both eligible and able to easily reach them. However, the reputational net does not seem to stretch to agencies which are not close to skid row. Both the sophisticated agencies and the half-way houses described above are only loosely covered by the reputational net.

The sixth element involved in treatment of skid row alcoholics is Alcoholics Anonymous. Almost every agency, except City Mission, uses Alcoholics Anonymous programming. Some, such as Matt Talbott and Fresh Start, emphasize it more than others such as the Salvation Army. Nonetheless, AA is a very prevalent part of skid row treatment programs. Therefore, I included a section on AA evaluation in my questionnaire.

As AA people themselves point out, skid row drunks form only three percent of all alcoholics in the United States. Most literature, as mentioned previously, demonstrates that alcoholics on skid row are frequently excessive rather than addictive drinkers. Still, AA feels it has a definite place on skid row, and the members provide free services and programming for almost all the agencies on skid row. Only two men in the sample had never heard of AA, and only one man had so little information about it he was unable to evaluate it. Almost two-thirds had at least attended meetings, and another twenty-nine percent claimed that they had at one time been members of AA. Thus Alcoholics Anonymous is well-known to the men of skid row who utilize Harbor Light.

Not only is Alcoholics Anonymous well-known, but it is widely respected by the men. Only thirteen of the seventy-seven who rated the service rated it as below average in services to help the alcoholic. Most of the men agreed that AA helped many. However, an interesting phenomenon occurred, for while the men formally rated AA as good or excellent, and claimed that it helped many, most of them also claimed that it did not work for them personally.

Perhaps foremost in the reasons for AA's failure with these men is the inability of the men to identify with the speakers and programs that AA provides. To become a member of AA, one "must devote six months to a year just going to meetings. This is the most important job you have to do. Everyone can't make AA, and most of them don't,"(Interview, Cuyahoga County Welfare Unit, March, '73) Few of the men who utilize Harbor Light are stable enough in employ and family situation to devote themselves to such a program. While there is a plethora of meetings at all times in the Cleveland area, as John Lofland has demonstrated, these meetings are class stratified; and most of the Harbor Light derelicts would be most uncomfortable walking into a higher class meeting. (Lofland, 1970, p. 109) To travel to compatible meetings might be difficult within the context of the skid row man's limited transportation and unstable employment situation. As one man said about the AA groups,

No, I've never really used their methods for myself. They are different people than me, and I feel they are better than me. The leads (speakers) are boring, and besides, I don't like to be reminded about drinking. (Interview 60)

Besides, when you have to work at seven A.M., it's tough to stay out all night going to meetings. (Interview 40)

The men who lead AA meetings, generally, are capable speakers, and therefore better educated at times than the men they speak to. Often their experiences are not as harrowing as those the skid row man has been through. "They don't tell me nothing I don't know. They can't tell you nothing you haven't done. It's only once in a while you run into a good one."(Interview 41)

Thus, for the men at Harbor Light, avoidance of AA comes because of the strain of class and experience differences, as well as an

inability to make the kind of commitment that AA membership requires. Most of them are just not willing to listen to "depressing stories." They find "It just doesn't help me to go to those meetings. They can't tell you anything new. The only advantage is that from the time you go to the time you get back, you are not in a bar." (Interview 43) There seems to be room on skid row for treatment which does not push AA as a requirement. Most of the men who have rejected AA agree that "they do good for the ones that believe in it." (Interview 25) The institutional AA meeting that the man is forced to attend makes the men feel that

they try to push it as if it was a religion, and make us attend. If it was voluntary at these places it might be better. (Interview 65)

While there is no class difference in the institutional meeting, except that between the lead and the group, the cover of anonymity which is available at outside AA meetings is withdrawn within the institution. This has the consequence that the freedom of personal exposure which anonymity provides is withdrawn in the institution, as all the men are known to one another. The men at institutional AA meetings see each other all day long. Men at Harbor Light who had used AA previously said that if the men could attend outside meetings it might be better than the institutional and compulsory meetings offered within the setting.

AA remains the only national organization with a high rate of successful treatment. No other method has matched AA's power in reaching the alcoholic. This accounts for its widespread usage. However, it is clear from these findings that simply because AA has had a high success rate does not mean that it is the most successful treatment to be used with all skid row men.

The men themselves recognize AA as an excellent and sincere organization, but realize that it cannot work for a man who either does not want it, or does not feel comfortable in its meetings.

The meetings of AA provide only temporary shelter for the skid row man. While a middle class or working class man might return to home and family after a meeting, the skid row man finds that "outside AA you return to the same jungle." (Interview 57) Perhaps the group feeling that AA promotes can be used in the skid row setting, but if so, it must be done carefully, so that its status specificity and middle class origins do not color presentations made to the men. Presently AA in insititruonal settings is not reaching the men of Harbor Light.

It is proper to conclude this survey of the six types of agency services with a quick summary of the foregoing. In demonstrating that as stated in Hypothesis one, agencies limit their clientele to those they can best serve, a number of formal and informal screening mechanisms were observed. One of the most important of the informal screening mechanisms is the reputational network that develops through the interaction of the men and the agencies. The men become aware of both the services offered and the eligibility criteria and other formal factors which might limit their access to these agencies, and this reputational network matches men and services together in the absence of any formalized referral service. While this sort of network has been suggested in the literature, especially



by Wiseman (1970), nowhere has the congruence between those who have used agencies, and those who know it only by reputation been pointed out. This network indicates the need for an institution serving this function. In terms of larger society, the development of this network to serve a need informally where it is not being met by the formal super-structure is much like for example the development of ad-hoc and experimental courses in an educational situation where the established institution is no longer fulfilling the needs of its clients.

Another implication of this reputational network is for policy as a whole in this area. Clearly, many of the men could benefit from some of the more sophisticated treatment facilities available for the alcoholic, and these facilities are well respected by the men. However, because only the informal referral network exists, it tends to have a conservative effect, directing men only toward the traditional and conveniently located facilities. This reputational network speaks directly to the orientation of the skid row subculture. A social welfare system aimed at rehabilitating this group would attempt to formally compete with this reputational network, by making the more sophisticated facilities easily accessible through transportation and encouraging their use. Presently, it seems that the sophisticated facilities would prefer to avoid heightened skid row usage.

In addition to the reputational screening network, the agencies also have other screening mechanisms, such as the ecological screening mechanism which locationally puts some services out of the skid row man's reach, or desire.

Economic screening systems which price the facility out of the skid row man's realm, and motivational screening systems which through interviewing limit the number of skid row men. Those organizations which claim a high rate of success with alcoholics generally have one or more of these formal screening mechanisms (which of course influence the more informal ones) operating to limit the number of skid row cases they deal with.

Thus, the organizations attempt both formally, and through the aid of the informal reputational network, to limit those clients to those who it can best serve. These other organizations are competitors for clients who are served by Harbor Light, and form a significant element of Harbor Light's task environment. By making their services more accessible to skid row men, they draw clients from Harbor Light; by screening skid row men, they may increase their own successes while sending the unrehabilitatable to less sophisticated services such as City Mission and the Salvation Army.

Harbor Light is also an organization covered by the reputational network, although it was not included in this section as obviously all respondents had already chosen it. Clients using the reputational network have taken information about the services offered by Harbor Light from that network and decided that it would suit their needs at a particular moment. Many of the men using the reputational network are not looking for extensive treatment and commitment to long-term sobriety, and therefore, specifically seek out close shelters which require little work for their benefits. They choose a compatible organization according to the reputation of its clientele (for companionship) and shelter. The next section deals with those men who have been attracted to Harbor Light.